

Are you born for sales or is it learnt?

This question or the alternate: *'Are Salespeople Born or Made?'* has been around for decades and has created conflicting views. The 'born for sales' advocates believe it's an innate talent such as being charismatic, a high need to achieve, and being optimistic. Those who believe 'sales can be learnt' are of the mindset that knowing a sales process and following what has been taught and or read in books is the ingredient for sales success. Perhaps the answer lies somewhere in the middle?

One researcher estimates that 70% of top performing salespeople have natural instincts that play a critical role in determining sales success. This implies that 30% of top performing salespeople, who don't have these talents, have learnt how to succeed. Another study with a different perspective showed the top 1% of salespeople across 23 different industries were self-made, learning what works through intuition, experience and training. They kept repeating behaviours that gave them the results they were looking for and in time these became habits.

The difficulty with natural talents are how do you transfer these to salespeople who don't have natural ability? Do salespeople with no natural talent need to have some attributes and/or qualities to build great sales success, for example, taking risks? There is a huge opportunity for great sales success if salespeople are willing to put themselves through the challenge of developing the right skills and attributes.

What are the attributes you need to be an effective learner and therefore succeed in sales? Based on personal and professional experience I believe these to be:

- **Passion.** Do you have a burning desire within that yearns for success? You may have been a middle of the road student at school and now have a real need to prove yourself. Passion is the energy that starts the journey
- **Determination.** Are you prepared to take risks, learn from your failures and keep going? Do you focus on the reason/s why you are doing this job when things get tough?
- **Accountable.** Are you prepared to take full responsibility for your actions and that of fellow co-workers when in front of a client - no excuses or blame of others?
- **Attitude.** Do you have an optimistic outlook one that uplifts others? Are you consistent and so much so that others have come to expect it from you?

So what is the answer to *"Are you Born for Sales or is it Learnt?"* Whilst it is true some top sales performers have innate talents I disagree the figure is 70%. In my opinion this figure is considerably lower. The self-made top sales performer has often had to overcome both personal and professional obstacles to develop their intuition, learned through both structured courses and experiences. Over time they have developed similar traits to those with innate talent but often with greater insight into why they are successful.

If you would like to know more about 'are you born for sales or is it learnt' or answers to other sales/sales management problems then contact Kurt Newman direct +61 412 252 236 or email info@salesconsultants.com.au



Kurt Newman is a recognised sales expert, successful author and respected coach and mentor who has guided many well-known companies to improved profitability and countless sales professionals to greater success. Following an outstanding, award-winning and record-making career in sales that spanned three decades and covered all major market segments, Kurt is now focussed on passing his expertise on to others through his work with Sales Consultants and community-based initiatives.