

Sales Quote of The Month:

When was the last time you heard the demand, "Get me the cheapest brain surgeon you can find!" – Alan Weiss

Sales Tip of The Month:

Find time to do just one more call a day. That is 260 calls a year, or an extra month to make money every year!

The telephone impacts our professional lives on a daily basis. If you have poor telephone skills you are going to suffer and never make it to the next stage in the customers buying cycle.

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Issue 1

Upgrade Your Phone Skills

As sales professionals we spend a great deal of our time leaving messages for colleagues, clients and prospects yet the vast majority of sales people have terrible telephone phone skills.

Here's a list of never fail tips:

- When you get a gatekeeper, never start a call by saying: "Hi, how are you today?" Many executive assistants at the C-level will say the minute they hear those words they know a sales rep is making a prospecting call. If you don't know the executive or gatekeeper then simply say, "Hello. Is Bill Smith available? It's Bob Weese calling from B2B Sales Connections." Simple direct and accurate.
- You must have a plan ready for voice mail. If you hum, haw and ramble you are most likely going to have your message deleted before they ever listen through to the painful end.
- Give your name and phone number off the top so they can write it down immediately. Secondly, use a little good news or a benefit statement to get them interested. "Fred, its Bob Weese calling from B2B Sales Connections. My number is xxx-xxx-xx,xx. Great news. We have enough widgets in stock to fill your order if we get it in today. Give me a call and we can start the process. My number is XXX-XXX-XX,XX. Again, that's XXX-XXX-XX,XX."
- To ensure you are saying the number slowly, write it down as you say it. Many sales people ramble on for more than a minute in a disjointed uninteresting message only to fire out their phone number as quickly as humanly possible. Oops, the prospect, finding it impossible to make out your phone number, lost interest and hit the delete key before you finished.
- Regardless of how well you know the person at the other end, leave a call back phone number. The recipient may have pulled messages from a different phone outside of the office, and your number may be buried on their desk, in a file, well out of reach. If you don't leave your number, you have now dropped from an immediate action item to a "get around to it". Make it easy for your clients and always leave a number.
- Empty your voice mailbox. Nothing will kill your sales momentum like a customer getting the message, "this mailbox is full, goodbye".
- Face the facts landlines are almost 100 per cent crystal clear while mobiles can range from good to "I could do better with two tin cans and a string". If you are calling to discuss an important issue or concern, don't try and carry on the conversation while either you or your customer is in traffic heading home or to an appointment. Save the important calls for a time when you can focus 100 per cent on the customer and the message.



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Ask The B2B Sales Coach

Dear B2B Sales Coach:

I have completed my sales process, however the customers still are not buying, even when I am saving them money! Any ideas that can help me close these sales?

- John, Toronto, ON

Dear John:

Closing a sale should be a logical conclusion to your selling process. However if at the end of the process your customers do not see value in your solution, they will not buy, no matter what the price!

A closing question that works well is "Mr. Customer, in your opinion, is this proposal the right solution for your organization today?" If your prospect says yes, great! The customer sees the value of your recommendation. Pull out the contracts!

However, if your prospect says no, or hums and haws, he is not yet convinced of the value of your solution. You may need to resell the benefits of your solution, or you may need to rework the solution itself. The prospect may also need to see further proof that you can do what you say you can do.

Sometimes a prospect will disguise his no as something like "I don't have the budget." Just take the objection out of the equation. "Assuming you had the budget, Mr. Customer, in your opinion do you feel that this is the right solution for your organization?" If you still do not get a yes, you have not revealed the true objection.

Go back over the prospects in your sales funnel and ask the "Is this the right solution for your organization today?" question. If you don't get an immediate yes, then perhaps you may need to go back to resell the value.

Good selling!

- The B2B Sales Coach

Recommended Reading

Becoming Preferred – How to Outsell Your Competition
by Michael Vickers

Great ideas to implement to increase your perceived value in your customer's eyes.

Like to make a reading recommendation? Just email the B2B Sales Coach at askthecoach@b2bsalesconnections.com

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.

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