

The Collector Chronicle

NORTH AMERICAN RECOVERY

May 2023

America's Collection Authority

LAST MONTH'S LUCKY WINNER

The lucky winner of our client prize for April is Coalville & Kamas Health Centers. They have been using our agency since 2015! We will be sending them a gift basket from the Chocolate Covered Wagon. Enjoy!



THIS MONTH'S PRIZE

This month we will be giving away a gift basket from the Chocolate Covered Wagon. Each client who sends new accounts during the month of May will have their name entered into a drawing. At the end of the month, we'll draw a name, and if it's yours, you'll win the gift basket!

***Don't miss out on your chance to win!
Send new accounts before the
end of the month!
Good luck!!***



The Dynamics of a Collection Call

By David J. Saxton

President, North American Recovery

A collection call is an interesting thing. When done correctly, both the consumer and collector feel good about the exchange. Consumers experience a feeling of relief and satisfaction: relief because they don't have to wonder who's calling every time the phone rings; satisfaction because they are closer to finally paying one of their outstanding debts. The collector feels good because they are helping the consumer with a scenario that is most certainly causing stress and anxiety for the consumer. However, the complexity of the call means that if one small thing goes wrong, it can be very upsetting. Not only for the consumer but for the collector as well.

It's important that a professional debt collector understands what's going on from a fundamental physiological standpoint when they make a collection call. In order to ensure our collectors are prepared, we provide extensive initial and ongoing training on the psychology behind a call. And this training helps them understand what they are doing, why they are doing it, and why it works so well. This month, I want to break down a collection call for you and talk about the methods we use to collect an account and how they contribute to our overall success.

A good collection call starts with the collector's attitude. If a collector has a positive attitude about themselves, our client, and the consumer, they will have a successful call. Once a collector develops the ability to approach each call with a positive attitude, they can use the techniques we teach them to establish the foundation for a positive exchange with a consumer. And if the first call doesn't result in payment in full, that's okay. Since the collector is using the correct techniques, even if the account isn't paid immediately, they've set the wheels in motion to ensure that it eventually will be.

This may be obvious to most people, but we make sure this concept is the first one we train on, and we hold collectors to this standard for their

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entire employment. This positive attitude model prepares a collector for what might be a negative response from a consumer. If things were okay, the bill would have been paid. Right? Most consumers have reasons for non-payment, and sometimes they come across as negative.

Now, what if the consumer has a legitimate reason for non-payment? What I mean by this is that perhaps there was a mix-up along the line and the bill slipped through the cracks, or perhaps there was confusion or a misunderstanding. Well, when this happens, we ask the consumer to send us written documentation so that we can uncover what happened and get things straightened out. Taking this approach helps us filter out the "stalls" from the genuine issues.

The next part of a collection call is the single most important. It is how the collector sounds (their tone of voice) when speaking to a consumer. A collector must have a confident, firm, and professional tone without sounding arrogant or condescending. We don't want to offend the consumer. We are adamant that our collectors be respectful and that they communicate in a professional manner. However, a collector must still sound confident and firm, or the consumer won't take the situation, or the collector, seriously. It's also very important that a collector be formal in their approach. If the collector sounds friendly, the consumer will try to take advantage of the situation.

Now that we understand what a collector's attitude should be and how he or she should sound, it's time to call the consumer. When we make the initial call (and all subsequent calls for that matter), it's important that a collector use the consumer's full name, including their middle name (not just the middle initial), if we have it. Why is this so important? It usually triggers a unique memory in people that gives us a distinct psychological advantage. What am I referring to? Well, remember back to when you were a kid. If one of your parents

wanted to speak to you about a very serious subject, how would they address you? If they were anything like my mom, they used your FULL name. I always knew my mom meant business when I heard, "David Joseph Saxton, come here!" Not only will using their full name elicit a deep-rooted physiological response, but we are also verifying that we are talking to the correct person.

After we confirm we have the right person, we tell the consumer about the bill and ask a very simple question: "When do you intend to pay this account in full?" (Not those exact words, but that's the idea.) This may sound strange, but here is why we do this: We give the consumer an opportunity to indicate his or her intentions, so we don't waste time talking to someone who has no plans to pay no matter what we say. Most of the time they answer with "Oh, I can pay by such-and-such date," but sometimes they tell us they can't pay anytime soon. When this happens, we switch to solution mode and find out when they can pay, then set up an arrangement for down the road.

In cases where the consumer agrees to pay in full today or in the short term, we get them to agree to a pay-in-full date. Creating a deadline is another important psychological tool because, without a deadline, it just won't get paid. If a consumer needs an extended amount of time to make payments, we set them up on a reasonable repayment schedule and follow up each month until the account is paid in full.

Our collectors are proud of the way they work with consumers to find a solution that results in payment in full. The tools and techniques we provide them enhance their success, and the end result is a happy consumer, a happy collector, and a happy client. Thanks for reading. Have a great month!

— Dave



The Collector Chronicle is published monthly by NORTH AMERICAN RECOVERY for prospective and current clients. Please direct questions or comments to the editor, Dave Saxton, at DaveSaxton@North-American-Recovery.com

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