

How to Differentiate yourself from Competitor Salespeople

Salespeople believe that it's their product or service or the company they work for that differentiates them and the reason why clients buy. This is only partially true. In fact research has shown its 19% of reasons for buying a product or service yet the perception can be much higher.

To create a point of difference the focus always needs to be on what matters to the client.

From the client's perspective there is little difference between any two competitor products or services so to differentiate and justify their purchase they create a difference and its cost.

The same research highlights that 53% of reasons why a client will buy is because of the direct interaction with the salesperson. If you are more competent than your competitor salespeople you can create a sustainable competitive advantage. This cannot be done with a product or service because competitors will copy the product or service in no time.

In previous sales blogs I mentioned sales competency levels and stated the mean average is Level 3. It is by far the most common sales competency level. Level 1 is the Beginner and Level 6 the Professional.

In summary:

Level 3 - Attributes

These salespeople can be in their role for many years, even decades and not achieve a higher level of sales competence. They are the seasoned salesperson and will often have a '*been their done that*' attitude. This makes them resistant to change and they can be difficult to manage.

They usually have built a loyal client following over the years and feel comfortable in their daily tasks. Level 3 will avoid meeting with executive level management within the client organization which is often due to a lack of self-confidence.

Level 3 - Knowledge

Generally they have excellent product knowledge and knowledge of their clients on a personal level. Sales performance is consistent due to the years in the role. They have often attended many sales courses in their career and therefore believe they know everything there is to know in sales.

Level 3 tend to lack business acumen and therefore their knowledge of the clients' organisation can be inadequate. They also have limited knowledge of sales strategies and sales tactics.

Level 3 - Skills

- They will prospect for new business when forced to do so
- They will follow a defined sales territory route as laid down by sales or general manager
- No or vague sales call objectives
- They will present where the client chooses rather than initiate the right selling environment

- Good to excellent rapport building skills
- They will ask more personal questions than business related questions
- Listening skills are generally good
- Qualification of prospects and clients can be inconsistent
- They predominately use only one selling style
- They will provide a standard answer to a sales objection without first probing to uncover the real issue
- Competent at closing the sale
- Tend to over service the clients they feel comfortable with and under service or avoid those they don't get on with
- Dislike and so avoid client record keeping and paperwork.

The answer to differentiate yourself from competitor salespeople rests within your sales competence. With 53% of clients buying because of their direct interaction with a salesperson image what would happen if the salesperson developed sales competency Level 4 or even Level 6?

If you have any questions on this subject or any other relating to sales, sales strategy or sales management then please contact me directly on +61 412 252 236 or email kurt@salesconsultants.com.au.



Kurt's expertise is in improving the sales effectiveness of his clients' businesses by generating more sales and in a more profitable manner. He has guided companies to increases sales from 10-47%. Clients range from small to multinational companies and has completed projects in Australia, the Middle East, Asia and Europe.