

Vinyl Fence *Tip*

Practical and Proven Ways to Sell More Vinyl Fences

From your friends at National Vinyl Products

How to follow up on bids to get more jobs



You've been out to the job site. You've measured and calculated. You've presented your bid for the fencing job. Now comes the hard part – the waiting. How should you follow up on your bid?

Following up on a fencing bid can help set you apart from the competition. Think about it. Home and business owners are getting bids from several fencing companies, so your follow-up can put your proposal in the forefront. It shows you care.

Contrary to what you might have heard or thought, following up on a bid does not make you seem desperate for work; it makes you seem professional. However, there are some important steps to follow.

1. Timing is everything. You want to give the potential client time to review the bid, but you don't want them to forget about it. A good rule of thumb is to contact the client within five to seven days after you submit your bid. Maybe even sooner.

2. Make it personal. While your bid is in writing, a phone call is your best bet for your follow-up. A personal call allows you the opportunity to answer any questions the client may have and to offer any suggestions you may have for the job. Texting is also very effective.

Begin the call by introducing yourself and asking if the client received the bid. Then ask if it is a good time to discuss the job. Be ready to call back if it is not a good time.

Have the bid and any job details right in front of you so that you can talk knowledgeably about the specifics of their job and their property. Be courteous and professional. Assure the client you will provide the best service possible.

3. Email is the next best thing. If your busy schedule does not allow for you to make phone calls as a follow-up or if you don't have time for a call, then email is ok. Keep the message brief, friendly and to the point. Ask if you can answer any questions either by phone or return email. Again, be positive and professional.

4. Ask for a timeframe. During the bidding process and again during follow-up communication, ask the client when they plan to make a decision on the job. While this date may change, it helps you know if they are serious fencing customers or not.

5. Share your schedule. If you are holding specific dates in your calendar for their fence installation, let them know. However, be honest about this approach. It could backfire if you don't really have a potential conflict for that timeframe.

6. Offer tips and ideas. Use your follow-up call to educate. You can win a job by showcasing your expertise. Since you calculated the bid, have you come up with some additional suggestions for their fencing? The follow-up call can be a great time to share your experience and fencing industry knowledge, and it shows you have been thinking about their particular situation.



7. Do not fear rejection Do not fear rejection. If your bid gets turned down, keep discussing your product. But also go through your “checklist” of things that make you better: your high-quality products, your trained company crews, your ability to save them time and grief by pulling permits, your insurance that protects them, your on-time completion, your ability to give them a temporary fence. Keep educating them. Keep close, even if they say no.

8. Don't panic if it still is no. Whether you get the job or not, think of every bid as an important learning experience. Have your mantra be something like this, “We have the best fencing product for the job. We have the best team to install this fence. We know we can do this fencing job on time and on budget.”

Keep your head held high and resist the urge to lower your price or offer added incentives when you follow-up on your bid. Thank the customer for their consideration and then take the information you have gained to move on to the next client.

9. Mail a thank you note. Mail a thank you note. Do not email it. Do not text it. Hand-write it. Hand-address the envelope. Use a cool first-class stamp. Make it sincere, from the heart and personal. The best time is to send it right after giving a bid within three days. And do not hesitate to send more than a thank you note. It is a lost art that still works.



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