

Five questions that land clients



By [Donna Rachelson](#)

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Often when it comes to marketing, we get fixated on the message that we want to transmit to potential clients and forget to actually listen to what our target audience actually wants from us.

These questions below will help you to understand your client's needs and demonstrate that you care about helping them to solve their problems. Bear in mind, however, that the questions are only effective if you listen to the answers.

1. What problems would you like help solving?

People are interested first and foremost in how you can help them to address the challenges they are facing in their business. If you're a web designer, you might focus on what it is about the prospect's current website that doesn't work. If you're a recruitment agent, you'll concentrate on finding out more about the position that needs to be filled so that you can find the right candidate. Figure out where the person's "pain" is and how you can ease it.

2. Can you explain to me the consequences of your current situation?

This question will help you to understand why it's important for your client that you solve his or her particular problems, and what the benefits will be. It also gives you a sense of the broader context in which the client is operating.

3. What is your ideal situation or solution to your problem?

Often clients have a picture in mind of how they want things to work. It helps to know this from the beginning so that you can manage expectations and ensure that what the client wants is achievable. It's also fun to spend time thrashing out possibilities and strategising about clear solutions that you can deliver.

4. What is your timeframe?

Often people miss this simple question and regret not establishing deadlines early on. Ensure you discuss the client's needs upfront and agree on a clear time line with measurable progress steps towards the end goal.

5. Do you have any questions or concerns?

Your prospective client may have questions around time, money, and whether your offering is going to work for them. Allow them to ask these questions and ensure you have answers ready to put them at ease and deal with their worries. Hearing their concerns will help you to better understand them and to design better products and services.

Establishing yourself

Remember that before you dive into the questions, you need to establish your credibility. You only have a few seconds in which you can convince your potential client to fall in love with you, your offering and your company, so ensure you make the best impression possible by doing your research before you arrive.

Try to understand as much as you can about the client's business beforehand and get a feel of the current challenges in the industry. Then run through these questions and pay close attention to the answers. The listening bit is the most important part.

I'd recommend spending 80% of your time listening and 20% talking and asking questions. Asking probing and intelligent questions is key to establishing your credibility.

ABOUT DONNA RACHELSON

Donna Rachelson is the CEO and founder of Branding & Marketing YOU, a company that specialises in personal branding and marketing - and the author of the best-selling book of the same name. Donna can be contacted on donna@brandingandmarketingyou.com or visit www.brandingandmarketingyou.com

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