

Managing client expectations – Making your business work for you!



It's good to be flexible, but you could be making your business work more for your client than for yourselves. This is often through the fear of losing the client, or the need to try to help too many pet owners.

- "I'm free any time."
- "Feel free to email me 24/7."
- "Walks can fit around you."
- "You can pay later."

Words like 'flexible', 'cheap' or phrases like "I'm available at any time" may attract clients, but you may find yourself attracting the wrong type of client and finding yourself 'time poor'.

In the long term, you may find yourself here, there, and everywhere! Remember: it is your business, your rules.

The business needs to work for you! Set your default diary up for success and let the clients know when you are available. Yes, there is a little flexibility, but not having a weekend off and dropping plans for that one cat visit is not acceptable. If you find yourself answering emails/calls at any time - you have just reinforced this behaviour!

- Set times of work that work for you.
- Payments in advance.
- Set check in times for follow ups.
- Monitoring progress through video footage excel spreadsheet.
- Set pick up times for walking.

It is also not just about the admin side of things. You need to be honest and upfront with the client. You can't promise results and you can't offer a set timeframe. There's traffic, weather, sometimes pain issues, or even grooms that may take a few minutes longer.

That's why I recommend a more generous timeframe, between pick-ups or grooms etc. You can give an idea, based on other case studies and your typical working day. You can tell them that, unless they commit to their 'minimum dosage', things simply won't work. However, DO NOT be too hard on them and don't make things too complicated.

Training needs to fit around their lifestyle. Motivate, inspire, cheerlead them on. Don't make them feel bad, but do be honest with them that results will take time and effort. Compare the journey to going to the gym or learning to sing.

Some clients will simply not do the work, some will mess you around. Have an interview process BEFORE you take them on; it is okay to be selective! If they really aren't doing the set tasks, failing to take action, cancelling those walks, etc., then you may need to consider letting them go or giving them a more hands on support programme.