

What does it take to make the sale today?

Does this situation sound familiar? You walk into a sales call, go through some initial chitchat, ask a few questions, answer a few questions with “canned” statements and ultimately the customer asks, “How much is it?”

Strategy ... the word is much abused in sales. The dictionary says strategy is, “a carefully devised plan of action to achieve a goal, or the art of developing or carrying out such a plan.”

This means you have taken the time to assess your customer and what it takes to get the customer to want to buy.

You understand the selling process from their perspective, because you have analyzed their business and understand what will take place during the sales cycle before you start it.

Why spend time talking about this? Because most salespeople seem to have no strategy when they go into a sale. Of course, that doesn't mean they don't have an objective for the sales call, but they haven't taken the time to think about how to achieve the objective – and that is the essence of strategy.

What do you need to develop a successful strategy for the sales call? The following list is a good starting point.

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| <p>1. What information do I have? What information do I need? You already know what you want to accomplish, but the bigger question is what information do you need about your customer and their situation?</p> <p>2. Who is the real decision maker? Is this the same person you are meeting with?</p> <p>3. What is the decision-making process?</p> | <p>Is there a committee? Are there others who will influence the decision?</p> <p>4. If you understand the customer's situation you can anticipate the obstacles you are likely to face when asking for the sale. What are the typical obstacles you face? Who is your competition? Are there unique obstacles you might face when dealing with this customer?</p> | <p>5. What's your plan to overcome each obstacle? The better you prepare to overcome the obstacle, the less of an objection it is when it actually occurs.</p> <p>6. What actions are required on your part to complete the sale? Is it a sales presentation? A bid involved? What follow-up actions do you have to do?</p> |
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Finally, do you believe in yourself? You can do all the preparation and develop a sound selling strategy, but if you don't believe in yourself, it is likely that you will fail. How you answer these questions can be a predictor of your potential for success.

Do you believe in your company? Do you believe in the product or service you are selling? Do you believe in yourself?

Remember, strategy is not about making a sale today; it's about making tomorrow's sale.

For more information on training in this area or other sales training curriculum, visit: www.ats-solutions.net or contact Mike Biggins at mike.biggins@ats-solutions.net

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