

Building Your Massage Business

Advice and Tips by a Successful, Massage Therapist And International Professional Massage Therapy Business Coach

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How To Make A Great First Impression In Your Home Massage Therapy Business

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It's hard enough knowing how to get clients in your massage therapy business, let alone impress them enough where they want to come back. So here are some very handy tips you can use in your own home massage therapy business to impress clients so not only will they come back, but they will want to refer people to you.

First of all, in your massage therapy business, you are usually the ones taking all the calls. This includes bookings, enquiries, cancellations, wrong numbers, and talking with people who want to sell you things for your massage therapy business.

So what about the people who make an enquiry over the phone? How do you get them from an enquiry to a booking? The secret is creating a great first impression. There are four ways to have a higher chance of turning an enquiry into a booking. These four ways are; your voice, your proper speech, your response and your closing.

1. Your voice.

It's very important if you are practicing at home in your massage business to have a tone of voice that says "you are very interesting and I am so happy to hear from you." Make sure you always express to the person that you are very interested. Don't answer the phone in a monotone voice, always express a light, interested tone that people feel comfortable with.

2. Avoid using slang (proper speech)

We do it everyday. Its best when speaking to a new potential client first that we make an effort to say "yes" instead of "yeah" and "Pardon, I'm

sorry I didn't hear you" instead of "huh?" or "what?" Coming across an enthusiastic, literate therapist makes ways for more success than someone who has a monotone, casual language approach. And besides, its not professional to speak in everyday common terms to people you are trying to obtain business from.

3. Your response

It's best to listen first then advise. Instead of replying with "70 per hour" and leaving it at that when someone asks you what your fees are, you can reply with "The fee for a deep relaxation massage for 1 hour is \$70 and it's guaranteed. So if you don't feel totally relaxed or having an improvement in your mobility after the treatment you will not be asked to pay."

4. Your closing

Never feel embarrassed or awkward in asking for their business. After all they are calling you to express interest. If you do feel uncomfortable go at asking for their business with a different approach. You can simply advise them of the different massage styles you might do and have success with. You can let them know you are open after hours, and that you have the convenience of credit card facilities for example. Giving a prospective client a good experience when he or she first deals with you creates a higher chance of success in the long and short term.

It's very important to make a good impression in your massage therapy business. Particularly if you have been practicing for 1 to 2 years and need to boost client numbers or have just started out in massage therapy as a profession. Always remember to give the person a positive experience when they are dealing with you and the little things you say such as polite speech and a professional tone will go along way.

Using Chair Massage At Public Events To Build Your Massage Therapy Business

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Back when I started my massage therapy practice I was stumped at ways to build my clientele. I used to think that the only way to get massage clients was to put an expensive advertisement in the local paper and cross my fingers, hold my breath and pray like I've never prayed before. I was really pleading with the Universe.

Then one evening I got a call from my massage therapy association. They needed massage therapists at the National Tai Kwan Do Championships in my city. It wasn't paid work but it might be a good opportunity to build my massage business and get more clients this way.

The massage association supplied a chair for me (I only had a massage table, not a massage chair) and set up my chair backstage. It was a very exciting day as far as massage therapy went. I was inundated with karate champions with sore shoulders, swollen ankles, elbow and arm pain and the list went on. I gave around 40 massage therapy treatments that day.

I was really tired at the end of the day, even though the massage treatments I gave were only about 10-15 minutes at a time. I was tired but exhilarated. I gave out many business cards and a small brochure on how regular massage therapy improved your ability to do your sport.

The outcome from that was I had two calls. Now you may think that two massage therapy treatments from an event such as that is pretty poor. It may be, but I didn't see it that way. You see what happened is that those

two massage treatments I did for those people as a result of the event was a seed.

Over the following weeks those two massage clients told their other karate team members about my massage treatments and how much it had helped them with their flexibility and improvement in movement. As a result, those two new clients turned into another 10 people over the next 6 months.

At the time I was charging \$50 per hour massage. After a few months I'd make about \$500 from the treatments and it actually added a few thousand dollars to my income for that year of trading as a single operator massage therapist.

And what did I do? I simply invested a day doing what I loved most. And the most important thing is that I always advised them of the benefits of regular massage therapy for their particular sport. I explained how much better they would feel and how much better they would perform at events such as that one.

You do not have to associate getting more massage clients via expensive newspaper advertising. It's not the only way. Just a few hours of your time, offering massage treatment to the right market can really work wonders. You might not see the results straight away, but then again you might. But think of this donation of your time as an investment, not a loss of your time.

Make sure thought that if you do use this strategy, that you are massaging people who want to be massaged. Don't go and set up someone or at an event where it's unrelated. Make sure people are interested in massage therapy first. For example you may offer your

services to a corporate event where you know the attendees are sitting, listening to a guest speaker for a weekend with very long hours. People may really appreciate a massage after four hours of sitting and feeling cramped. Always check it out first with the event coordinators first as to whether they feel your massage will be a good advantage for the day.

Just remember this key point- marketing your massage therapy service can come in more ways than an investment of money. It's your time and skills with your hands.

How To Get More Clients Coming Back Through A Simple Method Of 'Advice'

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Recently I was with a massage therapist in a coaching session of ours about a massage therapy appointment keeping method and when I asked her how she was doing with her rebooking rate she said she was getting a lot of success. After every 5 massage treatments she gave, 3 of them rebooked another massage treatment.

I congratulated her and said "so what's your secret?" I knew that most massage therapy businesses don't reach this target for a number of reasons and wanted to know what method she was using. She said "oh I don't know, I just ask them if they want another massage treatment." "So what is it that convinces them to come back again? Obviously you are doing more than just asking them," I grinned.

She proceeded to tell me that she simply *advised* them of the benefits of booking another massage therapy treatment. In 'advising' them she simply offered them the continued benefits of massage therapy such as loose, free shoulders, no more back pain, flexibility in movement generally, easing pain in the neck from sitting at a computer and so on. She told me she not only advised them of what would happen if they had regular massage therapy, but how much it would benefit them in other ways. She mentioned that when someone has massage therapy on a weekly, fortnightly basis, their sleep patterns become deeper; giving them a feeling of being more rested which meant more energy. She also said that when massage therapy was had once a week particularly, mental and emotional stress levels went down significantly and she backed this up with research from the Touch Research Institute of Miami.

Being significantly impressed with her follow up method, I posed a question. "Yeah but all us massage therapists know this, how many clients do you think knew this before their massage treatments?"

"Hardly any," she replied, "maybe like 1 out of 15."

"Why is that? Why do people know so little about the longer benefits of massage therapy?"

"Because we don't tell them I suppose."

"So do you think clients benefit more from seeing you because you educate them to the benefits of massage therapy long term and the benefits it has on other levels such as deeper sleep?" I asked.

She smiled "oh yes, most definitely."

That was it. She'd just proven a fundamental problem with massage therapists. We expect clients know everything that massage does, so we don't open our mouths and tell them. I can also verify this in my own massage therapy experience. I had a higher rebooking rate with clients I educated, than clients I didn't. It's really simple and we often overlook this in our massage therapy business. It's such a simple thing and if we can increase the amount of times we actually tell them about how massage therapy benefits them in others ways- ways that keep working long after the massage is had, then our clients will feel like they have great value for money and not just paying for something that lasts an hour.

Always remember to tell them about what massage therapy does, just like my client. 3 out of 5 repeat clients is a very high number all because she strived to tell people how much benefits they would get long after they walked out of the clinic room. By not telling them it's almost a disservice to them. They should be fully informed and if you need to, write down a script for yourself you can use as a guide in conversation to

remind yourself to tell them of the benefits they get from massage therapy.

Don't use big, technical language that only we know such as Lymphatic drainage or good for the circulation. Use words such as 'pain relief' and 'less headaches' and terms like this that they understand. You can surely tell them what Lymphatic means but keep it focused on what *their* problems are. So for example if someone has massage treatment for back pain, don't tell them about Lymphatic drainage. Keep it relevant to their problem. Tell them how the tight, hard muscles will relax, given them less pain, more flexibility to get on with the things they need to do in their life. Always keep it relevant.

Here are some ideas you can use just after the client has just had a massage and you want to keep the moment there to talk to them and ask for another appointment:

"How are you feeling?" "Each time you have a massage therapy appointment with me, we get closer and closer to giving you less and less pain, giving you more flexibility to move around and have less pain in your lower back. I can also give you some stretching exercises to maintain the relief you are feeling right now, but it does work best if you have weekly or fortnightly treatments (for a while). Would you be interested to keep this feeling going by rebooking/making another massage treatment?"

"I can see you can actually move that arm! That's great, are you experiencing relief? That's' great. What I can do for you is design a program for you that include massage therapy treatments and some exercises, would you be interested in that? This involves some regular massage therapy treatments with me for a while, and after that you

should get much more relief and be able to work on the computer again without pain and aggravation."

So don't be afraid to follow up with your massage clients. Don't think that you are just trying to "get" something out of them because if you think that you'll never be able to feel comfortable with this technique. Just think that you are advising them of something that's going to give them a lot of help and relief in their lives. And the worst thing they can say is no. And even if one client says no, you already have the knowledge to gain one client, which means you will be able to gain another. This way just makes your rebooking rate a lot higher.

The Five Stages Of Gaining Client Trust In Your Massage Therapy Business

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In a massage therapy business the key to success is gaining clients trust. Many therapists have lots of clients with a high turn over but really, this just makes hard work in your massage therapy business. What you need to focus on is marketing to get loyal clients, not one-off's.

Loyal massage therapy clients come back. They pay on time every time, they refer their friends, they tell strangers about you and they even ask if you would come to their office building. What a client is this!

So just how do we get clients like this in our massage therapy businesses? The fact is there is five stages to gaining clients trust and they may not be what you think.

Stage 1- Reflecting trust. In order to gain trust you first must convey it in your massage therapy business. Make sure you have every thing about you in your marketing, that includes how you can help them and what benefits they keep getting if they keep having massage with you. Very important.

Stage 2- When they have called up to enquire about you and how your massage therapy works, ask them about themselves. Don't go on about how massage is good for the circulation, ask them what they need and what are they looking for? To eliminate the desire to talk about yourself and listen to the client starts to make room for trust.

Stage 3- When your client comes for his or her massage therapy appointment, make sure you listen to what they are feeling, not just what they are telling you in words. Listen to their tone, their body language and their facial expression. In a massage therapy business we need to be listeners as well as practitioners. The more you listen the more they will open up to you and this is a sign of trust.

Stage 4- When your client makes a second appointment it's a sign they are trusting you to do a good job for the second time. In this moment, don't just make the appointment and thank them for coming. Always tell them what they can do between now and when they see you again to relieve the pain and discomfort. It will help them to trust you further because you are displaying *genuine* care and concern.

Stage 5- Lucky last. In your massage therapy business when a client refers you to someone else, especially someone close to them. It's a big sign that they trust you. They are now confident to tell people that you can do the job, how much they have gained from seeing you and that that loved one should see you to gain the same experience. In a situation like this you can send a surprise 'thank you for the business' card in the mail or call them up personally or give them a gift.

Integrity begets more clients. It really does. So make sure you do these things during the five stages of gaining clients trust in your massage therapy business. You'll find your massage therapy business snowballs.

How To Incorporate Other Modalities Or Products That Work In Well With Your Massage Business

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Massage therapy has to be one of the most rewarding professions around. However doing massage full or part time can be hard work, let's be honest here! The good news is that there are some other things you can do to give you more to increase your income and have your massage clients love you for it. And no, this is not about hard selling; it's about making a little more income to give you a break and helping your clients at the same time.

To get thinking on what other modalities or products that work well in your massage business ask yourself this question; "What will help my clients?" For example if you do sports massage then you may want to sell some bottles or jars of sports rub for example to help with sore muscles and ligaments after your clients have been playing sport each week.

Perhaps you just do relaxation massage for stressed out women in their homes. In that case they may appreciate some other form of stress relief such as a relaxation cd or some essential oils.

Essential oils are actually a really great product to have in your massage practice as a complimentary aspect to helping your clients further. You can use essential oils for so many problems your client can experience, which means that essential oils can be used for different type of markets. If you do sports massage you may want to make up your own sports blend to help relieve aching muscles. Or if you massage stressed out women you may want to make up a feminine relaxation blend with lavender and rose for example.

There are lots of things you can offer as a complimentary aspect to your massage practice, not just products you can offer other modalities. For example if you are targeting the stressed women markets you may want to learn Reiki 1&2. Reiki is a beautiful energy healing modalities for stress and releasing of pent up energy accumulated during the week. Its less energy spent for you too.

Or you may want to offer an additional modality such as Bowen therapy to compliment your massage therapy treatments. Bowen isn't as much energy spent either and can be a good way to help your massage clients recover from injuries if massage therapy is too much for them. You will find that sometimes you'll have a client who is hypersensitive to being touched but yet they still want some massage to try and relieve the problem. In this case a more gentle technique such as Bowen might be ideal for them.

Make sure that no matter what modality or product that you offer it does two things; 1) offers your clients an added benefit and 2) gives you more flexibility to offer an effective complimentary treatments that helps them more.

The benefits, long term, or applying this strategy is that you benefit from the extra income as a result of helping people this way. Products will help people outside the massage treatment time and modalities will help the massage treatment work more effectively.

For more tips and good ideas on how to build your massage therapy business without spending any money, just go to

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