



Tricks of The Trade April 2012

The Importance of Mentoring

Hope you're well.

Well is it Spring? Or is it Winter?

Tropical temperatures in March, heavy snow in April (in some parts of the UK at least). And having been to California in March and Sweden in April on training missions I think I've experienced enough temperature variations to last me a few months thank you very much!

This month I want to reiterate the importance of getting yourself a mentor. I have a fabulous mentor myself and as a result feel like my business is getting the advice, help and unbiased support it needs to realise the goals we've set.

We all need help now and again. Those who say they don't need it probably need it the most!!

Mentoring

How much help do you get in your business?

Who have you got to bounce ideas off that don't bring their own baggage into the equation?

Do you seriously believe that someone, somewhere hasn't had the same challenges you're experiencing right now?

If you listed your top three current challenges, I would bet that these are issues that many other business owners, business leaders, sales professionals have experienced in the past.

Whether you're running a small business, managing within a larger organisation or running or intending to do any of these in the future, seriously consider getting yourself a MENTOR.

Everybody's at it - top sportsmen, business leaders, dare I say it leading politicians!

What's a Mentor?

- Someone who you feel can help you in your pursuit of your career objectives, whatever they are - more sales, a promotion, improved leadership skills, more self control, better networking techniques etc.
- Someone who can give you a neutral take on your latest challenges - they should have no axe to grind.
- Someone with a vast bank of knowledge that you can tap into - who's been there, done that...and collected a few T shirts along the way.

- Someone you check in with now and again to bounce your latest ideas.
- Someone you trust to challenge you, to prod you, to ask you searching questions.

A good mentor...

...will use a variety of different approaches and move seamlessly between them - coaching, counselling, mentoring, advising, training, guiding, whatever you need.

Critically, you can learn from their mistakes! Get to know the pitfalls and how to avoid them

Getting yourself a mentor isn't a sign of weakness. On the contrary it's a sign of strength, a sign that you are willing to garner all the resources you can in your pursuit of your goals. It's not about copying them, it's about using their experience and advice and adopting it in a way that works for you.

How does mentoring work?

Any way you want it to!

You can go the formal route. Have regular scheduled sessions with a paid professional coach or mentor who can offer you the level and breadth of experience you need to tap into.

More informally you might find someone in your organisation that can help (bear in mind it can't be someone you report to). Ask them if they would be available as a mentor and offer to take them for lunch now and again in return for picking their brains.

You'd be surprised...

...how experienced achievers like to be asked about how they have achieved success - they will be impressed by your drive and initiative!

You and your mentor need to get on well. Choose someone you have good rapport with.

Get away from your normal place of work. No phones, no interruptions, it all helps. Look upon it as an investment of time and money in YOU.

How long should you and your mentor spend together? Anything from an hour a month upwards. You may need more time at first and top up mentoring sessions further down the line.

So - don't plough that lone furrow. Tap into an external source of support - and watch those sales increase!

And let me know how you get on.

Until next time...

Leigh

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To get your FREE download of "The Biggest Sales Mistakes" go here

For previous 'Tricks of the Trade' go here

Quick Sales Tip 1

Do you manage a sales team?

If they do something that you are unhappy with and you say nothing, unconsciously you are saying to them that it's ok for that to continue.

If they are not doing things you really want them to do and you ignore it, you're saying it's ok NOT to do it. No words are used on either example - but a message is sent nonetheless.

Quick Sales Tip 2

Do you ever get complaints?

See them as a perfect opportunity in sales! It's those that don't complain and quietly ditch you that are the concern!

A complaint can be subtle - they may tell you very calmly, rather than shown in anger, but they are giving you an important message all the same.

See complaints as your chance to shine. Respond proactively and these customers will become your biggest fans.

Quick Sales Tip 3

Does your marketing talk about you?, your company, your products, how many awards you've won?

You know it really should be talking about 'them', the problems they can get solved, the goals they aspire to, how they want to feel.

If your brochure, your emails, your website talks about you, you're not making as many sales as you could be.