

Sales efforts

During discussions concerning sales with other people in sales the conversation slowly moves in the direction of sales training. Some good, some bad training however not enough sales training is given to the sales people. Recently I was involved in discussion with a very good friend and the conversation went back a few decades to the sales training that taught the theory of us against them mentality.

When a certain company started out with their flat rate pricing some of the very first trainers made obvious statements that were solid for that economic time period. The statements were made during the 1980's where the sale was successful mainly due to the service contractor being able to show up. The statement is; not every person is your client. Do not waste time with time wasters. What they forgot to teach and mention with the people they were training is how to determine which people were time wasters and which people needed education, consulting and developing the relationship.

Every trainer will say to build value. Few trainers will cover how to build value due to pinning down the definition of what is value. Value is hard to define due to it being a perception and the client controls that perception. The sales trainers forget to inform the sales people taking the training how to discover what value is to the client and to drive that value. Another missed point is how to discover what is valuable to the client. There is a difference between valuable and value.

The other statement, stop leaving money on the table. Sales training that accommodates this line of thought is far more difficult and the easiest approach is to teach the use of fear as a motivator. Fear is a huge motivator for both a client and a sales person. Fear of job loss motivates the normal sales person to do whatever it takes to bring in numbers. Sales training organizations are graded by owners of companies with the numbers that are delivered and how quickly those numbers can be achieved. Those numbers are evaluated by real dollars and not by how the dollars are manipulated. The end justifies the means type attitude. Fear as motivation can be taught in a few days with little to no extra effort from the sales person after the training. The sale service technician paints a picture of impending disaster and simply asks the home owner this; do you want to wait until then or take care of it now. I personally believe this type of salesmanship is garbage and has no place in the sales tool box.

It is apparent that the vast majority of sales people leave a ton of money on the table and that is how the sale is looked at by these sales people simply as money. When the sales person's perception is one of helping the client, the additional items are addressed and most clients will choose to move forward

with those additional items. It is the distorted mindset of the sales service technician that must change instead of the client's mindset.

For the unskilled service technician with sales it is a fear of rejection that causes the technician to bypass the additional sales. Lacking sales skills prevents the sales service technician from becoming an outstanding superstar sales person. It holds them back and creates an atmosphere of complacency that is believed and compared to consistency. Do not allow consistency to become complacent and an accepted behavior. This will lead to an enabling the tech that stunts the growth and profits of any organization. Open the door and help the sales staff by creating magic in their daily activities.

The large sales training organizations believe that it is better to have one, one thousand dollar client instead of five two hundred dollar clients and your company does not need those two hundred dollar clients. My belief is I need both of these type clients. Why would any company be willing to lose 5 clients in order to have 1 big catch? Many companies during this current economic climate are feeling the pinch of losing those clients in the past that did not produce the big hit.

When the cost of doing business is greater than the value of the client it is time to cut that client loose. However I believe that the sales service technician should not make that decision. Often it is the lack of communication between a service technician and client that produces the two hundred dollar client and has less to do with the client. The client I do not want is the client that does not care about or respect the profession and has a belief that any person can do it. Value, quality of the product and service has little to no meaning for that type client.

Back in the day sales people were taught to have a rebuttal for every objection and answering an objection was considered a rebuttal. A fight or struggle between the sales person and the client occur with the rebuttal attitude. Whoever won that small battle usually won the fight or struggle to make a sale or a no sale. The very next time a sale was required with this client the war had to begin all over again or they choose a different company. I believe the sales of today have evolved more towards building a relationship with more rapport that allows the client to naturally choose to use the sales person each and every time with little to no question of why . I have observed sales evolving the last five decades. Sales have not changed much however the communication in which the sale is discussed has evolved. The way information is gathered and communicated has evolved to a degree of more efficiency.

Today communication is the key to the mint. Learning how to communicate and discover the important items to a client will uncover value and what is valuable to him or her. This can be uncovered only by composing the sale around the client and less about the sales person or organization in the beginning of the sales presentation. Sooner or later it will come down to the knowledge, performance, and quality, service of that organization and that will drive or engage the client to a natural progression of consent within the presentation and offering of the solution. Start by being prepared and to learn more about the client, what is important to him or her and discovering what he or she wants, needs, can use and can afford. Start believing in your abilities to carry the day and help guide the client while helping him or her to resolve their issues.

The time is now to start progressively changing the way a sales organization approaches sales and the clients. Start allowing the client to have an enjoyable ownership exchange that will allow the sale and effort to move forward. Forget old school tactics that try to convince a client to own against the client's will. Brian Tracy states a man convinced against his will is of the same opinion still. Using fear to manipulate and motivate will only produce results that will leave the client with the same opinion after the sale and prevent future sales efforts.

Start learning to build rapport and a relationship that constructs trust and respect and enjoy repeat business with existing clients that will allow an organization to grow and maintain the service that is required and demanded by all clients.