



**25 Ways**  
**To Grow**  
**YOUR**  
**Business**

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# Introduction

When financial intermediaries think about increasing sales, there is often talk of buying leads.

Yet this is not the only way to grow your business.

In fact, there are lots of ways you can grow your business, some of which are simple to implement and cost very little. We have therefore shared some ways that you can do this.

You don't have to implement all these 25 tips, just choose a few at a time to focus on and make it happen.

**“Vision without action is merely a dream. Action without vision just passes the time. Vision with action can change the world!”**

***Joel Arthur Baker***

## Tip #1 - Target Existing Clients

It costs 10 times more to acquire a new client than to keep one.

Existing clients are extremely precious to your business and can be a great source of incremental business and referrals. After all, you have already spent time, energy and money nurturing and cultivating the relationship, so make sure you get the most out of that over the longer term.

Amazingly, so many companies get their strategy wrong and focus more on acquiring new clients than seeking opportunities from within their own client bank.

To do this successfully you must:

1. Communicate regularly with clients in a manner that engages with them.
2. Know every inch of detail about your client's financial portfolio, so you can find ways to up-sell and to cross-sell.
3. Use technology to make points 1 & 2 easy to deliver.

"The magic formula that successful businesses have discovered is to treat customers like guests and employees like people."

*Tom Peters*



## Tip #2 - Know your clients

They say knowledge is power. The more you know and understand about your clients, the more sales opportunities you will discover.

Understanding your clients is absolutely essential and this does not necessarily have to be a big, expensive piece of work.

There are online survey tools, such as Survey Monkey that are very inexpensive to use, for example.

Intermediaries who use our 360 Lifecycle system use the TCF questionnaire for a post-sale feedback analysis and frequently uncover new sales opportunities.

This is because the best form of communication is to listen. Listening unlocks opportunities.

As well as formal questionnaires, find time to speak to clients to find out what they thought of your service. Find out about their hidden concerns and motivations by using open questions and discover what they think of you and how they feel about you. Discover how likely they are to recommend you.

***“Listening is the best form of communication”***

Your clients’ needs change constantly, so that is why you need to stay tuned in by actively listening.



## Tip #3 - Win back lost clients

You have probably got many clients that have not been in contact with you for a long, long time. But don't give up on these clients because a lost client does not equate to a lost cause.

In fact, research has shown that an organisation **is twice as likely to successfully sell to a lost client as to a new prospect.**

Yet for many organisations, winning back lost clients is frequently the most overlooked source of incremental revenue.

Yet having worked hard to win them in the first place, it is fruitless to let them go so easily. Try and find out why they had seemingly "gone away".

It could be something you have done, like a simple thing such as not staying in contact. Or it could be nothing to do with you and they had some changes in circumstance. But without contact, you'll never know.

***"For many organisations, winning back lost clients is frequently overlooked"***

Therefore have a strategy for client acquisition, retention AND WIN BACK. If you do win back lost clients, especially those that found a competitor, then they will become a stronger and more loyal client; some will even become advocates.

**WIN THEM  
BACK**

## Tip #4 – Embrace new clients

So you have hung onto more clients and sought out lost clients. Now get onto seeking new clients.

There are plenty of ways to seek new clients – from SEO to referrals – which will be discussed later on. At this point, we want to focus on what you should do when a new client comes on board.

This is because too often clients use their selected intermediary firm just once. Therefore, go and check your own database and see how much that applies to you.

### Why does this happen?

Sometimes it is because the experience was not as great as they were expecting. Or it could be that the organisation did not stay in contact with the new client and they felt unloved.

When you have spent lots of time, money and effort in winning new clients, this is such a waste which can be avoided if you simply do a follow up piece of research, after their first experience of your business. If there were any issues, they can be addressed immediately.

So when you think about **client retention**, make sure you include **brand new clients** in your thinking. Treat them differently and make sure they form a habit of using you again and are likely to refer you to others.



## Tip #5 – Follow up leads

It is amazing how many leads go cold, just because a company did not get around to following up promptly. This can be an enquiry over the phone, a referral, or someone you met at an event.

Every minute that it takes to return a phone call or reply to an enquiry is time in which the prospective client could go elsewhere.

Finally, on the subject of leads, if you have an enquiry system on your website, make sure it is active and leads are not being sent into a black hole.

## Tip #6 – Unleash your secret sales force

No longer is it enough to simply satisfy your clients; you need to delight them. And if you exceed their expectations, they'll become advocates. Advocates are crucial, as it is these clients that deliver word of mouth promotion – the most powerful form of promotion.

Advocates are your secret sales team, who do not need remunerating! So if you want to increase your sales, you need to know who your advocates are.

**“A satisfied customer is the best business strategy of all.”**

*Michael Le Bouef*

Expectations exceeded	At risk	Loyal	Advocate
Expectations met	Searching	At risk	Loyal
Expectations not met	Gone	Searching	At risk
	Dissatisfied	Satisfied	Delighted



## Tip #7 - Keep your client database up to date

If you don't have the equivalent of a database, CRM system or client management system, then you will most certainly be missing out on many sales opportunities and wasting a lot of your time with manual records.

This is because most sales opportunities are sitting right under your nose – within your client data.

In today's world of technological advances, a database of some form of database is absolutely essential. With such advances, it also means they are no longer out of the price range of intermediaries.

In fact, not having a client management system will cost you more in lost sales than having one.



Once you have a system in place, it has got to be used and maintained. If your system has incorrect client contact details, for example, you'll be wasting money. If you don't record when their mortgage product is due to expire, or when they like to review their investment strategy, sales will be missed.

Pull all information together in one place and have a system that has a sales audit and does a lot of your work for you to create more sales.

***“In today's world of technological advances, a database is absolutely essential”***

## Tip #8 – Seek out complaints

These days there is plenty of technology to see what is being said about you, in the press and on online forums. For most companies, however, only a small proportion of *complaints* actually get articulated. There are many other complaints that manifest themselves in other ways: they simply go away and some of these may be generating negative word of mouth.

Therefore, look for signs in client behaviour, keep in regular contact and give clients the opportunity to tell you how they feel, to get it off their chest. Online surveys can really help in this regard.

If clients don't get any negativity off their chest through you, they will find other ways to do so. And your reputation can be damaged.

So make it easy for clients to complain. Do regular research and speak to your front line staff to find out what is being said and **PROTECT your REPUTATION and PROFITS.**



## Tip #9 – Communicate Regularly

Communicating is something that we do throughout our lives, but often don't give much thought to how we're doing it. With better communication, you can enhance client relationships. And since just about everything in life is based on relationship, the impact of improved communication can be far-reaching.

With stronger relationships you'll generate more referrals and greater levels of repeat sales. So communication is vital.

Therefore, you need to be communicating with clients – and prospects – on a regular basis. Segment your client bank so you send different communication messages to different clients.

***“You need to be communicating with clients on a regular basis”***

When it comes to communicating, you have to remember that this is like a marathon, not a sprint. Do not expect to send one email and expect a flurry of calls. It won't happen.

These days consumers are more savvy and don't want to be overtly sold to. Instead, share top tips, discuss market activity and be seen as sharing expertise. This way you position yourself as the thought leader in the sector.

Finally, communicate regularly for longer term sales growth and keep your messages consistent and clear.



## Tip #10 - Improve Your Own Communication

Most of the issues within organisations are driven by a lack of communication. We can all enhance our communications skills and if you do - with staff and clients - then you'll benefit through the bottom line without having to spend a fortune. So it is a great return on investment.

The starting point for improving your own communication is to have intent to do so. Remember the most important part of communication – to listen, so use open questions to spark conversations.

## Tip #11 – Collaborate Strategically

To collaborate means to work together, in a way that it is a win: win.

This is more than just a simple referral process from other professionals; it is a way of adding value to your clients by forming “partnerships” with other advisers. If you specialise in mortgages, for example, find someone who specialises in investments and share clients for mutual gain.

This can generate extra sales in areas of business you are not currently active and you can use technology, such as 360 Lifecycle, to do this in way that you still retain control over the client.

In a more competitive market, collaboration is crucial.

**“All lasting business is built on friendship.”**

*Alfred A. Montapert*

## Tip #12 – Forget the USP

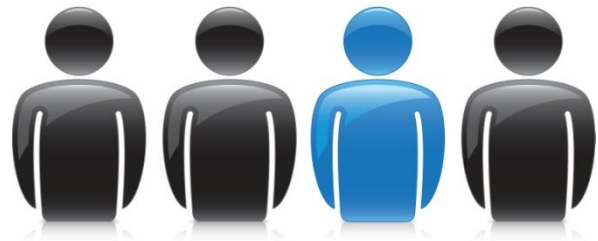
So many companies get hung up on having a unique selling proposition. Forget about this. Instead, to grow your business you need to stand head and shoulders above your competition by being distinct.

The easiest way to do this is to be simply better than everyone else.

For this to happen, your people and your technology are crucial. Make all elements of your client buying journey easy and smooth. Take a step back and review every single point of contact that your client has with you and work out how to make it better.

Ease of use is crucial here because research has shown that the lower the effort in dealing with organisations, the more likely you will have repeat business and referrals.

So enhance your service delivery by keeping it simple and stand out from the crowd.



## Tip #13 – Have a perfect website that sells

Your website is an important part of that client buying journey, so your website should be easy to navigate.

Think of your website as an extra member of staff – and a member of staff that is brilliant at explaining what you do and encouraging prospective clients to make contact.

Your website is now often the first port of call for a potential new client. Even if they have been recommended to you by a friend, they will still make a visit to your site, and perhaps others, to make a decision.

So make sure your website portrays a good image and gets across a clear message in 4 seconds. And don't be afraid of having good quality photos of people within your business – don't be faceless.

When writing content for your website, you could think about what you would say to a prospective client face to face. Write down these words and expressions. Now put them onto your website, in short and sharp sentences.

There are other tricks to both drive more traffic to your site and to ensure more visitors contact you. Always keep your site simple, with **easy navigation and language** that connects with your clients; as I have mentioned, use the language you'd use face to face and more referrals will result in new business.

Finally, you'll have many new prospective clients fishing around the internet, so you need to catch them so you can reel them in. Get them interested through your language but before they leave, have something where you **can capture their visit**. Have a call me back facility, or a means for them to sign up for something, such as a newsletter. Otherwise, you may never know they visited.

## Tip #14 Maximise your SEO

Many organisations focus on SEO (and worse still, Pay Per Click) before they have their website sorted. This is a mistake because all that happens is that people dive into their website, then jump straight out again.

A good website is there to catch visitors, to engage them. So get your website sorted before you focus on SEO.

Now onto the topic of SEO, as this is a way of driving traffic to your site. First of all, how you describe your business in your search engine text is vital. People have a few seconds to decide on which link to click, so make the text engaging. Keep this description short.

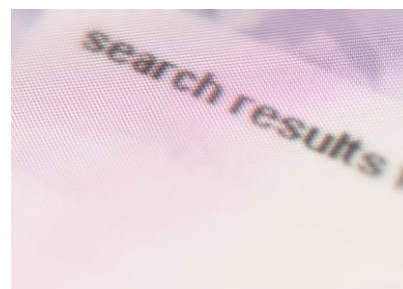
### **What about getting to the top of Google you ask?**

Well there are plenty of companies out there that will tell you it takes time and money. They will talk about back links and other bits of jargon.

The key is to get your content on your website right – and updated regularly. Have content on your site that is likely to be sought, which could be “financial advisers in Kent” for example.

Also use the likes of LinkedIn to enhance your SEO with a good company profile and have blogs with strong content. You can write blogs free of charge, using hosting sites such as WordPress.com. They have lots of templates. Or you can ask someone to brand your own template. Then get writing. Try and write a blog a week, but before you start, make a list of blog subjects, so you are prepared. Give tips and advice, get people engaging with you. Facebook, Linked In and Twitter.

For SEO, strong content is king.



## Tip #15 – Use LinkedIn To Get Introduced

Imagine you are at a networking event and there is someone you'd like to meet. You can either introduce yourself, or be introduced by a mutual contact.

Many people don't get LinkedIn. However it is a powerful tool. LinkedIn is the virtual equivalent to the principle of six degrees of separation. By connecting to the people you know, you can discover who they know. Some of your connections may have further connections to people that you'd like to meet.

This is where LinkedIn is so powerful because it is not about who you know; it is about who you know knows. So use LinkedIn to get introduced to new contacts.





## Tip #16 – Be an inspirational leader

An inspirational leader delivers enhanced sales and profits.

Leadership can inspire your workforce and can also be a great way of standing out a crowded market. Now I am not suggesting that you all become clones of Richard Branson or Alan Sugar, that would be a mistake. When it comes to leadership, always be yourself. However, whoever you are, your leadership skills can always be improved.



Here are a few traits of effective leaders:

**Nous** – the ability to judge what will work and what won't

**Clarity** – be clear and simple in telling others what success looks like

**Vision** – know where you are going and how you plan to get there

**Passion** – passion is contagious and passionate people are more successful

**Courage** – be brave with decisions and don't be afraid to admit when you get it wrong

**Inspirational** – you need to speak to everyone in your business and make them know you care and appreciate the job they are doing

**"The key to successful leadership is influence, not authority."**

*Kenneth Blanchard*

## Tip #17 – Have really motivated employees

Being a great leader is a great way of motivating the troops. And motivation is vital for profit growth, as it has been proven that there is a strong correlation between a motivated workforce and profits.

There are companies that can take a temperature gauge for you, to see how motivated your workforce is. Or you can do it yourself. Whatever you decide, increasing motivation levels will make a big difference and a few tips you can try to improve motivation are as follows:

- Ensure everyone has a job that challenges them
- Set clear goals and have degrees of accountability
- Give greater freedom to employees
- Provide the right resources to do the job
- Listen
- Provide on-going personal development
- Be open with your communication
- Make time for your staff
- Provide encouragement
- Ensure they and you know their natural talents
- Be fair and consistent
- Provide open and constructive feedback
- Tell them when they have done something great
- Ensure you have great team work
- Don't use jargon
- Get feedback from them

## Tip #18 – Celebrate your successes

Working in business can be tough. You have good days and bad. So, whenever you achieve something great, celebrate it. By this I don't necessarily mean a trip to The Ivy, but just acknowledge people's hard work. Buy them a coffee or something. It does not have to be a grand thing.

Communicate your successes too; tell the whole company of all your successes. It will mean your staff will work harder towards future successes if they know it does not go unrecognised. Tell others too. Don't be shy, be proud.

*"Celebrate what you want to see more of."*

*Tom Peters*

## Tip #19 – Plan daily

Planning is often overlooked because there is so much emphasis on the here and now. Without a plan of action, opportunities will be lost.

Therefore, have a five year plan, a 12 month plan, a quarterly, a monthly and a weekly plan. Then plan your day's activity around your longer term goals; don't do anything that does not contribute to your goals.

When making daily plans, a good tip is not to do it on the actual day, do it the DAY before. Make your next day's plan be the last activity of your working day, when it is fresh in your mind.

Remember, increasing profits is all about being more efficient and more effective. Proper planning will deliver this.

*"The key is not to prioritise what's on your schedule, but to schedule your priorities."*

*Stephen Covey*

## Tip #20 – Always seek help

No business can thrive without obtaining help from the outside. In fact, really successful companies do this constantly.

So seek advice and support across many functions, like leadership, IT, HR, Finance and Marketing. You'll get a fresh perspective and, by choosing suppliers wisely, you'll generate greater efficiencies and increase sales.

Speak to other intermediaries and share ideas.

All the top UK companies seek help, so why shouldn't you benefit too?

**“No person will make a great business who wants to do it all himself or get all the credit.”**

*Andrew Carnegie*

## Tip #21 – Develop your staff

Use external help to train and develop your employees. If you want to increase profits, it will be developed by those in your business, those that do the work. So enhance their skills and you'll enhance your profits. It will make them work smarter. It will enhance motivation levels. It will reduce staff turnover.

## Tip #22 – Learn from mistakes

Every business has its ups and downs. When something does not go so well, just learn from it. Accept it. Be honest with yourself and most of all learn from this. There are more opportunities on their way, so make the most of these.

**“It's fine to celebrate success but it is more important to heed the lessons of failure.”**

*Bill Gates*

## Tip #23 – Challenge The Norm

Your culture should allow constructive challenging. This is not a prerequisite for whining and griping, but an openness that allows employees to challenge current thinking with sensible ideas and thoughts.

Constructive challenging is both healthy and positive as it encourages individuals to find ways to do things better because other perspectives add value and richness to our own.

You should also encourage curiosity. Children are often asking “why” and as adults we should continue to ask such a simple question continuously, combined with *how, when, what, what if, when, where, who*. Let curiosity challenge conventional thinking, assumptions and enhance your profits and move away from the “we’ve always done it that way” approach.

*“The important thing is to not stop questioning. Curiosity has its own reason for existing.”*

*Albert Einstein*

## Tip #24 – Save time with your emails

What has emails got to do with sales? Well, it links to time management. The more time you have, the more time you can commit to generating more business. So cutting out unnecessary things is vital and email is one such activity that invades all our lives, an invasion that has created inefficiencies. So here are a few tips to help you become more efficient with email:



- **Turn off your email alerts**, to avoid interruptions and retain focus on what is important.
- Set up a rule so all emails where you have been on the **cc list** send to a separate folder.
- **Set times when to deal with emails**, based on your most productive times. Check emails no more than twice a day.
- **Send less emails yourself**, this way you will also receive less.
- Think about creating “**groups**”. Therefore if you receive an email from a supplier, by setting a rule, it goes to a certain folder rather than being lost amongst everything else.
- **Keep your emails brief**. If you can’t summarise it in 5 bullets or less, don’t send it.
- When sending **attachments**, make sure you also summarise the document quickly.
- **Deal with it**. Do you ever read an email, don’t do something with it and leave it in your inbox, only to read it again later? Don’t – try to just touch everything once

## Tip #25 – use 360 Lifecycle

Now it just would not be right if we did not mention our own product now would it?

360 Lifecycle is the complete client management system that provides you with a range of tools that will allow you to run a successful business. It will give you greater control, time efficiencies and increased sales.

The system has been designed by intermediaries – for intermediaries – and built by leading IT practitioners.

With 360 Lifecycle, all your client information is securely stored within a cloud-based system, so it can be accessed from anywhere and client storage is not restricted to your PC size.

Once all your data has been securely transferred and stored, you will have access to a range of tools to perform day-to-day administration tasks through to unlocking information to grow your sales.

With our system you can significantly save on the cost of running your business, generate invaluable extra hours into your working day and ultimately deliver increased sales. With 360 Lifecycle, you are in total control of your business, your data and your processes.

360 Lifecycle has a unique Hotbox tool which means that never again will you forget to follow up with new clients further down the line.

360 Lifecycle helps you stay in touch with clients and unlock hidden sales opportunities.

360 Lifecycle can bring all your client records together in one place, so it will be easier to identify those clients that you may have “lost”

360 Lifecycle can help you collaborate and generate more business through its Referral Tool.

360 Lifecycle helps you easily communicate with clients through our Campaign Manager tool.

# Important

This Guide is for professional adviser use only.

It is designed to give guidance only and we are not responsible for how these tips are applied within individual businesses.

This guide was written for and on behalf of 360 Lifecycle by Tonic Marketing Solutions Lt.

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