

How To Get More Massage Therapy Clients With Referrals

About the author:

Michael Humphreys has been doing massage professionally since 1993 and is the owner of a massage therapy centre. He is co-founder of the website Help Your Practice. They offer a free monthly newsletter at <http://www.helpyourpractice.com/>.

When I talk with fellow massage therapists, what is the one thing that I consistently hear?

“I need more clients!”

I ask them the following question in return and most of them can't tell me the answer:

“How many of your new massage therapy clients come from referrals?”

The truth is the majority of your new massage clients should be coming from referrals. In my massage therapy centre, we tend to average about 75% of our new clients coming by referrals from our existing clients.

Here is a three step formula you can follow to increase the stream of new massage therapy clients coming into your practice referred to you by your existing massage therapy clients.

Step 1: EARN your client's trust

A client won't refer their friends, family members, or co-workers until they trust you. You may deliver a great massage, but your clients won't refer others if they feel unsure about it.

Why? Everyone secretly fears that if they make a referral and the person actually hates the experience or is treated badly, their friend or significant other will come back to them and complain.

A complaint like, “Why did you refer me to that massage therapist? You know, they treated me like crap. Their service was awful and I'm never going back to them again.”

A complaint of this nature causes the referring person to be reluctant to send more referrals your way again.

If you deliver a great massage, demonstrate a high level of professionalism, and are punctual, you set the stage for earning your client's trust.

Step 2: ASK for the referral

Here's where most massage therapists make a major mistake: They are scared to death to ask their clients to make a referral. They're afraid that their client is going to say no or that the therapist isn't good enough to recommend.

But that's rarely the case. The truth is, your clients are some of your biggest fans and they want to see you succeed. They just don't think about you until they need your services or they have an appointment with you in the next day or two.

How do you ask for the referral? For starters, don't ask them an open-ended question like, "Do you know anyone who could use a massage?" Everyone could use a massage!

The average person knows at least three hundred people if you count friends, family, co-workers, in-laws, and so on. If you ask them for anyone, your client will rack their brains for about three seconds and then give up because there are too many people that they know who might need a massage.

Limit the mental list for your massage client. Ask them a question like, "Do you know any co-workers who could benefit from a professional massage?" Or, "Do you think any of your friends could use my services?"

Step 3: REWARD the referral

When a massage therapy client refers someone they know to you, they are taking a risk. A risk that their friend or family member may not enjoy the experience and will come back to them and complain. You need to help your client feel like they have done the right thing by referring someone new to you.

First, when that new massage client comes in for their first massage appointment with you, you need to knock their socks off. Give them every reason to believe that you are the best massage therapist who has ever worked on them or ever will. This new client will then go back to the person who referred them to you and rave about you.

Second, send the massage client who made the referral a thank you note or card. It's becoming a lost art and takes just a few minutes. It will impress your clients and encourage them to refer even more people to you. Or if you prefer, send them a thank you gift like a small bottle of essential oil or bath salts.

If you follow this simple three-step formula, you will be pleasantly surprised by how many new clients start being referred to you.

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