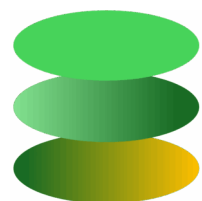




How to Create a Choice Before You Quote

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You already know which job you want

Boiler swap or a dripping tap. Full rewire or a socket that's gone dead. Two slipped tiles and some resitting of ridge tiles or a re-roof?

You know your jobs. You know which are the decent ones and which are the scrappy ones. You know which ones you want before you get back to your van.

Nobody needs to teach you the difference between decent work and scrappy work. You've been pricing jobs in your head from the doorway for fifteen years and you're right most of the time.

So, judgement was never the problem.

Then why did you take the scrappy one?

Because on Tuesday, the only enquiry was a scrappy one.

That's it. That's the whole reason. Not softness, not poor business sense, not because you don't know your worth. You took it because the alternative was an empty Thursday, and an empty Thursday is a mortgage payment looming.

And then Thursday came, and so did the decent enquiry, and you were full.

You didn't lose that decent job because you're bad at this. You lost it because the decent enquiry and the scrappy enquiry never overlapped in time.

Worse than that, you'd already committed to going to the scrappy job and reputation forces you not to back down on a promise.

The trap nobody names

Every enquiry that comes in is take-it-or-lose-it.

Prospect rings. Prospect wants it done. If you say, "I could come a week on Thursday," your prospect says thanks very much and rings the next name on the list. So, you don't say that. You say yes, because a job you've got beats a job you might get.

This is the mechanism. Not laziness. Not fear. **Just the fact that you are asked to decide, on the spot, with nothing to compare it to.**

Choose in the dark and you'll choose whatever's nearest. Anyone would.

You cannot fix this by seeing the future

Every bit of advice you've ever been given assumes you can somehow know what's coming. Plan your week. Protect your diary. Hold slots back for the good stuff.

Try it. Hold Thursday open for a decent enquiry that never arrives, and you've given away a day's money for nothing. Do that twice and you'll never do it again.

You are not going to get better at predicting next week. Nobody is.

So, stop trying.

You fix it by not letting go of the past

Here is the whole thing, and it is not complicated.

You don't need Tuesday's scrappy job and Thursday's decent job to arrive at the same time.

You need Tuesday's scrappy to still be alive on Thursday.

That's not foresight. That's just not letting go.

If the scrappy enquiry gets an acknowledgement minutes after the call. That's a good response.

If the same scrappy enquiry has another follow-up in the evening (same day) that says, "We're busy and we'll give you a quote within 2 days" the prospect is seeing progress.

2 days later, the enquiry is probably not lost.

If the prospect thinks it's really desperate, then the enquiry may disappear. BUT compared to the other people who have not responded at all, **you're streets ahead.**

If the decent job enquiry comes in, **you have two things on the table at once.** The moment there are two things on the table, you are choosing.

Not predicting. **Choosing.**

That's what a pipeline actually is. It isn't a crystal ball. **It's a holding pen.**

What "not letting go" actually means

This is the part that decides whether any of it works, so let's move through this carefully.

It means every single enquiry gets:

An answer within the hour. Not a quote. An answer. "Got your message — I'm on a job till five." That one message is the difference between a live enquiry and a dead one, because the prospect is now waiting for you instead of ringing the next bloke.

A price within two days. Not a week. Two days. Most of the work you've lost, you lost by silence, not by price.

A follow-up when the enquiry goes quiet. *Because it will.*

Day 3: "Did you have any questions about that quote?"

Day 7: "Still happy to do that if you want it — just let me know either way."

Day 14: "Assuming you've gone elsewhere — no problem at all. Give me a shout if anything else crops up."*

That last one is not a defeat. It is the single most effective message on the list, and it wins jobs, because half the time the job hasn't gone anywhere. The prospect has just been busy, same as you. The fact that you value them is also noted.

No one else followed them up.

And it has to happen for every quote. Everyone.

Not the big ones. Not the ones you remember. Not the ones from customers you liked.

Everyone.

Why this is where nearly everybody fails

Because none of the above is hard. **It's relentless.**

It's Thursday. You've been under a floor or on a roof since seven. You've got a van to unload, an invoice to write, and a kid who wants you to look at something on a screen. And somewhere in your phone there are four quotes from nearly a fortnight ago that need a nudge.

You will not send those messages. Not because you're lazy. Because you are a human being who has done a ten-hour day.

Do it for a week and it works brilliantly. Do it for three months and you'll have stopped, and you won't have noticed stopping.

That's the truth about this method:

The method isn't the problem. Keeping it up is.

Once you've got choice, you have two moves

you win either way

Say it's working...

The scrappy enquiry is still alive, and now the decent enquiry comes in.

You don't have to turn scrappy job down. You've got something better than that.

Price it at what it's actually worth to a busy man.

The scrappy job is a £200 job. You're booked solid. You quote £400, and you tell the truth:

"I'm honestly booked out at the minute. I'd have to move things about to fit you in this week. If you want me to, I can — that's what it'd cost. Completely understand if you'd rather wait or try someone else."

That is not a brush-off. That's a real quote, honestly explained, from a man who'd genuinely have to shuffle his week.

Now look at what can happen.

Prospect says no. Good. Thursday's free for the decent job. You've lost nothing you wanted.

Prospect says yes. Also good. It's now a £400 job, and at £400 you'll do it gladly.

You cannot lose. Whichever way it falls, you're better off than you were on Tuesday when the scrappy job was the only thing there and you said yes for £200.

There's more. When it comes to quotes, especially the scrappy jobs with the minimal budgets, you have to take such care with the materials. There's not much margin for error. You spend ages doing a quote that you really don't want to do for a job you really don't want to do.

When you double the price and you've already accounted for your labour, the materials can drift off by quite a bit, and you're still well in profit.

Scrappy quotes can take less time.

And it ratchets

Every scrappy job you win at £400 lifts your floor a little.

Every job you lose frees a slot for something better.

Both directions push you the same way — towards better work, at better money, for better customers. That is not a trick, and it isn't a sales technique. That's just how a trade business climbs. It is how it happened to me, slowly, with a spreadsheet, the long way round.

Two things I'm not going to pretend about

This doesn't work on emergencies. A burst pipe is now or nothing. You can't hold it, and you can't price it too high without being a shark about it. So, don't. This is for more planned work - the jobs that could wait a week, if they had to.

The order matters. Do not put your prices up first. If you start quoting £400 before you've got enquiries stacking up, you'll lose the work, panic, and drop back down within a month.

Enquiries first. Then choice. Then price.

You can only be relaxed about losing a job when you can see the next one coming. That's the entire reason the phone matters — and it isn't for the jobs. It's for the nerve.

Now — why I wrote this

I'd rather tell you than have you wonder.

I offer a system that does everything in the middle section of this document automatically. Answers the phone when you're on the tools. Sends the holding text. Chases the quote on day three, day seven, day fourteen. Every enquiry, every time, whether you're knackered or not.

So yes — it serves me for you to read this and think **"I can't keep that up on my own."**

I've written it out in full, with the actual messages and the actual timings, because it's true and it works.

It works whether you ever spend a penny with me or not. If you can do it with a notebook and an alarm on your phone, **do it with a notebook and an alarm on your phone.**

I did it with a spreadsheet for years, and it changed my business before I had anything else.

What I'd ask is only this: don't read it, agree with it, and then do nothing. That's the outcome that costs you.

If you worked out your number on the website before you downloaded this is what it's costing you every year. Not because you're bad at your job.

Just because, on Tuesday, there was only ever one thing on the table.

Thank you.

Peter Hawkins