

Sell Value and You Will Close the Sale; Sell Me Stuff and You Won't!

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Business professionals today are busy – really busy. They have a million things to do before they end their day. The last thing they want is to be interrupted with a call from a sales person trying to sell their latest product or service. Inside Sales people need to remember that customers don't buy stuff; they buy value, especially in today's troubled economy. If you are a sales person and have a quota to meet, what should you do?

- **Do your homework.** Don't pick up the phone without researching the customers you plan to call for the day. In fact, if at all possible, do this prep work the day before so you are ready first thing in the morning. Review your own internal notes on the customer. Know what has changed in their industry or in their particular environment. For example, is the customer coming out of bankruptcy, consolidating newly acquired companies, or expanding into the Asian Pacific? If your company subscribes to any business subscriptions, such as Hoovers, be sure to check out what the service has to say about the accounts you will be calling. Know their new products or services, their competition. Become a subject matter expert.
- **Once you identify a potential problem, determine if you have a solution that addresses the issue?** If you don't, move on to the next customer on your list. Customers will remember if you push a solution that isn't really appropriate or if you over-promise. Your solution should address the customer's key concerns.
- **Know your purpose.** Is the purpose of the call to close business or is the purpose to set an appointment with an outside salesperson? Being clear on your goal will help you to accomplish it.
- **Plan what you will say.** Never shoot from the hip. Think strategically. How will you open the call in a way that grabs the custom-

er's attention and makes the customer quickly conclude that he or she needs to listen to you? What is your hook?

- **Ask strategic questions.** In order to keep the customer engaged, you will have to ask questions. However, customers don't have time to educate you. They expect you to have done your homework. You need to think of three dynamite questions to pose that will really get the customer thinking. With good questions, you position yourself as a trusted advisor or someone who is watching out for their best interests.
- **Link your solution to their problem.** It may seem obvious to you that your product is a good solution. However, customers don't always see it. Be sure you can link your solution to their problem in simple, clear terms. Don't bury your ideas. Being concise will definitely work to your advantage. Know when to be silent.
- **Be clear about how you can add value?** Can you save the customer time, money, or resources? Can you install quickly? Do you already know the customer's business because of prior solutions? Do you offer local responders if there is a problem? Can you guarantee? It is important that you know the value you can offer that others can't.

Our customers are much more savvy today and looking for value. If you can demonstrate that you have a solution that solves a key issue, they will welcome your call. If you try to sell them stuff, they won't!

Impact Communications, Inc. consults with individuals and businesses to improve their presentation and telephone communication skills. It is not what you know but how you communicate it that makes a difference. When you have to have impact, phone (847) 438-4480 or visit our web site, www.ImpactCommunicationsInc.com.

