

thank you. thank you very much.

Call it what you want...up-selling, direct mail, thank you notes, special offers, holiday cards or a quick email. Personal communication with your clients and customers works, and it translates into more business and more loyal customers.

My advice to clients is to always keep a positive, sincere and open line of communication with their customers. Make sure you send a thank you note to new customers after the first time you have done work with them. Stand apart from the rest of the people they have done business with in the past who took the check and ran with it. Just don't forget about the clients who have been sticking with you for a while. Sometimes we all forget that email, facebook, LinkedIn, mail, texting, tweeting and faxes leave a cold and impersonal touch on the business day.

Below are some ideas for personal communication to keep you and your company on the top of the pile.

Send a thank you note (handwritten via snail mail holds the most impact and can sit on someone's desk for weeks):

- after meeting with a prospective client
- after completing the first job for a new customer
- to a customer who has recommended you to someone else
- when you finish a large, tight-deadline or time-intensive job
- when someone signs up for your e-newsletter
- when you meet someone who shows an interest in your services

Take it to the next level and **include something of value** along with your thank you note:

- special offer or discount incentives
- downloads (reports or information that might be useful)
- news (awards, press releases, new offerings)
- customer satisfaction surveys
- customer loyalty program
- subscriptions to e-newsletters
- testimonials or case studies from other clients
- sales and marketing pieces to help them know you and your company better
- order tracking information
- customer service information, phone numbers, etc.

