

The Power of Choice

Pause for a moment and think of the times in your career you reacted to a client by saying or behaving in a manner that on reflection, you regretted. How did you feel? Regret...remorse...uncomfortable...embarrassed? What did you do next? Apologize, or did you let it slide and do nothing?

A client's behaviour may be less than ideal, but what you do is critical in terms of your self-worth and the relationship. If you allow a client's behaviour to trigger you, there is no other way of putting it - you have lost control.

What have you said to yourself to justify your actions? Examples: "Who do they think they are...I don't have to put up with this...How dare they say that to me!"

Ask yourself:

- What triggers me the most?
- What have been the outcomes when triggered?
- What could I do differently?

When you react to what a client has said or done you are in an unconscious autopilot mode that is based on past learnt programming. Feeling angry, frustrated, stressed or anxious is fear-based. Example, during a recent sales coaching session I broached the subject about the salesperson's behaviour that was extremely defensive when the client showed his frustration about a promised delivery that did not happen. The salesperson reacted in the same manner when I asked the question. His vocal tone and volume dramatically increased as did his speech rate in what sounded aggressive to justify what he said to the client.

In any sales situation you have a choice. You can react or respond. Responding is consciously choosing what you will say and do and therefore, you have total control over yourself. What you learnt in the past that is ingrained in your unconscious and hindering your progress can be unlearnt and replaced with thinking, feeling, and behaving in line with the person you want to become.

The definition of choice is an act of choosing between two or more possibilities. So, how do you switch from reacting to responding?

1. Be aware of the behaviour that is preventing you from being the person you want to become.
2. As you feel the negative emotions flaring, pause and take a breath, even if only visualized. It will stop your ego playing the old, programmed pattern.
3. Respond thoughtfully including your vocal tone and speech rate. If you feel calm and do not take what was said or done personally, you will naturally speak in a slower lower vocal tone projecting care and confidence.

Depending on how long you have had a particular program, don't be surprised if some patterns go back to your early childhood. Replacing these will take persistence and patience, but it is worth the journey to be able to consciously take control of how you feel, think, and behave in any selling situation.

You have the power to choose in any present moment to react or respond. The latter has a significant impact on your wellbeing and stronger client relationships. Sales will develop as a direct result of your behaviour.



Kurt is a sales practitioner who created sales records in five industries and won major sales awards including Salesperson of the Year. The products and services he sold were newly released, consultative, relationship and retail. He is a recognized sales expert, successful author and respected sales and personal development coach who has guided organizations and salespeople to vastly improved sales performance and profitability. His clients range from small to multinational companies in Australia, the Middle East, Asia, and Europe. Kurt is the author of 21 Timeless Insights for Sales Success sold in eight countries. Available on www.amazon.com.au or www.salesconsultants.com.au. His latest book The Most Unlikely Salesperson will be released in August 2023.

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