

Sales Tip: Bullet-Proof Your Sales Career in 2003

By John W David

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Who do we listen to in 2003? Will it be a return to economic stability and growth as some economists suggest or will it be a bust as most warn.

Maybe we should just hope for the best and prepare for the worst.

The key for your success is whether you prepare for the worst by making defensive mistakes or by being better focused on redirecting and accentuating your resources on market control and market expansion.

I will suggest that you take the position that the game will be won or lost by your decisions to win and not by your indecisions to lose.

To that end, we will direct all our efforts together through-out this new year with the sole purpose of making sure that you win.

You will find that all your best, most productive opportunities are hidden behind the most obvious ones, the ones that, if you charge off and jump on them, will get you into trouble. Not totally unlike a sales call.

Now, what follows may sound like an advertisement for "Making the Perfect Sales Call". However, those who have been with us since early on know that isn't the way we work.

While experience has taught us that "Making the Perfect Sales Call" is the best sales learning and application resource anywhere, feel free to use anything else you feel comfortable with to get you jumpstarted in 2003. THAT is the key!

The first consideration you must address going into 2003 is this one fundamental equation. This is inviolate.

"Quality of Knowledge x Quality of Execution of Quality of Knowledge = Quality of Success".

Only the degree of Quality is entirely up to you. And, it will show in your results.

Whatever the size of the gap between where you are and where you feel you'd like to be or feel you

should be in your sales career or any other career in which selling something to someone else plays a role in your success, the bridge between the one and the other is always this equation: (Repeat it aloud).

"Quality of Knowledge x Quality of Execution of Quality of Knowledge = Quality of Success".

The acceptable unconscious reality is that we all just don't know what it is that we don't know. In and of itself, that's not bad... up to now. However...

The conscious reality is that if we choose to ignore the gap and, worse, the cause of the gap, that's tragedy by design. We have to turn that around in 2003 or we may create another tragedy.

The second consideration is that all the need, want, or desire for what you offer is still there. High revenue selling potential is still out there.

Even if what you offer is just yourself as in job searching, the need, want, or desire is still there and maybe even more so. Because, most businesses' sales are slumping and need strong sales help.

What has changed: The buying dynamic.

Meet the new buying dynamic, then meet the new buying dynamic with a strong sense of urgency, and the sale will happen... today.

The Key here is that you must change where and how you build and make your Summary Presentation. If you make your Summary off what you can do to fit in or even can do better, you will lose!

This is especially distressing in appointed sales calls.

Appointed, targeted, properly performed sales calls should close with at least a six times higher close ratio.

The third consideration, then, is that to match the change in the buying dynamic, your call grades must rise by a minimum of one full point.

However, I get a strong sense that more than one, closer to two points, may be the bare requirement to meet the new challenges of the new buying dynamic.

One thing I can guarantee, same old same old just won't cut it.

At current sales call grade levels, averaging 4.3/10, the only serious sales volumes that will be made will happen mainly on absolute need and on reduced pricing and on costly terms and conditions of sale.

That will impact negatively on your revenues / incomes now and on your career over time.

You are better than that.

Sales Call Grades are that silly little, rarely recognized number at the bottom of your sales call sheets.

Included in the sales call grading system:
Quality of Pre-Call Prep, Practice, and Rehearsal.

Quality of use of Time-Slotting as a Growth Vehicle.

Quality of Pre-Call Disposition.

Quality of Call to Absolute, Minimum, and Optimal Call Objectives to Ideal Customer Profit Profile.

Quality of adherence to established selling / buying structure, system, and sequence including: Chit-Chat, Intro-Presentation, Competitive Information, Dowsloping, The Cap, Upsloping, and Summary Presentation.

Quality of Removal of most or all of 31 silent sales call killers of most sales calls.

Quality of Close to identifiable, measurable, and timeliable Sale or, at least, high quality Advancement to Sale.

The object of a high sales call grade is to leave your prospect wondering: "Wow! How can I get that guy (or gal) on my staff??" Create that buzz and you're half way home to the sale now and a bullet-proof career over time.

The fourth consideration is that you must be more proactive with managing your career as a separate business unit. Yes. Appoint yourself this very minute as "CEO and General Manager of You" as a separate service-product within the product or service you sell.

While you represent your company and its products and services probably quite well, you have to step out of that nice comfortable little role and take a serious look at the real business that will feed yourself and raise your family for the rest of your life.

How well you develop, market, and network this new self product to a broader and deeper market reach will dramatically improve your value to yourself, to your company, and to your customers both current and future. Get yourself out there!

I wish I could double-underline "network". Your key focus will be to be a greater value to anybody and everybody who you can proactively bring into your business life.

The fifth consideration. Now... here's where it can be fun. Now that you are the "CEO and General Manager of You", fire yourself as sales rep. Yes!

Start conducting interviews with another "you" for the job.

What would you, as "CEO and General Manager of You" want better in your replacement? How about harder working? How about better organized and prepared? How about more productive ... new business? retention of old business? How about to the items in Sales Call Grades?

You see, the nice thing is that you already know the job requirements. And, you know the criteria for the better job requirements.

But, what if you could, as the "CEO and General Manager of You" which, effectively, means your career, find out the general feel and, thus, the criteria for new reps, and then meet those criteria... then exceed them?

Can you see how that little technique could make you a better value to your self company, to your real company, to your career, and help bullet-proof your lifestyle? Of course, you do.

The sixth consideration. The critical step will be to position yourself to be found by the people you really want in your life.

Imagine building a career mainly around being found by the right people who have a need, want, or desire looking for you and willing, authorized, and ready to pay your price for what you have to offer

both as products and services and as a personal / professional resource.

Alternatively, you will be consigned to forever trying to find and deal with people who aren't really interested in you or what you have to offer at the time you find them.

We've all been there.

Positioning properly is a great way to meet the right people on your terms and make easy sales while the other is just a horribly difficult way to earn a living.

The seventh consideration. Before you ever do anything for any reason, identify, measure, and timeline a definite positive result that is consistent with where you want to go with whatever it is. Or, alternatively, don't do it.

Everything you do as a personal professional must be considered by you as a personal profit center. Really, doesn't that make sense?

If you can run your business life as a profitable business should be run, doesn't it make sense to make everything you do be a separate profit center? Of course, it does.

Dear friends, I don't want to sound mercenary about this. By all means, do good things for people.

However, I want you to understand this, every minute spent doing something for nothing when it could be spent doing something that will enhance your sales now and your career over time, is a wasted use of your most precious resource: Time.

You have only so much of it before its attendant buddies, 'energy' and 'money' gobble up the rest of who you are and what you can do for the stakeholders in your self company... remember? What would a responsible CEO and General Manager do?

You can be a better overall value to everybody if you are a better overall value to you and your self company. Okay?

So, as of today, if you can define it, measure it, and timeline its value as a definite, positive value to you, your business, your career, and to your betterment to your family, then, and only then, do it.

Well, friends, we're out of space again. I'll be apologizing to the publishers again. (Sorry, Guys!)

Help your business. Help your colleagues. Apply the concepts, ideas, and strategies here. Reread and apply all the Pro Sales Tips on The ProShop. Gear up for great 2003.

Commit to a net growth of at least 36% for next year. Nobody will mind if you're the only person in your territory not playing the gloom-and-doom game.

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