

The Weekly Sales Tips Annual 2008

56 Sales and
Coaching Tips



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1 Introduction

Over 5,000 people receive their weekly sales and coaching tips in their emails each week and I'm proud now to publish a whole years' worth.

Enjoy

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Paul's Blog
www.paularcher.com



2 You're a Tough Nut to Crack

A good friend of mine was recently very keen to approach a new customer for his services. This customer was very difficult to get hold of, never returning calls, never in and extremely allusive.

So what did he do? He bought a walnut, carefully prised open the shell and put a piece of paper inside. He then promptly posted the walnut to the prospect.

The next day, the prospect obviously very intrigued to know what the walnut was all about, opened it and read the message. And the message.

"You're a tough nut to crack."

Brilliant. He got the client's attention who speedily phoned him and business resulted.

The customer - Richard Branson.

True story.

Sometimes we just have to be a little bit different with our prospecting and appointment making.

A favourite of mine is to send a prospect a lottery ticket or scratch card. The message is to take a chance this Saturday you could win a million.

"Take a chance with me and we could help you with countless business challenges that you might have."

I've heard of salespeople, phoning the office of the person they want to speak with, finding out when's lunch and getting a pizza delivered with a message inside.

The message is clear that the more innovative and imaginative we are, the more chances we'll get the prospect's attention.

3 A Little Secret to Kick Start Your Sales

What have space craft got to do with selling?

My eldest son was asking how spacecraft travel through space without burning fuel to propel them. Yes they burn a huge amount of fuel on take off, and discard all their fuel tanks as they fly into space, but once in space, a big burn and then the fuel gets turned off. The space craft continues to travel unheeded.

Now my son asked me why. Now I'm no physicist or scientist and I hadn't the faintest idea. But armed with the resource of the Internet we set about finding out why.

And we came up with Newton's First Law which states when an object is in motion, it stays in motion.

Now this got me thinking about selling.

My middle son Euan has terrible trouble getting up in the morning and we try everything to help him. But once he's up and about he's fine. You want to go out first thing in the morning for a run and it's bitterly cold and wet outside. It takes a lot to get going, but once you start, the rest becomes much easier.

So how can this help us in selling?

Think about your product or service that you sell. Is buying your product or service just one big jump? Is it a headache to get customers to really see the benefits? If so, break it down into small bite sized chunks and

encourage your customer to take the first step which is a really easy one to take. Make the first step really easy to take, and then the next and the next and so on until the ball starts rolling.

The first step might be to agree to meet for ten minutes, or to sign up to your eNewsletter, or to allow you to send over some client testimonials. Or whatever.

The important point is to make the first step small and easy to take and then let Newton's Law take over.

An object in motion, stays in motion.

4 Find a Common Enemy

Last season, my little Under 10's rugby team, that I help coach, were galvanised into action by one of the most powerful action principles ever known.

The team we were playing were playing tough. Some would say dirty, some would say physical. The fact was they had a few intimidating players on the pitch and they were only 10 years old. Motivated by the wrong doings on the pitch, our team began playing like they've never played before.

They had a common aggressor to beat. The enemy had done harm to them and had to be beaten.

Now this is not normally how the children behave, but sometimes when you have a common opposition or enemy, it spurs you all into action and you work together to bring about success.

Now what does this have to do with selling?

Quite simply, if you find a common enemy with your client, you will build bond together and a firm rapport will result.

But what sort of common enemies do we have in selling? I'm not talking about terrorism or another rugby team; I'm talking something we all have in common. Like:

- CO2 Emissions. Do you have a carbon footprint policy? Do you save paper, do lots of communication via electronic means. Agree with your client the need to reduce the carbon footprint and see the rapport building.

- The taxman. Most clients don't appreciate the amount of tax that's taken from their hard earned income. So rally behind the client against the taxman, the enemy.
- High interest rates and the Bank of England. This causes untold misery for people who can't pay their mortgages so rally behind the fixed rate and beating the interest rate rises.
- Inflation the common aggressor. Show how your products can defeat this.

Do you see where I'm going?

Find common enemies, back them and just watch that rapport with your client building beautifully.

Things have changed for my rugby juniors since last season. I took my referee badge this summer and now ref. all our games. Guess who's now the common enemy!

5 How a Source of Proof Can Help Establish Credibility

I played rugby at the tender age of 12 and foolishly didn't wear a gum shield. In a rather brutal and physical scrum, I came a cropper and lost two front teeth.

Now at the age of 44, I'm having some dental implants done to replace these missing teeth and boy is there a lot of work involved.

I was referred to a firm of dentists, a private practise in Cheltenham and in the summer, I had my first appointment with Mike.

Now this man was going to do some major surgery in my mouth and I wanted to make sure he was up to the job. Yes he was referred to me by my own dentist, the plaque on the wall outside his surgery looked pretty impressive and the private clinic did look the part.

But Mike was young, very young and I guess I looked worried. But before I could ask, Mike began his re-assurance patter, in a very professional salesperson manner.

The first thing he said to me was his full name, his qualifications and his experience in the dental industry with particular mention of his familiarity with dental implants.

Looking for my reaction, he then provided me with a Source of Proof and went on to tell me about someone recently who had a similar problem to me and how his dental solution dramatically changed the person's life.

He watched me closely and then provided another Source of Proof. Clever man.

In selling, particularly if you're selling a big ticket item or involved in business to business selling, you need to have your reassurance statement and several Sources of Proof.

Your reassurance statement should include your name and your experience both in the customer's industry or sector and your experience in dealing with similar problems to your customer.

So if you're selling a mortgage to someone who is looking to release equity, state your name, details of your general mortgage market experience and particular experience in the equity release market.

Then have up your sleeve some Sources of Proof. These are so important and can be put to a variety of uses. Showing the customer you have handled similar situations to theirs before, building up your credibility or used to overcome an objection later on.

So what should your Source of Proof include?

- The name of the previous customer (with their permission of course)
- The industry sector
- The pain or problems they were experiencing
- The reasons or causes of the pain you established
- The solution you recommended and the outcome that occurred
- What your solution meant in money terms to the customer

Continually update your Sources of Proof so they remain fresh. Many salespeople ask their satisfied customers for these and give them a template to use to cover everything. Satisfied customers are usually happy to provide these.

So next time you're beginning a meeting with a customer, remember to give them your reassurance statement and a Source of Proof to establish your professional credibility.

And yes, my treatment begins next year and being the big baby I am, I'm not looking forward to the pain, even though he had a Source of Proof for this one. Oh and I'd better come clean, actually the rugby story is a little white lie. I just fell over all those years ago and lost my two front teeth. The rugby story just sounds better!

6 Too Many Choices Can Spoil the Sale

It's my birthday coming up shortly. Don't ask (44) and my family want to help me celebrate in style. So over our Sunday lunch my wife held a competition for everyone to come up with two ideas to celebrate Daddy's birthday.

And Daddy was to judge the winner.

It was wonderful. On the table were 8 brilliant ideas.

But could I decide? No way, there were just too many options to choose from. I got confused, which normally doesn't take too much - just ask my wife.

Now this lesson spreads itself nicely to selling. Yes we spend time getting to know our customer's needs, wants, desires and we come up with recommendations and choices for the customer to take.

If we give them too many choices, we'll only confuse the customer and they might not take any. Many want to think about it afterwards and this stops the sale dead.

Instead, give the customer a maximum of two choices, and let them decide from that.

Another little known tip when giving the customer choices is to leave the one, you would like them to choose, to the end. This is so because when faced with choices most customers want to make a decision and feel internally pressure to do so. After a long list of choices, they tend only to recall the last ones and most often opt for the one that is very last on the list.

Whilst on the subject of choices for the customer, it helps us to think about how other professionals act in these situations.

When a doctor diagnoses your medical problem and decides on a prescription, he makes that decision for you and writes it out on a piece of paper. As his customer we just accept it without debate.

Now a doctor is different to say a mortgage adviser. But it's the same end result really. The doctor's customer comes to her to decide what is needed. A mortgage adviser's customer also comes to them to decide what's needed.

Maybe sometimes we need the strength of mind to accept that the customer wants our professional advice not a host of choices that they could have got from the Internet.

The winning idea? That was from my daughter Bethan (6) who went for a trip to the seaside so Brody could run along the sand for the first time. Ahhhh.....

7 Seven Secrets of Physical Success

It was 8 in the morning. Dublin was sublime. The early morning mist was drifting over the River Liffey and there I was, sitting in a client meeting, awaiting the boss to arrive. In she walked, or should I say glided. An entrance which exuded confidence, humility, accomplishment. A glide across the room which was practised and fluent. She oozed success with every movement.

How do some people do this? What secret do they have to make that perfect first impression? Read on to discover the Seven Secrets of Physical Success.

Entering the Room

The first impression is vital, everyone knows that. So when entering a room for the first time, maybe with a customer sitting at a desk or a meeting room, make sure your movements give the right first impression. The keys to entering a room are to stand tall and then do slow and deliberate movement.

Movement

Stand tall, actors use the wall to adjust their posture and stance. Stand with your back to the wall and this gives you the perfect posture to use. Then make every movement slow and deliberate. Fast jerky movements just give the wrong impression of nervousness. Make every movement deliberate and with a purpose. This might sound odd, but just watch people doing the same thing and their nerves will get the better of them via unnecessary movement. You see your nerves come through your periphery limbs. Your legs and arms are where we show our nerves. Legs show nerves through pointless movement. Every movement must have a purpose

Smile

The human smile is the most important rapport building skill known to mankind. We've smiled for thousands of years as a peace gesture. It evolves from our times as apes when the smile showed no fighting intent, almost a submissive gesture amongst primates. A smile also injects your body full of endorphins, the body's natural "feel good" drug.

Posture

Your posture says reams about the person you are. Are you slouched, angled? Are your feet and legs balanced or do you lean from one to the other, constantly moving and shuffling. This is an art not a science and you can choose to stand whichever way you wish after all it's a free world. But if you want to create a great first impression, stand solid and balanced. Feet about the same width as your shoulders and slightly angled away from your body, but not like a penguin! Legs still but using the knees as natural hydraulics.

Body looking tall and confident. Arms by the sides when not in use and gesturing with full

arms when the words require. The mid line from your forehead to the floor should never be blocked. Keep it open and clear to give a natural welcoming image. Head balanced, care the submissive tilt of the head unless you want to give an impression of being intrigued.

A final point about posture. Do you stand or sit? In a large group setting you must stand to give a confident and persuasive talk. With two or three people, sitting is appropriate. If you are very tall, try to keep your eye level the same as the customer, so you might want to sit down to balance the eye level with your customer. Never look down on customers!

It's now been proven that your body affects your state of mind. A confident and assured stance and posture will make you feel good. And this has a knock on effect on your performance.

Eye Contact

Give plenty of it, as much as your customer. Care with locking onto a nose or one eye. Try to gaze in a triangle across your customers face. Eye to eye to mouth, back to eye and son on. This gives a warm friendly eye contact. When you're talking you want to give eye contact pretty much all the time but when listening this is your chance to look away every now and then. Looking away and upwards sends the signal that you are listening and thinking about what the customer is saying.

With a group of people your eye contact must be shared amongst everyone in a natural style. Give each person 2 or 3 seconds of eye contact. No more, no less and share this contact around the room in a natural sporadic manner. Aim to keep your eyes on the audience 95% of the time. Be careful with slides or visual aids that take your eye contact away from the audience. In fact, challenge yourself if you use slides with lots of words and boring old bullets. Go on ask yourself the question and honestly answer it. Are they merely your speech notes?