

The Collector Chronicle

NORTH AMERICAN RECOVERY

JUNE 2017

AMERICA'S COLLECTION AUTHORITY

LAST MONTH'S LUCKY WINNER

The lucky winner of our client prize for May is Inova Emergency Medical Associates – Kingman Regional. They have been using our agency since 2016!

We will be sending Ashley a gift card to Nordstrom!

NORDSTROM

THIS MONTH'S PRIZE

This month we will be giving away two tickets to a Salt Lake Bees game (or to the Colorado Rockies)!

Each client who sends new accounts during the month of June will have their name entered into a drawing. At the end of the month, we will draw a name. If it's yours, you'll win the prize.

*Don't miss out on your chance to win.
Send new accounts in June!
Good Luck!!*

SALT LAKE BEES
OR
COLORADO ROCKIES

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 experiencing success. However, if one small thing goes wrong, it can be very upsetting. Not only for the consumer, but for the collector as well.

Most collectors in our industry don't truly understand what's going on when they make a collection call. It's not their fault; they simply haven't received the necessary training. Our collectors, however, receive extensive 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, talk about the methods we use to collect an account, and why they work so well.

A successful 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 be confident that, no matter what the consumer says, the bill is owed and needs to be paid.

This idea may sound strange, but almost every consumer tells a collector they don't owe the bill or they shouldn't have to pay. The reasons are

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many—and consumers can be very convincing—so a collector must be prepared for any excuse. Most collectors in our industry struggle with this concept. They tend to believe the consumer, and it kills their results. We help our collectors avoid this mistake by requiring a consumer to provide written documentation proving his or her claim before we stop our collection efforts.

Taking this approach virtually eliminates frivolous claims. It comes down to this: if the collector is going to believe everything a consumer says, he or she might as well not even make the collection call. It's unfortunate that we have to take this approach, but if we didn't, our results would be terrible.

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, 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 is 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!" That's exactly the feeling we want to convey to a consumer.

After we confirm we have the right person by firmly stating his or her full name, we tell the consumer about the bill and ask him a very simple and straight-forward question: "Do you intend to pay?" (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 isn't going to pay no matter what we say. Most of the time they answer with "yes," but sometimes it's "no." When their answer is "no," it makes more sense to proceed with legal action instead of trying to convince him or her to pay.

When a consumer agrees to pay, we explain that he must pay the debt in full by a certain date. This deadline is another important distinction because, in today's society, everyone pays everything by making "monthly payments." For those consumers who can pay their debt in full, giving this date to them motivates them to do so. However, for consumers who can't, we then take it to the next step and set them up on whatever monthly payment is convenient to them. We then follow up each month until the account is paid in full.

There you have it. Short and simple—but effective when done correctly. Have a great month!



The Collector Chronicle is published by NORTH AMERICAN RECOVERY for prospective and current clients. The owner, David Saxton, welcomes your questions or comments.

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