

Sales Tips: Conduct Sales Meetings that Inspire Results

By John W David

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John W David
jdavidppl@yahoo.com

Internet Marketing - Pro Shop <http://internetmarketing-proshop.com>

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To be an effective professional sales meeting, it must follow the same set up and processes as in a Professional Sales Call.

Have you ever sat through a sales meeting during which you have asked yourself "what in h... am I doing here?" Well, you're not alone.

Most sales meetings, like the Monday morning ritual, are how management tells you how poorly you're all doing and what must be done now to improve things... all to do with more calls / more sales.

Hint: Is your sales manager doing that much better?

You see, folks, that's what going on in the minds of your reps. And, they have the right to think that.

These meetings are the one-way, top-down stuff. You know the type:

Everybody shuts up, afraid to say anything, or to admit that they can't do this or have failed at that, or that they need help of any kind, or they just plain haven't faith in the manager.

Sadly, in most companies, that's as good as it gets!

Then, the round table stuff like: "John. How are things going on in your territory? Anything new to tell us about?" And, you know that for the most part it's the pya stuff that management wants to hear.

Is that what your sales meetings look like?

Question.

At the end of your sales meeting, are your sales troops filled with a burning desire to spread your Five Best Value Benefits of your corporate mission? Uh huh.

In other words, have they bought what you've tried to sell them in the meeting? Or, have they even bought the meeting itself?

You see, the focus of your meetings should be less to do with statistical what was or what is and should be everything to do with real-life triage of what isn't working as well for your people as they would like or the introduction of newer weaponry that will make their Mission easier and better to fulfill.

Wouldn't that make more sense? Isn't that closer to the selling process?

This is more than about meetings and management of people.

It is all about building Team Culture within Mission and under Leadership to do with total committed involvement of your entire team in something they feel they own, want to be an integral part of, and where the objectives will benefit them, their careers, their families, their customers, and, by default, their company.

Doesn't a sense of ownership in the solution precede the sale? You know it does.

Whenever you have felt totally, passionately committed to a concept that you own, how have you presented it to someone you truly care about?

Yep. Totally involved. Sharing, caring, all about how it will benefit the other person. Right?

Isn't a sales meeting an opportunity for the company to sell its Mission to its clientele through its eyes, ears, nose, throat, and hands... its representatives?

If not, then its hirelings haven't bought its solution and are going out there day in and day out just doing a job... with the results attendant to people just doing a job.

Is that what your company wants?

In and after the standard weekly sales meeting, that's just what the company gets.

Starting today. here is what to shoot for in your Sales Meetings... all of them.

- a) Team Culture
- b) Teach and Train
- c) Inform and Lead within Mission
- d) Reaffirm that your Team is battle ready within the Professional Selling Process and your Five Best Value Benefits.
- e) Get Results.

Here's how.

- a) Team Culture within Mission. Look at Championship teams. You should always seek to model yourself and your people on the most successful examples available. Success breeds Success.

How are they organized, structured, and being led on the field and on the sidelines?

Do they follow a success system where each player has a specific responsibility which is ultimately integrated into the whole effort?

When you create a sense that being on this sales team actually is a considerable step above the rest, you have created Team Culture. Team Culture is key to winning at anything.

In building this Team Culture, establish that your meetings reflect the Mission of the company.

This might be a time for everyone in the organization to re-acquaint themselves with the concept and the need for it.

Now, this is going to require that the company actually has a Mission and that Mission includes a fervent desire to serve its market constituency beyond the levels of normal customer expectations.

It doesn't have to be an enormous difference. It just has to be enough that the sales and marketing people can see the Mission and see how it is different and better thereby cementing Team Culture.

This will lead to seriously help establish Market Separation by redefinition, the front end of better Quality sales efforts, higher close-conversions, superior Price / Profits / Incomes.

b) Teach and Train.

Part of any winning team culture is giving your sales force the sense and belief that they are always the best prepped and ready to win.

Preparation wins Championships. That makes them different and better.

Have someone make a mock Summary Presentation to your Five Best Value Benefits in response to the five most common needs, wants, or desires of your best "B" and "C" grade accounts. Do this for every meeting featuring a different player, including yourself, each time.

In the beginning, some of these Summaries may be a bit gruesome. That's the point.

However, in the long run, they will self-coach each other upwards to better performances and results.

A Team Culture built on on-growing Success should always be your only target.

c) Inform and Lead within Mission.

Establish that your meetings are about Leadership built around real substance that responds to your sales people's needs answering the same questions your customers ask of them, your company, and your products:

"So what?", "What's in it for me?".

An intelligent approach would be for the company to monitor its MIS at the boardroom level to keep their corporate ear to the ground about what their customers want and what, therefore, your reps are running into.

That way, your meetings can better target real issues with relevant Best Value Benefits that they can accept and pass along to their customers.

The only danger to this approach is that it may require two-way communication.

This two-way communication must not be master/slave, manager/employee. It must be professional/professional where Respect is mutual.

That could be a quantum leap for most companies and their management staff.

The best way to establish a genuine two-way Leadership based approach is to conduct your meeting in a round table setting where no one is at the head of anything, in a board room consistent with some of your sales calls, and everybody seated, including the moderator.

d) Reaffirm that your Team is battle-ready within the Professional Selling Process and your Five Best Value Benefits.

Therefore, establish that your meetings follow the Professional Selling Process. Yes. From Prospecting through Follow-Up.

Use the entire process as the ultimate example to your troops of what the selling process should

look like on a call.

To have any chance of success, your meetings must be about them in exactly the same way as their efforts must reflect the needs, wants, and desires of your customers.

For the meeting to be about them as being for their Best Value Benefit, no less as it would be for your customers in any other selling environment, make sure they are totally involved. Commitment follows Involvement.

f) Get Results.

You should want two Results.

i) A reason for living! A reason to go out to conquer and control their territory. This is beyond 'job'. This is beyond management. This is beyond sales meetings.

This is akin to nationalism. This is about your Mission as your Flag waving it high for everyone to see and to want to be a part of.

Think it's impossible? It is only if you believe it is!

ii) Something they can take into the field and increase their close-conversion ratios through more Passionate, Professional Sales Calls selling only their Five Best Value Benefits resulting in better pricing / profits / incomes.

Did I say Passionate? Passion reflects Team Culture, Team Mission.

If they have it, sales follow. If they don't, sales don't.

Passion is purely a Leadership thing.

When your sales team owns your Mission in their souls, your sales meetings are about re-injection of Passion and Desire and unity of purpose and far less about bland, management-style statistical garble and pya growth needs.

That stuff goes in one ear and out the other... or it should.

Troops know when their under fire. They need and will follow Leadership. Leadership is about Team Culture and Mission.

Great Leadership is about Great Teams with Great Culture and Mission.

If you want to Lead your sales team to superior results, you must demonstrate to their satisfaction that you understand and empathize with what they are going through not by words but by constant and proactive involvement with what is really going on in their territories and yours and to make all your jobs easier and better.

Improve the Qualitative Value of your meetings for your team. You can only win!

You get better sales, more sales, your company customer-base retention rate will rise simply because as you help your reps, you can only help your customers stay aboard, your pricing will be superior, and profits will be far better.

It all starts with better professional value sales meetings.

Lastly.

Question: Does a proper, professional sales meeting demand more Effort, take more Time to prepare, and cost more Money to pull it off? Uh huh.

Answer: Does a properly motivated, better trained, sales person seeing in her meetings and using the professional selling process properly on her calls have a better close-conversion ratio and produce more sales at superior pricing... even if only a few percentage points more? You betcha.

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John W David

Author / Teacher / Speaker

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