

Direct marketing - advanced

The most successful direct marketing is where relationships are built up with customers. This involves communicating with customers and following up their inquiries directly and quickly. It is all about satisfying the needs and wants of the customers.

The steps to success include:

1. Set your goals clearly. Without goals there is no purpose. Like any other business you must set down objectives and those are the reasons behind your motivation to move into the direct marketing field.
2. Get motivated. You will need to motivate yourself because there is no boss standing over you to see that the job is done. Once again, motivation comes from a desire to meet the goals that you have set.
3. Be disciplined. Because you are running a direct marketing business that may have peaks and troughs of activity, many fail to keep standard business hours. It is therefore important to maintain discipline in the times that you start and finish if you are to achieve what you have planned for that particular day.
4. Schedule your time. You need to set down a plan of what needs to be done on a daily basis and then use good time management skills to achieve that.
5. Be organised. If you are working from home, set up a proper area in a separate room at home, so that your systems are organised. This will result in efficiency and meeting the orders that come in from customers.
6. Be positive. They say that success is 90% attitude and 10% aptitude. You need to be positive in all that you do and not allow yourself to be discouraged if the response initially is not strong. If you stay with your plan and always seek ways to improve your advertising, results will come in the long run.

The 10 direct marketing commandments

1. **Think big:** Set out what you want to accomplish, put in place your goals and then "go for it!" Set your goals out, write them down, and fix a date for reaching them. Set them into short-term reachable goals, and then long term target goals. Do not set them too high. Make sure they are achievable, but set them so that there is a little bit of work required to reach them. Work every day consistently to achieve one step at a time until the final goal is complete. Goal setting is critical in every area of life, so direct marketing and the expected results are no different.
2. **Be motivated:** Once you have set down your goals then put into place a step-by-step plan of how to achieve them. Once that schedule is in place, stay with it. Keep up the enthusiasm; keep up your energy levels; keep up your good health; and keep up your motivation. Achievement only comes through effort, and effort will only be produced by motivation.
3. **Be disciplined:** Once you have set your targets, put in place a schedule to achieve them, and then discipline yourself in following the schedule. Get up early each day and discipline yourself to stay with the job until that day's requirements are done. Set up a "To Do" list for each day and then discipline yourself to keep with your program for the day and not be side-tracked.



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4. **Be positive** - Success is 90% attitude and 10% aptitude. You need to learn the art of positive thinking. Anyone can achieve anything that they set their mind to. It is more than just mind over matter, it is actually to do with looking out in the world and saying: "I can do it". The words: "It's impossible" should never be in your vocabulary. People need to remember that they have two ways of thinking: they can either think positively or they can think negatively. You can either look up or you can look down. Remember the old story of the two men that were imprisoned. It goes something like this: Two men were behind iron bars. One looked down and saw mud; the other looked up and saw stars. Everywhere you look in God's creation, there are positives. When you hear the birds chirping early in the morning, you will see them looking skyward, raising their beaks and chirping about the great day before them. The thing is, why be negative when you can be positive and achieve much more?
5. **Set schedules:** You need to set a schedule for yourself. A schedule is your roadmap to success because if you have no direction, then you will end up travelling in circles and ultimately, you will never reach your goals. Planning is everything. If you do not plan to get somewhere, you will never know when you have arrived. Plan your work and then work your plan.
6. **Set up an area to work from:** Many direct marketing people work from their own homes but it is still essential to set up a specified work area. You need to take pride in your business if you are to achieve success. By setting up a separate area, this will take it away from the home responsibilities and you will find you will work much better.
7. **Be wise with finances:** At the beginning set up a budget and a Business Plan right at the beginning, incorporating marketing strategies. The Business Plan will set out what you want to achieve and how you are going to achieve it, and review it annually. Make sure you handle your finances correctly. It is essential to set aside income in reserve that can be put back into the business otherwise you will end up spending it all. If you fail to reinvest some of your money back into your business, this will cause a strain on your cash reserves and eventually end up in failure. It is very easy to start spending when you may find your cash balance growing. What you have to remember is that there are still bills to be met and ongoing costs yet to be paid for, so always work with a reserve in the bank account.
8. **Keep healthy:** Take care of yourself. Get plenty of sleep, eat the right foods and take time to "smell the roses". People take this for granted, but, in fact, when you are starting out in business or even if you have been in business for a while, as the pressures increase, you can find yourself letting your health go and not following the normal healthy good habits of eating and sleeping. If you keep yourself fit and healthy, you will be able to perform better and you will enjoy running your business a lot more than if you are carrying a lot of aches and pains and lack of sleep etc.
9. **Focus:** Set your targets and focus. Don't allow yourself to be distracted in any way. Of all the advice that should be given priority for direct marketing success - focus is number one.



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10. Never give up: Although this is the last commandment, it is, in fact, the most important of all. Remember these words: If you never give up, you'll make it. If you look at the Olympic Games, the mark of a true champion is that they never give up. In fact, the Olympics are a very good parallel to apply these commandments to. If you follow through the commandments from 1 through to 10, these are the steps that world-class athletes have to follow in order to achieve their goals. The ultimate goal is the Olympic gold medal, and each one of these commandments must apply to them otherwise they will not succeed. Never giving up has nothing to do with never failing. People fail all of the time. That is not the problem. Failure is only temporary. Just because someone goes down, does not mean they have failed. It is when they stay down that they fail. Winners are not those who never fail, but those who never quit. So in your business, never entertain the thought of losing. Work hard and never give up!

Further information

The following fact sheets provide further information on these issues:

- Direct marketing – introduction
- Direct marketing campaign