

Sell yourself instead of company or reputation

Special to Sentinel-Voice

Q. Dear Regina: I am an African-American stock broker who uses the city's directory of Black businesses to solicit for clients. When I call on prospective clients, I stress the reputation of the well-known firm I am affiliated with and the services that we provide. I also ask a series of financial questions to qualify prospects by telephone. I seem to get nowhere, though it's obvious that Black people need to invest their money. How can I convince them to make time to explore investment options?

A: Stock brokers are notorious for 'hard-sell' approaches in tele-marketing. Instead of focusing on "your firm," "your reputation," and "your services," you need to be sensitive to "client needs."

Money is a sensitive subject to delve into by telephone. A client-centered marketing approach demands that you develop and enhance relationships. Many stock brokers ask personal questions by telephone and, frankly, a "cold call" about an issue as personal as someone's finances is grounds for hanging up.

Client-centered marketing necessitates continual relationship development through joining the Chamber of Commerce and other civic and professional organizations and cultivating referrals.

Have you successfully managed the monies of existing and previous clients? A third party, preferably a seasoned public



Regina's
Q & A
By Regina Lynch-Hudson

relations person or agency, can create a client testimonial sheet that details what you have done for "actual people." You will want a third party to get the quotes from the clients. It is, of course, a conflict of interest for you to call customers to ask them what they liked best about you. Other marketing materials can also be developed which open doors.

Investment in your business is essential. Perhaps you want to mail invitations, inviting prospects to lunch, at their convenience, in their area. Try this instead of the traditional "I'd like to set up an appointment for you to come into my office." Remember: you are selling a very personal, confidential service and to do so you've got to appeal to clients on a personal, intimate level.

Clients don't view themselves as sharing private information with "your" company. They view "you" as their confidant. So, sell yourself.

Q. Dear Regina: I am attempting to put together a direct mail piece that I am sending to credit unions and churches. I own a small automotive dealership which does \$5 million annually in business. We want to partner with credit unions and churches to convince memberships of both to do business with our dealership. What do we need to say?

A: Your target market will be more inclined to take action if your letter(s) suggest action that will provide an acknowledged benefit.

Are you offering discounts to particular credit unions or church members, and/or offering to make a donation to the church for every automobile that the member buys from your dealership?

Make sure that your letter(s) are written with the client as the focus. "You will receive" works better than "I will send you." Stay away from "I" or "we" oriented language, and stick to "you" or "your staff."

The heading of your letter should arouse immediate interest, otherwise it will not be read.

Questions? Call Regina Lynch-Hudson at (770) 717-7020.

Florida school board ponders limited censorship

Special to Sentinel-Voice

MIAMI — After a group of high school students published a pamphlet deemed racially and sexually offensive three months ago, the Miami-Dade County School Board has proposed new guidelines that would allow principals to censor certain articles.

According to a proposal under review by the

board, principals would have the final say but couldn't change anything without a "specific educational purpose," said Russ Wheatley, who heads the redrafting effort.

"You just can't go in there with a red pencil and mark through things just because you don't like it personally," Wheatley said. "But teachers, as well as students, need to understand the

responsibility lies with the principal."

The revised guidelines were met with disappointment by some students.

"I would hate for a well-written story to be kept back because the principal feels it will tarnish the school," said Kanika Frazier, a front-page editor of the Carol City High School newspaper.

The new rules are being prepared at the request of Superintendent Roger Cuevas, three months after nine Killian High School students were arrested and suspended after publication of a booklet filled with racist comments, depictions of rape and threats against their

principal. The pamphlet was not school-sanctioned.

"What does this do? It punishes the good kids," said Shirley Yaskin, adviser to Palmetto High School's paper. "It punishes the journalism students who are interested in really helping change their school."

Under the proposal, teacher-advisers must bring to the attention of principals anything "they feel uncomfortable with or may cause controversy," Wheatley said.

Principals also would be instructed to consult school district attorneys over controversial material.

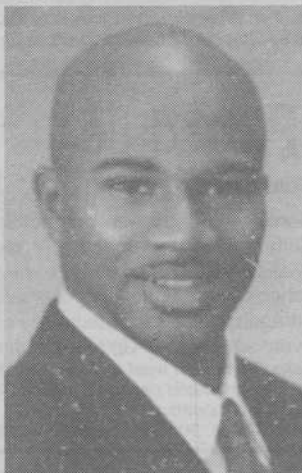
Las Vegan graduates from Yale

Special to Sentinel-Voice

Four years after graduating with high scholastic honors from Western High School, Kurtran Wright repeated the academic feat, this time walking down the isle of one of the nation's most respected universities. Wright graduated with a bachelor's degree in architecture from Yale University.

A native Las Vegan, the Yale alumnus developed early on a desire to excel. After a stellar high school career, he entered college with designs on being an architect. He wanted to be the best architecture student there. He was, as one of his professors attests: he is "one of the most creative students in the undergraduate architectural program" at Yale.

Not one for complacency, Wright will enroll at the University of Pennsylvania to



KURTRAN WRIGHT

pursue a master's degree in architecture, and ultimately aims to own an architectural firm.

Besides excelling academically, Wright proved a star outside class. His extracurricular exploits include a four-year stint as lead drummer with the Yale Gospel Choir, which toured the name

and recruited African-American high school students to attend Yale.

Two years ago, he founded "The King's Men," a bible study group for young African-American men and served as its chairman. He also spent a summer in London studying English architecture.

Wright credits much of his success to family inspiration, faith in God and good time management.

"You shouldn't go out with your friends when you should be studying," he said.

Local African-American high schoolers should consider Yale because Wright said the Ivy League school's instruction is nonpareil.

He offers this advice to aspiring Ivy Leaguers: "Take the tough courses, read a lot and make a strong contribution to significant school and community activities."

Neal

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"The mayor has never been in a fight like we're going to give her," Barbano said.

"Whoever the nominee is come September I will support," Reid said. "They are both my friends and I like them both."

Besides the Jones' factor, Neal must contend with gathering enough support to win the ticket. Assemblywoman Chris Giunchigliani, District 9, appears to back Neal.

"Joe has represented Democratic issues for years," she said. "He has always been good for laborers."

On June 2, in Reno, the unions are going to have their election. In order for a candidate to get the union's endorsement they must receive

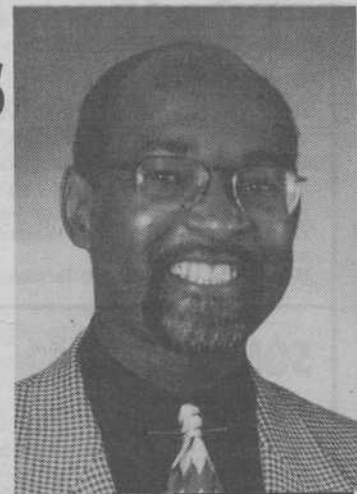
66-2/3 majority vote of all the union locals assembled. Though Neal has voted mostly pro-union — walking the picket lines and even being arrested — union support isn't guaranteed.

"It's strictly a democratic process that we go through," union leader Blackie Evans said. "I wouldn't have any problem with him (Neal) being governor."

Neal lived in Nevada more than 44 years. He has been acting governor, senate president pro-tem, senate minority leader, assistant minority leader, assistant majority leader and served on the Interim Finance Committee.

Neal's e-mail is Joe@Neal98.org and his Web site address is www.Neal98.org.

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