

Progress opportunities and avoid being ghosted

3-min read



It seems like things are going well, communication is good, progress is good, and it looks like the deal is about to close.

But then your prospect stops replying. You're now chasing them. What happened?

Traditional advice tells us to keep following up. Here are 5 simple steps to avoid being ghosted in the first place.

1. Daisy chain communication

This situation frequently arises because no expectation has been established that the prospect will get back to you by a specific deadline. Perhaps you were expecting a reply within the next few days, but the prospect may consider it a quadrant 2 task (important but not urgent).

Before the end of a meeting, set up the next time that you're going to speak. This ensures that you're not left chasing, because the next touchpoint is already in the diary. This also gives both parties a pretty accurate indication of how urgent the project is.

2. Ensure you've uncovered their discomfort

People rarely hire a consultant without specific pain that they want to alleviate. Potential clients may like your business and even respect what you do but, in most cases, that's not enough to give you a contract. To illustrate this point, we once asked a room of 100 people, "Who takes painkillers when they're in pain, and who takes vitamins for optimal health?"

20% took vitamins for optimal health. 90% took painkillers for pain.

Uncover that pain.

3. Bring new perspectives and ask thought-provoking questions

The Rain group conducted a study of 700 buyers to identify their top reasons for buying. Of the 42 answers, number 1 was **the consultant educated me with new ideas and perspectives.**

1	Educated me with new ideas or perspectives.
2	Collaborated with me.
3	Persuaded me we would achieve results.
4	Listened to me.
5	Understand my needs.
6	Helped me avoid potential pitfalls.
7	Crafted a compelling solution.
8	Depicted purchasing process accurately.
9	Connected with me personally.
10	Overall value from the company is superior to other options.
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Before we can offer fresh ideas, we first need to have them. But we also need to ask questions that encourage the client to gain new perspectives for themselves. Some simple thought-provoking questions are:

“So, what's motivating this call?”

“Why jump on a call with me right now rather than 6 months ago?”

“Out of everyone you could speak to about this, why me/us?”

“What happens if this problem is left unresolved - for the business and for you personally?”

“What are the alternatives to us working together? How do you feel about those alternatives?”

4. Don't send a proposal

You may be surprised at how many people are happy to say yes without one. I've seen decision-makers say yes to £5000, £10,000, £15000 worth of work without ever seeing it in a glossy proposal.

If a proposal is necessary, which is often the case, then still don't send it. Instead, book a time to discuss it together and move forwards.

5. The “give up” email

Chris Voss, FBI negotiator turned business consultant, suggests this one-liner to reignite the conversation if a potential client does ghost you:

“Have you given up on this project?”

No one wants to give up, and this might be just the spark that your prospect needs.

But, if they still don't reply, the deal is truly done and you can consider yourself free to explore other opportunities. To discover more about progressing deals, [let's talk growth](#).