



Tricks of the Trade

November 2011

Achieve Sales Success without ever having to pitch

This month I emphasize just how crucial it is to understand your customers and prospects, their specific needs, their hurts, their dreams. Quite simply, companies that fully understand their customers in this way will be thriving, despite the economic backdrop. It really is that fundamental to sales success.

If you have friends or colleagues that would benefit from these tips, feel free to pass them or share via the social media links.

Achieve Sales Success without ever having to pitch

It's really easy to talk about you, your company and how good your products and services are.

That's a mistake, alongside making assumptions about your prospect before the relationship begins. Many don't bother to find out what the prospect or customer REALLY needs.

Only when you truly understand what's going on in their heads, can you truly match it with your offering.

Understanding as much as possible about your client's perspective is vital in developing rapport - a vital pre-requisite for sales success.

Growing a strong and positive relationship where you focus on your client's needs, problems, challenges and desires will ultimately lead to the successful matching of your products or services...and, for the best possible motives...THE WELFARE OF YOUR CLIENT.

Everybody has their own unique 'Map of the World'

Everybody is different - everybody is unique. That's as a result of the multitude of their individual influences, events, successes, disappointments, peer groups, working relationships, family relationships as they pass through life.

You have your unique map - and everyone you come into contact with will have their

unique map too. Family, friends, colleagues. And of course your customers and prospects. Respect and acknowledge this - then let it work for you.

No two people's paths will be the same - so why treat them the same?

Forget you - and forget your standard sales presentation! Yes you should have a 30 second pitch for quick chance meetings and parties! But from now on every sales situation you encounter needs a different approach.

An approach that acknowledges that everyone is different.

Take a typical sales pitch

A sales person gets shown in to a room and is faced with one or more representatives of the potential customer. The prospect expects a pitch. The sales person expects to do a well rehearsed pitch - and off they go.

Perhaps some research has been conducted beforehand. Usually I find it's not much! So the standard pitch gets rolled out and the prospects are left to pick which products and services may be of use to them from a bewildering range. The sales person speaks nonstop for the whole pitch with maybe a few questions at the end and a general discussion if it's going well.

The problems with this approach is that a) the real pains of the customer are never established b) There's no genuine connection or rapport c) There's often no real feedback of whether the sales person is close to a sale or not d) everything has been delivered according to the sales person's map of the world and the map of the receiver is never elicited or acknowledged.

An alternative approach?

Walk in - and say something like "rather than talk non-stop about us and what we do - I'm very interested in you, your company and your current and future challenges. Then I'll be in a much better position to suggest whether - and how, we might help you conquer your challenges and drive you towards your business objectives. Would that be helpful?"

Assuming a yes - "thank you - so, in the area of xxxx, what would you say your current issues are"

A two way exchange ensues.

The advantages being...

- 1) They're talking and you're listening, that's the way it should be
- 2) You're finding out gems of information about their needs which you can incorporate when you talk
- 3) You're finding out about how they're 'programmed' for example whether they are 'pain or gain' motivated, their representational systems, if internal or externally focussed. And you can tailor your language accordingly to maximise rapport.
- 4) Of course you're learning exactly how you can specifically help them - and are now able to give examples of how you've helped similar companies with similar problems before.

This approach is bound to be more successful. You've connected, built genuine rapport, and identified what they need - and have something for them that's going to hit the target 100%

The exact structure of these exchanges will of course vary according to whether you sell business to business or business to consumer. Remember that whoever is your prospect, selling is about a two way exchange and not a one way pitch.

Let me know how you get on.

Until next time.

Leigh

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PS - please forward these tips to anyone you think would benefit from them.

Get Help With Your Sales

020 7903 5426

Bonus Tips...

Quick Sales Tip 1

If you go to networking events it's tempting to head for those people there that you already know.

Yet if you really want to get the greatest value, make sure you spend the vast majority of your networking time with people you don't know.

More challenging? Possibly. More rewarding? Definitely!

Quick Sales Tip 2

Take FULL responsibility for your sales.

Don't blame others - that only leads to a path of mediocrity.

Take responsibility for your actions and decisions.

Successful sales people take responsibility for everything they do AND everything that happens to them.

Quick Sales Tip 3

Sales success will go to the best prepared, self believing, responsible person who sees opportunities and is willing to take risks to seize them when they come.

If you really want it...you don't have to be the fastest, the most powerful or the lowest priced...you just need to take action and GSD - Get Stuff Done!