



Waypoints

Knowledge and navigation for Senior Living and Care Communities

They came to see **you** because they wanted to **buy**. *Did you and your community feel right?*

by Gary M. Solomonson, M.Div

In his book, *Little Black Book of Connections*, Jeffrey Gitomer states emphatically that “people don’t like to be sold, but they do love to buy.” For those of us who work in senior living and care communities, it is an imperative we must embrace. For just a moment, think of what Gitomer is saying as you recall a recent spouse or adult child who visited with you about a family member or friend, learned about you, your community and toured your memory care, assisted living or skilled nursing environments. **They were there because they wanted to buy.** They were looking for the right environment, services, staff and volunteers who would love and care for their loved one. Most importantly, if they bought, they wanted you and your colleagues to truly ENJOY the new resident. Not just care for or serve them, but ENJOY them, too! Housekeepers who would have ENJOYABLE conversations with them while cleaning. A dining services staff and volunteers who would dine with them and ENJOY their company. Programs and activities ENJOYED by all, makes for a very good day! In high acuity situations, staff that would tuck them in at night with a hug; a hug ENJOYED by both!

I don’t like anyone putting pressure on me to buy. However, if I want or need something, I love to buy when it FEELS RIGHT. And when I truly imagine ENJOYING something and it FEELS RIGHT, I will buy with enthusiasm and confidence.

Most of you reading this article know the basics of effective marketing and sales in these environments, so I won’t dwell on run, block and tackle items. I’d like to share my story of what I do in these situations where there is an opportunity to help someone buy services in memory care, assisted living or skilled care environments. You might find a couple things here that you can add to your approach. Here’s how I try to make it FEEL RIGHT for the prospects I meet. The key here is authenticity. Not a sales pitch. I threw those away years ago.

Waypoint: Listening for Clues

After a warm greeting, I ENJOY a good half hour or more of great conversation with my guest. Good discovery creates the roadmap for the relationship. Without it, the odds of a successful closing are severely diminished. During this time I hope to learn about the prospective client through active listening. When it is an adult child or friend visiting, the task is doubly challenging as one sifts through their personal views of what is desired for their loved one. I carefully listen for clues related to the prospect’s physical, intellectual, social and spiritual aspirations, wants, interests and needs. I find asking good ‘feeling finding’ questions encourages my guest to tell good stories that contribute to a deeper and more clarifying discovery process.

Waypoint: Their Experiential Tour, Not Mine

At the appropriate time, I invite my guest to walk with me to experience the community’s environment, staff, residents and

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“...Before you can take, **you gotta give.**”

Learn the real rule of give and take and other sales and marketing wisdom in **Book Look** on Page 2

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Develop and expand contacts and lead generation with

‘Sails’ Set™ Page 4

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The Red Bottom Boat LLC
Adjusting Your Sails To Catch the Marketing Wind

Little Black Book of Connections by Jeffrey Gitomer

Buy It: Bookstores, online at Amazon and Barnes & Noble, or for bulk orders, contact Elizabeth Barber, Media Alchemist at Jeffrey Gitomer's office: Elizabeth@gitomer.com or 704.369.8189

Read It: This is a 'must read' for anyone in our industry, rich with inspiration to successfully connect with prospects and referral sources. Regardless of your role in a senior living and care community, we are all in marketing by virtue of the customer service we render every hour and every day.

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volunteers. **Here is an important waypoint. My path is based totally on their story, not mine! I start with what is most important to my guest and the tour is always an 'experiential summary' of our conversation.** Equally important, I always make sure to introduce them to key staff, those who will eventually ENJOY their loved one. While supervisors are important, it is the 'hands-on' staff that is critically important as well as the Executive Director/Administrator, the keeper of the brand. We must all embrace the belief that everyone working in our environments are 'workers and marketers,' especially the line staff. The perceived quality of the line staff's work is one of the most powerful marketing statements in your brand! It is the statement that the prospect will observe and hopefully feel. It all needs to FEEL RIGHT.

Waypoint: Sitting, Imagining, Storytelling and Shaking More Hands

During our walkabout, I do some strategic sitting, imagining and storytelling. Based on the clues I noted during discovery, a technique I have used in helping prospects buy is selectively sitting in the places their mom or dad, husband or wife, brother or sister or friend would sit. Based on their story, we may sit in lounges, dining rooms, activity rooms, snoezelen rooms, exercise rooms, model apartments, ice cream parlors and courtyards. If appropriate, sometimes I show them photos of how others use and ENJOY these areas.

The tactile and psychological experience of SITTING in a few key areas where their loved one might sit to ENJOY themselves can become a positive game changer for your guest. Sitting in the ice cream parlor, I might say, "This is a great place where your mom might ENJOY her favorite ice cream after an activity program." Sitting in the Dining Room, "Our dining services are wonderful and personalized. The plants, art and aquarium in here are part of the Eden Alternative philosophy which we implemented three years ago." Often, such a comment about a

program or philosophy will open up an additional opportunity for a FEEL GOOD conversation by developing an interest noted during discovery. If someone from Dining Services is around, I invite them to join us and shake their hand. Sitting in an activity room or lounge, I might selectively describe our commitment to social, educational or spiritual growth, again based on my discovery. Often, when walking through the hallways, I will ask a housekeeper to visit with us who might say in an upbeat voice as they shake hands and introduce themselves, "I ENJOY chatting with residents while I'm cleaning and always ENJOY their company. It is very nice to meet you and I hope your mother will ENJOY living here." Subconsciously, this will begin to resonate with your prospect and they will internalize their tour, which has been an 'experiential summary' of your discovery conversation. Having sat, imagined, done some storytelling and shaking of hands with other staff, all this will contribute to FEELING RIGHT! And as this 'experiential tour' is internalized, it will contribute to their subconscious kicking in later during the decision-making process.

Waypoint: Closing With a Heartfelt Invitation

And now for the closing, which is not some mysterious act, arm twisting or sales trickery. Closing is nothing more or nothing less than an AUTHENTIC AND HEARTFELT INVITATION for your guest's loved one to become a resident in your community, a resident whom you and your colleagues will serve, love, care for and

enjoy!



The Speakers: A Powerful Lead Generation Program

5-Day Design, Implementation and Coaching Workshop
for Your Operations and Sales and Marketing Team at Your Community

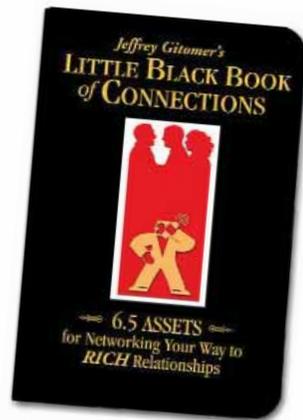
One of the most underutilized resources in most senior living and care communities is the creation and development of their own Speakers Bureau that offers informational, educational and entertaining presentations that promote positive aging and supportive care. It also becomes a great venue for making contacts in the community and creating both immediate and long-term prospect leads.

—Navigate to page 4 to learn how to start creating **your Speakers Bureau**

Jeffrey Gitomer's Little Black Book of Connections

A Review by Gary Solomonson

Initially, it begins with those of us in sales and marketing. Gitomer says, "The real rule of 'give and take' is: Before you can take, you gotta give." Throughout the book he reminds us that in sales and marketing, it is wise and practical to give value first before you ask for value. For those of us in marketing and selling senior living and care communities, we need to develop creative and innovative ways to give value first to our referral sources and to our prospects.



connecting and disconnecting with others as we move through the day. Gitomer says,

“What you say to others is a reflection of who they think you are.”

While you are speaking, *they are thinking and deciding* who you are, whether they like you, and whether they want to take *the next step* with you.”

Giving value to referral sources might come in the form of a referral to them first. Another might be value in the form of information or education to help them in their work. Sometimes the value is simply listening to their story and taking time to get to know them. In knowing them, and them knowing you, value flows reciprocally. Give them a copy of this book!

For a prospect, listening to their story, truly understanding it and then connecting the dots between their wants, needs, interests and aspirations for your community and services, is giving value to them. There are few gifts valued more in a relationship than being a good listener and the prospect feeling good about being heard and understood. Other value can come in the form of education, both verbal and written. Books and websites that address their concerns and interests are great gifts.

Another important 'nugget' that is an undercurrent throughout the book is the idea that each person in a senior living and care community needs to be aware of the importance of their 'affect' inside and outside of work. We are sending verbal and nonverbal messages all the time. We are always

We are all the walking billboards of our communities and how we 'act and speak' inside and outside of work communicates the type of customer service our residents receive.

This book is so rich in nuggets of wisdom that you can read it 10 times and always find something new to ponder and add to your ideas and abilities of how to successfully connect with prospects and referral sources. Oh, and for those of you who like to read the last chapter first or skip around reading a page here or there, he wrote this book just for you!



Meet the Crew: Featured Friends and Business Associates, The Red Bottom Boat

Annotated by Gary Solomonson

I have surrounded myself with talented people who bring exceptional knowledge, critical thinking, brilliant creativity, and innovative solutions for the senior living and care communities we serve.

You'll enjoy working with any of them. Please take a look—get to know one of our crew members in each issue of *Waypoints*.

—Navigate to page 5 to meet **The Crew**

Effective Lead Generating Programs to Get Your Community's

'Sails' Set™

to catch the marketplace winds!

Mix and match 2- and 3-day programs for a week, or Reserve a 5-day program for 2013.

One-to-One Weekly: Maintaining & Nurturing Your Relationships With Your Most Productive Referral Sources (2-day program)

The ABCs of Prospecting: Creating Small Group Wellsprings (3-day program)

Expanding Squares & Circles: Structure and Systematic Development (5-day program)

The Speakers: Create a Speakers Bureau to Export Information, Education and Entertainment (5-day program)

Resident Clubs for Past Careers and Volunteering: Attracting the Greater Community to Visit Your Community (3-day program)

Traveling Support Groups: Exporting Value to the Greater Community (2-day program)

The Pusher, The Reader, The Legacy Book Maker™: Volunteers and Lead Generation (5-day program)

The Baker's Dozen: Innovation in Sales and Marketing Staff Support with Volunteers (2-day program)

The Two-Hat Imperative: Every Employee a Worker and Marketer (2-day program)

The Wagon Wheel: A Holistic Business Development and Management Program (5-day program)

Bonus program with any purchase:

The Checklists:

Transitional Marketing focusing on Move-ins, Orientations and Move-outs

The Speakers: A Powerful Lead Generation Program Create **your** Speakers Bureau

It is a creative approach to involving physicians and other professionals that are difficult to meet and engage as they share their professional passions. A small but effective Speakers Bureau, made up of five individuals, can get your program started and produce wonderful results. The membership of your Speakers Bureau should always include a staff member, a resident, an adult child of a present or past resident, a volunteer and a community partner, oftentimes a physician or a physical therapist.



Gary Solomonson has a professional background in speaking and has trained many speakers in his 46 years in working with senior living and care communities. Your return on investment in working with him will be almost immediate as he skillfully helps you develop your bureau, select topics, and coach speakers during the week he lives at your community and telephone follow-up during the following quarter.

Your Investment: \$4,750 plus travel. It includes 5-days of on-site consultations and training workshops, 6 hours of setup by The Red Bottom Boat staff and phone conference follow-up as needed during the following quarter for your speakers. For a complete outline of the 5-day agenda template, call Gary at (612) 384-6395 or Gary@TheRedBottomBoat.com



The Red Bottom Boat LLC
Adjusting Your Sails To Catch the Marketplace Winds

Contextual Innovation

Collaboration in physical design development to bring strength to products, services, programs, sales, marketing, and operations

Creative Infusion

Creative vision and implementation for new developments
 Creative revitalization for existing communities to give products and services renewed vigor, renewed life, and renewed impact

Customized Coaching Workshops

Training to connect ideas, methods, and initiatives to make a difference in the applied art and science of sales and marketing

Serving Senior Living and Care Communities

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We have had so many wonderful compliments on our brochure and website for The Red Bottom Boat LLC. Mary Adelman and her staff created a WOW piece that has given us great satisfaction and pride every time we hand our brochure to a prospective client. With our stock in trade being sales and marketing, creativity and innovation, our brochure had to communicate those messages visually and textually.

Adelman Advertising is a full-service agency located in the rural hills of Avon, Minnesota. Since 1989, they have provided creative and successful solutions through critical thinking, effective development, and efficient production to help clients define their products or services, their marketplace, and their potential.

Senior Housing and Health Care Marketing and Advertising Specialists: Adelman Advertising has helped senior housing and health care providers launch and maintain occupancy within both for-profit and nonprofit communities on a national level. They have worked with independent living, assisted living, memory care, home care, respite care, hospice care, and continuing care retirement communities. Their specialized knowledge assures that you will reach your target markets with your key messages—driving leads, improving occupancy and achieving a healthy bottom line.

Marketing and Advertising for Professional Businesses and Services: Adelman Advertising also assists a variety of clients including professional services, financial institutions, health care, manufacturing, and nonprofit organizations. Services include research, marketing plans, advertising plans, brand development, websites, advertising strategy, and creative development.

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