

10 Ways to Increase Your Sales Success

Although there are, no doubt, several important considerations involved in making a sale, there isn't a foolproof, one-size-fits-all approach to successful selling. Decades of Gallup's research into high-performing salespeople has found that the most successful salespeople understand their innate talents and strengths and use them to sell more effectively.

No two people are alike. One person might thrive on fierce competition while another might succeed by being a super-analytical problem solver. You might have a tremendous talent for building relationships or be a brilliant strategist.

What's important is winning business your way and applying your talents in the process. If you'd like to learn more about your unique talents and strengths you can take the [Clifton StrengthsFinder assessment](#) and use this information to apply your top five talents to creating sales.

The following are ten ideas from [Strengths Based Selling](#) by Tony Rutigliano and Brian Brim to help increase your chances of sales success:

1. **Talk to the right person:** Are you talking to the right person or people? To whom do most of your client influencers and advocates report? Making contact with a key prospect might require turning a 'gatekeeper' into a promoter and advocate. Don't assume that someone isn't a valuable asset based on his or her position or title alone. Purchasing decisions are rarely made by one person, so having a broad constituency in the client environment is key.
2. **Forecast your chance of success:** Are your prospects expressing a need for your products or services? Is that need strong enough that they're willing to pay your price?
3. **Assess how you stack up to your competitors:** This part of the process requires basic research so you have a working knowledge of your competitors. Read their websites. Talk to people who have worked for them. Talk to your customers who have done business with them. Superficially, your competitors might seem to offer the same thing you do. But if you look closer, you'll find areas where you can differentiate your message. As you're crafting a value proposition, you can make it unique to the customer and better than your competitors.
4. **Learn the customer's decision-making process:** When selling big-ticket items, you'll invest a significant amount of resources in a deal. Knowing how decisions are made can save you a lot of trouble. Sometimes purchasing decisions are structured and formal, while other times they're ad hoc. Early on, ask prospects how they make decisions and how many people are involved with budgeting, implementation and related issues. And remember: most organisations and individuals are risk averse, so expect that a group of people will have to reach a consensus about purchases. If the customer bristles when you ask about the decision-making process, it might mean she's not in buying mode, or you might be talking to someone who doesn't actually have the power to buy.

For more business and life coaching tips to help you achieve your goals and create and live the life you've always wanted, visit www.blueskycoaching.com.au or to find out how you can work with me personally, contact Tania below.

5. **Calculate the customer's switching cost:** It's good to know what the switching cost is, but it can be difficult to determine because there could be variables that you can't know about. If you can't ascertain the switching cost, it's important to talk with the customer about it. You'll gain insight into the company, you'll show you care and you might find opportunities to present solutions they haven't considered.
6. **Learn the customer's culture:** Knowing how an organisation operates gives you an enormous advantage in knowing how to present yourself and your product, who to talk to and how, and where the barriers are and how to get around them. So start paying attention at the very first meeting. Does the client make you wait, or does he come out to greet you? Is his office full of books, trophies and family photos? Does everybody leave for lunch or do they eat at their desks? Does the company seem to have a generous budget, or is frugality the norm? Just as in poker, details like this are 'tells' and smart salespeople look for them and use what they learn.
7. **Ask the right questions to identify solutions:** You don't need to know all the answers, but you do need to ask the right questions. Often, asking great questions will generate dialogue. Your findings will allow you to provide solutions - not just products, but information, advice and insights that your customers need. When you provide clients with value-added insights, closing the sale becomes a natural part of the relationship.
8. **Put the customer first:** Doing this means that sometimes you won't be the right person for the job. Getting your customer to the right person or resource can be a critical step in building a stronger partnership.
9. **Understand your customer's business and their priorities:** To ensure your solutions offer real value, you need to understand your customer's business and priorities. Understanding the price and scope of solutions before you discuss them with your customers will build credibility and increase your chances of success.
10. **Use role-playing:** Your unique talents can contribute to successful negotiating and closing. Using role-playing to perfect your strengths-based technique will help you identify when you are - and are not - using your talents effectively.

For more business and life coaching tips to help you achieve your goals and create and live the life you've always wanted, visit www.blueskycoaching.com.au or to find out how you can work with me personally, contact Tania below.