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## February 2022 Monthly Sales & Service Tip

### Next Generation Selling Requires A Sales Certification Process To Become The Sales Professional®

The transformation process continues in selling today. Do you feel it? You should! A new breed of Sales Professional is emerging from the ranks and coming to the forefront. It's no longer about the seller. Next Generation Selling requires a different perspective, a buyer perspective, as it relates to satisfying needs and creating wants. **When you provide a different insight to customers about their business that they didn't consider, you become valuable and create "mindshare" with them.** When they need something, they think of you first. Unfortunately, there are many Sales Pros that can't change their perspective from seller to buyer and are departing from the sales arena.

There is a license or certification process required in most professions, but not in selling. Why is this? The sales profession is no different than being a lawyer, engineer, real estate agent, financial planner or accountant. **All professions require ongoing education and training, a certification process and an area of specialization.** Selling is no different. So Sales Leaders, continue to offer education and training and get ready for the next milestone in sales education: a Sales Certification Process designed for Next Generation Selling.

I am often asked what's needed to ensure that sales training is effective. The concepts of integrated supply, distribution sales and outsourcing continue to grow in importance as sales organizations become the preferred supplier or single source to their customers. The supplier that responds first and has availability gets the order! **Relationships are also critical as people will still buy from people they like and trust.** So continue to train on people skills, relationships, communication skills and personalities and behaviors of customers.

**Understanding and executing sales fundamentals** are similar to what professional athletes go through. It takes practice, drill and repetition to perfect these skills. The side that executes these fundamentals properly wins the sales game. Think about it! Why do the pros practice all week long to play one game? They execute instinctively and by habit so it becomes automatic or second nature. Salespeople continue to play while perfecting skills in front of customers without practicing. Today we must practice, practice, practice so when in front of our customers, we develop the leverage and play our best game.

**Preparation and pre-call planning are more important than the presentation.** Sales Pros must use a selling plan or process for pre-call planning. Sales organizations are standardizing a selling process, creating a sales culture with a common sales language for consistency of message. Sales reps who continue to flounder and drift will soon depart from our profession. The inadequacies of talking before listening, using close-ended questions, not selling benefits, fearing objections and forgetting to trial close, are STILL quite prevalent in most organizations. **Training becomes the vehicle to learn these sales fundamentals.** Learning becomes a three-step progression: TRAINING + PRACTICE = HABIT.

Finally, **Sales Pros must quit selling on price and get back to selling value.** "What got us there, we must continue to keep us there!" Value is perceived and in the eyes of the beholder. We're only as good as our ability to communicate this value to create perception. Sales Leaders, you must empower Sales Reps to take control of price discussions! The tendency I witness in the field is that the salesperson quits selling during these discussions and caves in on price. Sales

Professionals must have the authority to negotiate price and protect margins.

Sales Leaders, I've also been asked if we are to become dinosaurs in the sales profession and my answer is emphatically, "No way!" As long as we continue with R&D, technology advancements and new products, there will always be a story to tell. That story comes from The Sales Professional® (TSP) who has made the transformation to Next Generation Selling with a buyer perspective, they continue to bring solutions as a Consultative-Partner to their customers.

**There is still time to become certified as The Sales Professional® (TSP) in 2022.** All of our opens for 2022 will be provided via Remote Training starting with Level 1 the week of March 21, 2022. Check out our full schedule online. Go to [butlerlearning.com](http://butlerlearning.com) and click on "Shop."

We're always available and welcome your calls. Share your experiences, challenges and opportunities. We'll share ours with you!

Good Luck with your Sales and Service Excellence!

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

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