

It's Not the Economy - Stupid - By Dr. Rick Johnson

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The Pygmalion Effect - Have you ever heard the term 'A Self Fulfilling Prophecy'? That is what the Pygmalion Effect is all about. You begin to talk so negatively about your sales challenges that you begin to believe in your own whining.

Calling sales people whiners may very well tick some of you off. Sorry, but I too have been a sales person all my life and the fact is..... many of us do whine. This is especially true when times get tough. One of the problems with all of this talk about recession is that once people believe there is going to be a recession they start to feel negative about their business prospects and only tend to see what they believe rather than believing what they see. This creates the Pygmalion Effect. Once you convince yourself that we are in a recession, you tend to only notice articles, comments and statistics that validate your thoughts.

So, let's review some principles that can help us maintain our focus, and create the kind of success in 2009 & beyond that you can be proud of:

1. Go back to basic best practice in managing your sales initiatives
2. Understand your role in the market place
3. Develop or refine your individual territory plans (Take it seriously & document it)
4. Continue to develop and train your sales force (Don't scrimp here)
5. Insist upon sales territory plans that target accounts based on potential for growth
6. Create change based on changes in your markets and your industry

In turbulent times, you need to be proactive, more focused and more targeted. If you have done your homework, built long lasting relationships with your customers and have develop both personal and company value propositions you are ahead of your competition. It's called competitive advantage. Now is the time to leverage that advantage. If your competitors are easing off a little, now is the time to

grab a bigger share of the market. I used to tell my sales people.....

'As long as there are cars in the customer's parking lot, they are buying something. It's your job to get the biggest share of that something as possible.'

Basic Best Practices

Take the time to review best practices as they apply to your business. Look at your processes, your procedures and your policies. Do they reflect good management principles or do they become a little spongy due to past practices? Many salespeople do not spend enough time working on improving their sales skills and techniques. Sales training and development is the last thing you should cut when times get tough. Increased market share will go to the salesperson who really understands why people buy and can help people make the right business decisions. This is called being a total solution provider and it is a 'Best Practice'. Success will only be limited by personal ability and the professional sales person who embraces best practice, incorporates targeting, goal setting and action planning as a way of life. They will enjoy a bigger share. Sales success will not go to the lone wolf salesperson that believes only in themselves and holds everything close to the vest. Order takers and demand fulfillers will not prosper in these times.

It's About Attitude

Every day is a new day and how you act and think during that day is determined by your attitude. No one, not the boss, the crazy driver that cut you off on the way to work, that aggravating neighbor or the traffic cop that gave you a speeding ticket is in control of your attitude. You are the only person that can affect a change in your thinking or your attitude. That is why it is extremely important to take control the minute you step out of bed. It may sound conceited but there is nothing wrong with looking at yourself in the mirror the very first thing and saying, 'You are the Greatest, You will Succeed, You are the Best!'

If you have negative beliefs they will quickly affect your attitude and outlook which has a direct link to how you feel about your sales success.

? One person might believe that a 'bad' economy means it's going to be harder to make a sale. It's just not possible to hit my numbers when the economy sucks.

? Another person might believe that a 'bad' economy means you can now win lots more business because they are prepared and the quality of their value propositions coupled with their ability to reach out - network and build customer relationships is far superior to the competition that generally only has price going for them.

Different huh? The difference is simply in your personal attitude. Having a positive and supportive belief structure is essential if you want to succeed in any market but it is vitally essential if you want to keep on selling in turbulent times. That doesn't mean that you become delusional. You still must keep your eyes open and be on your game. Turbulent times can give you an advantage because customers will be looking for only the best suppliers. Suppliers that have a proven track record, suppliers that offer solid value propositions.

Value Propositions

Don't blow this concept off as some sales training jargon. Value propositions are extremely important. You have one, your company has one and your products have them. What is it about you that creates value for your customer? What is it about your company that creates value for your customer? What is it about your product that creates value for your customer? It's not features and benefits.

'Perceived Value drives customer expectations'

'Performance value drives customer satisfaction'

Understanding is the Key

Understand yourself first. Determine your strengths. Recognize your weaknesses. Make a vow to work on improving those areas where you are weak. To excel at anything you must have confidence and confidence comes from experience and knowledge. Recognizing your weakness puts you in a position of strength because you become familiar with your limitations and what you need to do to overcome them. Personal understanding is critical to understanding your customers. And, if you don't understand your customers it is extremely difficult to discover their pain. This is especially true during turbulent times.

Check out Rick's new CD series and workbook 'Unlocking the Secrets to Amazing Sales' @ <http://www.ceostrategist.com/resources-store/unlocking-the-secrets-to-amazing-sales-incredible-profits.html>. This introduces you to Tier Level Selling (TM). It is a must addition for your sales training initiatives. Order today and get a bonus copy of Rick's book 'Turning Lone Wolves into Lead Wolves ----56 ideas to maximize sales.

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