

CLIENTS | QUICK CARD CL-03

Making referrals easy

Fifteen minutes, your last ten clients, and the questions a good coach would ask you.



The practice

Most businesses that sell expertise will tell you, with some pride, that nearly all their work comes from referrals. Ask how they get referrals and there is a pause, then a slightly vaguer answer about doing good work and people talking.

In research by Hinge, a US marketing company, 59.5% of buyers of professional services found providers through their network, and nearly 70% had made a referral for their own provider. Plenty of people are willing to recommend you; most are not asked, or do not know what to say. So trace where clients come from, thank every referrer, give people one sentence to repeat, and ask at natural moments.

Where your last ten clients came from

New client	Where they first heard of us	Who referred them	Thanked, and told what happened?

A consultancy found seven of its last ten clients came through someone who knew it, and it had thanked two of the seven. **Your one sentence:** we help _____ with _____, so that _____.

Try this this week

Write down your last ten new clients and where each first heard of you. Then thank, by name, everyone who referred you and has not yet heard what happened.

Coach yourself

Set aside fifteen minutes where nobody can interrupt you, and answer in writing. An answer looks surprisingly different once it is on paper.

G

GOAL

If the right introductions arrived steadily, what would that change for me?

R

REALITY

Where did my last ten clients come from, and did their referrers hear back?

O

OPTIONS

Who could I thank this week, and what is the one sentence I want people to repeat?

W

WILL

Which three people will I ask this quarter, and when?

If you catch yourself saying...

You hear yourself say	Try asking instead
<i>"I don't want to look desperate"</i>	How do I feel when someone asks me for a recommendation?
<i>"Good work speaks for itself"</i>	What is that belief protecting me from?
<i>"They know what we do"</i>	What would they say if a friend asked them tomorrow?

ONE HARDER QUESTION

Who has sent me work more than once and never heard a proper thank you?

Keep it going

Referral habits fade in the first busy quarter, and the gap shows two quarters later. Give one person the job of recording where every enquiry comes from, and put check dates in the diary: 3, 6 and 12 months from today.

When to get help

If you plan to pay or be paid for introductions, check your professional body's rules first. If a client is unhappy, put that right before asking anyone for anything.

What a coach adds

This card gives you the questions. What it cannot do is notice which one you avoided. It is one of the SMARTer practice cards, covering the ten key areas of a business that sells expertise.



Talk yours through with me: book a Discovery Call at smarterentrepreneurs.co.uk

No pitch, no pressure, and you'll leave with something useful either way.