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Four Fundamental Skills
Preparation
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The Ethical Foundation

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Sales and Business Marketing Program

WESTERN MICHIGAN UNIVERSITY

Module 2

Another Chapter in the Journey to becoming a Sales Pro!

onselling



current topics >>>

Selling technique success start here!

The Sales Faculty at Western Michigan University will be guiding you through some very practical and workable selling techniques that will help you achieve success in the vast array of challenging selling situations you will find yourself in. And all of the models build from the four fundamentals addressed in this lesson.

So as the lessons turn to specific models and techniques, take the time to reflect on the connections. You should clearly see that in the end the specific techniques are the application of the four fundamentals. Thus strongly grasping the fundamentals gives you the base to work from when practicing the techniues.

Mark your calendars...

Great Lakes High School Sales Challenge

Two Events: Speed Selling & Role Play
Two Rounds: e-Round and
On-Campus. Dates & details can be
found on the GLHSSC web site:

www.wmusaleschallenge.com

Four Fundamental Skills

Selling success starts with these skills

This course is going to introduce very specific techniques and best practices for winning as a salesperson, but before we get into these very applied models we will start with four fundamental skills that form the basis for those techniques. These four fundamentals will be applied in each technique, so it is logical to start with the four skills.

Preparation

Preparation is the starting point for all success (in selling and in life!). Most failure can be traced back to a failure of preparation. Effective salespeople develop into serious and consistent preparers. The goal is captured in the phrase: "Win before you begin!"

Communication

Fundamentally, selling is an applied communication activity. Effective selling revolves around understanding, and understanding requires communication. Sales professesionals gain competence in a full range of both push and pull communication. Communication success boils down to "understand, and be understood!"

Facilitation

Facilitation is the art of managing the flow of and direction of communication. While communication focuses on the key ideas being exchanged, facilitation focuses on the space between those ideas and leads to everyone being on the same page.

Persistence

Achieving a goal takes commitment and resources, especially in the face of opposition or difficulties. This is persistence. Great sales people develop their smart persistence through the use of understanding based approaches and apply it to the challenges they face. Call it grit, tenacity or assertiveness, but it the end it is about smartly pushing forward

While these fundamental skills are key to success they must be built and practiced from an **ETHICAL** foundation.

Long-term success in selling (and in life) will only be possible when ethics are the underpinning of all your actions!

Two-Way COMMUNICATION wins the Day!

Selling is applied communication and the winning combination is having skills and competencies in effective TWO-WAY communication. Yes, we do mean back and forth between parties to the communication, but we also mean you have the ability to be an effective PULL cominuicator and an effective PUSH communicator. The goal: YOU UNDERSTAND THEM and THEY UNDERSTAND YOU!

PULL COMMUNICATION

A starting point for success in selling is gaining an UNDERSTANDING of the buyer's situation, needs, and challenges. This requires salespeople to be successful at PULL communication. Through effective questioning and listening they can pull the needed understanding fron the interaction.

Tool-Box of Questions

Having competence and comfort with a broad range of questions

Engaged Listening

Having the concentration and focus to really gain understanding

PUSH COMMUNICATION

To achieve a successful outcome in selling the solutions you can offer must fit the challenges the buyer faces. This requires that the buyer understands you and the case you are making. Through organized and effective conversation and presentation you will have to be able to push the needed understanding to the buyer (without ever being pushy!).

A Targeted Approach

Being organized so your message clearly makes the case that your solution fits

Brought to Life

Using a full range of tools like proof and story telling to be persuasive

Smart >>>

PERSISTENCE

USING YOUR ENERGY AND RESOURCES TO ACHIEVE A GOAL IN SPITE OF DIFFICULTY OR OPPOSITION

Effective salespeople do not give up easily. This does not make them pushy, it makes them smartly persistent. They use their energy and resources to appropriately push forward based on their understanding of the situation, and they are equally passionate about understanding the situation before suggesting a next action.

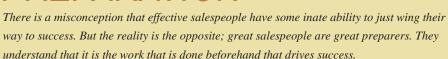
Smart persistence is not about banging your head against the wall because when we do that the wall goes nowhere and we bloody our head and annoy the buyer. Instead it is about finding the shovel, the ladder, or the door to get past the wall.

It is also called...

GRIT, Stamina, TENACITY, endurance, Assertiveness

Win before you begin >>>

It Starts with PREPARATION



A system where one "makes ready" in order to ensure a successful experience

GOALS

Preparation begins with goals and objectives. From the beginning, you need to know your hopeful end point.

ACTIVITIES

Preparation compels you to action and thus you need to determine what actions will create the win.

TOOLS

Preparation is the time to build the needed toolbox so that when it is time you have what is necessary to win Preparation involves COMMITMENT each and every day, it requires you to RESEARCH to fill your knowledge gaps, it involves THOUGHT to make sense of the situation and possibilities, it involves the CREATION of plans and tools to win with, and it mandates REHEARSAL to be sure you can execute your winning plan





Ethics must be your FOUNDATION

The application of the big four skills discussed is key to success, but that application, and thus that success MUST be built on a foundation of ETHICS.



Selling involves built-in ethical challenges. It is a job where you often function without direct supervision. You communicate both internally and externally and do so over important issues. It can be easy to take ethical shortcuts. Professional salespeople thus must be constantly alert to the bearings of their moral compass.

As indicated in the graphic above there are many words and ideas connected to behaving ethically. But if we eliminate the ones that are really about work ethic (e.g. hardworking) and those that are simply a synomen for ethics (e.g integrity, principles), we get a much narror set of terms, in fact we argue you can boil 90% of ethical behavior down to two fundamentals: consistently being HONEST, and showing RESPECT for the people you deal with.

ETHIC #1: Honesty

Contrary to numerous popular movies, you can't be an honest thief! By definition honesty involves being free of deceit, being fair, being truthful, being trustworthy. Thus honesty must be a key ethical principle in your life if you are to claim to be functioning ethically. Most other ideas we think of related to ethics (e,g, integrity, character) really boil down to the consistent application of honesty.

ETHIC #2: Respect

Showing regard for the inherent worth of each individual you encounter is showing respect. It doesn't mean you don't challenge or you don't push, but it means you do so in ways that fully recognize and incorporate your respect for the other person. Respect can be very individual (respecting the slower decision making process of a more analytical person) or can be big picture (respecting the cultural background of a person), but in any case it involves stepping past your biases and appreciating the person and striving to see the world thru their eyes.

FACILITATION

Managing flow and direction

Communication episodes are not just about the key ideas and information being exchanged, they also involve the movement between those ideas. This is where FACILITATION comes into play; it is literally defined as

TO MAKE EASY

Regardless of the form of the communication, giving attention to the flow, organization, and direction of the communication is key to creating a situation where understanding is made easy.

CONVERSATION FACILITATION

Being able to manage the flow and direction of a conversation is key to success. It involves being able to shift a conversation from one topic to another, being able incorporate newly understood information into the interaction, and being able to ensure that all parties to the conversation are engaged and on the same page.

PRESENTATION FACILITATION

When it is time to give a presentation, especially one that has the goal of persuasively and clearly making your case for the fit of your solution, facilitation becomes critical. Giving strong attention to your movement from one idea or message to the other and managing that effectively makes it easier for your audience to understand and accept your points.

DOCUMENT FACILITATION

E-Mails, reports, newsletters, memos, and all the possible "document" based forms of communication lack the built in two-way advantages of face-to-face communication making effective facilitation even more critical. Using formatting tools you have the potential to make the priority and flow of your information more clear to the reader.

final thoughts...

Four fundamental skills, supported by an ethical foundation, give you the base tools to win with!

ask the alumni >>>

Q: How important are ethics to your success?

"I founded my company in 2009 and made Integrity my first core value. It can't just be a word on the wall. We talk about it every day at our company daily huddle. We also hire and fire by it. There are not 2nd chances for stealing or intentionally harming a client for personal gain in our company, and the people who work with us like it that way!"



Matt O'Neill Owner of Matt O'Neil Real Estate in Charleston, NC BBA from WMU 04