

5 Foundation Strategies for Sales Success That Every Salesperson Needs To Master

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Introduction

Let's face it, in reality there are probably hundreds of strategies and maybe more, that those of us in sales need to implement, review and refine, to help us to achieve the success to which we aspire. But a question that I often ask of myself is "Have I got the fundamentals right?"

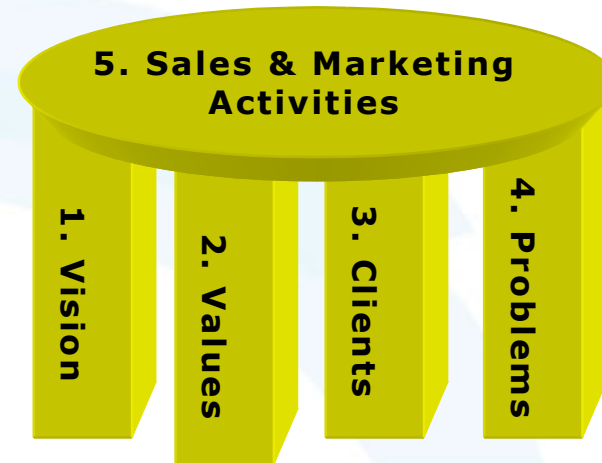
Just as I ask myself this question in my own business, in this SalesCoachCentral Sounding Board Report, I want to ask you to consider your answer as well.

The 5 foundation strategies that every salesperson (and sales manager) needs to implement for long term success, reflect what our research has shown to be the fundamentals or foundation strategies upon which all other selling and client service strategies rest.

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The 5 foundation strategies are:

1. Clarity of Vision
2. Living of Values
3. A Preferred Client focus
4. Problem Resolution
5. Sales & Marketing Activities



The key concept in this simple yet vital model for long term sales success, is that our sales and marketing activities are supported by our vision, our values, our clarity of our preferred and ideal target client and our understanding of the problems that our products and services can solve for our ideal and preferred clients.

You'll notice that our products and services are not directly represented in this model. This is not an error of omission. It is central to the client-value focused approach to selling – clients don't buy our products and services, they buy what our products and services will do for them – problem resolution or a positive and desired repeat or new situation or experience.

Let me now step you through each of these foundations strategies, and again, with the intention of not going into too great of detail, but to challenge you as I do myself) to constantly question and review whether you've got each of these five fundamentals in place.

1. What is my vision?

Nothing provides focus, energy and motivation like the power of a personal vision of a desired future state. A vision of the future that inspires you and that in some way creates value for others will release your internal creative force to help you seek, identify and pursue opportunities to make the vision a reality.

Whether it's a one, two, five, or ten year vision (or visions), the key is to get a picture of what you will have achieved.

Your personal vision, once clear in your mind and ideally articulated in a written vision statement that you can regularly look at and keep at the top of your mind, will help you answer the following questions:

"What am I prepared to do to achieve and live this vision?" and

“What am I prepared to give up to achieve and live this vision?”

When you ask yourself these two questions, answer them, review them, and take action on them, you will be well on your way to achieving and living your personal vision.

2. What are my business values?

Where your personal vision is a clear picture of your future, your business values are the guiding principles upon which your thoughts, words, decisions and actions are made. Your business values reflect and mirror your personal values – the two cannot be realistically distinguished.

Our thoughts, words, decisions and actions demonstrate our values to our family, friends, strangers, work colleagues, suppliers, potential and existing clients.

To paraphrase Aristotle, he said something like “Our actions and behaviours are our morals shown in conduct.” By what values will you conduct your business activities and build relationships?

I was told once that Elvis Presley once said

*“our values are like finger prints.....we all have them,
and we leave them over everything that we touch.*

Whether Elvis did or didn't say this, we are all judged either consciously or subconsciously by others, based on their observations and experiences in dealing with us.

Personal vision gives you purpose, business values give you clarity of thought, word, decision and action.

3. Who is my ideal and preferred client?

If we have clarity of vision, clarity of values, it follows that having clarity about who we can help when we sell what we sell, will focus our thoughts, words, decisions and actions on finding and building relationships with potential and existing clients who will gain the most value from doing business with us.

We get paid commensurate to the perceived size of the problems that we solve and for the experiences we create for our clients.

Surely then, it is not only in our clients' best interest that we provide them with opportunities to buy from us. But more than this....it is in our own best interest to be clear about who our preferred and ideal clients are, and also where and how to find them (or they us).

In this way, we can develop proactive and passive marketing and contact initiation strategies that will allow us and our ideal clients to qualify themselves and provide the opportunities for us to communicate and explore and deliver reciprocal value.

4. What problems does my target market have that I can help them solve?

This is one of the most important questions for anyone in a sales role to answer. As I've mentioned before, people don't buy our products or services. They buy what our products and services do for them. They buy problem resolution or experience satisfaction. Our products or services either solve a problem situation that the client wants to fix, or allow them to continue to experience something they are currently enjoying and want to continue enjoying, or allow them to experience something better or different than they're currently experiencing.

Here are two questions for you to ask of yourself:

"What problems do my target and preferred clients have that I can help them overcome?" and

"What can't they currently experience that I can help them experience through my products and services?"

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Make a list and remember, keep focused on only answering (at least at first) for your ideal client. The checklist of problems you can solve and situations they can experience will help you focus on the clients' real reasons for wanting to buy or needing to buy your products and services.

This list can then be used in a number of ways through both written and verbal communication and marketing activities, strategies and approaches.

5. What Sales & Marketing Activities Will Help Me Achieve My Success (How will I attract and retain my target clients?)

The previous four questions can be seen as the four foundation legs on the table of selling success. All other activities of building and maintaining our client relationships rest on this final question which forms the top of the table of selling success.

Once we understand our vision, our values, who we're actually targeting as our preferred and ideal clients and what problems we can help them overcome, we now get down to the business of business.....which is undertaking sales and marketing activities to attract and retain our preferred and ideal clients.

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Continuing the metaphor of the table, the more solid the table top, the more stable the table. In other words, the more we practice focused implementation of sales and marketing activities, the stronger our chances of consistent and stable results.

Inactivity breeds instability!

This is where a solid sales and marketing plan becomes the beacon for business and sales success. Questions that need to be answered and acted on include:

- What is my contact strategy for existing clients? How will I stay in touch with them to thank them for their business, validate and reinforce their buying decision and look for ways to reward them for being my client?
- What is my contact strategy for potential clients? How will I create opportunities for me to meet with potential clients? What will I do to demonstrate value early to them, distance me from my competitors and send loud and clear messages to the potential client that doing business with me will achieve their wants, needs, and solve their problems?

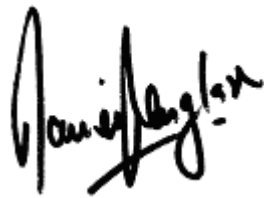
Summary

So how did you go? Have I at least challenged you to review these fundamentals?

Sometimes we can get caught up in busy work that lacks focus or purpose. That's the nature of being in a high energy, high expectation sales environment.

This Sounding Board Report reminds us to work on sales and marketing activities that are supported by our vision, values, clients and problem resolution. These 5 foundation strategies are the fundamentals of sales success and I trust that as you reflect, review and refine your thinking and actions in each of these areas that the table is solid, and that you feast on success.

Until next time.....my very best to you and good selling.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "David Penglase". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large initial "D" and "P".

David Penglase
Director
SalesCoachCentral