

BLACK BELT MANAGEMENT

A STRATEGIC REPORT FOR OWNERS AND OPERATORS

Increasing Sales with a Professional Enrollment Presentation Binder

Because of the abundance of useful information that is being provided, the report will be presented in two parts. In part one this month, you will learn the reasons for using a presentation binder when selling new enrollments. Also included is a list of suggested qualifying questions for enrollment. Each qualifying question is then examined in detail and its purpose is explained. Part two of the report next month will feature the remaining outline of the presentation binder and a complete overview of how to assemble your own.

~NAPMA

The goal of this month's Black Belt Management report is to help you build an enrollment presentation binder that will increase the consistency, professionalism and success of your enrollment sales conference.

In an ideal world, the enrollment conference is simply the "sold" stamp on an excellent introductory course. The bulk of the selling that needs to happen for a successful enrollment is best hidden within an excellent introductory presentation. During the intro process, the student's needs are addressed; the many benefits of your school are laid out like so many jewels, and obstacles about commitment and tuition prices are overcome with motivational philosophy (and some good, old-fashioned common sense). It's wonderful when the introductory course does all the work and enrollment simply becomes an issue of "Who do I make the check out to?" But in many cases

there's still a need to close the sale, so it's vital that the enrollment director has polished sales skills and a plan to wrap up the enrollment conference. The good news is that enrollment conference sales skills and techniques are easy to learn and can turn many, many cool or lukewarm prospects into new and enthusiastic students. The key to an effective enrollment conference is in the use of a Professional Enrollment Presentation Binder.

The benefits of a presentation binder are:

1. If an employee is sick, on holiday or simply late for work, conducting an enrollment conference using a presentation binder makes the process virtually painless for whomever is filling in. It also helps when you have unexpected increases in enrollments such as those that occur from special mall shows and back-to-school or holiday enrollment campaigns. A presentation binder can keep even the most inexperienced salesperson on track towards the desired outcome, the sale!
2. There are many aspects of the enrollment process from the first contact through the introductory classes that need to be reiterated and emphasized in the sales presentation. The idea is to make sure the benefits are clearly stated throughout the process to overcome any objections to time, money or commitment. The enrollment binder serves as a checklist to ensure that this happens.
3. A presentation binder helps to drive home important points with emotionally charged graphics and photos. It is often said that we remember what we see much better than what we hear. Sample photos and graphics you can use to build your own binder will be included in next month's continuation of this report.

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4. Using a step-by-step presentation binder is much more professional than “just winging it.”

Using Your Enrollment Presentation Binder and the Qualifying Questions

Ideally, the enrollment conference is given in the most professional, impressive area of the school. It can be a place where framed photos, articles and certificates show and tell the potential student the story of your school and

its success. The conference might be best given at a table sitting beside the client rather than across a desk. This can help to make the decision a group effort as opposed to “the school vs. the student.”

Once seated next to the potential student, out comes your attractive presentation binder. The cover might

feature a color image of your school’s logo or any image representing that you are a professional. On the inside cover page, place either a good looking, non-violent photograph or newspaper or magazine clipping of a success story about your school. Your qualifying questions can be placed on the facing page.

The qualifying questions, given in virtually any order, are meant to reveal any possible obstacles to enrollment before asking for the sale. Each question addresses a key factor in a successful enrollment (the sale) and gives the interviewer the opportunity to let the prospective student express his or her interests or concerns.

The qualifying questions are meant to get answers to the following:

1. Can the prospective student enroll in a long-term course?

2. Does the class schedule meet the prospective student’s needs?

3. Does the prospective student have any injuries?

4. Will his or she practice what they learn?

5. Does the prospective student understand the real benefits of membership?

6. Can he or she afford the tuition?

7. Is the prospective student ready to make the commitment?

8. As the instructor, what can you do for them?

While the questions above aren’t the exact question an enrollment director will ask a potential student, they are the essence of what he or she wants to find out. We’ve supplied a list of the actual key enrollment questions in this month’s report. All you have to do is make copies, insert them in plastic sleeves and put them in a binder for your enrollment director and staff to use right away.

The person giving the conference asks the question and listens for positive and negative comments. If a “yes” or some other positive statement is given, they move on. If there’s a challenge, then the interviewer stops there and works on resolving the issue before going to the next question.

How to Build Your Binder

- Purchase a sturdy, three-ring plastic binder and a box of heavyweight, non-glare plastic sleeves.
- Look through your photo archives and pick out a variety of photographs you can use to go beside the various pages that you’ll be inserting in your binder. Take the best photos and have 8x10 color copies made of them.
- Make copies of the Qualifying Questions contained in this report and insert them into the binder.
- Practice going over the questions with your staff until each member of your team has memorized them.

**Coming Next Month: Part 2
Building your own Pro Enrollment Binder!**

To begin the enrollment conference and to maintain a sense of control and direction during your presentation, there are a number of questions you can ask a potential student. The answer to these questions will tell you whether or not you'll be selling your regular course or if you'll need to design a custom program to fit their needs. Note: The questions that qualify are included in your camera-ready ad materials.

Let's review the questions that qualify and clearly define what it is to be listening for and what we want to accomplish:

Question 1: Will you be living in the area long enough to take advantage of our beginner's course?

Reason: This question is meant to find out if the prospective student should be asked to sign an agreement for 12 months worth of lessons. If they know they're only living in the area for a short time, then the school will want to offer them a program that fits their needs. For example, the program director can offer the student a three-month program instead of the 12-month program if the student is uncertain about long-term residency. The student may find out later that they're staying in the area and will be able to commit to a longer course.

Question 2: Have you seen our class schedule, and do we offer class times that work for you? Can you attend two required classes each week?

Reason: The class schedule is reviewed before the introductory lessons take place. It's gone over again so that a schedule can be set and the interviewer is listening to make sure that the prospective student can and will attend regularly. If a student can't attend classes regularly, or at all, then the enrollment conference is over. An option for the student who might not be able to attend your regular classes would be private lessons.

Question 3: Do you have any physical challenges that the instructors should know about that might keep you from participating fully in classes? Are you prone to any specific kinds of injuries?

Reason: If a student has a questionable medical condition, then they may not be a good candidate for a regular or extended program. It would be better to enroll them in a short-term course to make sure they can enjoy the classes before they commit to a long-term agreement.

Question 4: For our young students we require home practice of ten minutes a day, minimum. Does your child have a place and the time to practice at home what they learn in our classes?

Reason: Practice at home is one of the keys to retention. Students who practice improve. Establishing that concept

from the very beginning and emphasizing the point saves a lot of headaches down the road. It's also an opportunity to determine the parent's level of commitment to your program. If a parent confesses that they're too busy to have their child practice or that they're not interested in making them practice, then that's a challenge the school should know about in advance.

Question 5: Do you appreciate that our school isn't a "gym," but an "educational facility," and are you comfortable with our philosophy of focusing on a positive mental attitude, respect and self-discipline?

Reason: Here's yet another chance to talk about needs and benefits before you start talking about money. The reality is that professionally taught martial arts classes are worth far more than the tuition required to attend them. The challenge is to clearly get that message across.

Question 6: In most cases tuition is paid on a monthly basis, although we have other options. Can you comfortably budget between \$90 and \$110 towards instruction each month?

Reason: This is the question that closes the sale. Watching and listening to the response from a potential student is of great importance. However, if you've done a great job selling your benefits and overcoming obstacles in your introductory lessons, this step will not be difficult. If someone can't pay your regular rates, you're going to work out something for them. Nine times out of ten, they'll pay your regular rates without hesitation.

Question 7: Is it a good time in your life to commit to a long-term program of instruction that requires attendance two or three times a week and ten minutes of practice a day? Are there any activities or events that might interrupt your regular class attendance?

Reason: This question is about your expectations of the student and emphasizes the importance of regular and consistent attendance and practice. If a student doesn't attend or practice regularly, it won't matter what price they're paying for lessons. They'll eventually lose interest and drop out.

Question 8: Is there anything specific that you want us to help you accomplish in the next six months? Next year?

Reason: Here, you return to discussing the student's needs. Your goal is to make sure that the prospect knows you're interested and that you are listening to them. Be sure to take note for their student file.

At this point, you're ready to go over the specific payment plan options with the prospective student.

