

5 Secrets – how successful business sells well

by John Huggart, CEO, Sales Positive

Some businesses sell well.

Even in tough times they grow faster, retain key accounts, and occupy new segments. They even seem to out sell the small or medium sized enterprises (SME) that pride themselves on their ability to outsmart bureaucratic corporates.

So how do they do it? What continues to make them successful in the battle to win and keep customers?

In a 20 year selling career that has spanned private start-ups to major multi-national corporations I have observed 5 key reasons as to why and how some businesses succeed in selling.

1. STRONG SALES CULTURE

Businesses who sell well embrace a sales culture from the top. It is evident from the leadership that winning and keeping customers is important.

These leaders make it their business to keep in touch with customers, to personally engage on the big deals, and to assist sales people with practical insights and support. These multi-level relationships are rewarded when an account is at risk.

Best practice sales organisations recognise their role is to support the sale. As a result there is a high level of alignment with marketing, and a genuine lack of “us” and “them” between sales and other functions.

2. REWARD AND RECOGNITION

Yes successful business pays well. But importantly they are also open to significant incentives. Leaders respect rather than begrudge incentive payments.

Their best sales people will also be rewarded with non financial incentives, including opportunity for travel, entertainment and training.

3. THIRST FOR BEST PRACTICE

Best practice businesses strive for improvement and change. Induction and product training are substantial, as is the provision of relevant sales skills training for introductory and strategic selling, account management or negotiation. They will reinforce training with coaching.

Successful businesses will continue to learn by joining best practice forums, engaging consultants or attending seminars to access latest thinking and spot opportunities for improvement.

4. VALUE OF PROCESS

Successful businesses view the selling function as a process, and investigate and determine the best sales methodology that applies to their business.

They invest in planning, developing strategies, tactics and scenarios, prior to committing scarce selling resources. Plans are prepared to either a segment or account level. Effective plans are living plans, not “snap frozen” and placed on a shelf.

They know that not all customers are created equal. Sophisticated businesses align their sales and customer service efforts not only around the lifetime value of customers, but on their behavioural and buying preferences. A simple example is serving some customers by email/phone and allocating field executives where relationships are preferred (and valued!).



5. SYSTEMS CREATE VALUE

Successful businesses turn technology into an advantage. It goes beyond “one view of the customer” (a vision still beyond many major and SME’s) but includes accurate, transparent and real-time performance reporting and pipeline management.

Mature and affordable technology is available to automate and integrate sales processes. Best practice includes easy fulfilment of collateral, preparation of quotes and proposals and delivery of tailored presentations for both face-to-face and remote delivery.

CONCLUSION

The “5 secrets of how successful businesses sell well” illustrates common themes for business best practice. As knowledge is power, you have the ability within your organisation, no matter how large or small, to learn from the best and to achieve sustainable profitable growth from your investment in the selling function of winning and keeping customers.

If you have any further questions on this white paper or would like to find out how your business can lift sales performance please contact Sales Positive at www.salespositive.com.au.