

# DAVID PENGLASE

## YOUR SALES SUCCESS:

TEN SPECIAL REPORTS  
TO KEEP YOU AHEAD  
OF THE COMPETITION

A book full of the latest sales  
“must-knows” and reminders  
of proven truths still essential  
for successful selling today

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# Table of Contents

Forward .....	4
Report 1: The Eight Potentially Fatal Energy Leaks that lose most sales... 1	
Report 2: Dealing with the Sameness Syndrome - .....	8
How to win more sales by differentiating in highly competitive markets	8
Report 3: Identifying your Coping Behaviours .....	18
Report 4: The art and practice of comfortably disturbing clients.....	26
Report 5: If you leave it to chance, chances are you'll just leave it. ....	34
Report 6: Where's my gift basket? And other 'wow factor' stories .....	44
Report 7: The Structure-Flexibility Paradox.....	52
Report 8: The Must-Know Secret To Success In Sales.....	59
Report 9: Managing and Achieving Sales Targets .....	69
Report 10: How to become the #1 Salesperson in your industry. ....	77
About the author .....	88

## Forward

Your Sales Success is a series of ten reports written to challenge salespeople to review their existing sales and communication processes. It's often easy to let our habits steer our course through life, and so long as the habits we practice are goal supporting, this is a positive thing to do. However, every now and then, with some reflection and inspection, we can discover that our sales and communication habits may not be supporting the pursuit of our goals.

I do hope that you enjoy each of these reports and I would value any feedback that you might have on your sales and communication experiences.

My best to you

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "David." with a period at the end. The signature is written in a cursive, slightly slanted style.

David Penglase

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# **The Eight Potentially Fatal Energy Leaks That Lose Most Sales**

Report 1: The Eight Potentially Fatal Energy Leaks that lose most sales.

Key terms used in this report:

- Potentially Fatal Energy Leaks
- The Sameness Syndrome
- Coping Behaviours
- The Performance Plateau Principle
- Performance Paralysis
- Central Driver For Long Term Sales Success

# The Eight Potentially Fatal Energy Leaks That Lose Most Sales

## Introduction:

Is the energy you require to be successful in a sales career directed toward goal supporting thoughts, feelings and actions or might your energy be leaking into goal obstructive thoughts, feelings, and actions?

This is a very important question for anyone in sales to ask and answer.

Our research has identified eight potentially fatal energy leaks that if salespeople report one or more of them, the result is usually a direct and negative impact on the level of sales they are able to make.

Each of these energy leaks is caused by goal obstructive thoughts that the salesperson has adopted either through personal experience or learned through observation and being infected by other salespeople suffering from the same energy leaks.

## The eight energy leaks are:

1. Perception of Products and Services
2. Perception of Company Brand
3. Perception of Job Security
4. Perception of self value by management
5. Perception of sales and marketing activities
6. Perception of sales targets
7. Perception of client value creation
8. Perception of client interest

## Energy Leaks One and Two

Energy leaks one and two occur because of one of the greatest problems facing salespeople today. We refer to it as "**The Sameness Syndrome.**"

## **The Eight Potentially Fatal Energy Leaks That Lose Most Sales**

The Sameness Syndrome has been growing in momentum over the past decade and is a direct result of three key factors.

The first is ever increasing competition. The second is globalization of markets. And the third is increasing consumer awareness.

These three factors have made it and continue to make it increasingly difficult for salespeople to be able to differentiate their products and services from that of their competitors.

The push for the dual corporate goals of ever-increasing profits and higher return to shareholders and with the emphasis and expectation by sales managers for their salespeople to be able to achieve these goals in less time, with less expense budgets and limited resources, creates the potential for massive energy leaks by both veteran and rookie salespeople.

When a salesperson perceives their products and services and company brand to be similar or weaker than that of their competitors, their thoughts, feelings, and actions will be directed toward coping behaviour and other goal obstructive strategies.

Many of these behaviours may not be evident to sales managers, as activity levels may still be high, although generally these energy leaks result in lower levels of sales and marketing activities.

### **Typical coping behaviours include:**

- Procrastination
- Excessive preparation
- Excessive coffee breaks
- Personal phone calls
- Daydreaming
- Excessive planning without action
- Paper shuffling

## The Eight Potentially Fatal Energy Leaks That Lose Most Sales

Each of these coping behaviours (and there are many more), sap salespeople's energy away from goal supportive sales and marketing activities.

### Energy Leak Three

Energy leak three is a symptom that can be indirectly related to The Sameness Syndrome. It can be a vicious cycle for some salespeople. They struggle to differentiate their products and services in the marketplace and therefore sales fall.

This causes them to move from having a goal supportive positive energy directed toward sales and marketing activities, to a job security focus. Pressure is on for sales managers to achieve their team, state, or national budgets. That pressure is applied to their sales teams. When the constant pressure of achieving target is applied daily, some salespeople worry so much about the target that they forget to do any work. This results in more coping behaviours as described above.

### Energy Leak Four

Energy leak four is quite often the result of poor performance due to energy leaks one to three.

**The Performance Plateau Principle** is where salespeople will generally gravitate to the level of performance that they perceive their sales managers will accept from them.

If the salesperson perceives that the sales manager (usually the first point of management representing their organization) values them as a low performer, they will generally perform at that level.

When little or no consequence management is in place, this creates the many plateaus that salespeople find themselves experiencing.



# **The Eight Potentially Fatal Energy Leaks That Lose Most Sales**

## **Energy Leak Five**

Energy leak five can initially occur due to a lack of understanding or skill in being able to complete sales and marketing activities that will lead to higher potential of successful sales conversions.

However, where a salesperson is actually aware of and has the skills to complete the sales and marketing activities that will produce results and still fails to do them, there is an energy leak in either perceived value of completing the activities or a lack of confidence that could be borne from any or all of the other energy leaks.

## **Energy Leak Six**

Energy leak six is about belief in the possibility of achieving the sales target set for the individual salesperson.

Our belief in the possibility of success or failure will have a direct impact on which of the two we achieve – success or failure.

If the perception is that the budget is impossible, the opportunities to find and act on the many excuses that will present themselves as evidence of not even needing to try to achieve budget will increase.

## **Energy Leak Seven**

Energy leak seven can be one of the most severe of all the energy leaks.

Our motivation and enthusiasm is released at higher levels when we not only see the possibility of success, but more so when we see that whatever it is that we are doing, it will result in the creation of value for others.

## The Eight Potentially Fatal Energy Leaks That Lose Most Sales

For salespeople, when they see that a client will receive expected or exceptional value from the purchase of their products and services, their motivation and enthusiasm will be high.

When the salesperson's perceived potential of value creation is low, their energy leaks into goal obstructive coping behaviour that takes them further and further away from being able to create any value for clients.

### Energy Leak Eight

The final energy leak can cause a **performance paralysis** in any salesperson.

If their perception is that their potential and even existing clients will not be interested in wanting to hear from them or meet with them, any attempt at contacting the client will generally be placed as last in their list of to do items.

This is an obvious problem because the central driver of long-term sales success is a salesperson's ability and willingness to actually contact enough potential buyers on a consistent basis to achieve their sales target.

### Evidence of Energy Leaks

These energy leaks are revealed daily in salespeople across every industry.

They can be seen in low levels of sales and marketing activities.

They can be seen in the blaming and excusing of low levels of sales results and they can be seen in high levels of absenteeism and poor feedback from existing clients.

# **The Eight Potentially Fatal Energy Leaks That Lose Most Sales**

## Plugging the energy leaks

Although these energy leaks are costly to the salespeople, their managers and their organizations, the opportunities to plug the energy leaks are quite often not as difficult as it would seem.

Each of these energy leaks are caused primarily by perceptions, and the positive news here is that our perceptions can be changed.

They can be changed by the individual salesperson discovering reasons or evidence to change their perceptions.

These perceptions can be changed through affirmations, through sales coaching, through dialogue between sales teams and product development teams, and of course through learning and development programs.

The choices for courses of action are many, and whatever choices are made to change the perceptions of the salesperson, whether by themselves or their managers or others, the positive and proactive choice to do something is of course the correct choice.

Choosing not to do anything will simply result in more energy leaks developing from manageable drips into haemorrhaging streams of lost opportunity.

Dealing with the Sameness Syndrome - How to win more sales by differentiating in highly competitive markets.

## Report 2: Dealing with the Sameness Syndrome - How to win more sales by differentiating in highly competitive markets

Key terms used in this report:

- The Sameness Syndrome
- Value-Advice Selling
- Value Focused Questions
- Creating the 'wow' factor
- 7 Essential Changes from Traditional Selling

# Dealing with the Sameness Syndrome - How to win more sales by differentiating in highly competitive markets.

## Introduction:

Many organisations are operating in competitive markets where price and product “sameness” exists.

This Sameness Syndrome is reported by many salespeople today and results from the reality that most competitor products and services will adequately do what yours will do.

So, differentiating in competitive markets becomes quite difficult.

Now you may be in the fortunate (or well planned) situation where there may be certain features that you offer and provide that are different to that of your competitors.

However, if that is the case, it is also more than likely, that your competitors will have different features from you that will compensate for that difference in some way.

Therefore, having different features to offer does not necessarily by and of itself, have the potential to sufficiently differentiate you from your competitor.

The real question that you need to be asking when operating in competitive markets is not “What is it that we provide and do that will differentiate us from our competitors?”

Although a good start, there is another part of the question that you need to add ... and it's this:

*“What is that we provide and do, that will differentiate us from our competitors in such a way that creates sufficient value to the client to cause them to choose to do business with us rather than our competitors?”*

## Dealing with the Sameness Syndrome - How to win more sales by differentiating in highly competitive markets.

To enable you to answer this question sufficiently enough to distance yourself positively from your competitors, you will need to move on from traditional selling approaches and develop the skills, knowledge and attributes that will enable you to offer potential and existing clients a **value-advice approach** to buying.

Fundamentally, this change requires you to stop selling and to start creating a value-advice environment where consumers feel comfortable and confident that you are helping them to make wise buying decisions.

There are seven major changes that you will need to make to move from traditional selling to being able to follow the value-advice model and really differentiate from your competitors.

### 1. Stop selling a product or service – sell *advice*

People don't buy products and services. They buy what your products and services will do for them.

The sameness syndrome suggests that most products on the market will do what clients want them to do.

That's where moving away from selling products and services to selling advice can really help you differentiate from your competitors.

The key here is to ask appropriate **value-focused questions** that will help both you and the buyer clarify exactly what it is that they want to experience from purchasing a product or service *in their specific situation*.

When you have information about the potential buyer's specific situation you can then go beyond just talking about your products or services and start to offer advice on what would be most suitable for that client, based on your knowledge of the products, services and

## Dealing with the Sameness Syndrome - How to win more sales by differentiating in highly competitive markets.

now the specific situation in which the potential buyer is looking to use their purchase.

### 2. Stop selling features and benefits – sell *value*

This is an extension of the first point. People don't buy products and services, and therefore, despite traditional teaching, they also don't buy features and benefits.

Now, you may be a disciple of the statement 'features tell, and benefits sell' and in a way there is some truth to that statement.

However, this type of statement has caused many salespeople to lose sales, because the reality is that not all benefits sell.

If you take a moment to consider any product or service, they all have a range of features and a range of benefits.

However, just as some features are not important to some buyers, it is also true that some benefits of those features therefore will not be of benefit to all buyers.

Therefore, features tell, and some benefits sell is probably more of an accurate way to consider the statement.

The important question is "which benefits sell?"

It is the combined features and benefits, that offer and will create the specific value a potential buyer is seeking that sells. Therefore, value sells, not features, and benefits.

Now this is far more than just semantics.

If we can find out the value that a client is looking to experience, in their specific situation, then we can structure our presentation of our products, services, features and benefits in such a way that we don't

## Dealing with the Sameness Syndrome - How to win more sales by differentiating in highly competitive markets.

just flood the prospective buyer with all of the information about what we offer.

In a value-advice approach, we can advise the client of the specific features and benefits that will create the value they seek.

In this way, we are creating an environment that will help the client to be more comfortable and confident that we are helping them to make wise buying decisions.

### 3. Stop selling the past or present – sell *future*.

Highly effective salespeople who have adopted the value-advice model understand that they can really distance themselves from their competitors when they can allow potential buyers to consider the past and present, but to buy for the future.

This is not to say that every purchase needs to only satisfy future needs.

In fact, the value-advice approach suggests that the most value is created when a client realises these three things: The first is what they have experienced in the past is important. The second is what they are experiencing or looking to experience now is also important. And the third is knowing what to expect in the future and how that might impact on the value they seek from their purchase is just as important, if not more so.

Once again, this requires the salesperson to have a thorough understanding of the specific situation that each potential buyer will be using the product or service and the specific value that they are hoping to experience from any purchase.

Selling future value that a client may not have even realised, but through appropriate questioning and a value-advice centric presentation that helps the client discover this future value will positively



## Dealing with the Sameness Syndrome - How to win more sales by differentiating in highly competitive markets.

distance you from competitors who are more focused on the past and now.

### 4. Stop selling against obstacles – sell *potential*.

The value-advice approach to enabling clients to be more comfortable and confident in making wise buying decisions will assist salespeople in being able to stop selling against obstacles or objections that potential buyers may raise.

It provides the salesperson with the opportunity to start selling the potential to achieve the specific value that clients seek *before* any obstacle or objection is identified.

This is one of the high-level skills and attitudes that the value-advice approach requires of salespeople.

Selling potential requires a thorough understanding of what the client is looking for. In this way, any presentation or discussion of what the salesperson can offer is structured to meet and achieve that specific value.

In this way, the salesperson is selling the potential for maximum value realisation for the client.

In this way, any obstacle or objection would be dealt with as part of the presentation through providing proactive solutions to ensure that what the client is looking for is achieved, and that they will not experience any specific outcome that they are not looking for.

### 5. Stop selling expectation – sell *surprise*.

To really distance yourself from your competitors, adopting the value-advice approach allows you to go beyond selling just what the client expects, but to sell surprise.

## Dealing with the Sameness Syndrome - How to win more sales by differentiating in highly competitive markets.

Now there is a fine line between surprise value and surprise that adds no value at all.

Once again, this requires the salesperson to have a thorough understanding of the specific situation that each potential buyer will be using the product or service and the specific value that they are hoping to experience from any purchase.

But to sell surprise you need to be able to go beyond just the value that your product or service can offer.

This is about looking for ways to create the **'wow' factor** for the client after the point of sale.

What can you learn from the client that you may be able to appropriately use that will send loud and clear message to that client that you value their business, that you genuinely want them to receive the most value from their purchase, and that you want their buying experience with you to be one that they enjoyed and would recommend to others?

### 6. Stop selling price – sell *results*.

It's sometimes difficult to believe that in most research that has been completed on the hierarchy of the dominant deciding values of clients that price is rarely the most important.

This does not say that it is not important, of course it is, and to say anything other than that is a nonsense.

However, the value-advice approach to selling can not only help you distance yourself from your competitors, but in doing so, will help you and your potential buyers accept that price, or paying a fair and reasonable price for the value that they seek and will receive from buying the product or service that your offering is actually a given.

## Dealing with the Sameness Syndrome - How to win more sales by differentiating in highly competitive markets.

This reduces any stress around the price of the purchase from both the salesperson's and the buyer's perspective.

Why?

Because, if both parties know and accept that the buyer wants the best price possible for the value that they are seeking, all of the focus can be on achieving that result.

In other words, salespeople don't need to be selling on price, they are presenting their products and services in ways that will achieve the best result that the client is seeking. This is the foundation of the value-advice approach to selling.

### **7. Stop selling you – sell us.**

One of the key differentiators in any competitive market is the individual salesperson.

The value-advice approach to selling does not remove or devalue the importance of the individual salesperson in the decision process of the client.

It enhances it by ensuring that salespeople genuinely attempt to connect emotionally and intellectually with their prospective and existing clients through appropriate questions, and a genuine attitude of trying to create an environment of advice and value where clients feel comfortable and confident that they are being helped to make wise buying decisions.

Taking this approach one step further is for the salesperson to go beyond just the importance of their individual approach and to listen and present advice and value that encompasses all that the organisation has to offer.

## Dealing with the Sameness Syndrome - How to win more sales by differentiating in highly competitive markets.

This is where substantially distancing from your competitors can be achieved.

When salespeople can go beyond just having a focus on the immediate products and services that they can offer, and truly focus on the client's needs, opportunities to create value far and above just their products and services can present themselves.

This may involve other departments within their own company, or even recommending the products and services of other companies that can support and create additional value to their own.

So, there you have it.

There is a sameness syndrome that is resting heavily on the shoulders of many salespeople today and causing them to throw their hands in the air and say, "how do I compete?"

However, there is great opportunity for those salespeople who choose to move away from traditional selling approaches and adopt a more value-advice approach to creating situations where clients feel more confident and comfortable that they are being helped to make wise buying decisions.

So, are you ready to move away from traditional selling and reap the benefits of adopting the value-advice approach?

Then ensure you practice these 7 essential changes from traditional selling.

I've listed them again for you on the next page.

Dealing with the Sameness Syndrome - How to win more sales by differentiating in highly competitive markets.

## The Seven Essential Selling Shifts

1. Stop selling a product or service – sell advice.
2. Stop selling features and benefits – sell value.
3. Stop selling the past or present – sell future.
4. Stop selling against obstacles – sell potential.
5. Stop selling expectation – sell surprise.
6. Stop selling price – sell results.
7. Stop selling you – sell us.

# Identifying your COPING BEHAVIOURS

## Report 3: Identifying your Coping Behaviours

Key terms used in this report:

- Coping Behaviours
- Competency Model Equation
- Goal Obstructive Behaviours
- 'Coper-holic'

# Identifying your COPING BEHAVIOURS

## Introduction:

It may not be something that many salespeople want to admit, but there is a high likelihood that throughout any given working day, their thoughts, words, and actions may not be totally focused on goal supporting strategies.

It's in these moments of 'distraction' that despite potentially high levels of motivation and a clarity of the goals and sales targets they want to achieve, that salespeople, for a wide range of reasons, practise coping behaviours.

If these coping behaviours are not checked and managed, they become strong negative habits that may ultimately lead to their failure at worst, or at best, cause them to never fulfil their potential.

A coping behaviour is any goal obstructing action taken either consciously or subconsciously by a salesperson (or anyone for that matter) that diverts their energy away from more goal supportive actions.

These coping behaviours become even more damaging when they are unwittingly accepted, supported, and encouraged by the individual salesperson, their sales team and even their sales manager.

There are two questions that every salesperson and every sales manager needs to answer.

The first is how do you identify coping behaviours?

The second is how can you move away from coping behaviours and move toward more goal supportive behaviour.

## How to identify coping behaviours

Answering the question of how to identify coping behaviours requires a brief explanation as to why these coping behaviours actually occur.

There are three basic components of human behaviour.

## Identifying your COPING BEHAVIOURS

The first component is competency.

These are the skills, knowledge, and attributes that we have learned and developed over time. However, competency by and of itself is not enough to ensure success.

You will have known a number of people who may have the skills to do a great job but never apply them.

You will have known a number of people who were highly intelligent or had great product knowledge, but never really did anything with that intelligence or knowledge.

You will also have known a number of people with wonderful attributes, like a warm and friendly personality, but who never really seemed to achieve.

What this demonstrates is that competency by and of itself isn't enough to ensure success.

Many competent people do little with their competence and therefore never fulfil their potential.

The second basic component of human behaviour is the internal drive that causes us to take action and use whatever level of competency that we have.

Often referred to as motivation, this internal drive however is a combination of the physical and emotional energy that we have available to use the competencies that we possess.

We can look at these first two components of human behaviour in the following competency model equation.

Skills + Knowledge + Attributes x Motivation = Performance Potential.

You will notice that our motivation has a multiplying effect on our potential.



## Identifying your COPING BEHAVIOURS

If you consider someone with high levels of skills, high levels of knowledge, and high levels of attributes (given that it's extremely difficult to measure attributes), if they have zero motivation, their likely potential for success is zero.

Zero motivation multiplied by any value competence level still ends up as zero.

The reverse of this is true also.

If you have someone who has zero skills, zero knowledge and zero attributes, and I'm sure you'll agree that this is pretty unimaginable, but for the purpose of the exercise, let's say it's possible.

So, we've got a person with zero skills, knowledge, and attributes, (commonly referred to as an idiot), and if you have that same person with a high score in motivation (zero skills + zero knowledge + zero attributes x high motivation = zero) what you end up with is simply a motivated idiot!

What this means is that we need a combination of high levels of competence with high levels of motivation to increase our likelihood of success.

So far we've discussed the competency levels and the motivational levels as two of the three basic components of human behaviour.

However, having the competencies and the motivation to succeed again is not enough to ensure success.

The third component required is a goal, reason, or purpose that we can direct our competency and motivation toward achieving.

Without the goal, reason or purpose, our competency and motivation can be misdirected or left to aimlessly be applied to this and that and never focused or harnessed toward achieving a specific outcome.

Therefore, our three components of human behaviour are competency, motivation, and goals.

## Identifying your COPING BEHAVIOURS

If we have the competency and are motivated toward achieving specific goals we have direction and therefore a higher likelihood of success.

However, what can sometimes happen, is that despite having the competency, motivation and goals, some salespeople, either consciously or subconsciously have goal obstructive thoughts that distract or block their motivation, competency and focus away from the goal achievement.

These goal obstructive thoughts result in the coping behaviours being discussed in this report.

Here is a list of some typical goal obstructive thoughts:

- I won't call the client now; it'll be the wrong time.
- I won't ask the client for a buying decision, because I'll seem to pushy.
- I won't contact that potential buyer, because she won't want to know about my products and services.
- I won't recommend that product because the competitor product is cheaper.

These types of thoughts typically lead to certain actions.

For example, if the salesperson is consciously or subconsciously saying to themselves that they won't call the client now because it'll be the wrong time, there's a high likelihood that they won't make the call.

Therefore, if they don't make the call, what will they do?

Usually, the answer to this is that they will do something that will help them cope with the fact that they *aren't* doing something that will potentially lead to a sale.

## Identifying your COPING BEHAVIOURS

These coping behaviours that help people cope with not doing more productive and goal supportive activities, are often camouflaged as accepted, supported, and encouraged daily occurrences.

Typical examples of coping behaviours include:

- Taking a coffee break
- Offering to make coffee for others.
- Taking a 'smoko'
- Calling a friend or family member
- Meeting with a likeable but low potential client for a long lunch
- Starting a conversation with a colleague
- Paper shuffling
- Researching the internet
- Responding to emails

Now, some of these are legitimate and potentially goal supportive activities. For example, you could take a coffee break as a reward for making a series of client calls.

However, if you're taking the coffee break to cope with not wanting to make any calls, it changes from a goal supportive reward to a goal obstructing coping behaviour.

Here is a key question to help you identify your coping behaviours.

Throughout your typical day, ask yourself "is what I am doing now going to help me achieve my goals or distract me from achieving my goals?"

When you ask and answer that question, you might be surprised at the number of times you catch yourself either practising or about to embark on some form of coping behaviour.

The real benefit of identifying your coping behaviours is that once identified, and if you follow the advice on how to overcome and manage your coping behaviours, our research shows that you can potentially gain up to an hour (sometimes even more) of more productive time throughout your day.

# Identifying your COPING BEHAVIOURS

How?

Simply by focusing your competencies and motivation on goal supportive behaviours and not on goal obstructing behaviours you end up getting things that you need to get done, quicker.

## How to manage your coping behaviours

Managing your coping behaviours is really simply a product of identifying them first, admitting that you are practising the behaviour of coping ("My name is Felicity, and I'm a coper-holic"), then working at modifying your behaviour to do the more goal supportive strategies and finally rewarding yourself when you do.

Here's one suggested strategy.

1. Make a list of all of the sales activities that you don't really enjoy or like the least to do (these are the breeding ground for coping behaviours)
2. Refer to the list and then for each sales activity ask yourself the following "When I know I have to do this activity, what do I typically do instead of doing it first?" (eg. Have a cup of coffee, go for a walk, paper shuffle etc).
3. Make a list of your coping behaviours that you've just identified and place it somewhere that you will be able to see it throughout most of the day.
4. Now whenever you're about to go and do one of the coping behaviours you've identified, stop, and ask yourself "Is this going to be the best use of my time?"

If the answer is genuinely yes, then go ahead, but if you doubt that it is the best use of your time, and you're pretty sure that it's just a coping behaviour to distract you from doing a more productive activity, stop, and tell yourself to get on with doing the more productive activities.

## Identifying your COPING BEHAVIOURS

Being able to manage your coping behaviours will take practice and also takes a great deal of motivation and energy to keep focused on the goal supportive activities.

Most importantly, remember to give yourself rewards throughout the day as you achieve the goals supportive activities that you used to avoid.

Just make sure that the rewards don't become more coping behaviours to distract you from the next important task.

# The art & practice of comfortably disturbing clients

## Report 4: The art and practice of comfortably disturbing clients

Key terms used in this report:

- Principle of Client Discovery
- Brochure-Based Selling
- Value-centric Attitude
- Disturbing vs Comfortably Disturbing

# The art & practice of comfortably disturbing clients

## Introduction:

On first glance the art and practice of comfortably disturbing clients may sound potentially manipulative in its nature, but nothing could be further from the truth.

It would be extremely premature to write this client-focused and value-centric approach off as just another slick sales technique.

You see, it all has to do with one of the principles of client discovery.

This is one of the most important principles in the psychology of buying and therefore is a must-know principle for every salesperson.

The principle of client discovery states that most clients will feel more comfortable to make wise buying decisions when they discover for themselves a reason to buy, rather than when told they need to buy.

Let's consider this principle and how you can apply it to your own sales approach.

There's an often-debated question in sales as to whether a successful salesperson can create a need for a client or whether the need was always there and what successful salespeople do is to help clients to discover their need.

The principle of client discovery supports the latter view.

What makes this a powerful and important concept for salespeople to understand is that the more genuinely focused a salesperson is on wanting to help clients discover and clarify their wants and needs, an amazing amount of trust is earned and reciprocated.

Let's contrast two selling situations.

In the first scenario a potential buyer says they're looking for a specific product or service.

## The art & practice of comfortably disturbing clients

The salesperson typically responds by launching into a presentation to the client about their products or service and gives the client a run down of all the features and benefits.

Now, contrast that first situation with this second scenario.

In this scenario the potential buyer again says they're looking for a specific product or service.

However, the salesperson in this situation starts the presentation with something like "O.K. Let me ask you a couple of questions to make sure that I understand your specific situation and can recommend the best product for you."

On reflection you will see that the first is a product focused approach to selling and the second is a client-focused approach to selling.

Let's face it, people don't want to be sold.

They want to be placed in situations where they feel comfortable and confident to buy.

Merely running through the features and benefits of a product or service to a client when they say they are looking for a specific product or service really doesn't add any value or assistance to the potential buyer.

You may as well just give them a brochure and say, "read this."

This approach is known as 'brochure-based selling' and in today's highly competitive markets it will put any salesperson behind the pack very quickly.

However, genuinely wanting to find out about the potential buyer's specific situation to help you clarify how your product or service can best fit their situation will positively distance you from your competitors.



## The art & practice of comfortably disturbing clients

This is where the art and practise of comfortably disturbing a client becomes so important.

What you don't want to do is disturb a client. What you do want to do is to comfortably disturb them.

The difference is significant.

Disturb a client and you lose the sale. Comfortably disturb the client and you create clarity, trust and higher potential for a successful sale and a satisfying purchase for the buyer.

Salespeople can disturb potential buyers by:

- Brochure-based selling.
- Asking inappropriate questions (for example, questions that have obvious answers to them, or questions that are manipulatively attempting to get a specific response of either yes or no from the client).
- Not listening to the client's answers.
- Talking about features or benefits that just aren't important to the client.

These are just a few examples that professional salespeople will want to stay clear of.

So how do you comfortably disturb a client?

The art and practise of comfortably disturbing a client starts with your value-centric attitude.

You must be genuinely focused on trying to help a potential buyer better understand and clarify what will be the most important things for them to consider in making a wise buying decision.

## The art & practice of comfortably disturbing clients

Now, this may result in you, the salesperson, discovering in a few situations (ideally this would be a rare occasion), that your product or service is not the most appropriate for a particular client.

In that case, your best strategy would be to let them know that you don't think that what you have to offer will be the best for them, given your understanding of the customer's situation.

You may even need to recommend a competitor product – although you obviously wouldn't want to be doing that with every potential buyer or you'd go broke.

That may not sound like good business, but in reality it can be.

If your aim as a salesperson is to help clients feel comfortable and confident to make wise buying decisions, in the majority of situations, you will help them discover why your products will be the best purchase they can make, based on your understanding of their specific situation.

This results in a satisfied client achieving what they wanted from their purchase, and a high likelihood that they will recommend you and your business to other people.

If, however through your questioning you help a client discover that another option may be a more suitable purchase than what you have to offer, and you can recommend an alternative to them, although you may not have won the sale, you will have won their respect and they may still recommend you and your business to other people.

So, it all starts with a value-centric attitude.

Once the client understands that you really don't just want to sell them anything, but that you genuinely want to help them make a wise buying decision, they will be more ready to answer your questions.

A question that has the capacity to comfortably disturb a client will result in the potential buyer typically answering with something like ...

## The art & practice of comfortably disturbing clients

“Gee ... I hadn't thought about that” or “I'm not sure, can you tell me a little bit more about that” or “wow, good question, I hadn't even considered why that might be important.”

A question that has the capacity to comfortably disturb a client is typically an open-ended question aimed at helping the client clarify their specific situation, their past or current experiences, or their perceptions about their future use and application of the product or service.

What we're trying to achieve with a question that has the capacity to comfortably disturb a client, is to broaden their understanding of the potential use and value of our products and services.

More specifically you're trying to show how those products and services could not only meet their current needs, but potentially meet a need that they may not have considered.

This then has the capacity to help them expand their current thinking on their choice of product or service and how that choice will affect their specific situation.

There is no specific framework that you complete to be able to craft and ask a question that has the capacity to comfortably disturb a client into feeling more confident and comfortable about making wise buying decisions, however, the following will provide you with some thought starters:

- Try to discover their past experiences (good and bad) with the application of the type of product or service they are looking for.
- Go beyond just asking about which products or services they've used in the past. Ask about their experiences in using the products and services and how they achieved or didn't achieve their expectations.
- Try to discover their perceptions of their future situation. How might their current expectations and ideas change in the future, and

## The art & practice of comfortably disturbing clients

what affect might that have on how they use the type of product or service they are considering.

- The questions might typically start with:
  - What have been your experiences with ...
  - What are some things that you would like to ...
  - What are you currently ...
  - What haven't you been able to ...
  - How have you been able to ...
  - How would you like to ...
  - If there were three key things that ...

Here are a few examples of questions that have the capacity to comfortably disturb a potential buyer:

“What are you hoping to experience from your purchase that you haven't been able to experience up until now?”

“What is currently difficult for you to do, that if you could do it, would exceed your expectations?”

“What are the 'must-do' things that are at the top of your wish list?”

“What hasn't worked for you in the past that you need to definitely work for you in the future?”

“Other than yourself, who else might use the product or service, and how will that impact how it will operate?”

Don't get locked into the structure of these examples, look toward the principle of what you're trying to discover and how it will help you and the potential buyer clarify their past, current, and future situation to better make wise buying decisions.

Many successful professional salespeople have discovered that by going beyond the typical 'fact find' questioning that most potential buyers are usually subjected to, is not only more enjoyable and

## The art & practice of comfortably disturbing clients

energising for the salesperson, but that it builds a much deeper level of understanding and trust in the buyer-seller relationship.

Anyone can make a sale.

However, asking questions that have the capacity to comfortably disturb a client into being more confident in making a wise buying decision, will not only increase your capacity to win the sale and distance you from your competitors, but can help you to forge strong client relationships that result in more repeat and referral business.

If you leave it to chance, chances are you'll just leave it.  
Top Tips on Prioritising for Success in Sales

Report 5: If you leave it to chance, chances are you'll just leave it.

Top tips on prioritising for success in sales

Key terms used in this report:

- beyond the TO DO list.
- In-Your-Face projects and targets.
- Post Appointment Time-On.
- Stay in touch time.
- The weekly review.
- Emails & Phone Calls "Off-Line" Time.

# If you leave it to chance, chances are you'll just leave it.

## Top Tips on Prioritising for Success in Sales

### Introduction:

If you leave it to chance, chances are you'll just leave it.

This might seem a little negative, but our research and experiences have shown that many salespeople struggle with being able to prioritise and manage their time effectively.

This special sales report provides you with ten top tips on how to get more out of the same amount of time that we all have.

Some of these tips are obvious, simple, well tested, proven and you're probably using them already.

Others however, you may not be using, or may not be using consistently.

Let's start with an obvious one, and yet one that is not consistently practised by all salespeople.

### Beyond the TO DO list

Depending on the type of business you are in, I've always found that a typical to do list becomes too full and you need to go through and prioritise too many things and it all became a little difficult.

So, what I've found (and the many salespeople that I've recommended this to have also found) is that segmenting my to do list is a real advantage.

Now whether you use an electronic planner or pen and paper doesn't really matter.

There are arguments for the benefits of both, however, categorising your to do list can really help you prioritise and clearly plan your days.

## If you leave it to chance, chances are you'll just leave it. Top Tips on Prioritising for Success in Sales

For example, my personal to do list has the following categories:

- Proposals to write:

Now depending on your line of work, it may not be proposals, but rather letters confirming orders or the like.

- Phone calls to make:

I personally block time out each day to make my calls and to return phone calls. Of course, there are variations to this where something needs to be more spontaneous or urgent, but having this type of systemised approach allows a certain flexibility. How much time you will need to put aside can only be answered by yourself.

- Phone calls expected:

I want to know who I am expecting calls from so that I know that if they haven't returned my call by the end of the day, to action these return calls for tomorrow

- Notes to:

I set time aside to write personal handwritten notes to thank, congratulate, or provide value-add information to my clients (there's more on this powerful sales and communication principle later in this report)

- Follow-up activities:

These are the activities that I have diarised to be acted on based on any interviews or meetings that I have completed. The initial follow notation is made on the client interview notes that I keep for each client and then, as appropriate, shows up in my diary reminding me that it needs to be listed in my 'to do' follow-up activities.



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- Projects:

Once again, depending on your type of work, you may not need a projects section on your to do list. I use this for any research or development that needs to be done, articles that I might be writing, or products that I am working on. Usually, projects that are listed here have deadlines that I have targeted, and I allocate a set amount of time on the days that they are listed on the projects section of the to do list – this might range from 30 minutes on one project and maybe more on another. It all depends on what the project is and the deadline that I am working toward.

- Personal:

While some people disagree with this, I have found it much easier to have any personal 'to do' activities noted on my business to do list. Not that I would recommend doing the personal activities in business hours, but it's just good to know what needs to be done that day in all aspects of my life.

The To Do list is something that takes discipline, motivation and a method or system that works for you. Without it however, there's a large chance that you will be leaving things to chance, and the chances are that you will just leave it.

### In your face projects and targets

This is not for the feint hearted, but for those people who are motivated by visuals, this will be something that will really work, and help keep you focused and on the right priorities.

In my office I have what I call the Projects & Targets Chart.

It is one large piece of flip chart paper that is stuck on the wall.

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The basic idea is to have in large colourful words (and pictures or graphics if you like) any specific targets or goals that I am working toward, and the major projects that I am working toward.

I also draw connecting lines to show graphically how each item (target and project) affects each other.

Like I've said, this won't be for everyone, but I like to be reminded and keep focused on goals. This visual has worked for me exceptionally well.

Look for the principle and maybe it will work for you too.

### Post Appointment Time-On

I used to refer to this as my post appointment time-off, but I came to realise that 'time off' didn't really highlight the importance of the concept.

Post appointment time-on is the time that I really focus on what needs to be done as a result of any appointment I have just completed.

For me, I usually try to find a nearby café, and I will buy a juice, tea, or coffee, depending on the time of day and how I'm feeling, and take about 10 minutes to reflect on how the meeting went.

I use a planning and review interview form that helps me to do this.

The planning side of the interview form helps me to think about the objective of the call, what I already know about the particular client or prospect, and some questions that I think I might ask.

I then use the form to take notes during the actual interview.

## If you leave it to chance, chances are you'll just leave it. Top Tips on Prioritising for Success in Sales

Following the appointment, I use the review side of the form to help me reflect on how well I went using the BASICS of selling® steps. This covers off questions like:

- How well did I **B**uild rapport, gain trust, and connect with this client?
- How well did my **A**sking questions help me and the client to identify and clarify any needs or wants that I might be able to help them with?
- How well was I able to **S**how value that I could create for this client through presenting a solution, strategy, program, or products?
- What obstacles, issues, objections, or concerns was I able to **I**dentify and to what extent was I able to overcome these to move toward a win-win situation?
- Was I able to **C**onfirm the sale and provide the client with a checklist of the next appropriate steps for them to receive the value we had discussed.
- What follow-up action is required and how will I **S**tay in touch with this client to demonstrate to them that I value their business and in some way be able to deliver more than they expect and create a 'wow' experience for them?

That last question listed in my review process is the link to ensuring that not only do I promise what I can deliver, but more importantly, that I deliver on my promises.

It's during this post appointment time-on that any follow-up action is noted and diarised.

I live by the rule if it's not in the system, chances are it will be left to chance.

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My memory isn't that good ... so I don't want to leave important follow-up action to chance.

Now as you read this, you may not have the time to take 5 or 10 minutes at the end of each appointment or interview.

All that I would recommend is that you consider the amount of time that you will actually save by developing this discipline of reviewing each call.

### Stay in touch time.

Each day or at the very least once a week, set aside time (it might be 30 minutes, it might be less or more), to take action on your 'stay in touch' strategies.

Staying in touch with clients is about looking for opportunities to write, send, contact, or somehow reconnect with existing clients in a way that will send loud and clear messages that you value their business.

If you're not staying in touch with your clients in a systemised way, chances are you'll be leaving it to chance, and as I've said a few times in this report, if you leave it to chance, chances are you'll just leave it.

I use this time to consider four or five key clients, their interests, hobbies, or things that I've learned about them that are important to them.

I am constantly looking for articles, books, upcoming events, or something that will be of interest to that particular client and when I find something (and I don't always), I will send them a note with the article or details of the event or a reference to a book or website that they might be interested in.

We can spend a lot of time on 'busy work'. However, taking a focused and systemised approach to this activity is not busy work.

## If you leave it to chance, chances are you'll just leave it. Top Tips on Prioritising for Success in Sales

It's important work that will reap you much reward and the reality is, although this may or may not be true for you, but for me, this is an activity that I get a lot of enjoyment out of.

I enjoy it because it keeps me focused beyond just the business relationship and really helps me (without ever being intrusive or getting too personal inappropriately) forge deeper relationships with those clients who are very special to me and my business.

### The weekly review

At the end of each week, or at the start of each week (personally I like the end of the week), set aside 15 minutes or so to review your wins, newly discovered opportunities and reflect on any setbacks that you've had.

We can learn so much through this self checking process. The days, weeks and years fly by quick enough – slow them down by grabbing hold of those important lessons and achievements and asking yourself:

- How can I replicate this win that I've had this week?
- How can I ensure this set back will happen less in the future?
- What have I learned this week that will help me achieve my goals?

This exercise becomes even more valuable when you can share your reflection and learning with others on the same path.

### Emails and Phone Calls “Offline Time”

This may be a little controversial for some, however, I recommend that you turn your emails and phones off and wherever possible and block out specific times to make and receive calls and to review and send emails.

## If you leave it to chance, chances are you'll just leave it. Top Tips on Prioritising for Success in Sales

I know that in some business situations this is just not practical, however, I know of many successful sales professionals who do just this – regardless of industry.

It's amazing how quickly clients and colleagues can be 'trained' to accommodate this method of doing business.

It's also a much better and focused use of your energy and time. Think of the number of times you are distracted through the day by unexpected calls or emails that you find yourself getting immediately involved with answering or acting on.

All I'm suggesting is that you try to block out time to do this and do it in a more focused way.

You might choose to read and respond to emails the first thing each morning.

You might choose to read emails as one of the last things you do in a day, but to not take action on them, and rather allocate time for the following day, or when appropriate.

You should manage your time, and not be at the beck and call of emails.

Once again, there will always be variations or exceptions to this rule but try it – you will be pleasantly surprised at how much time and effort you will save. In terms of phone calls, you could operate a similar system to the emails.

Divert your phone to your message bank service and respond to calls when you have allocated the time, not just when they arrive.

When you think about this tip, it really does make good business sense.

It just takes a little courage to actually do it.

If you leave it to chance, chances are you'll just leave it.  
Top Tips on Prioritising for Success in Sales

## Summary

These tips are at the top of my list in helping me to prioritise my incoming and outgoing sales and marketing activities.

This report is not intended to be an exercise in time management skills, rather it is to provide you with some specific sales oriented points of focus that will help you prioritise and gain the most out of making your day more productive.

Where's my gift basket? And other 'wow factor' stories  
Real life lessons on how to create lasting impressions to win more sales.

## Report 6: Where's my gift basket? And other 'wow factor' stories

Key terms used in this report:

- Silent Referrals
- Creating the 'wow' factor
- After Sales Apathy
- Must-ask and Must-act-on question
- Turning 'high tech' into 'high touch'



Where's my gift basket? And other 'wow factor' stories  
Real life lessons on how to create lasting impressions to win more sales.

Introduction:

If you want to win more sales than ever before, and build more repeat and referral business, then it's time to start researching how.

And one of the best places to start is when you're next at a restaurant or barbeque with some friends.

In the course of your normal banter at one of these social gatherings, do some market research.

Now this may be uncomfortable for some salespeople to do, because they like to keep work and social lives quite separate (more on this in the Special Sales Report #10: Is work-life balance a myth for the busy sales professional?).

However, what you will find is the conversation level will actually increase in energy, humour, and along the way, you'll get some valuable ideas on how to create lasting impressions to win more sales (and a few great ideas on what not to do).

Start the conversation with a simple question by asking your friends something like:

"What has been their best and worst buying experiences in the past twelve months?"

Now, it's probably a little crass to actually take notes, but at least take some mental notes on what you discover.

As your friends start to tell you about their best and worst buying experiences take specific notice of what the salesperson did or didn't do to cause the resulting story being told.

Then, when you're back in your office, jot down the key principles and ask yourself how well you're applying the positive strategies that

Where's my gift basket? And other 'wow factor' stories  
Real life lessons on how to create lasting impressions to win more sales.

caused your friends to remember a particular buying situation, and how well you're avoiding any of the negative strategies that caused your friends to remember a particularly unsavoury buying experience.

You see, what your friends would have demonstrated is that great buying experiences (and poor ones as well) are remembered by people, and they actually enjoy telling others about their experience.

This is how word of mouth testimonials (silent referrals) can work for great salespeople and do real damage to unprofessional salespeople.

Where's my gift basket?

Here's an example of the silent referral process.

We recently sold a house.

The real estate salesperson we chose to act as our agent did a good job. We sold the house prior to auction for an amount that we were very happy with.

We had purchased a new property through a different real estate agency.

We also liked the style of this other real estate salesperson, knowing that in reality, he was acting on behalf of the vendor and wasn't really focused on looking after us.

All in all, the sale and purchase went smoothly and we were satisfied.

But I'm sure that's a fairly typical scenario for most people.

However, our new neighbours, soon after we moved in, decided that it was time for them to move a little closer to where their two girls went to school (they assured us that it had nothing personally to do with us moving in as their neighbours – just in case you were wondering).

Where's my gift basket? And other 'wow factor' stories  
Real life lessons on how to create lasting impressions to win more sales.

They also had one real estate agent selling their home and were dealing with a totally different real estate agent for the purchase of their new home.

Now neither of these agents were the same agents that we had been involved with.

The real estate salesperson who sold our neighbours home, on the day of the auction and on the fall of the hammer, with a record above reserve sale price being achieved, popped open a bottle of French Champagne for our neighbours. No big deal I hear you say.

But wait for the rest of the story.

On the day they moved into their new home, our neighbours received a beautiful gift basket, full of goodies and another bottle of French Champagne from the real estate agent who helped them to sell their old home.

Now, remember that she was not the real estate agent involved in the purchase of their new home, only the sale of their old home.

My question is "where's my gift basket?"

I can assure you at dinner parties that we have had, or when people ask if I know a good real estate agent, I recommend Bernadette, my neighbours real estate agent and not the real estate agents who helped us to buy and sell.

## A surprise in the boot

Here's another example – and you'll realise it was quite some time ago (who has cd players in their cars anymore?).  
Some years ago, I had an amazing buying experience when I bought a new car.

Where's my gift basket? And other 'wow factor' stories  
Real life lessons on how to create lasting impressions to win  
more sales.

After buying the car (otherwise it's called stealing), I drove out of the car sales yard feeling very pleased with my purchase.

It's always a great feeling to be driving a brand new car with that brand new smell and feel about it.

As I turned the first corner, I remember smiling because I thought Slavko (the car salesperson) had preset the car stereo to be playing on Classic FM and it just happened to be playing my favourite piece of classical music Pachelbel's Cannon.

I remember when I first walked into the customer service section of the car dealership that it was playing in the background.

When I met Slavko, I remember just mentioning to him how much I liked that music.

Nothing else was said.

As I continued to drive, I realised that it wasn't the radio, but that it was a CD playing.

In fact, when I arrived home, I found four CDs in the stacker of some of my favourite classical music.

Wow. What an impact that made.

By the way, I also found a golf umbrella, tees and golf balls in the boot with a personal note saying, "Enjoy the next round, regards Slavko".

Now, here's the point.

Where's my gift basket? And other 'wow factor' stories  
Real life lessons on how to create lasting impressions to win more sales.

Every car salesperson could do something like that.

But they don't.

Every real estate agent could do something like Bernadette did.

But they don't.

Why not?

The answer is one of the scourges of modern-day business known as "After Sale Apathy."

After sale apathy is what our research has shown is the major cause of lower levels of repeat and referral business.

After sale apathy gives fuel to the third buying exit ramp for customers. The third buying exit ramp is taken by customers when they do not receive any positive and value-add after-sale contact by a salesperson or do not feel that they have experienced a 'wow' factor buying experience.

So here is a must-answer and a must-act-on question for every salesperson and sales manager.

What are you currently doing, or could you be doing, that creates additional and unexpected value or provides a positive 'wow' factor buying experience for a client *after* the sale is completed?

Once again, you can learn some great lessons from your family and friends when they tell you about their 'wow' buying experiences, or even when they tell you about what they wish they could have experienced by way of follow-up from salespeople.

Where's my gift basket? And other 'wow factor' stories  
Real life lessons on how to create lasting impressions to win more sales.

## That personal handwritten note

As I was writing this report, I was interrupted by the phone ringing. It was the Epilepsy Association of Australia seeking a donation for their charity.

We get calls and requests from a wide range of charities, some of which we are happy to make a donation, and some that we choose not to make a donation.

But the Epilepsy Association of Australia is one charity that we are very quick to say yes to.

Why?

Well, it's not because we actually have any connection with the charity, although we do know a few people with Epilepsy, that's not the reason.

The reason stems way back after we made our first donation to that charity.

What we received in the mail a few days after donating, was the typical computer-generated standard 'thank you for donating' letter.

I don't remember even reading the letter, but what I did read was this personal handwritten note on the bottom right-hand side of the letter.

It simply read,

*Thank you Mr and Mrs Penglase for your kind gift.  
Anthony.  
Volunteer.*

What Anthony the volunteer had achieved was to get my attention and cause me to go 'wow'.

Where's my gift basket? And other 'wow factor' stories  
Real life lessons on how to create lasting impressions to win  
more sales.

I remember saying to my wife Liz, "How simple is that."

Anthony had turned a 'high tech' letter into a 'high touch' experience.

## Summary

I realise these examples are from a few years ago now, but look beyond that and challenge yourself to think of ways you can create wow factor responses from your clients.

This report demonstrates that we can learn a lot about doing business better, about building stronger relationships and winning more repeat and referral business from our own buying experiences and those of others around us.

A little bit of research at your next dinner party could reveal some hidden keys for you to be able to create the 'wow' factor for you existing and potential clients.

'The Structure-Flexibility Paradox'. Breaking the shackles that keep too many salespeople chained to their desks.

## Report 7: The Structure-Flexibility Paradox

Key terms used in this report:

- Paper-Work-Distracters
- Planning the sales call
- Beyond mental notes
- Post-call-review-time
- The structure-flexibility paradox



'The Structure-Flexibility Paradox'. Breaking the shackles that keep too many salespeople chained to their desks.

## Introduction:

I recently walked through an open plan office of a major financial services organisation.

To give some context to what I'm about to share, this was not a call centre. It was the national distribution section of the financial services firm, and the majority of the staff held positions of Business Development Manager (BDM).

A significant part of the BDM role requires travelling to the offices of financial advisers, to meet with them and to discover ways their products and services can create value for the financial adviser and for their clients.

I had just finished a meeting with the State Sales Manager, and we were walking back toward the lifts.

It was around 10:30am on a Tuesday and the majority of the workstations were occupied by busy looking salespeople working away at their computers.

Something didn't seem right to me, but I couldn't put my finger on exactly what it was, so the manager and I said our goodbyes and I set off on the return journey to my office.

As I was driving along the foreshores of Botany Bay toward my office, I pulled up at a set of stop lights where I noticed a very professional looking person with a compendium tucked under her arm, shaking hands with another well-dressed businessman in front of an office building.

The woman then left, and the man returned inside the office block.

As I started to drive off, I noticed the woman was walking and making a call on her mobile phone.

It then dawned on me what wasn't quite right back at the financial services office.

'The Structure-Flexibility Paradox'. Breaking the shackles that keep too many salespeople chained to their desks.

The majority of the BDMs were at their desks and not out meeting with Financial Advisers.

### A quick survey

When I got back to my office, I typed an email and sent it out to about 100 salespeople from over 10 different industries that I extracted from our course participant database.

It was a simple email asking this:

"what was the main distraction that would keep them in the office and not out making sales calls?"

Over the next two days, I received 75 responses and more than 90% of the responses told me that their biggest distraction was administrative compliance or in the old language ... *paperwork*.

With some follow-up calls, the three most reported paperwork distracters were:

- Weekly sales call reports
- Expense claims
- Follow-up letters and emails

Of course, all of these are essential to a salesperson's role and certainly are required from an administrative, managerial and client relationship management perspective.

Given that they are a must-do activity, it is important to find a balance between doing the paperwork and doing enough sales activity to produce the levels of success or sales targets required.

This report has been written to help you consider ways to systemise the paperwork, speed up the reporting (without reducing the quality of

'The Structure-Flexibility Paradox'. Breaking the shackles that keep too many salespeople chained to their desks.

information) and ensure that all the follow-up required as a result of a sales call is efficiently and effectively completed.

## Weekly Sales Call Reports

Let's start with planning the sales call.

Here's where a little bit of time spent prior to the sales call will help maximise the time both during and after the call for the salesperson.

Before every sales call or meeting, take a moment to plan your call.

Here are some typical questions that you could ask of yourself before you see the potential buyer or existing client:

- What am I trying to achieve during and after this sales call/meeting?
- What don't I know about this client that will help me create more value for them or build a stronger relationship with them.
- What do I already know that will help me establish or re-establish rapport and trust.
- What questions do I plan to ask during this call/meeting?
- What obstacles or objections might they have?
- If an existing client, what was the follow-up action that I was to have completed before this meeting?

These are just some samples to get you thinking.

You may want to reduce this down to just one or two key planning items, but whatever the number of questions that you ask of yourself, a little planning will go a long way to making your call more efficient, and will also, as you will see as this discussion progresses, help reduce the time spent on the paperwork.

## Beyond mental notes

Now depending on what line of business you're in, whenever you're with a client or prospective buyer, if you are asking appropriate

'The Structure-Flexibility Paradox'. Breaking the shackles that keep too many salespeople chained to their desks.

questions, your clients will be telling you things that you need to know that will help you to help them receive the most value that you can offer.

As they are talking, you might be used to taking mental notes.

Taking mental notes is one thing, however asking permission to write down some actual notes will not only demonstrate to the client that you're listening, it will actually help you to be a more active listener as well.

It also provides you with a great summarising process to be able to go through your notes, point by point, demonstrating your understanding of the client's situation and then addressing each point in whatever appropriate action that may be required.

## Post call review time

Once again, depending on the business you are in, taking 5 minutes at the end of each client meeting (it may be less or more as required) to review and reflect on the call will be an invaluable investment of your time and help reduce the amount of in-office paperwork.

I often recommend to salespeople that after each sales call/meeting (when appropriate) to grab a cup of coffee, tea or freshly squeezed juice and quickly ask the following questions of themselves:

- How was the objective of the call achieved?
- What did you learn about the client to help you create more value or build a stronger relationship?
- What potential revenue will be raised as a result of the meeting?
- What follow-up action is expected?
- When have you agreed to meet again?
- What other contact names or referrals were you able to discover?

If you're using one of the excellent sales management software packages, these questions can still apply.

'The Structure-Flexibility Paradox'. Breaking the shackles that keep too many salespeople chained to their desks.

The only difference is that you're entering the information directly into your digital device.

But isn't this creating even more paperwork?

You will be surprised at how much time you will actually save, how much more focused your sales calls will be and how much value you will actually gain from completing this planning and review process.

It will save you time especially when it comes to completing any sales call reports, because you will have the majority of what will be required already written down or better even if you've already entered it in your notes section on your device.

## Expense Claims

Here's a paradox that you may or may not be familiar with.

The paradox is that the more structured you are, the more flexible you can be.

For that reason, developing a process to track and record your expenses *as they occur* will save you countless time back at the office.

Don't just collect your receipts and pile them up for the end of the week, fortnight, or monthly reporting period.

At the end of each day, take the 5 minutes (if it's taking longer than this you must be really spending big) to record your expenses and attach the receipts.

Now this may seem obvious, but the reality is that not many people do it.

The feedback that I receive from many salespeople and their managers is that when they develop the habit of reviewing each day (whether this be expenses, sales calls or what ever) their periodical reporting time is reduced significantly.

'The Structure-Flexibility Paradox'. Breaking the shackles that keep too many salespeople chained to their desks.

## Follow-up emails and correspondence

This is another 'habit' of allocating the appropriate time and not letting all of the emails and follow-up activities build up until the end of the week.

Here are three simple, practical, and yet often neglected tips for you to think about and assimilate into your own style of operating:

- Read and respond to emails only twice a day (always file your 'sent' emails as soon as you send them – don't let them grow and grow in the 'sent folder' in your mailbox.
- At the end of every sales call/meeting, take action on any follow-up that is required *before* you move onto the next meeting (this won't always be practical, but whenever it is, take the opportunity).
- Whenever it is possible for you to do, delegate as much of the paperwork as possible. If delegating is something available to you, applying the other tips in this report will make it easier for the person who you are delegating the task to.

## Summary

The reality is for many salespeople, unless in call centre type of roles, they need to be in front of potential buyers and existing clients.

That's where the majority of your time should be spent – not in the office doing paperwork.

However, the follow-up work resulting from client calls/meetings is the glue that connects and binds long term business relationships.

While it's a bit of a balancing act, a little structure and process can go a long way in helping reduce the amount of time you need to spend on the paperwork.

# The Must-Know Secret To Success In Sales

## Report 8: The Must-Know Secret To Success In Sales

Key terms used in this report:

- The numbers of the sale
- Proactive-Passive Marketing
- The 7x5x4 warm call marketing approach

## The Must-Know Secret To Success In Sales

### Introduction:

I know, I know, you've heard it all before.

Surely not *another* secret to success in selling.

And actually, you're right! This really isn't a secret - it's common sense.

However, the reality is, salespeople everywhere are looking for that edge, that fast track, that special technique that might just make the difference to winning more sales, meeting or even beating their targets.

Quite frankly, I'm guilty of doing exactly the same thing.

Not only in my own sales activities, but also in my aim to help sales managers and salespeople find the edge and to assist them in achieving their sales results and striving to be at their personal best.

But here's the thing, selling, when it really does come down to the basics, is a numbers game.

Now, I have to let you in on a real secret.

It took me a lot to finally type that last sentence, because I believe that selling is much more than a numbers game ... and it is.

But, as I've just said, at it's very core, the success that you may be currently seeking, could very well just come down to a numbers game.

Before you write that statement off, let me explain.

Of course, communication skills are important.

Of course, belief in your product is important.

Of course, self-belief, motivation, and having great products that create value are important.



## The Must-Know Secret To Success In Sales

Of course, your personality and interviewing skills are important, and so too is your ability to build rapport, ask great questions, show true value, identify obstacles, and overcome objections.

Of course, your ability and attitude toward confirming the sale and asking for buying decisions are important, as too is your ability and commitment to taking action on staying in touch with your clients.

Of course, all of these things are important.

However, they are all important, but pretty much useless unless you've got access to and are actively contacting enough potential and/or existing clients who have the potential to buy from you.

That's it. Plain and simple.

Everything else is insignificant, your skills, knowledge, attributes, and motivation are wonderful – but unless you understand and take action on this must-know and must-act-on principle, your long term (and immediate term) success in sales is at risk.

Put quite simply, the secret to success in selling is your ability to identify and contact on a consistent basis, significant numbers of potential clients who need what you sell.

If you're not calling on (either face to face, phone, video-conferencing or through email or via your website) enough potential buyers to be able to sell enough of what you sell, the most probable outcome is that you'll go broke.

You might have the best product in your industry, but if no one knows about it, and if potential buyers aren't aware or reminded of that fact, you'll probably go broke.

So how do you know that you're seeing enough potential buyers to be able to generate the amount of revenue required for you to meet or exceed your sales targets?

## The Must-Know Secret To Success In Sales

The numbers of the sale:

Here's one method (not the only method) of calculating how many potential buyers you need to be contacting.

This is certainly not rocket science, but well worthwhile reviewing to see if your current marketing levels and appointments with potential and existing clients will generate the amount of revenue you require.

Use this worksheet with your own numbers and see if you're on track to achieve or exceed your sales targets.

I'll use figures that will demonstrate the point, but that may have no relevance to the amounts you will use. You fill in the Your Example' section:

	ITEM	EXAMPLE	YOUR EXAMPLE
A.	Annual Revenue Target	\$100,000	
B.	Average Revenue Per Sale	\$5,000	
C.	$A \div B$	20	
D.	Average number of potential buyers it takes before a sale is made	5	
E.	$D \times C$ = Number of potential buyers required to be contacted to achieve sales target	100	

Once you've arrived at your answer, all you do is divide this by 4 to get your quarterly target of potential buyers to contact; divide by 12 to get your monthly target; divide by 52 to get your weekly target of potential buyers to contact (although you may want to think about how many actual weeks you can contact clients when you consider your own vacation time, public holidays etc)

## The Must-Know Secret To Success In Sales

Now, this formula has been offered merely to make the point that you need to have a fair idea of how many people you need to be contacting to be able to generate enough opportunities for sales to be made to achieve your revenue targets.

The key question is, now that you've arrived at your estimated number of potential clients that you need to be contacting, will you be able to achieve the number of calls, appointments etc., required?

There is a range of opportunities available to you to be able to increase the number of potential clients that you can contact.

However, two of the most proactive and focused opportunities are:

### Proactive-Passive Marketing

Depending on the type of business that you are in, your existing client base is usually a fantastic place to start to generate repeat and referral business.

It is well worth the effort to continually be asking your existing clients "So, how are we doing?" ... "Are we delivering the value we promised?" ... "Are you happy with what we've provided?"

Asking questions that have the capacity to comfortably disturb clients and to help uncover any other needs or wants, problems or issues that you might be able to help them with is an important proactive-passive marketing strategy that will reap you many new and repeat sales.

Proactive-passive marketing is an attitude supported by consistent action on promising what you can deliver and delivering on your promises.

Proactive-passive marketing is about staying in touch with your clients and creating 'wow' experiences where they provide you with unsolicited referrals and requests for repeat purchases.

You may also choose to be more assertive (but never aggressive or pushy) with some clients who have not readily provided you with any

## The Must-Know Secret To Success In Sales

referrals. Without a doubt, some of the easiest sales to make are with people who have been referred to you by a client advocate.

How do you know if you've established a reputation where you have clients who are raving about your service and professionalism to their friends, family, and colleagues?

You will be receiving plenty of warm referrals from your client advocates.

However, if you're not receiving the level of referrals that you would like you may want to increase your proactive-passive marketing.

In terms of receiving referrals, there are four types of clients.

1. Happy clients who automatically refer their friends, family, and colleagues to you
2. Happy clients who will wait for you to ask and remind them to refer their friends, family, and colleagues to you.
3. Happy clients who despite the exceptional quality and value of your products and professionalism of your service levels, they will never refer their friends, family, or colleagues.
4. Unhappy clients who will never refer anyone to you – ever!

Here are some strategies to obtain even more referrals.

For your happy clients who are readily referring people to you, make sure you are thanking them and rewarding them in some way (an email, phone call, letter, or little gift to say thanks).

For your happy clients who aren't yet referring anyone to you, you could simply ask for referrals, or you could write to them, using the sample on the following page as a guide:

## The Must-Know Secret To Success In Sales

### **Sample begins:**

*We are proud to say that much of our business is built on word of mouth. Our many satisfied clients refer their friends, family, and business associates to us.*

*And for that, we are truly grateful. We would welcome any referral contacts that you might feel comfortable for us to write to or phone.*

*You can be assured, based on your own experience with us that we are not in the business of "hard sell". We are in the business of trying to identify the needs of our clients and then doing everything we can to meet and wherever possible to exceed their expectations.*

*If you do have some people who you think might be interested in us contacting them, please provide whatever contact details you have:*

*Contact name:*

*Contact company:*

*Contact position:*

*Contact phone:*

*Contact email:*

Once again, this is only a sample letter. Rework it to reflect your own style and personality.

.....

### **Sample ends.**

Don't expect everyone to send you referrals, however, this might just get you a few more than you would otherwise.

If you have some reluctance in asking your happy clients for referrals, perhaps it's because you're not convinced that you have delivered on your promises, or that you're not sure that you've been able to create the 'wow' factor that would cause clients to want to refer others to you.

## The Must-Know Secret To Success In Sales

You might be surprised at how ready some clients will be to recommend others to you ... they're just waiting for you to ask.

### Adopting the 7x5x4 warm call marketing approach

*Note: With this approach you need to ensure you are not in breach of the SPAM laws that apply in your country.*

If you're in the kind of business that customers come to you, then this approach may not be directly relevant.

However, look at the principle behind the strategy, and you might discover ways to attract the right kind of customer (i.e., someone who wants to buy) to your business.

**Step one** – write one standard marketing email/letter – keep it brief. In the email/letter, outline who you are, what your business mission is, and how you and your products and service have created value for people.

Add one or two short testimonials from existing happy clients on the email/letter. In the last paragraph, write something like “I will call you next week to arrange a meeting with you to discuss how we might of assistance to you.”

O.K. Now you have a marketing letter. Who do you send it to?

Hopefully you will have identified your target market in your business plan, and ideally, have a list of potential clients.

If not, start your research now.

If you're doing business to business selling, who are the potential decision makers and influencers within organisations that you would like to have as your clients, or who you would like to do even more business with?

LinkedIn is a great resource for this approach.

## The Must-Know Secret To Success In Sales

If you're doing business to consumer sales, you will need to look for ways to identify where you could do a mass marketing mail drop or place a well written advertisement or brochure using these principles.

Again, you will need to ensure that you comply with any privacy or SPAM legislation that is applicable to your situation.

**Step two** – next Monday, send the email/letter to 7 potential clients. On Tuesday, send the email/letter to another 7 potential clients. On Wednesday through Friday, continue this process.

So now you have the 7 x 5 part of the 7x5x4 marketing strategy.

That is, you have sent 7 emails/letters out each day for 5 days.

In this first week, you have targeted 35 potential buyers.

Do this for 4 weeks and you have completed the 7x5x4 marketing strategy and have sent emails/letters now out to 140 potential clients.

**Step three** – Now you need to start calling the potential clients to arrange interviews.

On the Monday of the second week, you call the 7 potential clients that you emailed on the Monday of the first week to arrange interviews.

On the Tuesday of the 2<sup>nd</sup> week, you call the 7 potential clients that you emailed on the Tuesday of the first week to arrange interviews.

Continue this process, and over a five-week period, and you will have emailed and personally phoned the 140 potential clients.

Now you may not get interviews or be able to make appropriate contact with everyone of them, but, depending on the kind of business you're in, you will only need to secure a few interviews to gain real benefit from this strategy.

## The Must-Know Secret To Success In Sales

### TIP

Don't try to sell or tell too much on the phone.

You're trying to get an interview.

Simply ask for 30 minutes of their time to discuss the opportunity to help them in their business.

Depending on your existing workload with clients, you might need to adjust the number of emails/letters and calls either up or down.

However, certainly, the 'younger' your business, as has been highlighted in this report, selling is a bit of a numbers game.

So, take up the challenge, and get those marketing emails/letters out there.

### Summary

Although this report has been about 'doing the numbers', I certainly haven't steered clear of the need to continually be striving to develop your skills, knowledge, attributes, and motivation.

In reality, selling is about consistently being able to contact enough potential buyers to be able to apply your communication and selling skills to discover opportunities where your products and services can create real value.

When you can do this, it increases your capacity to be able to provide buying experiences for those potential and existing clients where they will want to provide you with repeat business and referrals to new opportunities.



# Managing and Achieving Sales Targets

## Report 9: Managing and Achieving Sales Targets

Key terms used in this report:

- Sales Targets are a given'.
- Reverse Reaction.
- Sales & Marketing Activities.
- Key Questions.
- Rewarding Yourself.

# Managing and Achieving Sales Targets

## Introduction:

Let's face it, the majority of us in sales don't get much input into our own sales targets.

If you do, fantastic! You're one of the fortunate few.

But for most salespeople and their managers, sales targets are usually set by the finance department in response to the pressure being put on the organisation's board of directors, to achieve and provide a predetermined return to shareholders.

Well, the reality is that your sales targets are a given, and the minimum standard of performance that will be expected of you is to achieve that target.

If you're in the fortunate situation where you firmly believe that the sales target set for you is easily achievable, that's fantastic.

But for many salespeople, their immediate reaction when they find out their new sales target is one of dismay.

And herein lies the problem that many salespeople start to cause for themselves.

They disengage their energy and motivation from that target by saying something like, "Well, it's not my target, or that's a ridiculous figure."

Now, what I'm about to say, may cause you to roll your eyes and shake your head, but stay with me for a moment.

As salespeople, if we want to increase our chances for success, we need to understand, that even if our sales targets are ridiculous figures, it's not our concern.

Just in case your sales manager is reading this over your shoulder, and has just fell off their chair, let me explain.

## Managing and Achieving Sales Targets

The actual sales target is not your concern, because it's a given. It's set. It's not negotiable.

So, what is your concern?

What we as salespeople need to be focusing on is not the actual sales target, but what sales and marketing activities we will define and implement in order to have the highest chance of achieving the target.

This is not to say we ignore the sales target; we simply focus our attention on the things that will help us achieve it.

You see, we have no control over the target, but we do have choice and control over our own sales and marketing activities.

### Where's your focus?

One of the realities of managing and achieving goals is that sometimes your focus can be your best friend or your worst enemy.

What you invest your emotional and physical energy in will become stronger.

This means that if your emotional and physical energy has a goal supportive focus, then you will more than likely achieve your goals and targets.

However, if your emotional and physical energy has a goal obstructive focus (either consciously or sub-consciously) you will more than likely struggle to achieve your goals and targets.

For some people, they put so much pressure on themselves to achieve the target – which sounds positive – but their focus is on feeling the pressure.

This pressure builds and builds and distracts their focus away from the actual target.

## Managing and Achieving Sales Targets

It's almost as if the more they focus on the target, the further away they are becoming.

Why?

Because their focus is on the pressure and worry, and not on the actions and behaviours that will result in more opportunities to achieve the target.

This '**reverse reaction**' has been the downfall of many sales targets across many industries.

So, the key is to start to focus on what is in your control as a salesperson.

Remember, the target is already set.

You don't have control over the figure.

But you do have control over what you will do to try and achieve it.

This is where your focus for sales goal setting needs to be. Not on the target but setting goals around the activities you will undertake to achieve the sales target.

As you consider this approach, I recommend you take a moment now to write out actual goal statements.

Now you may be one of the many people who want to resist the practice of writing out goal statements.

However, I encourage you, if you've never done it before, or even if you've tried writing out goals statements in the past and haven't found them to be of benefit to you and helping you focus on your goal achievement, to try this exercise just one more time.

Your goal statements can be written in many different ways, however, here's one way that you can approach them to ensure that each of these 'activity goals' are easy for you to review and manage your progress.

## Managing and Achieving Sales Targets

For example, you might write out a goal statement on defining your prospect clients in a similar way to this:

By Wednesday next week, I will have researched and developed a list of prospective clients that I will be calling on over the next 100 days.

A key to making these goals realistic and achievable, is to transfer them into your daily and weekly activities.

As a salesperson, our diaries ought to be full of specific and measurable daily and weekly activities including research time, phone calling time, email/letter writing time, sales calls/meetings with prospective clients, sales calls/meetings with existing clients and so on.

There's nothing worse in a salesperson's life than an empty diary with no activity and little prospect of success.

So, increase your chance of success by filling your diary with realistic opportunities that you will create from your sales and marketing activities.

While you're developing a list of the sales and marketing activities you're going to set goals around to implement, start to think about the sales target and how your activity levels will enable you the best chance of achieving it.

### Key Questions:

As you're working on setting your sales and marketing activity goals that will help you to achieve your sales targets, consider the questions listed on the next page and take some time to make sure that you can answer them with detail and confidence.

## Managing and Achieving Sales Targets

1. What proportion of the sales revenue target was achieved last year from existing clients?
2. What potential is there from existing clients for this year?
3. How will you stay in touch with these existing clients to provide value and reason for them to do the same amount or additional amounts of business with you this year?
4. What amount do you need to find from new clients?
5. How will you identify these new clients?
6. What marketing and sales activities in the past did you or have others used to secure business with existing clients?
7. What marketing and sales activities and strategies will you employ to set up appointments or make contact in other ways with the potential clients you have identified, to discover and clarify where there might be potential for you to create value for them?

But setting these sales and marketing activity goals is only a part of the process.

You also need to manage the process of goal achievement.

You can do that by first looking at each of the sales and marketing activity goals that you have set and asking yourself this question:

“What skills, knowledge or attributes might I need to learn or strengthen to be able to achieve this goal?”

This is an important question for you to ask, because if you don't have the competency to achieve the goal, it will only cause you frustration.

So as part of your goal management process, you need to identify a personal learning and development plan.

## Managing and Achieving Sales Targets

Identify the areas that you will need to develop and start working on those.

Another part of the goal management strategy is to review your progress on a regular basis.

Weekly is a pretty good way to do that.

Last thing on a Friday of each week, take a half an hour to review your progress.

What did you set as your weekly sales and marketing activities and how did you go?

What caused you to achieve or not achieve these activities?

What can you do in the next week or so to ensure those activities that did not take place in the past week are recovered in the following weeks?

Reward yourself:

Finally, one of the most important strategies to managing the achievement of your goals is to reward yourself when you achieve the activity levels you set.

Rewarding yourself is different to the rewards you will receive from your organisation and in many ways, more important.

When you know that you have set realistic but stretching activity goals, and that you have actually achieved what you set out to do, the numbers will just take care of themselves.

So, remember to reward yourself weekly or fortnightly.

Maybe you will reward yourself by treating yourself to something special. It could be going to see a movie, a special bottle of wine, or taking some personal time.

## Managing and Achieving Sales Targets

Whatever it is, set these little personal rewards regularly, and make sure you take them when you earn them.

### Summary:

Let me conclude this report by saying that planning doesn't achieve results, nor does unplanned activity usually achieve the best results.

However, well planned and executed sales and marketing activities, when implemented with strong belief and enthusiasm by you, will give you the best chance of achieving any sales target that you might be faced with.

So, fill your diary with planned sales and marketing activities, reward yourself as you implement and achieve your weekly and fortnightly activity levels, and I'm sure you will reap the benefits and accolades from your organisation as you meet and even exceed your sales targets.



How to become the #1 Salesperson in your industry.

## Report 10: How to become the #1 Salesperson in your industry.

Key terms used in this report:

- Visibility
- Differentiation
- Role Model
- Sales Process
- Fulfilling promises

# How to become the #1 Salesperson in your industry.

## Introduction:

Not everyone can or probably even wants to be the #1 salesperson in their industry.

Maybe #1 salesperson in their company is enough, and without doubt, that is a wonderful ambition and well worth pursuing, and the information in this report will certainly still be of value.

However, if in the not-too-distant reaches of your aspirations, you would like to at least consider the possibility that you might be able to go beyond the #1 salesperson in your company and tackle the opportunity of being #1 in your industry, then this report will provide you with some real value, challenge and strategies to develop and implement.

Our research has discovered that there are fundamentally five key strategies that are usually implemented by the most successful salespeople and by those who are recognised as industry leaders in what they do.

The five strategies to become the #1 salesperson in your industry are:

1. Be more visible than anyone else in your industry.
2. Differentiate in some way so that you are 'top of mind'.
3. Become a role model.
4. Follow an effective and proven sales process.
5. Promise what you can deliver and deliver on your promises.

Let's consider each of these in turn.

## Visibility

To help us consider this strategy of visibility, let's start with a question.

When you think about the #1 salesperson in your company – who comes to top of mind?

## How to become the #1 Salesperson in your industry.

Now if it's you, congratulations. You're probably implementing many, if not all of the strategies outlined in this report.

If it's not you who comes to top of mind as the #1 salesperson in your company, then let's spend a moment considering what they might be doing that causes them to be so successful and certainly, what causes them to be at the top of your mind.

Sure, they obviously will be winning more sales than anyone else.

And it's probably highly likely that they have exceptional sales and communication skills, supported by an extremely high level of product knowledge.

But there's a principal question that they have more than likely asked of themselves and answered that will be helping them achieve and focus on the most effective use of their valuable time.

Here is a question that will help you move to number one salesperson in your company and then to go beyond that and achieve number one salesperson in your industry. And the question is:

**"Who do you need to be seen by and make regular contact with to achieve your potential?"**

Now, this may on the surface to be a question that has an obvious answer ... and the answer might be "customers of course".

However, when you really start to consider this question, your answers can help focus your attention on building your personal recognition not only in your company but in your entire industry.

Let's consider some possible answers to this question.

Sure, existing clients and potential clients would be the obvious answer, but take a moment to consider how well you have really defined who your existing and potential clients are, who your future clients could be and which ones you need to be calling on and contacting more than you possibly are at the moment.

## How to become the #1 Salesperson in your industry.

You see, the key here is to be clear about who you need to be seen by and make contact with.

Spend the majority of your time fishing where the fish are.

In other words, make sure that you're seeing existing clients and potential clients who have the capacity to buy more from you.

Have you taken time to actually define your 'ideal client'?

This can be a powerful exercise for three reasons.

The first is that it gives you clarity about who you really would like to be selling to, creating value for, and building relationships with.

The second reason is that with greater clarity for yourself, your discussions with potential referrers (colleagues, existing clients and other influencers) will be much clearer in helping them identify the type of prospective client you would like to be referred to.

And thirdly, your marketing, advertising and general sales approach will be more focused and potential clients that 'fit' the description of the ideal client for you will be able to better realise that you are the type of person they need to be talking with to help them achieve their goals.

Clarity brings an amazing number of opportunities for anyone in sales.

But who else other than existing and potential clients do you need to be seen by and make contact with?

What about the influencers of those clients and potential clients?

Who are the people that have an influence on the thoughts, decisions, and actions of your existing and potential clients?

Depending on the type of business you are in, these could be personal assistants, managers, partners, other industry leaders or commentators etc.

## How to become the #1 Salesperson in your industry.

Here's another question for you to consider.

Not only is it important to know who you need to be seen by and make contact with, it's also equally important to be able to answer the question of "Where can you be seen by them that's easy for them?"

Let's consider an example to explain this principle.

A financial planner decides to 'be seen' by a number of potential clients through a marketing strategy of conducting breakfast seminars.

This financial planner has defined her ideal client to be retired couples.

She decides to hold the breakfast presentations in the city and wonders why very few people turn up.

The problem is that the financial planner wasn't making it easy for potential clients to see her.

Without making or breaking a stereotype, it's probably fair to say that many retired people aren't looking to get up and travel into the city for a breakfast presentation by someone they don't really know.

The financial planner would have been much better off conducting the breakfast seminars in locations closer to where people actually live – local community halls, educational centres, or other venues where a seminar could be held.

Again, the principle here is make it easy for those who you need to be seen by to achieve your potential to actually see you.

So, the first strategy was to be more visible than anyone else in your industry.

This might include attending industry functions, or joining community associations where the people who you are targeting as potential 'ideal' clients would be members.

# How to become the #1 Salesperson in your industry.

## Differentiate

However, it's one thing to be seen, but will you be remembered?

Will you be the salesperson who is 'top of mind' when your potential clients think of something they need that your products and services might help them with?

For this reason, there needs to be a supportive strategy to that of just being visible. Visibility without recognition is potentially as invaluable as invisibility.

So, here's the question that will challenge you to be take action on this strategy.

“What can you do with your personal style or daily client relationship strategies that will help your existing and potential clients remember you positively?”

Answer this question and you will be well on the way to achieving the position of #1 salesperson in your company and moving forward to becoming the #1 salesperson in your industry.

Maybe you've got a different accent that distances you from competitors and is easily recognisable. Maybe there's something physically different about you that will cause people to positively remember you – your height, your hair, your clothes etc.

But for many of us, differentiating by 'style' is difficult.

Therefore, we need to differentiate by action.

What actions will you take that will keep you at top of mind with your existing clients and help your potential clients to remember you and distance you from other salespeople calling on them?

# How to become the #1 Salesperson in your industry.

This isn't just about gimmicks and giveaways.

Although these can be legitimate and valuable marketing enhancers, however, look for real value add strategies that will cause you to create 'wow' experiences with existing and potential clients.

## Role Model

Without wanting to sound too evangelical, but what the world needs now is ... (yes, of course love) ... but in this case ... more role models.

This strategy is directed squarely at you striving to build the best version of you.

The world's history is dotted with wonderful philosophical messages like the Golden Rule "Do unto others as you would have them do unto you".

This golden rule theme is to be found in most if not all religions.

Putting it into a more business-oriented theme, we can arrive at something like this:

Think, act, and model the behaviour you would expect of others.

If you consider these words for a moment, what they will challenge you to do, is to aspire to the best you can be, and in so doing, you will inspire others around you to be the best that they can be.

In other words, you will be leading by example.

Unfortunately, today we seem to be lacking in leadership across the board.

There are exceptions, and I'm sure you will be able to identify certain leaders in their fields, with whom you can relate to and even aspire to.

## How to become the #1 Salesperson in your industry.

But when we think of politics, business, sport, entertainment, it's not so easy to identify role models, and the reality is, many are probably not necessarily focusing on being role models.

However, those who do stand up as role models, and quite often they won't be blowing their own trumpets, have qualities that people relate with, aspire to, and even try to emulate.

What about you?

In the way that you conduct your business, are you modelling the behaviour that you would expect of others?

In the way that you communicate with your clients, are you modelling the behaviour that you would expect of others?

In taking the decision to model the behaviour we expect of others, it raises us to a higher level of personal discovery and challenge.

Could you be the role model that others might aspire to?

If your answer is yes, you will be further down the track of success and certainly on the path to becoming the #1 salesperson in your industry.

### Follow a sales process

Our research shows that either consciously or subconsciously, the most successful salespeople across many industries understand that it's not what we sell, it's the way that we sell it, that will cause clients to come back again and again.

Understanding the process of a sale increases our ability to build business. Here's an example of a proven sales process that I've been coaching successful sales leaders and their salespeople with for three decades.

The process is called the **BASICS of selling.**®



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One way to view the process of selling is to think of it in a series of interconnected steps. Using the word BASICS as an acronym, you too can follow this proven selling process.

The following provides you with the objective of each of the steps. Use it to review your own approach to selling.

**Build rapport:** The objective of the build rapport step is to create a comfortable communication experience for both the buyer and seller. It is about establishing a degree of mutual purpose and respect and to provide the momentum to discuss business potential.

**Ask questions:** The objective of the ask questions step is to help both the potential client and salesperson clearly identify and clarify client wants and needs.

**Show value:** The objective of the Show value step is to present product and service features and benefits in a way that shows specific and tailored value for each client.

**Identify obstacles:** The objective of the Identify Obstacles step is to determine and appropriately remove where possible any reasons or causes that might prevent people from buying.

**Confirm the sale:** The objective of the Confirm the sale step is to gain confirmation to take the appropriate action to commence or continue the business relationship.

**Stay in touch:** The objective of the Stay in touch step is to create after sale experiences that encourage clients to adopt a preferred supplier relationship and to recommend and refer others to you.

By following a process like the above, you will be able to reflect on every interaction you have with a potential client.

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You can self-coach how well you're implementing your sales process by asking the following:

- ❖ How did I build rapport and trust with that client?
- ❖ What questions did I ask to help the client clarify what they were after?
- ❖ How did I show the value the client was expecting?
- ❖ What obstacles or objections did I uncover by seeking their feedback on what I was offering?
- ❖ How did I confirm the sale by helping them make a decision to buy when they were comfortable and confident to buy?
- ❖ How did I stay in touch, or commit to staying in touch in a way that will create more value than the client expected.

This self checking reflection will really help you connect with your clients and provide you with valuable information on the level of success you are having in building business and help steer you to becoming the most successful salesperson in your company and industry.

### Fulfilling your promise

Long term profitable sales relationships are usually built on a strong foundation of *trust*.

Trust is something you earn through promising what you deliver and delivering on your promises.

What are you doing to cause your existing and potential clients to respect and trust you in ways that will distance you from your competitors?

What extra-mile philosophy do you have and act on that will build greater levels of trust, respect and deeper long-lasting relationships with your clients and potential clients?

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One way to keep you focused on building trust is to never think of winning one sale.

Think about the first sale as just the start of a long-term relationship.

Every action you take after that first sale will have the capacity to continually distance you positively from your competitors.

This is why a short-term quick sale focus is potentially dangerous if you are aiming to become the top salesperson in your company or industry.

Sure, you have to win sales, but will the sales that you win cause your clients to buy again and refer others to you, or will the sales that you win be one-offs?

The one-off sale, if you can get enough of them, can work, but it's hard work.

Fulfilling your promises and going that little bit extra to create valuable 'wow' experiences for every client will quickly surge you to the top of your profession.

### Summary

Being number one is a wonderful goal, but without wanting to sound too much of a tree hugger, deciding to aim and take action on becoming number one, and then pursuing and enjoying the journey, the setbacks, and the many successes, will be without doubt one of the best decisions you will ever make as a salesperson.

It's so easy to be mediocre and one of the crowd.

It doesn't necessarily take someone special to rise above mediocrity ... It does however require special commitment.

# How to become the #1 Salesperson in your industry.

## About the author



DAVID PENGLASE is a behavioural scientist and Australia's leading expert on the Art & Science of Building Customer Trust. David shares his research on how trust impacts almost every measure of success in our personal and business lives ... Especially in sales and service roles.

With degrees in Business and the Psychology of Adult Learning, an MBA, a Master degree in Professional Ethics and a Master of Science degree in Applied Positive Psychology, David is one of Australia's most booked and rebooked conference speakers and masterclass presenters – both in person at your event, or livestreamed from his purpose built multi-camera livestream and recording studio.

David's clients range from large multinationals to boutique small businesses looking to create successful sales cultures.

David and his wife (and business partner) live in Sydney and have two adult sons.

For more information about David or to inquire about booking David for your next conference event, or Professional Learning Development program visit [www.davidpenglase.com](http://www.davidpenglase.com) or call +61 (0) 418 400 369.