

CenterPoint Business News™

From Start-up to Success

March 2008

Welcome to CenterPoint Business News. In each issue we will attempt to shed light on topics that may be helpful to all business owners in running their business successfully. Whether you are just getting started, or are already running a successful enterprise, we hope that you will find food for thought, special insights, or maybe just that one idea, that when implemented, will drive your business success.

We look forward to hearing from you if there are any special topics that you would like us to delve into on these pages. Should you have suggestions, please forward them to:

Newsletters@centerpointcorporate.com.

Happy Reading!

In This Issue

10 Reasons Why Your Business Needs a Website

Search Engine Optimization vs. Search Engine Marketing

Sales It's a Process not an Event



Effective selling demands a committed and disciplined approach to a series of actions performed time and time again.

Selling is the # 1 critical element of every successful business. After all, without revenue, a company cannot continue to be in business. There may be as many philosophies about selling as there are businesses. However, talk to great sales people and most, if not all, will agree on one thing: it is a process, not an event that makes them successful.

Remember when you were a kid and it was time to sell cookies for school or maybe your scout troop? Remember how you started with your family, and then went door to door through the neighborhood? Remember how if you still hadn't sold enough cookies to get that cool prize, which was the entire reason you went through this grueling process in the first place, you resorted to setting up a table at the local grocery store and asked everyone that came and went if they wanted to buy a box or two?

If you can remember that, then you already know that selling isn't a single event. You know that it takes a persistent effort, repeating the same pitch (would you like to buy some girl scout cookies, ma'am?) over and over again, until enough people forked over the fifty cents or three dollars, (depending on when you were born), so that you had sold enough to win that prize.

Becoming a great salesperson and successful business owner is pretty much the same thing, except the prizes we aspire to often take a whole lot longer than a week or two to achieve. But here is the good news: you can achieve all of your sales goals with a good sales process.

The key is to develop a simple process that you can stay committed to, even when you don't feel like it (knock on all the neighbor's doors). Create a unique selling proposition (would you like to buy some thin mints today, sir? I hear the Mrs. really likes them. SMILE) Then get into action and talk to everyone that you can find that might have an interest in your product or service (your family, friends, neighbors, and all those strangers at the corner grocery store). Repeat daily until you have the best prize of all, a successful business that employs other people to pick up the routine so all you have to do is teach them your success formula.

Yes, it sounds simple. And it is simple. To paraphrase Forest Gump, "simple is as simple does!" So why is it that only 5% of the people are any good at sales? Because they get hung up on the NOs.

Creating a sales process helps to overcome that obstacle, because you know that when that door gets slammed in your face, you move on to the next one, and then the next until someone can't resist your pitch or your smile (or the fact that you were the cutest 5 year old in the neighborhood) and they reach into their wallet and fork over enough cash for not one box, but two.

Happy Selling!

Don't Sell - Sort!

If everyone wanted to buy from you, selling would be easy. How do you find those who want to buy versus those who don't?

It is the age old question, "How do I find customers?" Wouldn't it be nice if those people who were interested in your product or service would wear some identifying garment? Say a red shirt instead of a blue one. Then you'd know who to talk to. You would know not to waste your time on the blue shirts.

Unfortunately, identifying potential customers just isn't that easy. This means you have to be willing to talk to everyone you can, regardless of the outcome. Sure rejection hurts. Nobody likes to hear, "NO!"

But there is a philosophy that helps turn the rejection into a game. Sales is a sorting game, "Some will, some won't, so what, next?"

To make the selling process into a game, you have to think of it in terms of ratios. A typical sales ratio is 10:1. That means that for every ten times you make a sales pitch, you will make a sale. It also means that you will have to talk to ten people before you get to make a sales pitch. At least that is a good place to start.

As you get to work, make sure you track your progress. You may find that you only need to talk to 6 people before you find someone who is a potential customer and three out of ten of them buy from you.

Once you know your ratios then every "NO" brings you a step closer to a sale. Suddenly, all of your conversations have an element of success, and "NEXT" becomes just another step in your sales process.

Commit to sorting rather than selling and you'll lose your fear of rejection and find yourself on the fast track to selling success.



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