

KEYS TO SUCCESSFUL SELLING: THE MARKETING NEWSLETTER OF

# Product Data...Quick

## Don't Let The Economy Slow You Down...

Last week I visited a friend who is in charge of sales in an automotive dealership. When I asked about his business, he complained about the slowdown in car sales. As he showed me his sales records, I looked over his shoulder to scan the activity on the showroom floor and on the car lot.

While there was not a single customer in sight, there were five salespeople waiting for customers to drop in. One studied the local newspaper, another concentrated on Sports Illustrated, numbers three and four observed the traffic outside and number five just sat there, staring into space.

The sales manager explained that other dealerships confirmed that business has dropped off. He also mentioned reports from several automotive manufacturers that indicate a nationwide downward trend in automotive sales.

I asked the oblivious question, "If business is down, why aren't your sales people making calls? Instead of waiting for customers to show up. Why aren't they calling their old customers and getting new leads?"

Caught by surprise, the sales manager said, "You're right they should be doing that. But why should I be the one to tell them? Why can't they think of this on their own?" I answered, "Because as the manager you are in charge of 'what to do' and 'how to do it'. If you tell your salespeople that you expect them to call 40 customers a day, and if you give them a good script, they'll be sitting behind their telephones making calls.

If you provide the 'what-to' and the 'how to' they'll follow your direction. If you wait for them to take the initiative, nothing will happen.

How do salespeople react to a slowdown in a slowing economy?

**1. Persistence pays off.** Sales managers who set high standards for persistence won't enable their teams to walk the path of least resistance. It's the sales manager's attitude that determines the attitude of the sales team. If your attitude says, 'we'll persist' and we'll respectfully decline the next invitation to the next recession,' then your team is likely to win.

**2.** It does not really matter where the economy is going – **what matters is where you're going.** If you are clear about your goal, if you know how many calls it takes to close a sale, if you do whatever it takes to reach your goal, you'll do well in any economic cycle.

**3. Boost the motivation to win.** Create short-term incentive program to reward effort. You'll quickly realize that the economy is not driven by the interest rates set by the Fed, but by the interest sales managers show in motivating their teams.

**4. Get back to basics.** Nothing can spoil a sales team more than success. If last year was great, chances are that your salespeople are already



skipping vital steps in the cycle. They may leave out the cosy-justification step, make shortcuts in their presentation or use weak closes. If sales have slowed down, it's time to sharpen the ax and start a "boot camp sales training program."

**5. Get more creative.** When business slows down, salespeople are hungry for new ideas. Good sales managers know that problems are nothing more than wake-up calls for creativity. Schedule a brief brainstorming session every week. The goal: to improve every single process within your sales organization. When business slows down, let your creativity lurch into overdrive. Just a few creative sales ideas will pull your sales forward to the fast lane. ♦

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## How To Keep Your Positive Edge

**T**wo methods, when used together, can propel you into a positive force field where no amount of disappointment or rejection can penetrate or destroy your will to succeed.

Use positive self-talk. Every morning, when you get ready to start your day say to yourself, "I will think positively today, all day, no matter what my day may bring. I will think 'I can. I will. I must.'" Throughout the day repeat these words to yourself, no matter what happens and especially when the day gets rocky and things don't go your way. Tell yourself, "I am capable. I am positively going to get good results."

Now that you are in the right frame of mind, act it! Stand tall, speak from your diaphragm, smile, smile, smile and square your shoulders to face the world head on. Compliment others on what they do, how they look, and how they come across to you. Make friends, but don't be afraid to stick up for your rights. Don't back down, but if you must, back off temporarily. Then come back to win another time.

With these two approaches to every day's challenges and roadblocks, you'll be ready to face every situation as an opportunity for winning. ♦

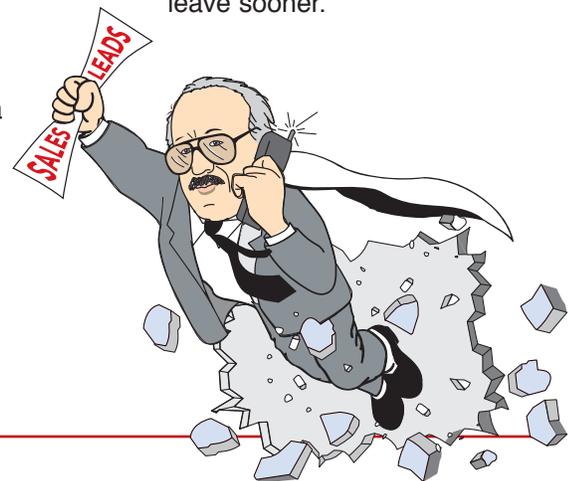
## Twelve Reasons Why Sales People Fail

- 1. Not making enough calls.**
- 2. Not following through with promises made.** Prospects judge you by what you do, not by what you say.
- 3. Not listening.** Your understanding of your prospect's unique needs will not increase by you talking.
- 4. Not starting every day with a plan.** Set goals for each day and each week.
- 5. Not describing customer benefits clearly, succinctly and persuasively.** Prospects are persuaded by "meaty" words, not "watery" sentences.
- 6. Not asking for the order often enough.** Failing to ask for the order is the same as asking for failure.
- 7. Negatively prejudging the prospect's ability to buy.** If you imagine that your prospect won't buy, you're developing a self-fulfilling prophecy.
- 8. Not dealing with customer objections head on.** When a prospect has an objection, welcome it as a question that you're happy to answer.
- 9. Ignoring the power of a positive attitude.** When things don't go your way, change your attitude. A



positive attitude will help you cope with failure, rejection and disappointment.

- 10. Not changing and growing.** Granted, change and growth bring pain, but resisting change and growth lead to more failure and greater pain.
- 11. Lack of focus on priorities.** Sales people with a clear focus on the most important and most urgent tasks will always get better results than sales people who allow themselves to get side-tracked.
- 12. Failure to work harder and smarter.** Sales people who quit early will be asked to leave sooner.



## Quick! Hints



## Listen Up!

and service far outweigh the price difference". Example: "We do more than \$12 million a year in sales at these prices. We couldn't do that if our customers weren't convinced that we were the best buy."

is Mike Gilbertson with the Greener Corporation. I'll be in your area on this date and would like to meet with you. I'll be at your plant/ office at [name the time and the date]. If I don't hear from you I'll assume that this time and date are convenient for you." I then say, "Thank you and I look forward to seeing you" and repeat the time and date.

## Fax The Facts

Have you ever made repeated calls to a decision maker who never returned your calls? Here's a useful tip.

Make an enlarged photocopy of your phone message pad. Fill it out as though you were the decision maker's assistant writing down a message. In the TO field write down the decision maker's name; in the FROM field write your name. Fill out the MESSAGE field saying that you called and can be reached at your specified number. Then fax your "message" to the elusive decision maker. Expect a call. Try it.

## The Five C's Of Professionals

Professionals possess Conviction, Concern, Confidence, Courage and Curiosity. Their **conviction** is strong that their product will solve the prospect's problem. Their **concern** is genuine that the prospect buy now for his own benefit. Their **confidence** is strong that they can persuade the prospect to take action. Their **courage** enables them to ask the prospect to take action now for his own best interest. Their insatiable **curiosity** causes them not to wonder why the grass is greener on the other side...but to climb over the fence to see how the grass is being fertilized and learn the brand being used!

## Price Is Too High!

The objection I hear most often is "Your price is too high!" In response you might want to answer, "Sure, our price may be a bit higher than our competitors, but our quality, reliability

## Listen Like A Good Friend

Good customer relations depend on good listening skills. Use these listening statistics and tips to help you hear what you're missing and increase your sales.

- Over 50 percent of selling is listening. Keep quiet and let your customers tell you how to sell them.

- Theoretically, communication is 20 percent fact and 80 percent emotion. Successful salespeople listen for facts and feelings.

- We speak at about 180 words per minute, but we think at about four times that speed. Stay focused by practicing the EARS technique: Evaluate, Anticipate, Review and Summarize the conversation.

- Studies show that attention spans last about 30 seconds. Keep prospects attentive by pausing every 30 seconds to allow them to cut in and contribute.

- Periodically summarize what you hear to keep in sync with your customer... The more attentive and alert you are, the more information you will retain.

## Voice Mail Problems?

I really liked this idea so I put a little twist on it. Since voice mail is making it more and more difficult to reach prospects and customers, I leave the following message after making two unsuccessful attempts to make contact: "Hello, this

## 3 Ways To Sell Yourself

1. Show sincere interest in your prospects by asking questions and letting them talk while you listen.
2. Always do what you say you will do and deliver what you promise, plus a little extra.
3. Show how you have helped others, and make a commitment to your buyers to do the same for them.

## Side-By-Side

Sitting face-to-face with you prospects and debating your product's merits or liabilities can make a buyer/seller relationship feel more adversarial than allied. To show prospects you're on their side, try sitting beside them instead of across from them. Anything you say working as a team with them or working for them may ring truer if your position and body language reinforces your words. As always, showing genuine concern for your buyers, asking questions and listening carefully don't hurt your chances either!



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READ IT...ADVERTISE IN IT!

## Are You a Good Listener?

How many of these poor listening habits do you have?

- You spend more time talking than listening.
- You frequently interrupt.
- You hardly say anything or respond non-verbally during conversations—you don't give the speaker feedback that you are listening.
- You jump in and finish someone else's sentence.
- You divert conversations from what the speaker is saying to what interests you.
- Most of your conversations focus on you.
- You frequently daydream when others talk.
- You plan your response while the speaker is still talking.
- You're quick to provide advice, even when not asked.
- You interrupt slow speakers using the excuse that they need to speed up.
- You ask so many questions that speakers cannot convey their thoughts.
- You make judgments about what is said before the speaker has finished.
- You like to answer a question with a question.
- You are easily distracted during a conversation.



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- Sally

