Attitude, Belief, and Confidence … The ABC’s of Sales

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I once believed that in **sales**, if I could just learn that one killer closing statement, that one **closing technique** that worked every time, all my troubles would be over. Unfortunately, that statement and that technique do not exist. Don’t get me wrong; there are proper techniques that are extremely helpful in the **sales process**. Proper **sales skills** cannot be discounted. However, the three areas that will outshine rusty or nonexistent skills are the ABC’s of sales; and the lesson I quickly learned was that there is a balancing act.

The **ABC’s** of sales consist of three attributes: **Attitude**, **Belief**, and **Confidence**. Remove any of these three and success in sales will quickly dwindle. Attitude is probably one of the most important attributes to possess in the arena of sales and is the one that can quickly sink a fledgling sales person or a seasoned veteran. You may ask yourself, *“What does a proper Attitude have to do with the sales process?*” The equation is quite simple and yet still complex… our thoughts control our Beliefs. Earl Nightingale once said, *“We become whatever we think about all day.”* Our thoughts control our Beliefs. Our Beliefs affect our expectations. Our expectations affect our Attitude. Our Attitude affects our performance, and our performance affects our life.

Think of it this way. You have an appointment with a potential client. Your thought is, *“I am going to gain a new client today.”* What is your Belief? You are getting a new client. What is your expectation of how the call is going to go? Great! What will your Attitude be? Upbeat… the Mojo is working. How will this affect your performance? Your Confidence has already assured you a win before you ever darken the potential client’s door.

Now let’s reverse the Attitude and see the potential outcome. You have an appointment with a potential client and your thought is, *“This individual is just like all the rest and probably only going to waste my time.”* What will your Belief be? Another blown appointment. What will your expectation be? Zippo, nada, once again. What will your Attitude do? Sink like a one egg pudding. How will this affect your performance? You will probably greet the potential client with a smirk that says, *“What’s your problem? I know you’re not buying anything today!”*

What is the difference between the two scenarios? Attitude. If you believe you will win, you will win more often than not. **Zig Ziglar** calls a negative Attitude stinkin’ thinkin’. It is prevalent in a great deal of sales people and can quickly infect an entire team. A positive Attitude alone is not going to guarantee a sale; however, it is a huge contributing factor to the overall success of the **sales person**. Attitude can make or break a **sales team** or an individual and must be evaluated on a regular basis.

Keith Benton is the founder and owner of Benton Marketing Strategies, a company that specializes in online insurance sales training. He has been involved in insurance sales and training for the past 25 years, and has had the privilege of training hundreds of insurance sales professionals with a simplistic 5 step approach to the sales of insurance products. Visit www.agentsalestrainer.com to learn how to get started with Sales Training from Benton Marketing Strategies!

Sales Techniques - Selling Benefits

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Strategies Sell the Sizzle, Not the Steak. This point became overwhelmingly clear recently while eating at a local Mexican food restaurant here in Texas. Someone had ordered Fajitas. It was interesting to note that as the waiter brought out the plate of sizzling beef strips, all the heads in the room turned to notice what delicacy was heading their way. Hence the statement *"Sell the sizzle, not the steak."* Steaks had no doubt been brought to various tables with little or no fanfare. However, when the Fajitas entered the room, everyone took notice. You may ask what this has to do with sales. It's a question of selling features or benefits.

The brochure mentality is prevalent in some sales organizations. The company has spent a great deal of money on brochures, so the easiest sales technique is to simply sell from the brochure. However, the problem is that most brochures list features, not benefits. Features don't sell. Benefits do. What's the difference, you may ask? One is the sizzle; one is the steak. A feature states what something is and a benefit states what it does for the client. Ask yourself, *"Do the sales techniques I am using answer the benefit question?"* For example, a salesman might say that his product has the feature Super X. The benefits question doesn't get answered. What does that do for the client? It actually would be better to state what the feature means to them; how it improves their life, makes their job easier, or adds value to your overall proposition. That's a benefit. That's the sizzle, not the steak. Make sure you sell what it does, not what it is.

I have been selling insurance for years and what strikes me as extremely interesting is that if you were to ask 100 insurance agents what they sell, I can almost guarantee you they will tell you life insurance or health insurance. If you were to ask any potential client what they are truly looking for, they would tell you safety, security, and peace of mind. Unfortunately, some times we are not selling what the client is really looking for. Why? Because we are selling the steak instead of the sizzle. We are selling features instead of benefits. Remember to always ask yourself, *"Does the manner in which I am selling answer the benefit question?"*

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4 Sales Techniques for Handling Objections

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In sales, the most challenging responses you can receive are Sales objections. This can be seen as a road block or a sign that there is more work that needs to be done. Without the proper tools, most sales people are left with no other option than to pack up their sales kit in defeat. Do I get defensive? Should I ask, *"What haven't I explained?"* These are all questions a new sales person faces. How do you handle objections?

First, let's look at what an objection is. Objections are nothing more than a way for the client to say, *"Slow down"*, or *"I need more information"*. That's it, nothing more. Below are some tips on how to deal with the most common ones.

The Preemptive Strike: If sales professionals are getting the same objections over and over, it makes sense to place the answer or that piece of information into your overall presentation. If you answer the objection before it comes up, you win.

The Bypass: Some objections are nothing more than a knee-jerk reaction. How do you determine whether what you are hearing is real or not? Try to ignore it and move on. If the objection is not brought up again, which is usually the case, you win.

The Put Off: When asked a question that has nothing to do with your focal point, put it off by stating, *"I believe I will answer that in just a moment, but let me continue."* The majority of the time it will never come up again, you win.

Proper Foundation: One of the most common mistakes new sales people make is not laying a proper foundation as it relates to the sales process. When the *"I want to think about it"* statement comes up, a majority of sales people don't know how to respond. This is not the time to argue or take a defensive posture. This generally indicates that the sales person has not connected the client emotionally to the product or service they are trying to sell. Most potential clients do not want to offend the sales person by saying *"No"*. Because that seems so final, the dreaded response comes out. This is not a true objection. This is a symptom of the sales person not asking enough questions. How do you handle this one? The answer is simply to spend time finding out what the emotional hot button is by asking plenty of probing questions. Once this is done, this phrase will be eliminated the majority of the time. You win!

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Qualities of an Effective Sales Team

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In sports, there is an old adage, *"There is no 'I' in team"*. This statement is especially true in a sales team. How do you take a group of individuals and make them a cohesive, productive, and thriving sales team?

Let's first look at the importance of the leader. Does the leader possess a definite vision for his or her team? Whether it is sales goals or growth, first the leader must have a vision and then effectively convey that vision to his team. Each member must believe in that vision and be able to recount and explain it to others. In other words, the leader, like a ship's captain, will be setting the course for the future. However, without the proper hands on deck, the ship is sunk.

Attitude is the first quality that is absolutely necessary for a thriving team. This is one area that has caused many teams to quickly decline. If you have a pervasively negative attitude in your organization, that attitude can and will spread throughout the team and your ship is on the way down. Motivation levels and attitude checks for your people are essential.

Camaraderie is the next quality. Are your people constantly pulling for each other? Does it seem more like a home environment or a prison? Once the sales people bond together, they begin to keep each other motivated. If, on the other hand, they are tearing each other down, the overall attitude will quickly diminish. The leader is responsible for setting the tone and constantly monitoring the team. Are you giving the team adequate opportunities to bond?

High Activity is the next quality. As sales managers, you have probably already discovered you cannot manage sales. You can only manage activity. In an environment where your team has the right vision, the right attitude, and camaraderie, you'll find that your people are working individually, but moving in the same direction. When this is the case, you will generally have the activity levels necessary to achieve your goals.

Leadership development is the final quality of an effective sales team. Leaders who raise up leaders usually get, not only the new leader, but their followers as well. Growth is an automatic by-product. Are you working on building leaders or followers? The difference is quite dramatic.

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You Have Leads to Work, Now What?

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As a professional sales person, you know you must somehow separate yourself from the competition. But how? We've put together some tips to help you successfully work the valuable leads you have just received.

Make Contact

Leads are always better fresh. Make sure to work these leads as soon as you receive them. The reason the lead inquired is they have a problem. The sooner the initial contact is made the better. Often times the first person to make contact makes the sale. So do not hesitate to contact your lead as soon as possible.

Be Genuine

When speaking with your potential client. Realize they have a problem they want solved. This is not the time to tell them how wonderful you are or how great the company is. This call is all about the client. Once they feel you are truly there to help them, they will allow you to. Be genuine. Most people can spot a phony a mile away.Start a conversation that focuses on them and their issues.

Let them know you have their request for HELP with their health coverage, Life coverage etc. and need to get a little bit more information from them . Ask some basic questions such as, Who all needs to be covered? Himself or herself only or the whole family? What coverage do they presently have? Are there issues with the coverage or the premium that is making them switch. Get them talking and listen carefully to their answers.

Turning your referral into a client Once you have the appointment now is the time to separate yourself from the pack. Here are some basic hints to be successful.

1). Take time to get to know your potential client and put them at ease. Too many sales people rush in, tell them how great they are and their company is and never give the client time to get comfortable with the process.

2). Take time to small talk and put them at ease.Remember to ask questions about their current coverage, their past coverage and how they use it. This will show you buying patterns.

3). Be sure not to over promise. Know your products and help move the client into an appropriate product based on their need and their budget.

4). When the client tells you something write it down. This conveys that they are important and you are there for them.

5). Put ink to paper. Don't wait for the client to beg you start filling out the application. You can increase your sales dramatically by simply filling out the application. Start by asking a question such as, Now your birthday is Jan 1st right? (or whatever it is) Write it down on the application.

Start Expanding Your Business Today!

These selling tips, are provided by Benton Marketing Strategies. Online sales tools for niche insurance markets. Increasing your effectiveness and confidence! Utilize these strategies to start building you practice today.

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