

Sales Tip!



The Most Difficult Aspect of Selling

What is the most difficult aspect of selling?

- Accurately analyzing the growth potential of customers
- Creating an effective territory plan
- Developing an appropriate prospecting message
- Formulating meaningful qualifying questions
- Preparing responses for the inevitable stalls and objections
- Developing an effective plan to meet sales goals

While all of these represent a challenge of one sort or another, the most difficult aspect of selling isn't included in the list.

After you analyze your market, develop a territory plan, develop and rehearse your prospecting pitch, formulate your qualifying questions, prepare responses to anticipated questions, and set some ambitious goals...you must take action.

And that's where so many salespeople falter. They fail to take action—to implement their plans in a timely fashion. Some never get their plans off the ground.

Why?

The most likely reason is procrastination. Not the overt "I'll do it tomorrow" type of procrastination, but procrastination in the guise of "fine-tuning" activities—tweaking the plan to get it "just right." Double-checking territory figures. Rewriting scripts and questions. Recalculating numbers. The more tweaking they do, the more time they buy for themselves before they have to face the real-world challenges the plans address.

Not all "fine-tuning" activities are driven by procrastination. Some people have a need for perfection. They're not ready to take action until everything is perfect...every contingency has been identified...every twist and turn predicted and appropriate actions planned. They put off implementation until everything is perfect. But it never is. So, the planning continues and the "doing" never begins.

Another reason salespeople put off implementing their selling plans is that planning and preparation are intellectual—"safe"—activities. The results of their efforts are predictable... and they have complete control over the process. But once the planning and preparation is complete and they have to engage and interact with prospects, they no longer have complete control. The process now encompasses an emotional component—the potential for rejection. They put themselves in vulnerable positions where they have to deal with frustration, disappointment, and short-term failures. The process is no longer "safe."

Selling success is the result of knowing what to do...and doing what you know. It requires action. It doesn't require having a "perfect" plan, asking "perfect" questions, or giving "perfect" answers. Most often, "good enough" is, in fact, good enough. Putting yourself "in the line of fire" is what counts. Sometimes, things will go as planned; sometimes they won't. But, as long as you're in action, you're in a position to make corrections when needed...and to succeed.

When you focus your efforts on quickly identifying and weeding out suspects, and then use a selling process to methodically qualify the remaining prospects, "more prospects" will lead to more sales.

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