

Do You Have the Formula to WIN in 2013?

Editor's Note: In this column space of *Vet-Advantage*, we will give you insight into both basic and advanced tactical selling techniques that will help you serve customers better than ever before. But let us preface this with a warning. The material in these articles is not for salespeople who are not ready to push themselves harder than ever before. It is for the professional who seeks constant improvement, fresh ways to serve customers, and constant learners who are never satisfied with being average. If this is you, it's great to have you on board. Now let's get to work!

There are only two things that will make you famous in 2013...your knowledge and skill. So are you prepared to do what it takes to make this your best year? Whether you are a seasoned veteran or an eager rookie, there are some Do's and Don'ts that separate top performers from the rest of the pack. These survey questions determine if you are doing what it takes to get on top and stay there:

1. The most important skill of a salesperson is the ability to:

- A. Deliver the key features of their solution.
- B. Listen and learn.
- C. Overcome objections.

2. Top performing salespeople understand they need to:

- A. Ask a question, deliver the benefits, ask another question.
- B. Deliver some product information, ask questions, then deliver more.
- C. Ask, listen, ask, listen, ask listen, then deliver the solution.

3. The most important quality of successful salespeople is:

- A. Positive Attitude and Enthusiasm
- B. Product Knowledge
- C. Sales Process

4. The most important emotion that a salesperson needs to create early on in a sales call is:

- A. Uncertainty about their current supplier.
- B. Urgency to make a change.
- C. Curiosity to learn more.



By Brian Sullivan

5. Which of the following phrases will get the customer to open up and give you the information you need to serve them?

- A. What keeps you up at night?
- B. Thanks for your time. I would like to ask you some questions to save you time, and see if I might be able to help.
- C. Are you having any challenges with your current supplier?

6. The best time to determine who makes buying decisions in a facility is:

- A. Early in the sales call.
- B. At the end of your presentation.
- C. Never, wait for the prospect to tell you.

7. What is the most common mistake below average salespeople make before and during a sales call?

- A. They don't have a call objective.
- B. They don't bring the necessary supporting materials.
- C. They don't seek advice from their manager.

8. To effectively convey your solution, you need to:

- A. Explain how others have benefited from your product.
- B. Explain all the features and benefits of your solution.
- C. Focus your presentation on key benefits that you learned may be important to them.

9. When a customer has an objection or concern, you need to:
- A. Hear them out, ask a question, respond, and get agreement.
 - B. Deliver your rehearsed response.
 - C. Minimize the concern with body language that says there shouldn't be a problem.
10. The best time to deliver your financial presentation and give them the cost is:
- A. On a follow-up meeting after they reviewed your information.
 - B. In the earliest call possible after they confirmed the benefits of your solution.
 - C. A,B,C – Always be closing.

Quiz Answers

1. **B.** Below average salespeople do more talking than listening and learning. Don't educate until you first learn what they are thinking and feeling.
2. **C.** A common mistake of underperforming salespeople is they deliver their presentation too early. Don't just learn a little then present. Listen to the full story first ... then deliver your benefits.
3. **A.** All three answers are important. But prospects will say yes to you based more on your attitude and enthusiasm for your solution than anything else. They make decisions emotionally and defend them logically. So let them know you love what you sell!
4. **C.** Delivering your information before they even want it only creates more resistance. Use a curiosity building question such as, "Would you be interested in hearing how we may be able to _____ (add a big benefit)."
5. **B.** Thanking prospects for their time automatically brings walls down. And preparing them for questions in a low profile way will make them see the benefits of their responses. Ask probing questions too early and they will only see your questions as a tool of sales manipulation.
6. **A.** Have you ever delivered your greatest sales presentation to the wrong person? Of course you have. We all have! Don't wait until the end to ask the question, "Who as well as yourself is responsible for deciding on the need for a product like this?"
7. **A.** Too many salespeople mistake activity for progress. Never make a call without a clear objective that has the customer doing something as a result of the call. "My objective is to get the prospect to agree to introduce me to the key decision-maker ... to agree to place an order today ... to agree to a formal presentation sometime in the next seven days." It's not about what you do, it's about what THEY do as a result of your call.
8. **C.** If you ask effective questions that get them to open up, you should have a notepad full of bullet points that tell you exactly what you need to focus on. Customize your presentation around those points and get little agreements along the way.
9. **A.** Stop and listen to the objection and don't minimize it. Peel back the onion to determine the root cause of the objection. Make no assumptions. This will assure you answer the correct objection. Then get confirmation you did.
10. **B.** Too many salespeople don't do enough homework before a call and are then forced to send the financial info after. If you create excitement in your solution, be prepared to deliver the finances today. Because when you leave, their life starts again. And your solution may no longer be a priority. (Understanding this isn't always possible, but when it is, don't delay) Also, don't close TOO early (ABC). They need to first agree they like what you have.

Scores

Let's see how you did. Now go back and give yourself 10 points for every correct answer.

80-100: Nice work! You have the communication and influence skills necessary to serve clients at the highest levels. You understand the value of learning and delivering. You also get more done in fewer calls than average salespeople.

60-70: Good news. You understand some of the key skills of top performers, but there is room for improvement.

Below 60: Remember, you will learn more from your failures than your successes, so take what you learned and put these skills into action. See you at the TOP! ■

As President of PRECISE Selling, Brian Sullivan, CSP delivers seminars and internet training programs on sales, customer service, leadership and presentation skills to companies of all sizes. To sign up for a free video training module on The Beauty of Questions go to www.precisesellingonline.com. Or for seminar information go to www.preciseselling.com.