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Issue 1

## Sales Quote of The Month:

"Those who say it can't be done are usually interrupted by others doing it." – James Baldwin

## Sales Tip of The Month:

Professional athletes always go through a pre-game warm up to ensure that they are mentally prepared to perform at their best. So should sales people. Before you enter your prospect's office, take a moment, and get your head in the game!

***The fact of the matter is that where you prospect is as important as how much you prospect.***

## Where Do You Prospect?

Have you ever been told, "Here's your business cards, there's a street. Now go and bang on some doors."? Or how about, "Here is the phone book, start dialing!"

Although these shotgun methods of prospecting may produce results, it really is sheer luck if they do. The chances that you happen to knock on the right door, or dial the right number, at the exact time when a prospect is ready to buy are actually quite slim.

Granted, sales is a numbers game, requiring you to make a certain number of calls to find one prospect, but what if you could improve the odds? If it used to take you 20 calls to find one prospect, how much more would you sell if it only took you 10 calls?

The fact of the matter is where you prospect is as important as how much you prospect. In other words, you should spend your time where you are lost likely to be successful.

It is dangerous to believe that every company can and will buy your product or service. For example, if you sell restaurant supplies, it is unlikely that you will make any sales to retail clothing stores. You would be better off not trying to in the first place!

To maximize your prospecting time, you need to clearly define what types of companies will most likely buy your products. This definition is commonly referred to as your target market, and it is essentially a description of your current and future customers.

This description should include the industry which they operate in, the size of the company perhaps based on the number of employees, the products they buy and the competitors they buy them from. Your target market definition may be more specific depending on the product or service you sell.

Your target market definition should also include when a prospect

can buy. Ask yourself how often a company re-orders your product or how often they re-negotiate the contract for its use. If a company is only 2 years into a 5 year buying cycle, they really are not a prospect at this time.

The best way to define where to spend your prospecting efforts is to analyze where you have been successful in the past.

Make a list or spreadsheet of all of your last quarter's sales, and cross reference it to your target market definition, with a separate column for industry, size of business, geographical location etc. Do you see trends emerge? Do you make more sales to certain sized companies in particular industries in specific geographical markets? Chances are you do, and that is where you should be spending your prospecting time.

Once you know your targets, spend your time where you're most likely to find them. Don't just work harder, work smarter!



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## ***Ask The B2B Sales Coach***

Dear B2B Sales Coach:

My order processing department says my paperwork is a mess. Any suggestions?

- Ray, Oshawa, ON

Dear Ray:

It is a common misconception that sales people are not good at sales order paperwork. In fact, the top sales producers, those that are making the highest incomes, are often also those that produce the cleanest paperwork. Why? They know that sloppy paperwork wastes time, is embarrassing in front of customers, and delays commission payments. Therefore, they simply choose to do it right the first time.

Whenever possible, have all the necessary paperwork to complete your sale filled out before you arrive at the customer's office. This is much less stressful than trying to complete everything when the prospect is watching you.

Take the time and double check everything before hand. If you are not sure what you have done is correct, ask your order processing department before you visit the customer. Perhaps they could give you samples of properly completed paperwork for you to have on file when you need to reference it. An ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure!

Always carry in your briefcase at least two blank copies of every piece of paper a customer may have to sign. If you make a mistake while in front of the customer, at least you have a back up that you can use without having to run back to the office.

The next time you are running out the door thinking that you do not have enough time to properly prepare for your closing meeting, stop and think again. If you don't have time to do it right the first time, when you going to find time to do it right the second time?

- The B2B Sales Coach

## ***Recommended Reading***

### **Think and Grow Rich, Revised by Napoleon Hill**

Originally written in the 1930's, this is a classic, with timeless lessons about the power of positive thinking in achieving what you want in life. It is no wonder that it has sold millions of copies, and has motivated countless people to attain success.

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

## ***About B2B Sales Connections***

*AIM HIGHER* is written and edited by Susan A. Enns, managing partner of B2B Sales Connections. She has a proven track record of success, with over 20 years of direct sales, management and executive level business to business experience.

B2B Sales Connections provides consulting services to the business to business marketplace. including the operation of Canada's premier niche job board and career training website dedicated only to business to business sales professionals. The firm helps clients achieve greater sales success by focusing on recruiting, training and marketing services for both the employer and employee alike.