

Bad Habits of Good Salespeople

Some salespeople close new business continuously while others, albeit personable and seemingly good at what they do, have fallen into a rut of less & less closed sales - - one reason may be because they've fallen into bad habits without even realizing it. (Note: If you are a business owner, you too are a salesperson ...When you talk to someone about your business, you need to be direct, authentic, and unattached to the outcome.)

Are you a victim of any of these bad habits? See if you recognize any of these in your daily sales activities..

#1) Sticking to People You Know - - It's far easier to communicate regularly with those whom we've already met & have rapport. However, if we stay within our "comfort zone" it limits our potential for growth. Oftentimes, at networking events, we gravitate toward someone we have met before. While it's always nice to see familiar faces, don't fall into the trap of spending half your time chatting with people you know.

When meeting people for the first time, it's also easy to fall into this routine - - You meet three or four people and chat for a minute each, and then meet someone and the chat becomes a 20-minute conversation. Some people who stay with one person will justify this by saying that they want to find out more or they want to have a real conversation. I can appreciate that. I also believe sometimes all it takes is that one important connection to have a successful event.

However, no one ever says they stayed with one person because finding a new contact is an uncomfortable experience. But that is a factor as well. It's a change in your environment. Once you get comfortable with a situation, any change will cause a certain amount of anxiety. It's far easier to continue talking with a familiar person rather than going through the exercise of finding and introducing yourself to an unfamiliar person.

Listening to the experts, you'll hear pretty much the same piece of advice: People buy from people they know. But if you are sticking to people that you know because they are familiar to you and you are in a comfortable place, then it's time to rethink your prospecting strategy.

#2) Taking the Path of Least Resistance - - Given a choice, people prefer getting more of something over less, getting it sooner rather than later, and working less to get it as opposed to working a lot.

There's nothing unusual about this. It's called being efficient.

I know a lot of salespeople and none of them have been afraid of working long days and overcoming impossible obstacles to achieve a goal. They are, however, creatures of habit. A successful salesperson will often resort to habituating certain behaviors to streamline their process.

Sometimes, these habits have outlived their usefulness, but a salesperson will continue to use them because it's easier than changing to something that is different, unfamiliar, or will produce an unknown result.

When I was starting out in sales, I always found it easier to call on previous customers over researching and calling on new prospects. This makes sense when you consider that we already have a relationship in place with these customers, and people buy from people they know and like. And as noted before, change is a painful process.

However, not everyone will buy what you have when *you* need them to buy it. They will buy when they *need* it.

If you are starting to panic because none of your past customers are calling you back, then it's time to find some new ones. You do not want to risk your current relationship to make a fast sale. You are better off dealing with change rather risking your current client relationship.

#3) Looking for that “Special Verbiage” or “Scripted Materials” - - Are you only concentrating on WHAT you say and not HOW you say it? Even good salespeople find themselves repeating the same script over & over and finding it unsuccessful... Why? Because you tend to repeat things that you know have previously worked.

Here we are talking about interacting with people, and everyone is different. You won't find one special thing that will work on everyone, everywhere, in the same way. You have to stay aware of your prospect and communicate with them the way they want to communicate. If not, then you will find yourself missing important information in the sales process.

#4) Selling the Product not the Solution - - It's easy to fall into a habit of becoming enamored with your product, service or company. You call or email a prospect or you finally meet with them face-to-face - - You think about the best way to open and you come to the conclusion that you need to tell the person about your wonderful products & services and you think "Wow, they have to be impressed with this."

The best way to approach a prospect is remembering “what can I do for you?” – not “look how great we are!”

Remember, you need to address their needs.

#5) Using Only One Method to Touch Your Prospect - - There's a tendency for salespeople to focus all their efforts on one or two media or to rely heavily on one strategy. In a previous article, I wrote on combining Direct Mail Marketing with Email Marketing.

In today's environment, the more variety you can incorporate into your prospecting, the better chance you will have of connecting with your contacts. In addition to email, phone and the personal visit, you still have social media, networking, and business organizations.

If you find that you are falling into any of these habits, then it's time to take a fresh look at your activities and generate some new additions to your results.

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