

Seize the Deals

Tips to take control of your sales career

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!

I had to go and ruin it, didn't I? Can't I just get off your back and let you enjoy the revelry of the recently departed Holiday Season before dropping the "reminder bomb" of the "life altering" resolutions that you just made? But good news! It's the start of the year. Which means you have basically 11 months to *really* get things going.

You still have tons of time to blow out of work early while driving past possible clients. Or perhaps burn an hour doing meaningless paperwork after a halfway decent tele-sales call. Sure, don't sweat it. And oh, it's time to start researching that 2012 Spring Break trip. Never mind those Facebook updates you need to monitor. And did you see what Kim Kardashian was up to today on Twitter?!!! Your change can wait a while, can't it? Whew!

Well, I hate to burst your bubble, but you are in this thing with the rest of us. We are all going into 2012 together ... as a bunch of crazy Sales Weapons. Why? Because things aren't as easy as they once were. This economy stinks, customers seem harder to find, and margins aren't what they once were. But guess what? A lame economy, tough customers and eroding margins only affect average and below average salespeople. And YOU don't have to be average. That is a choice no economy or customer can take away from you.

So why not make 2012 the year you worked harder, became smarter and did more than ever to increase your skills? Because the feeling of accomplishment that comes from being THE top sales performer in your company or industry is tough to beat. Think of the perks that come with



By Brian Sullivan

being better than *everybody* at the world's greatest profession. While I will try not to sound like a late night infomercial promising lavish yachts, fast cars, and beautiful people falling at your feet, I will promise you this: you will feel like a champion. You will gain the respect of your managers and company leaders, and perhaps more importantly, your customers.

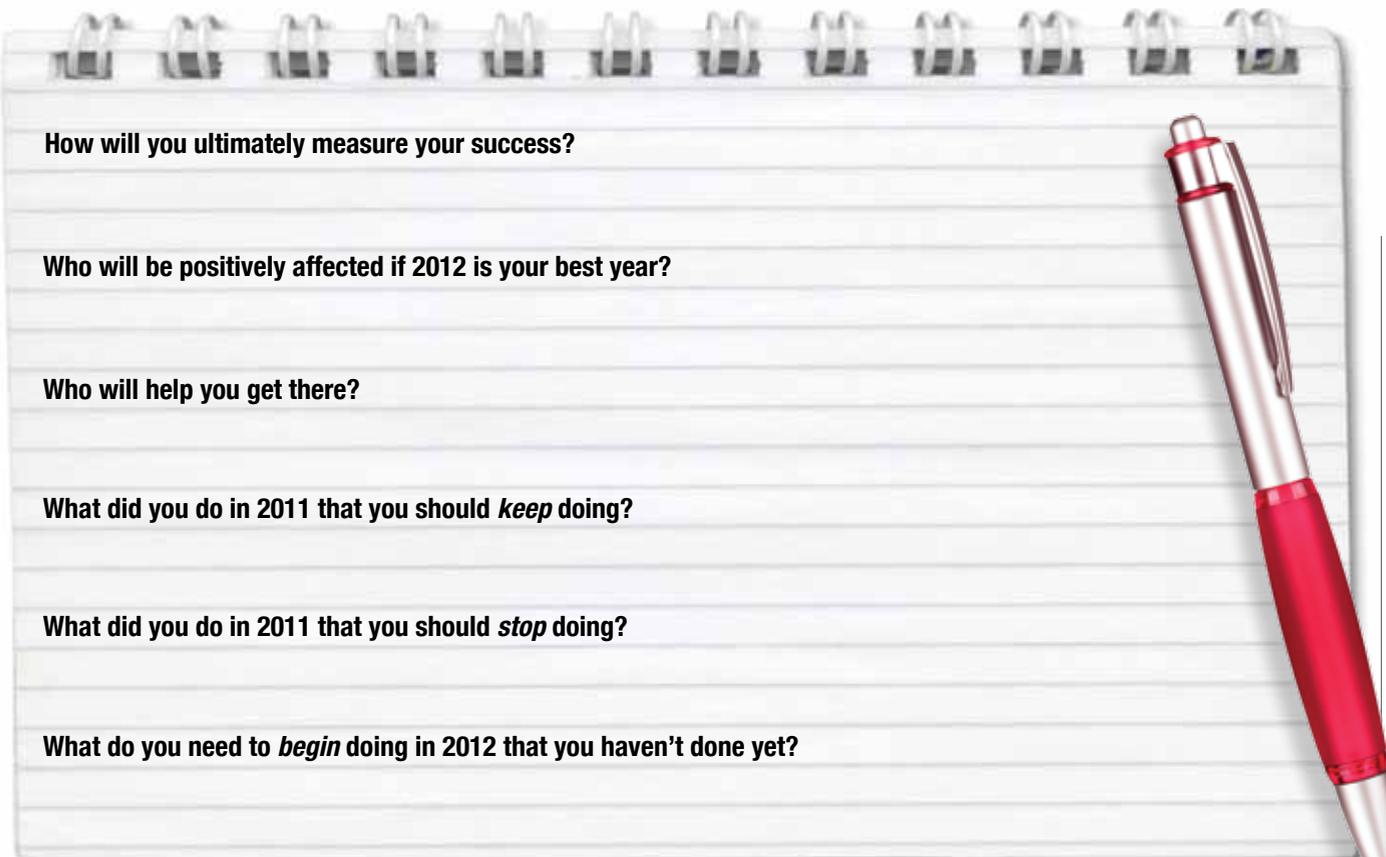
Motivation

While I fully realize the thrill of a large commission check may be good enough for you, for most, the driving motivation is recognition and respect. So ask yourself this question: When was the last time you were publicly recognized by your company, manager or industry? I'm talking about an award, a voicemail passed on about something extraordinary you did, or a posting of a customer testimonial on the company website about your amazing service. When was the last time somebody made you feel respected by asking your advice about how to sell at a high level, how to overcome that common objection, how to get to the top? If you said six months, one year, or never, then things are about to change.

In 2012, you WILL be noticed. You WILL be respected. And you WILL be a top performer. It's time to become famous in your company and industry. But how?

Step 1: Grab a pen and pad, an iPad, or a computer right now.

Step 2: Think clearly about what your success will look like at the end of this year. Then answer the below questions:



How will you ultimately measure your success?

Who will be positively affected if 2012 is your best year?

Who will help you get there?

What did you do in 2011 that you should *keep* doing?

What did you do in 2011 that you should *stop* doing?

What do you need to *begin* doing in 2012 that you haven't done yet?

Step 3: Make it specific.

I will make \$_____ this year.

I will close _____ sales a week.

I will have _____ sales presentations/meetings a day.

I will make _____ prospecting calls a day.

I will plan _____ hours/minutes each week to plan.

I will be rank #_____ in my company in sales.

Now take that sheet and tape it to your forehead! Take a deep break and let those commitments sink into your brain. When you are done peeling the tape off your face, make one more commitment. Promise yourself that you will look at that sheet (electronic version works well too) each Monday morning and Friday afternoon. The more you look at those objectives, the more quickly you will become a top performer. You see, by keeping the finish line in front of you at all times, you will know exactly where to run. The target will be stationary, and a stationary target is much easier to hit than one that is moving.

And notice the last line of the PRECISE Objectives. You need to plan to plan. This means that you need

to pick a set time each week to map out your month. During that planning time, DO NOT pick up voicemails, e-mails or tweet! Plan your high value activities at least two weeks out.

So here's my prediction for 2012. If you are committed to mastering sales, consistently focus on your objectives, and schedule time each week to plan; you will get the recognition and respect that we talked about earlier. Your peers will want to be like you, your CEO will want to know your secrets, and your customers will want to fix you up with their closest relative (assuming you're single). Next holiday season, as you review 2012, you will be thankful for the commitments to excellence you made one year ago.

And lastly, never forget:

"No amount of success at work can compensate for failure at home." – Patrick Morley

See you at the TOP! ■

Sales Coach and Business Consultant Brian Sullivan, CSP is the author of the book, *20 Days to the TOP – How the PRECISE Selling Formula Will Make You Your Company's Top Sales Performer in 20 Days or Less*. Sign up for his free his free weekly motivation and sales tip by going to www.preciseselling.com. Fun stuff that will keep you focused on getting to the top!