



## **Follow up or Fall down by Aaron Crowley**

There are two kinds of cooks in this world: those who follow the recipe and those who don't. Those that use the proper ingredients in proper proportion, serve their guests with confidence, knowing their dish will taste superb. Those that substitute or eliminate an ingredient have no such peace as they pass the plate, ever wondering if the guests will notice.

In stone fabrication, there are two kinds of sales systems: those that follow-up with customers after an estimate is submitted and those that don't.

Following up and re-connecting with customers after they have been provided information and an estimate, is as necessary to growing sales as yeast is to baking bread. If the *follow up* ingredient is present, like the bread, sales will rise.

For the stone company struggling to re-connect with potential customers in a timely fashion after the initial quote is generated, the following recipe is a simple yet incredibly effective way of making sure it happens.

### **The ingredients are as follows:**

- 1- "bid packet cover sheet" created in excel (pictured),
- 1- three ring "bid" binder with ten tabbed dividers labeled Monday through Friday twice (pictured),
- 1- short follow up script
- 1- responsible person assigned to execute the plan.

The system works on a daily and weekly basis like this: Every day, estimates are produced and compiled and every week they are followed up on.

On Monday for example, compile the estimates that were produced and sent to customers and staple a "bid packet cover sheet" to the bundle. Next enter the name and phone number of each customer contained in the bundle of estimates on the cover sheet. Lastly, date the bundle, three ring punch it, and place it in the "bid" binder under the first tab labeled for the day the estimates were produced. In this case it would be Monday, and would go under the first "Monday" tab in the binder.

This is repeated every day, so at the end of the first week, there would be a “bid” packet under each of the first five tabs labeled Monday through Friday.

At the beginning of the second week, the following Monday, the “bid” packet produced the previous Monday is pulled out, and every customer in the packet is called by the person assigned the task.

The script for the follow up call need not be elaborate. It could be as brief as, “Hello Mrs. Jones, this is Joe Smith, and I was following up to make sure you received the estimate for your granite counter project and wanted to make sure we answered any questions you might have.”

Notes from the customer are written on the estimate, then the packet is put into the second “Monday” tab in the binder for the second follow up call the following week.

Once the quotes in the bid packet are followed up on a second time, the packet is removed from the binder and filed away, making room for the next packet, so there are never more than two bundles under any daily tab in the binder.

No sales system will ever guarantee that a stone shop will sell 100% of the jobs they quote. But the one containing follow up as an essential ingredient, will increase the quantity and quality of the food on the table, regardless of who’s cooking in the kitchen.