

Sales Quote of The Month:

"If you don't know where you are going, you'll end up someplace else." – Yogi Bera

Sales Tip of The Month:

Just like meetings with customers, schedule at least an hour of prospecting time in your calendar each day. Take out your next week's calendar and book it now! Then stick to it, no matter what!

Without a plan of action on how to achieve your sales objectives, the annual ritual of goal setting is just an exercise in futility!

January 2009

Issue 1

What Is Your Goal?

Happy New Year!

At this time of year, we tend to look forward and set both personal and professional goals for the year.

Take a moment and think back to 2008. Did you reach the goals you set for yourself last year? If not, it's probably because you did not develop a plan of action to achieve them.

When you are in a performance-based career like sales, goal setting is vital to your success. Vital yes, but without a plan of action on how to achieve your objectives, the annual ritual of goal setting is just an exercise in futility.

So what are your goals? Is it the sales quota that your sales manager just assigned at your annual kick off meeting? Perhaps. True, your minimum acceptable level of sales performance is important, but is it YOUR goal?

Is your sales quota important enough for you to hold it near and dear to your heart and make it a

driving force in your life? Probably not.

What you do for a living is a means to achieving what you want in life. In other words, the sales career that you have chosen is the way in which you earn income to fund the lifestyle that you want.

Your lifestyle is a personal decision, but determining the income required to fund it should be your first step in goal setting. Determining the day-to-day activities required to earn that income is the next step.

A sales career is a profession that lives on the law of averages. Using a little basic math, you can quickly determine what activities you need to commit to do each day to achieve your personal goals.

What do you have to do each and every sales day to reach your lifestyle goals? To answer that, simply reverse the sales process by asking yourself the following questions:

1. What is my desired lifestyle?
2. What is the income needed to fund my desired lifestyle?
3. How much do I have to sell to earn my desired income?
4. How many proposals do I need to present to sell that amount?
5. How many fact find appointments does this require?
6. How many prospecting calls does this equate to?

By breaking out a larger task into the daily activities needed to complete it, you greatly increase your chances of reaching your goal. In other words, completing the daily activity is much easier than achieving an annual target.

Once you know what you must do each and every sales day, you have created your plan of action. In other words, you are not wishing for a Happy New Year, you are making it happen!



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Ask The B2B Sales Coach

Dear B2B Sales Coach:

When I am prospecting, I always hear "I am happy with my current supplier." I can't sell when I can't even get in the door. How do you handle this objection?

- Peter, Halifax, NS

Dear Peter:

Of course you hear this objection over and over! Most prospects are happy with their current supplier. Otherwise, they would have called you before you called them! If by some chance the prospect was unhappy enough that he picked up the phone to call you, they would have also called your competitors as well.

Dig deeper into the prospect's relationship with his current supplier. Ask how long they have been dealing with their supplier and why they changed to them in the first place. Ask what it is specifically that makes them happy with their current supplier.

You must also plan ahead by knowing what competitive advantages you have over that supplier. You can then develop questions which differentiate yourself. For example: "Mr. Prospect, some users of your brand of widgets have told us that they experienced an issue with _____. Have you ever experienced this problem? How did that affect your operation? Would it help if we solved that problem?"

By being prepared with questions for at least three competitive advantages for each particular supplier, you should create enough need in the prospect's eyes so that you can get the appointment. If not, perhaps they were not the competitive advantages that you thought they were!

Don't be surprised by this objection. Expect it and plan for it!

Good selling!

- The B2B Sales Coach

Recommended Reading

Allen Carr's Easy Way To Stop Smoking by Allen Carr

It's not directly related to sales, but in the spirit of setting goals for the New Year, if you smoke, this book will change your life! Everyone that reads it, quits. I did.

To recommend a good sales or sales management read, please email the B2B Sales Coach.

About B2B Sales Connections

B2B Sales Connections provides consulting services to sales organizations and sales professionals in the business to business marketplace. Founded by successful, experienced professionals, the firm specializes in helping clients achieve greater sales success by focusing on recruiting, training and marketing services for both the employer and employee alike.

In addition to consulting, B2B Sales Connections is Canada's premier niche job board and career website dedicated only to business to business sales professionals.