

Special Edition

Developing a Winning Sales Program Part 5

Over the last 4 weeks, I've discussed how to develop successful sales people. I have stated that a successful sales person needs to:

- Write down their goals and objectives.
- Start with small goals.
- Establish higher goals and aspirations, and;
- Revisit their goals and objectives daily.

I further indicated that it's important to understand that successful sales people;

- Have objectives.
- Don't make excuses.
- Ask for orders.
- Raise and meet objections.
- Do their homework.
- Manage their time and territory.
- Have product knowledge.
- Listen to the customers needs.
- Talk to decision makers.
- Set high goals.
- Follow up.
- Give concessions, only for return, and;
- Control situations.

One of the most difficult skills for a successful sales person to develop is to be an effective listener. I've indicated that the buyer has the answers. You can't make a sale without a buyer. Until a sales person understands that dynamic, it's very hard for that sales individual to be as successful as they can be.

I also indicated that people don't like change. Change presents disruption to "the status quo". Currently, the transportation industry is inundated with its challenges; it's extremely stressful, and we're trying to develop "calm" in the middle of the storm.

To become a successful sales person, you have to convince the buyer that something is missing. You also have to be able to support the buyers existing personnel and systems during the disruption of the change. I refer to this as "hot button" selling.

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Ahern & Associates, Ltd.

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Consultants Inc.

May 11, 2009

This week, I want to focus on the dynamics of the sale. Most importantly; how to survive and prosper with shippers in a market that dictates price.

First of all, a sales person always has to be enthusiastic because enthusiasm sets the tone;

- They need to create excitement.
- **They need to convince the buyer that there's something missing with their current resources, and;**
- They need to focus on the buying process.

Last week, I discussed the "buying" process and I provided a list of the normal objections a sales person encounters. I stated, in some cases, they're true objections but, in most cases, they're simply a "stalling" technique and a sales professional need to take those objections and overcome them.

I also stated that a sales person needs to analyze themselves. They need to develop a mission statement and they have to define their own legacy. This is a very difficult market, but it's also a market that people can excel in if they become creative and establish the "ground rules" for not only establishing their mission statements, but accomplishing specific goals and objectives. **It all gets down to; will, dedication, persistence, and the ability to always learn.**

In my years of training sales people, I've noticed that many of them aren't properly prepared. They find excuses why they're not performing and they refuse to look at themselves and analyze themselves and recognize that if they're not selling, there's something fundamentally wrong with their process. Defining a sales territory is a prime example and, in part 1, I provided 11 basic questions to be utilized in learning and developing your territory as well as establishing goals.

Those 11 characteristics should be the guiding fundamentals to "begin" the process of change. Once a sales person has developed their goals and objectives, they need to develop a "wow" factor. We have all heard the term, but many times it's misapplied. Wow separates the strong from the weak; it separates the sincere from the insincere; it separates the sales professionals from the failures, and it separates the yes's from the no's.

Wow is really the measure of a sales person's power and their ability to perform. The question becomes; "are you using the wow factor"? **The wow factor is one of the most powerful aspects of sales because you're differentiating yourselves from the other 10,000 sales people** that are calling your prospects. I utilize this wow factor with my sales analysts on a daily basis. **My sales staff is trained to;**

- Only deal with the decision maker.
- They're specifically taught how to get past the "gate keeper", and;
- Their presentation is not a "canned" presentation; it touches on issues that concern customers based on current economic conditions.

As a sales person starts this process, they begin to realize that success equates to organization, knowledge and combining techniques to become successful. Earlier, I indicated that you can measure how much "wow" an individual sales person has by evaluating their productivity. **Successful sales people are;**

- Persistent.
- They're knowledgeable about their prospect.
- They're prepared.
- They're 10 minutes early for an appointment.
- **They're very professional – they dress properly, have professional accessories, they're very crisp and clean and they have good business cards, and;**
- They get to the point quickly. Then question, listen and question again.

They are in a position where they can extract most of the information that they need in a very short amount of time and they don't interrupt the buyer while he's talking;

- They separate themselves from their competition and everybody else.
- They're creative; they have new ideas.
- They have a great presentation.

In other words, they're different from every other sales person a customer talks to;

- They're confident in what they say and the way they act.
- They're able to build rapport fast and keep building it during the presentation.
- They use humor, humor and more humor, and;
- **They act and speak as though the deal is already completed. They are assuming that the sale is completed.**

This is not to confuse confidence with cockiness. One works, the other fails. There's an additional component and that's a positive, enthusiastic and focused individual. In today's economy, with all the challenges that the trucking industry has, **it's more important than ever that when your sales person is in front of a prospect, they realize that;**

- Their time is valuable.
- They have something to say.
- The sales person believes that your service is far superior than your competition;
- They recognize that pricing is only 50% of the sale, and;
- **The balance is building the relationship, doing what you say you're going to do, and doing it consistently.**

This means that a successful sales person never quits;

- They put passion in their presentation.
- They focus on their buyers needs, and;
- **Their main objective is to get one word – yes!**

How many times do you categorize a person based upon the product or service they're selling? Take, for example, an insurance agent or insurance broker;

- They dress the same.
- They look the same.
- They drive fancy cars, but you buy from one particular insurance agent or broker – why?

It consists of feelings of trust; a perception of his/her success and your perception of their ability to perform in difficult times. That's exactly the image you want your sales people to project each and every time they're in front of a prospect.

It's important for a sales person to recognize that if they want to be memorable, they must create an image, in the mind of the prospect, which distinguishes them from others. What you do; how you do it, what you say, how you say it, really distinguish and set you aside from the rest of your competition.

Over the next several weeks, I will be focusing on these areas. I'm also going to be focusing on what an employer needs to do to assist his sales staff in becoming successful.

In closing, people should understand that humor melts ice; it warms the coldest of hearts and it makes the sale.

QUOTE OF THE WEEK: **“The minute you settle for less than you deserve, you get even less than you settle for.”**