

You will drastically increase your potential for closing a sale when you provide recognizable projects similar to the one you're there to sell.



This process closes sales

The way you prepare and present your proposals increases the perception of value to your products and services when those proposals are being compared to your competitors'. At Bass Custom Landscapes, we have established a standard process that is used in every proposal. Seldom do we give bids. Many companies give free quotes. However, if you provide ideas and information for a solution to Mr. Prospect's problem or an opportunity to meet with one of our landscaping experts, your prospect will understand you are providing something of value.

Our proposals are eight to nine pages and the order guides our estimators through the sales presentation, which is the same for each estimator. This process keeps our close ratio above 50% and protects our company from changing or altering our promises to all of our clients.

► **Cover sheet.** We begin with a cover sheet that restates what kind of service or proposal the client has asked for. Use the client's exact words in naming the proposal to show you were listening during the walkover.

► **Company profile.** Every proposal begins with a one page company profile that gives you a chance to tell your company's story. You must establish who's going to be responsible for the personalized service the landscape business is known for.

► **References.** We then provide references and information about our company's licenses and insurance. You'll increase your potential for closing the sale when you provide recognizable names or projects similar to the project you're selling.

► **Explanation of services.** Pages four and five include a detailed explanation of our services which helps

to build an awareness of the value of our services.

► **Price sheet.** Page six is the price sheet. Prices are always on one page. We always price the add-on services, even if the client doesn't ask us to. This creates the opportunity for add-on sales in the future with a lot less effort. Move discussions about the price as far back in the proposal as possible because you set up the perception of value this way.

► **Guarantee document.** Page seven is our guarantee document where we state in writing exactly what the customer can expect from our company. The following are two of the thirteen statements located in our guarantees: 1) Our employees will be in uniform while working on your property. 2) Our staff will have the proper training to do the job you hire us to do. Reflect for a moment on services that your company does well, and put it in writing!

► **Company newsletter.** Page eight is our latest company newsletter provided monthly to all of our regular clients. By pointing out the feature articles on irrigation programming, upcoming chores and seasonal specials, our potential clients feel like this gets them on the inside!

Marketing comes in many forms: advertising, public relations, risk reversal, referrals, salesmanship, direct mail, telemarketing and others. You can make minor adjustments to processes and systems that you already have in place and major improvements in your effectiveness.

— This article is from a presentation that Tony Bass delivered in February of 2000 to the Ohio Landscape Association. The author is the owner of Bass Custom Landscapes and Super Lawn Truck of Bonaire, GA.

- He is a speaker and consultant with Vander Kooi & Associates, Littleton, CO.