

## Does Your Media Representative Make the Grade?

Top media representatives know that client service is essential. Regardless of the market or media type, the best reps follow through after striking a deal. As a result, they build lasting business relationships and help stimulate sales. Eight media buying experts provide suggestions on how to receive an "A" in client service and ensure repeat business.

### 1. Ask and listen.

Ask questions, listen actively and give clients your undivided attention – for instance, not doing email while talking on the phone – to earn the "A". There are no stupid questions. On the contrary, you can damage the business relationship by letting your inner censor talk you out of asking for more information or clarification.

### 2. Communicate.

Clients expect you to take their phone calls or call back immediately. Are you "in a meeting" whenever a client calls? Do you return calls when you feel like it? An "A" rep responds immediately, and proactively provides status updates to prevent surprises. For instance, clients want to know that you're going to be away instead of getting an "out of the office" reply to their email. When a client calls your manager or sets deadlines to motivate you to respond, you're failing.

### 3. Be flexible.

Do you adapt to your clients needs? Clients have reasons why they request specific terms and time lines. If you listened and asked questions, you will understand why you need to be flexible. Ignoring the client and delivering service your way because that's how you've always done it isn't being flexible.

### 4. Do what you say you will do.

Saying the right thing and intending to deliver are meaningless if you don't follow through. If you over-promise in order to please the client initially and tell yourself you'll control the consequences later, you'll get a poor grade. Step beyond your comfort zone and fight to get what the client requested. Delivering on what you promise will get you the "A".

### 5. Be accountable.

Top reps address problems quickly and tell the client what they are doing to fix them. Do you give

excuses when you are in an under deliver situation? If you lose staff do you have a backup plan? Clients know if you take responsibility for unexpected situations or dodge it.

Media buyers want to work with reps that focus on client service, and you're going to be judged by how you follow through after the deal. These simple suggestions will help you land solid scores with your clients and earn their future business.

***These suggestions are made by a team with over 60 years of experience. They are led by Jinx Mancini and include Alden Vaughan, Stacey Beville, Margaret Wilson, Audrey Bondurant, Sarah Capozello, Erin Sheldon and Susan Howland.***