



Client Retention Strategies Every Firm Can Use

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practicenews

CLIENT RETENTION DOMINATES AICPA TOP ISSUES SURVEY

Client retention tops the list as the most significant challenge facing CPAs for the second year in a row, according to AICPA's 2009 CPA Firm Top Issues Survey. The survey gathers information from a wide range of practitioners in five different size segments, from sole practitioner to firms with more than 21 professionals, in an effort to get a snapshot of the most critical challenges facing AICPA members.

Marketing and practice growth reappeared in the AICPA's Top 5 issues list for the first time since 2005 across all five of the firm sizes that were surveyed. Technical training standards and succession issues also topped the 2009 list. The top issues varied by firm size. After client retention, tax law complexity and changes were top concerns for sole practitioners, while partner accountability and succession planning were top issues for firms with more than 20 professionals.

STRONG MEDICINE
How can a practitioner inoculate itself against fraud incidents?
▶ **Prescribe a checkup.** Review the practice's billing collections on a bill statement

Medical office fraud
Practices face a surge in incidents

the payment was not made, then "discovered" that it was posted to the wrong account. Digging deeper, we learn that the office manager has been using this scheme to embezzle from the practice.

▶ When a doctor applies for credit to purchase a new car, she is surprised to hear that her credit score is low. The problem? A long-time staff member familiar with her personal information has been applying for — and using — cards in the physician's name.

▶ An office manager tasked with balancing daily and making the deposits report is found to have been stealing from the deposit. The theft is facilitated because no one reconciles collections posted to accounts receivable with billing reports and the ultimate deposit.



drives revenue growth of up to 20%.



For many large companies, up to 95% of profits come from long-term customers.

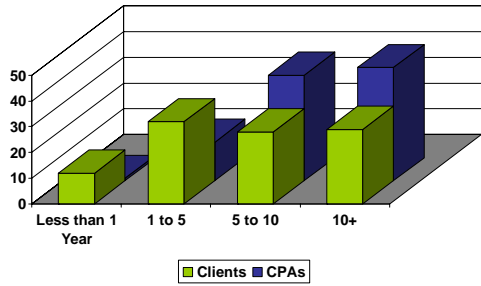


Adding a new customer costs three to seven times more than keeping an existing one.

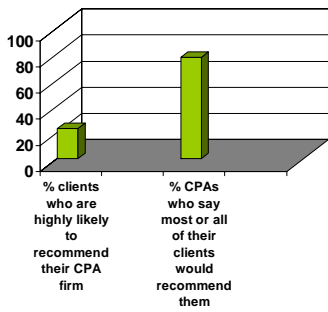


What Clients Really Think

CLIENTS: How long has your CPA firm worked for you?
CPAs: How long have you worked with your clients?

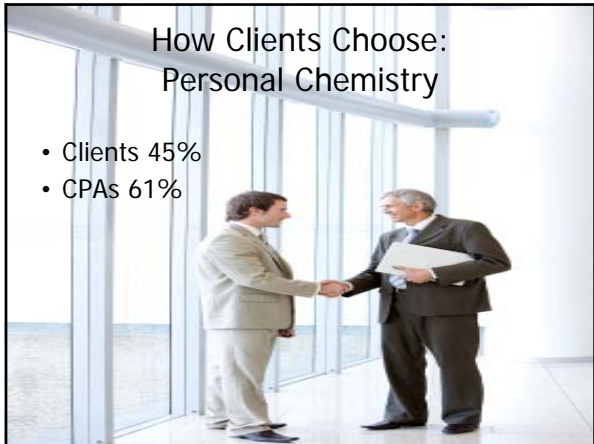


The Recommendation Gap





How Clients Choose

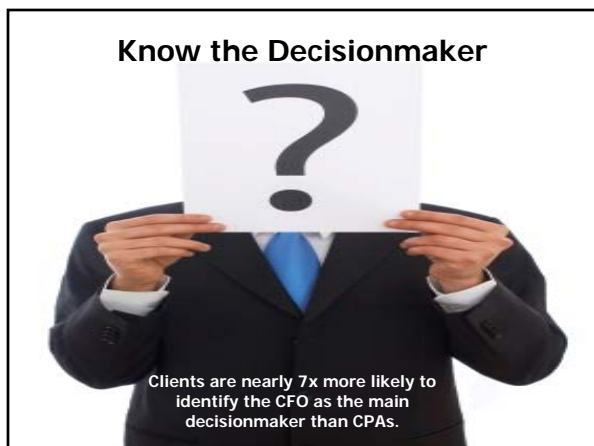
















Why Clients Change CPA Firms

Client Responses			
Poor client service, inattentiveness	66%		
Price, fees, costs, budgets	62%		
They might not be proactive enough	40%		
Bad personal chemistry	26%		
Need new or different services	25%		
Not getting enough time with CPA firm's best people	22%		

Why Clients Change CPA Firms

Client Responses		CPA Responses	
Poor client service, inattentiveness	66%	Price, fees, costs, budgets	63%
Price, fees, costs, budgets	62%	They die, sell or go out of business	50%
They might not be proactive enough	40%	Poor client service, inattentiveness	27%
Bad personal chemistry	26%	Bad personal chemistry	20%
Need new or different services	25%	We fire them for business reasons.	20%
Not getting enough time with CPA firm's best people	22%	Personal friendship with new CPA firm	17%



Need new or different services:

- Clients 25%
- CPAs 15%

~~Reactive~~
Proactive!

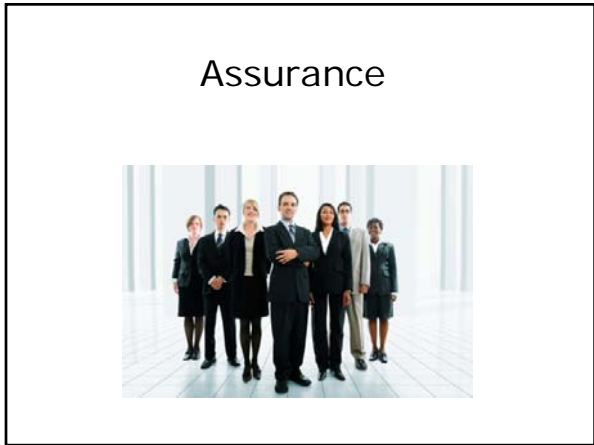
Might not be proactive enough: Clients, 40% - CPAs, 15%







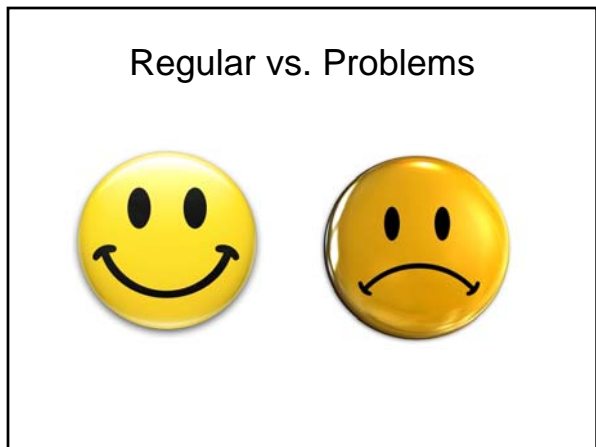














Client Retention Strategies



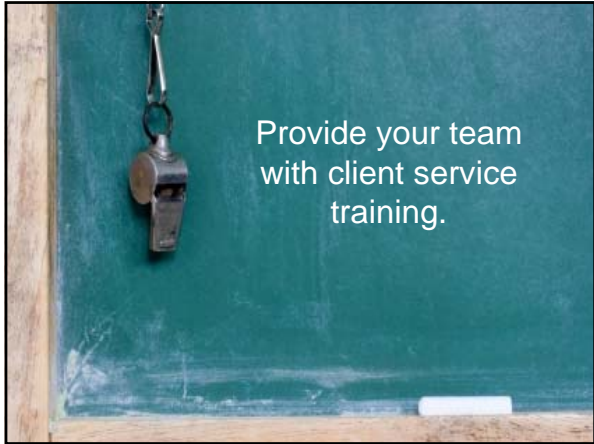
Teamwork:

Leaders are nearly twice as likely to have clients that belong to the *firm*, not to an individual.



Develop a Quality Culture:

Leaders are 3x more likely to empower every staffer to do what it takes to satisfy a client.





















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We greatly appreciate your choosing to dine with us this day. We look forward to you dining with us again. In our continuing effort to improve our service, we would be delighted if you would share your experience with us.

name : _____
 address : _____
 email : _____
 comments : _____

 Sea Pines Resort



Thank you for taking a moment to tell us about your stay.

- How did you book your reservation with us?
- Did you receive a confirmation of your reservation?

Excellent	Yes	No
		Poor
- When you arrived, were your reservations accurate?
- Were you greeted quickly and courteously when you arrived at the Welcome Center?
- Please rate the knowledge of our staff
- Was your accommodation cleaned well upon your arrival?
- How would you rate the attractiveness and maintenance of your accommodation?
- Were you referred to by your name during your interaction with The Sea Pines Resort employees?

Yes	No
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- Were directions and/or other information given in a courteous and effective manner?






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