



# SALES! WHO, ME?

Just because you're not directly liaising with customers doesn't mean you're exempt from developing sales skills.

I'M always amused when people tell me they're not in sales. In business, we're all in the business of sales, even if we're not working on the ground, face-to-face with customers.

Whether you're a CEO or middle management selling a crusade and vision to your people, an accountant or lawyer selling your services to clients, or a tyre repairer selling service and products - you are all in sales.

The critical mistake so many people make is not realising they are in sales. In order for you to be effective at what you do, selling

is a process that needs to be understood and mastered. Sales people are trained, not born. It is a skill, not a gift.

If you're in a managerial position and are wondering why your staff are reluctant to follow your lead or the company isn't moving in a favourable direction, you may need to revisit your sales skills. There are several key steps you can follow to ensure you're on the track to successful selling.

The first step, and foundation for the entire selling process, is to be aware you are in the business of selling. Once this has been established, you need to take ownership of

## IN SALES

with  
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your sales direction – nothing will happen until you make it happen.

From here, you need to work out exactly what you are selling. This can be quite tricky as you need to pinpoint your exact role which may be any of the following: selling a branded campaign with integrated messages, a company vision, a network, a shift in corporate structure, a service, a product or ownership of all of this.

Once you have identified the 'what,' it is time to consider the 'how'. Examine your current technique – what is working for you, your staff and your clients? Moreover, what is not working? Identifying the gap between what has been successful and what has failed, is a good place to start.

The next step is to mend these gaps. If you're still unable to locate trouble spots, ask an associate or colleague to give you some constructive feedback. Your clients are a knowledgeable data base – generally they are happy to give feedback on the areas they like, the level of service they expect and the areas they think need to be improved on or added to.

Once you have acknowledged the areas that need work, focus on them step by step. If you are a high-performing sales person you will know there is always something to learn and always areas you need to concentrate on to refine your skills so that you can be the

true professional you deserve to be. Once you perfect one step, you should already be working on mastering the next - there is no second prize in sales.

Your ability to identify and fix these problems will directly relate to the success of your company. The market expectation of sales and communication has risen significantly in the last decade. We expect leaders and each other to have the ability to sell our vision, brand, product or service with skill and professionalism. By teaching yourselves and your employees the proper sales techniques and communication skills, we will all be empowered to drive our own results and performance.

It is important to remember clients are inundated by messages and tactics from your competitors about where they should go for a service or product requirement. What is most important to them is how they are treated – if you look after them you will be able to grow your business and secure future success. Regardless of the size of your business, the strongest way to build on success is through a repeat and referral customer base – be a true professional in your area and take pride in the fact you are in sales.

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