

Make the most of the run up to Christmas

In his coaching series for CAM practitioners dedicated to “the difference that makes the difference”, NLP Coach **Mark Shields**, Director of the Life Practice Group, explains the tenth Practitioner Proficiency: “Seasonal Promotions”.

The nights are beginning to draw in, with the clocks going back an hour at the end of last month, and we’re beginning to get that warm cozy feeling of Christmas lights and presents. Traditionally this has been a challenging time for our industry and is definitely accepted as “a quiet time” and often compared to the summer holiday lull that seems to last for three months if we let it.

Now’s the time for those practitioners among you who have had enough of summer and winter lulls, to get busy with me in maximizing the time we have left until the end of the year and ensure we get off to a flying start in January

Christmas promotions

We have a few weeks until Christmas day. Now is the time to proactively contact everybody on your database who for whatever reason didn’t get past the enquiry stage. Email every one of these potential clients with a promotional discount voucher giving them between 20% and 40% off your normal prices for a set time only - ending Christmas Eve. You could position it as your end of year promotion, a way of giving something back, however you choose.

Some clients would appreciate the honesty and will understand it’s a quiet time which is being reflected in your prices.

New Year Fast Start Promotions 2012

This is the same concept. However, email your entire database, get together and advertise wherever you can, perhaps a small ad in your local paper.

You would never run the two promotions alongside each other as clients have two very different mindsets pre and post Christmas. Really go for it, perhaps with posters in the

local gym - gym memberships double in January, so why shouldn’t you arrange a wellbeing talk to all the new members?

January is the biggest month of the year for people taking decisions about making change in their lives for the coming year. 72% of people set New Year’s resolutions, 57% are confident in achieving them, 12% actually achieve them.

Christmas Vouchers

Another successful initiative I have modelled over Christmas is go to a local printer and print up some treatment vouchers, as people often like these for Christmas. Display them on your website; even run this initiative alongside your Christmas promotion.

Business planning and forecasting 2012

Assuming that the end of your financial year is in April 2012, now is a vital time to review your business performance and identify any shortfalls that need to be made up between now and April if you are going to hit your year-end financial goals. This is the time to review your business plan and calculate the additional activity and revenue you need to undertake to achieve your business plan and business financials.

January is a great month for new beginnings, new relationships, and new initiatives. People are responsive to change and almost expect it.

I always recommend to all my practitioner clients, wherever they are in terms of performance versus plan at Christmas, that we have an additional two or three proactive income-driving actions we add to the plan in January.

The reason for this is that achieving a good performance is one thing, but sustaining it is another.



Business year on year comparisons

It is important that your business grows and evolves, so Christmas is also a good time to do some year on year comparisons.

The average growth rate for a practitioner practising more than two years is 20%.

I insist all my clients track their weekly performances and review every year so we can see where the majority of clients originate, how long we retain them for, how many referrals we get, our success rate and general activity levels such as enquiries, appointments and so forth.

We can also calculate sales proficiencies from this information – for example, enquiry to appointment rates. This allows you to very quickly see developing trends and helps you know what to do differently to ensure you continue to be successful.

Social Media course

Finally, December is a good time to review your CPD and personal development. When considering personal development courses for next year I recommend you book yourself on a social media course. They are easy to find and will prove great value for money. CPD



About the author

Mark Shields, life coach, author, Media expert and motivational speaker, is managing director of Life Practice UK, specialists in Personal and Business Coaching.

Contact: 01462 451473, info@lifepractice.co.uk, www.lifepractice.co.uk