

Special Edition

Developing a Winning Sales Program Part 4

Over the last several weeks, I've discussed how to develop a successful sales and marketing program and what characteristics are necessary for a sales person to be successful. I have indicated that sales people fail 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.

I further indicated that product knowledge is useless until you know how your product or services are used on the job by a customer in a way that the customer can benefit and profit from that service. I also stated that 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.

A successful sales person is a person that understands that power is setting goals, achieving goals and believing they did it by themselves. Part of creating a successful sales person is "reprogramming" to understand that there is nothing such as a wasted call.

Most sales people believe that, unless they are calling a customer to sell them something, it's wasted time. However, nothing can be further from the truth. Each and every time you talk to a customer, affords you the opportunity to open up another door. In order to be successful, you need to:

- Be enthusiastic – for your enthusiasm will set the tone.
- You need to create excitement about how your service will be exactly what your customer's need – in other words, you need to sell the "sizzle".
- You need to understand that people buy only when they can't fill their own needs with the resources at hand. When a sales person approaches a prospect with a potential "fix to a problem", there is no appreciation for what a prospect must deal with in order to change how he/she is currently handling that problem.

The first thing a sales person needs to do; they need to focus on the buying process. As I stated previously, before people will considering buying, they must;

- Recognize there is something missing.
- They must verbalize it, visualize it, or in some other way, understand the steps needed to get to a solution.

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- They need to explore all possible ways to solve the problem, and;
- They need to understand how to support existing personnel and systems during the disruption an external source creates.

I stated earlier, change presents disruption of the “status quo” and people don’t like change. When a Seller assumes that people will buy, because he/she creates or finds a need, and presents a case for their service, it’s the beginning to the end, because for all practical purposes, they’re not addressing the real issue. That’s finding the need in solving the problem of what the Buyer is looking for.

A successful sales person needs to create a “wish” list;

- A sales person needs to probe.
- They need to uncover many undiscovered problems, which are accidents waiting to happen.
- **Rarely is a prospect totally happy in their present situation and not unwilling to look at improving it in some way, but yet, we never ask the magic question; “are there any conditions under which you would consider supplementing your current service with an additional resource?”**

This is what I refer to as a wish list. In simple terms, a sales persons job is to bring a prospect to a colored sock drawer to help that prospect determine what’s missing and what’s not so they can solve the problem and get the sale.

How do you begin the process? How do you make the prospect confident enough to buy? What should a successful sales person do or not do to create the sale? It all starts when the customer objects. In most cases, the customer won’t tell you the real objection the first time; he/she will just simply stall. However, a master sales person can get through the stall to the real objection. **When I was training sales people, I would ask them what their objections were and why they couldn’t close a sale and they would indicate:**

- “The Buyer wants to think it over.”
- “The Buyer wants to check with two more suppliers.”
- “Our price is too high.”
- “I have to talk it over with my partner.”
- “I’m satisfied with my present vendor.”
- “We’ve spent our entire budget this year.”
- “Get back to me in 6 months.”

In some cases, these are true objections, but in most cases they’re “stalls” and a sales professional needs to take those objections and over come them. This gets down to;

- Knowledge of selling skills.
- Knowledge of your service.
- Knowledge of your prospect.
- The relationship with a prospect.
- Your own individual creativity.
- Your attitude.
- Your sincere desire to help your prospect, and;
- Your persistence.

None of the above has anything to do with price. Some of them may relate to cost, but all of these objections have to do with value.

I will be addressing objections in the next several articles, but in closing, the first thing a successful sales person must do is analyze them self. Before a sales person can achieve their ultimate goal, they need to develop a mission statement. A mission statement is a personal challenge to the individual. It's a chance for that person to define their own legacy. **It's a statement of your philosophy and purposes all rolled into one. It's an opportunity to bring your goals into focus** and transfer your ideas into the real world.

The ground rules for establishing a mission statement is:

- Define what you're dedicated to.
- Define your service to others.
- **Define how you will strive to get better, do better things and grow.**
- Define your commitment to yourself.
- Define your commitment to others, and;
- Define how you're going to achieve your mission.

To sum up a successful sales person in words, it would be:

- Will, dedication, persistence, honesty, ethical, positive, enthusiastic, fun, healthy, effective listener, an individual that likes to learn new things, and someone that can provide encouragement to others.

In my next article, I will discuss how to be different, how to stand out above the crowd to achieve a sale.

QUOTE OF THE WEEK: "If you back pedal, you will lose. If you sprint, you at least have a shot at winning."