

Special Edition

Developing a Winning Sales Program Part 2

Last week, I began a series on how to develop a successful sales program. Again, I was pleasantly surprised to receive so many kind emails in reference to the content of my material.

Additionally, some readers pointed out, and rightfully so, that I consistently referred to “salesmen” when it should be “sales people”. That was a technical mistake on my part and if it offended anybody, I apologize.

Over the years, I’ve trained many women, as well as men, to increase their effectiveness in sales;

- Some of the best sales people that I have trained have been women, and;
- Going forward, I will utilize the term “sales person”.

With that stated, last week I indicated that a successful sales person must;

- Write down his/her goals and objectives on a daily basis.
- The sales person must start with small goals.
- Establish higher goals and aspirations, and;
- Revisit their goals and objectives daily.

It’s important to understand that successful sales people;

1. Have objectives.
2. Don’t make excuses.
3. Ask for orders.
4. Raise and meet objections.
5. Do their homework.
6. Manage their time in their territory.
7. Have product knowledge.
8. Listen to their customers needs.
9. Talk to decision makers.
10. Set high goals.
11. Follow up.
12. Give concessions, only for a return.
13. Control situations.

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14. They never close the door on opportunities, and;
15. Believe in their service and their company.

The reason many sales people fail is because;

- They're not prepared.
- They're not focused.
- They're not consistent.
- They're not persistent, and;
- They always find excuses and blame somebody else for their lack of achievement.

It's important for sales people and owners of companies to recognize that;

- People buy only when they can't fill their own needs.
- **The Buyer has the answers; the Seller has the questions.**
- Relationships come first, tasks second.
- **People buy using their own buying patterns, not a Seller's selling pattern.**
- A sales person has nothing to sell if there's no one to buy.

To begin the process, owners of companies need to properly prepare and educate their sales people on the services they have to offer. Management must set up specific goals and objectives;

- Management must monitor those goals and objectives on a weekly and monthly basis, and;
- Compensation has to be designed so that that sales people always have a "carrot to chase".

In other words, from a trucking company's stand point;

- They must properly train their sales people to sell their services.
- They must provide them with the tools to assist that sales person in becoming successful.
- They need to establish goals and objectives on a daily, weekly and monthly basis, and;
- They have to reward accordingly.

Once that process has been implemented, then it's up to the sales person.

Product knowledge is useless until you know how your product or service is used on the job in a way that the customer can benefit and profit from that service. On the surface, this seems simple, but I challenge your sales people to determine how far they have gone to understand how their customers actually use your product or service, on a day to day basis. **How do they use it and how does it bring benefit to them in their work environment?**

It's important, when prospecting and developing relationships, that sales people are able to "get past the gate keeper" and speak to the decision maker. However, it's also equally important to recognize that the person who purchases your service is seldom the person that utilizes it everyday. **The end user is a person who will provide you with the most important sales information.**

During the next several weeks, I will be focusing on assisting sales people in how to over come objections. In the trucking industry (today), shippers are constantly demanding lower freight rates;

- They consistently put pressure on companies and sales and marketing people to help reduce their cost.
- The shipper threatens, that in some instances, if you don't haul freight at an operating loss, then they're going to take the business from you.

When you listen to that logic, why in the world would you want to do business with anybody that tells you that you must operate at a loss to do business with them? That is not a customer. That's not to say that you don't have to compromise your rates, with customer's that have been with you for many years, **but your sales people also have to learn how to sell something other than price.** How many times have your sales people said "xzy customer wants to buy, but our prices are too high"? **Has anybody ever heard of a Rolls Royce, Bentley, and Mercedes Benz? These are some of the most expensive cars in the world.** Many people say the price is too high – yet these companies consistently, even in a down market, secure a certain market share and Mercedes Benz is one of the wealthiest companies in the world.

The price is too high is always the first objection. For a sales person to over come that objection, he/she must find out what the prospect actually means. The potential customer may mean:

1. I can't afford it.
2. I can purchase the service elsewhere at better rates.
3. I don't want to buy from you or your company because I don't like you.
4. I don't perceive or understand the value or your service in comparison to your competitors, or;
5. I'm not convinced yet.

The reality of sales is that 50% - 60% of the time, when price is the only objection that means that you're not going to make the sale. However, a positive sales person, then believes there is a 50% window of opportunity;

- It's opening that window of opportunity that will create the sale.
- It's exploring that window of opportunity, so that they can close a sale is what I will focus on.

In closing, it's important to impart to your sales staff that just because a prospect says pricing is too high, doesn't mean he/she won't purchase your services at some time in the future.

QUOTE OF THE WEEK: "Power is setting goals and getting people to reach those goals believing that they did it by themselves".