



the sales consultancy

THE BARRIERS TO AN A-CLASS SALES TEAM

There really are only 2 barriers when it comes to having a team of high performers... and they are easy to spot when you know what to look out for!

The Valley of Reasons and Excuses

It's so much easier to blame something else or someone else when we're not doing well. It lets your lower performers off the hook so that they can maintain their image of themselves. If you've got people like this then it means they have entered The Valley of Reasons and Excuses. When this happens to a member of your sales team you need to get them out of The Valley as fast as possible...before they pull in other struggling sales people.

IT'S NOT MY FAULT!

I'VE NO CONTROL OVER THIS

REASONS AND EXCUSES

THE CLUES:

- Your sales person will blame external factors for their lack of sales... the industry, people leaving, budget cuts, internal issues, IT systems, their personal life, the list is endless!
- It's never their fault.
- They can easily drag other non-performing members of the team into The Valley, then they all find it really difficult to climb out.
- They are in victim mode.

WHAT TO DO:

- Listen to what they have to say about their performance...let them talk and without interruption.
- When they've finished acknowledge that these factors are indeed challenges to be addressed with empathy and rapport...then ask:

SO, IF XXX IS STOPPING YOU CLOSING MORE SALES, WHAT ARE YOU GOING TO DO ABOUT IT?

- Allow them to come up with a number of actions that they are committed to and agree a review date.

My belief is that we create everything that happens in our lives by the actions we choose to take and the actions we choose not to take. This is very liberating because when stuff happens in my life that's not too great, I ask myself "how did I contribute to this happening?" It's a great strategy and helps me to stay out of The Valley and keep my personal power.

By the way...we all have the potential to go into The Valley so be mindful of your own thoughts and language. The only difference between a non-performing sales person and a successful one is the length of time they stay in The Valley.

Observe the individuals in your sales team and you'll find that your top performers seldom blame or relinquish responsibility for their sales results!

Negative Beliefs

What is a belief? It's a perception you've created at some point in your life based on an experience you've had. It's not a truth or a fact; it's your perspective on what that experience meant to you. While beliefs feel like they're real, they're often not, yet we hold onto them as though they were set in stone...heaven forbid anyone that opposes your beliefs!

There are two types of beliefs: the first type is the positive and empowering type. These reinforce what we do well and they make us feel strong and confident.

Then there are the negative, disempowering beliefs. These are the negative things that you think about yourself that stop you from even trying or committing to things because deep down, you believe that you can't do them.

You may have heard some of your team express things like I can't sell to x types, I can't present to a large group, I'll never be able to get more sales than x person...there's an I can't for most things. Even worse...they may be thinking them and not saying anything, which means you have no idea what's going on in their mind. These negative beliefs will stop your sales people from achieving by creating either an avoidance strategy of certain sales activities or a mediocre attempt at them!

The other point to note is that most of our beliefs are unconscious...so we don't even realise they are there!

I CAN'T...

IT'S NOT POSSIBLE

THE CLUES:

- Your sales person will openly make I can't statements.
- They may not voice their belief and instead avoid specific sales activities that they believe they can't do...despite your instruction, coaching or demands!
- Even the most confident sales people can be affected by negative beliefs...in fact we all have them!

WHAT TO DO:

- Find a quiet space where you won't be disturbed. Get into rapport then ask... "What stops you doing x?" Be sure to shut up and wait for their answer.
- You may need to use your coaching skills to nurture them through this but what you'll learn is the I can't belief that's getting in the way. Be sure not to judge or discredit the belief in any way. Remember it's written in stone for them at the moment!

Once you have the negative belief out in the open come up with examples where they have displayed the behaviour they say they can't do. They may have to dig deep to remember these positive examples – they are discounted by the mind when a negative belief is prominent. These examples can be in or out of work. For example...if one of your team had the negative belief that they can't present to a large group then remind them of a time when they did just that and got a great response. Get them to associate into the memory and voice it in as much detail as possible. Help them with anything they may have left out. When they are finished say something like... "so you can give a presentation and get a great response" After the first example they may say something like "oh that was a fluke". This is common. Go through 3 examples and they will realise they can actually do it!

Once they've gone through the 3 examples ask them... "so what do you believe now?" Again be quiet and wait for their response. They should say something much more empowering. Be sure that it's worded in a positive way...for example "I'm not rubbish at X" is stated in a negative way so get them to focus on what they want instead. I always ask "if you're not rubbish at X what are you doing instead?" Once the empowering belief is stated in the positive get them to write it down and repeat it to themselves as many times a day as they can until it becomes ingrained.

Check in with them regularly (especially in the first few days) to see how they are getting on.

This is a much-condensed version of my Negative Belief Buster process so if you'd like a free guide please do get in touch :)

My closing thought...merely teaching your sales people the technical skills to get great results isn't enough. You need them to absolutely believe they can successfully do it or they simply won't take action.

very best wishes,
Leigh x

If this has triggered some thoughts about your sales team that you'd like to chat more about then feel free to contact me direct on leigh@sales-consultancy.com or 020 7993 2257