

Sales call reluctance – how to identify and overcome

Sales call reluctance behavior accounts for:

- Eighty percent of failures in the first year
- Fifty percent of failures in the sales profession
- Forty percent of people consider leaving their sales careers.

Sales call reluctance can develop when:

- Repeated fear-based thoughts occur about an impending sales scenario
- Anxiety caused by thoughts of imposing on others
- Transferred behavior consciously or unconsciously by a sales manager, sales trainer or other salesperson.

The personal impact

When we experience fear, it can cause physical side effects including: an increase heart rate, sweaty palms, quiver vocal tone, stutter, or an inability to speak for short periods of time. When this happens sales call reluctant behavior can escalate to the point of immobilization.

Whilst sales call reluctance is often linked to business development activities it can be triggered at any time. For example, presenting to a senior management group.

External signs used to hide sales call reluctance

- A noticeable increase in activity with no corresponding increase in productivity
- Like-minded people are sort for justification of actions
- Over-servicing existing clients with whom greatest comfort is felt
- Excessive time in the office
- Extended internal meetings
- Focus on internal activities such as 'paperwork'
- Reports are extensive compared to other salespeople in the team
- Long coffee and lunch breaks.

Excuses are used when questioned why a sales activity hasn't been done. Most often these are a justification for other activities being more important or there wasn't time.

Getting back on track

If you are suffering from sales call reluctance:

- Don't feel ashamed or embarrassed. It can happen to anyone.

- Pay close attention to present thoughts and feelings that create the behavior. Aim to catch yourself out. What stories are you telling yourself? Examples, *"They will probably say no"*, *"I don't want to impose and "I don't have the product knowledge."*
- Replace your current thoughts and feelings with a vision of success and focus on the connecting positive thoughts and feelings. This will produce endorphins, our internal and natural happy drug that will influence how you are feeling, and it will uplift you. Examples *"The odds are stacked my way for a yes response"*, *"They will be want to hear what I have to say"* and *"If they ask a question and I don't have the answer, I will simply phone technical support."*
- Think how you will positively impact on the client. It will take the attention off you
- Continue to repeat this process until a new mindset has formed.

Other actions worth taking:

1. Find a coach. This should be with an experienced sales coach and preferably one who has experienced sales call reluctance. This will help them to relate to what you are going through.
2. Associate with can-do people. People will have a draining or an uplifting impact on you. Like attracts to like. Actively reach out to people who are goal orientated and focused on achieving results. They can be found at networking events, self-development seminars, courses, dynamic groups on LinkedIn as well as other social and social media sites.

Overcoming sales call reluctance isn't easy. However, by identifying the thoughts and feelings that lead to the behavior and actively replace those thoughts and feeling with a vision of success, you will turn the situation around.

Many high performing salespeople have at one time experienced sales call reluctance, including myself, so I empathize if you are going through this.

If you would like to talk about any area of sales that maybe preventing you from greater success, contact me direct on + 61 412 252 236 or 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 increased sales from 10-56%. Clients range from small to multinational companies. Projects have been done in Australia, the Middle East, Asia and Europe.