



TUESDAY, APRIL 25, 2017

NEW STRAITS TIMES

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CORPORATE COACH Q&A



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SELLING INNOVATIVELY

Q: I have been in the training business for 15 years now. I can't say I am progressing well although I manage to make ends meet every month. However, I am tired with this sort of 'hand-to-mouth' life. Every month I worry where to get the 'next meal', so to speak. Looking for clients every month is not only difficult but very tiring as I am growing older every year. This needs to change before I get even more depressed with myself. How can I do better than this? - **Ordinary Sales Person**

A: This 'hand to mouth' living is common among those who are selling 'commodity products' which are basically products that are very commonly sold by many other competitors. Worse still, these products are priced lowly and pricing is the name of the game as there isn't much else in them to compete on. Competition is very still in such overcrowded markets. Your clients are probably the same bunch of customers as your competitors. So there is absolutely no loyalty from them. It is all about who can give me the cheapest and the best terms.

The Bottom Line:

To move out from this predicament is to innovate your products for them to stand out and provide far more benefits to your clients than others can give. Find your unique selling proposition; there will surely be a few if you only care to study your products and organisation deeply. Once you find them, you will gain competitive advantage over them. The dark days of selling will be over, for your clients will want you over others, as pricing may only be perhaps a secondary consideration and not a primary one. What follows from here is that your profile will be raised and will attract a better calibre of clients. This will benefit you and your business.

Powerful Questions:

- Who else offer the same products like you do?
- What is their difference compared to yours?
- How can you make yours so unique that others can't do?
- Who will appreciate your offering more than others?

PITCHING YOUR SALES ACCURATELY

Q: I get into a high mood when someone gives me an appointment but the moment I sense that they are not buying from me, I get into a low mood. I don't know what actually happens in the conversation that we have although I am sure that something might have gone wrong somewhere. All in all, I fail to create an impact. It is really frustrating to be so near yet so far from it. What advice do you have for me? - **Tongue-Tied**

A: It probably lies in your sales pitch. You might not be pitching it in the way they want. Every prospect is different in personalities and has different needs, different perspectives in the way they look at things and hence, different 'hot buttons' to excite them. Say you are trying to sell a pen to two prospects. Prospect A might be more interested in the smoothness of the writing while the other is in the aesthetic appeal of it. If you have not done your homework to know who they are and what will excite them then you will continue to face many disappointments.

The Bottom Line: There are certain points you need to take note when you are at discussion with your prospects. Firstly, do your homework beforehand on your prospects and find out their needs to be addressed. Secondly, be brief and to the point on exactly what you will do to address their needs one by one. Thirdly, either say, give or do something that leaves behind an impact so that you will be remembered more than your other competitors. Fourthly, ask powerful questions that will either help you to get more information, establish their interests, expose their needs and more importantly give you the opportunity to align your sales pitch to the direction that ought to be. And once you have done all these well, be gently assertive to pin your prospects down for the next action (and not leave it hanging).

- If you were the prospect, what do you have to say in the way you present yourself and your products?
- What are the gaps to be addressed?
- In 20 seconds, how well can you say about what your products can do for them?
- What will make you be remembered as someone who stands out from others?

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