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August 2022 Monthly Sales & Service Tip

Setting Account Goals And Sales Call Objectives Move (Push) The Customer Through The Stages Of The Buying Process!

An "old Crony" and colleague of mine always lamented the importance of setting account goals and call objectives in order to achieve sales success. He built an entire sales organization on this premise and achieved global success with a telecommunications company. Now, I'm the "old Crony" and the Butler Rant for this month is how to create the urgency and literally "push" the customer to make a decision!

I wonder how many of us really plan and prepare before making a call. Remember, my father's line was always, "Preparation is more important than presentation." Just visualizing a positive outcome or expectation can lead to sales success. No kiddin'! Contrary, so can the opposite effect of negative thoughts lead to negative action; but we won't go down that road today. It's all about positive expectations, so if you need a dose of mental calisthenics, call me. You'll either start laughing with me or hang up. Now, who has the last laugh, huh?

Channel your positive expectations into doing the due diligence or right of passage in our profession by pre-call planning. Today, we Google everything so you might be surprised what information comes up. Research and look up all you want, but maintain a time discipline being on the computer. You must practice time management in all due diligence and only retrieve the information you need or want. Allow the Analysis to uncover and discover customer needs and wants during the customer interaction. Review account information, history, product mix and account potential to determine your account goals, including financial, and how you want to attack (strategize). Then consider incremental call objectives to reach these goals through stages, timelines or milestones.

Next Generation Selling is about the customer and not the seller, so consider looking at your account from a different perspective, a customer perspective, as to what their needs and wants are. Exploring these possibilities from a customer viewpoint, just might create other opportunities that the seller didn't consider. What are the buyers reasons, motivation and agenda to buy from you? How can you provide insight into the customer's business that they didn't consider so you become valuable to them? When the customer needs something and they think of you first, you've created the "mind share" with that account. The customer's not interested in your product features. The

customer wants to hear the benefits of those features like improving efficiency, safety and productivity or minimizing downtime while providing documented cost savings. Another Butler Rant of mine is that so many of us don't sell benefits to create the perception of value. I'll save that topic for another month!

After you have analyzed the buyer's perspective on call objectives, you're in a much better position to establish yours. Consider call objectives on every call. Where are you in the stages of the customer's buying process? Then analyze the tactics and steps you need to implement to reach your goals. Those tactics and steps can become call objectives. **Think of these call objectives in two ways: primary and minimum. Primary objectives are what you want minimum objectives are what you'll take.** If you're calling on a customer for the first time, your primary objectives would be to meet the decision maker, get a plant or facility tour and pick up a bid request or quote. Your minimum objective would be to schedule a tour and ask for any requests. Regardless, you always achieve an objective or sideline pass as I call it, and are still in the game. Like him or not, Tom Brady's comebacks are based on sideline passes. He throws a short pass, gets another and has a first down. Then he goes long and moves or "pushes" the ball down the field until he scores. The key is to set up the next call objective (sideline pass) to keep the customer moving.

Create the urgency with sales call objectives. Don't stop selling until you earn your "No's." Yes, we still must earn our "No's" to keep the customer moving. Remember, the timeline is against us. The longer it takes to move the customer, the less probability of a sale. It's a time-proven fact. Lastly, never leave a customer call without setting up your next sideline pass. If you're face-to-face or over the phone and customer says, "Get back to us," say, "No!" That's right. Ask the customer to pull out the calendar or open Outlook to schedule the next action step or appointment. If you accept, "get back to us" you may never reach them again! No foolin'! Recently, it took me nine (9) touches to reach someone who said, "Get back to me!" It's just too frustrating when you can set up the call objective or action step right away. Or, it sends a "qualifier" to you as the seller that the customer isn't as interested as you thought.

So, Sales Leaders, good sales managers always ask questions of their sales reps. One of those should be about account goals and incremental call objectives on moving the customer through the buying process. **Better yet, consider joining us August 15-18, 8am-10am ET via remote training, to learn more about setting account goals and call objectives.** If you'd like some help or assistance or have questions on this, give me a call and let's talk about it.

Good Luck & Good Team \$elling!

Bob Butler, TSP
And the BLS T.E.A.M.
Together **E**ach **A**chieves **M**ore

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