

[Promo Power]



Selling is hard work... especially if you think

that selling means manipulating people into doing something they would not have done if you hadn't come along.

I never call a prospect that I don't think I can help. If I don't get a positive result from the call (a commitment for a future appointment, an opportunity to make a presentation, a sale...) one of two things happened: Either they didn't believe that I could help them, or they didn't believe they needed help at all.

If they didn't believe I could help, I didn't do a good enough job of showing them that I could. That doesn't happen with one phone call. They have received mailings from me. Hopefully they've seen my articles in magazines (like this one). Maybe they've seen me speak somewhere. Maybe one of their dealers, or another colleague, told them about me. Maybe they've read one of my books. (Maybe the copy I sent them the day before I called!)

But, I don't make calls to people who aren't likely to know anything about me.

When's the last time you bought something from a total stranger who called you out of the blue? If that's how you're trying to do your sales work, you're going to take a big beating out there. Selling should be a process. And, it starts weeks, or even months, before the first call. I've booked business with people who have been on my mailing list for *years* before we finally got together. But, even over that time, they heard from me somehow

THE SALES PROCESS

several times each year.

The more expensive your product or service, the more trust is required.

The least expensive of my books sells for \$19.95. How much of a risk is that? You don't have to know much about me to take a twenty dollar chance on me. (It's really not even taking a chance... the book is guaranteed to help you, or you can send it back any time within a year for a full refund. See, I don't sell to people I don't believe I can help!) But, even at that, people don't buy the book just because it's only \$19.95 and there was zero risk. They buy it because they've heard of me and trust me to give them information that will help them.

But, to hire me to speak, you have to spend several thousand dollars. Consulting contracts can run into tens of thousands of dollars. People don't write checks like that to total strangers who call out of the blue to interrupt their busy day.

They have to believe that I can help them increase sales, grow market share, and improve their relationship with their resellers. I can't sell that in a first-contact phone call (aka: Cold Call).

And, here's a REAL important point: I can't possibly make them believe that I can help them if I don't honestly believe it myself. The first sale you have to make is to yourself. You have to believe you can help before you ever pick up the phone or pull into the parking lot.

Oh, the second scenario: They don't believe they need help. Do you really want to invest the energy it would take to change their mind? And besides, you may sell them on the idea that they need help and still not sell them on the idea that you're the one who can provide it. ■



MY SALES PROCESS

My sales process is:

- 1.) Identify a company that I can help.
- 2.) Find out who at that company is most likely to be my economic buyer.
- 3.) Get her/him on my mailing list.
- 4.) Watch for an article or news story that would be of interest to her/him (maybe one of mine that appeared in a trade magazine like this one)...that is somehow related to what I might propose to do for her/him...and send her/him a copy.
- 5.) Set the stage for a call or visit: Get a copy of my latest book into her/his hands. Nobody ignores a thick package from Federal Express.
- 6.) Call shortly after FedEx emails that she/he received it. (If I get voice mail, tell her/him when I will call again. Mail a testimonial from a similar client to arrive the day I promised to call.)
- 7.) When I do get to talk to her/him, determine what level of trust I've established and what I should shoot for as a reasonable next step...then plan it.

Larry Mersereau works with business owners, marketers, and sales professionals who want to bring in more business, so they can take home more money. More at www.PromoPower.com.