

Personal selling philosophy



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The web dictionary defines selling as; a sale is the act of selling a product or service in return for money or other compensation. Signaling completion of the prospective stage, it is the beginning of an engagement between customer and vendor or the extension of that engagement. Personal selling occurs where an individual salesperson sells a product, service or solution to a client. Salespeople match the benefits of their offering to the specific needs of a client. Today, personal selling involves the development of longstanding client relationships.

When one reads the definition of selling as I stated above, no one thinks of it as a philosophy. When I first got into sales, the words sales and philosophy didn't sound like they work together in any kind of a normal sentence.

Because I am in sales now and know of such thing called a sales philosophy, it makes all the difference to see how these two work together. For instance, I used to see my job in a very literal way. I saw my job as just selling stuff to people. It is the core definition of a salespersons job to sell stuff to people, so this is absolutely true. However, this is inaccurate. When I began to look at my job in a more philosophical approach or perspective I realized that my job is to help people make a good buying decision about the kinds of products (or services) that I am selling.

I then compared the two perspectives. The one about selling lots of stuff to people can lead a person to do what it takes to get the job done, which may or may not have a high level of integrity, good feelings on either side of the buying and selling equation, and it could go either way for referrals and repeat business. A salesperson who shoves something down your throat is probably not someone you would go back to or tell a friend about. On the

other hand, most salespeople spend more time with their products and services than most of their customers, and are more familiar with the issues around using their products and services. As such, when a salesperson takes the second approach to help the customer make a good buying decision, then the same thing gets done, a sale but in a different way.

The second approach (helping the customer to make a good buying decision) is my philosophy because a sales person with this approach is more likely to work to learn his/her business, products and offers so that he/she can be of maximum assistance to the prospect, work to understand the needs of the prospect, listen to the concerns of the prospect, and make sure to suggest an appropriate solution, after learning well what that means, etc. When I consider the more helpful approach I would rather buy from the more helpful sales person, go back to, and tell my friends about it.

Selling Factors Style in a Global Environment

Once a salesperson have a good grasp on their sales philosophy and process, the factors or skills that complement a successful selling style for a global environment is location and motivation. In an article by Mike Zimmerman he discusses why training a sales person is less effective than managing them. There are countless number of books that have been written, extolling the virtues of sales training. However, Zimmerman stated that all of them miss the point. He suggest that companies sales efforts fail, not so much because their sales people don't know how to sell, but because they're not being well managed. Zimmerman (2012) also suggest that call sheets, sales meetings, personal success plans all are not designed to

benefit the sales force. They're designed to give senior management the illusion that the sales force is being managed. Effective sales management is simpler than all of that.

The alternatives Zimmerman gave for a more simplistic approach for successful selling and why training is ineffective are: People can't be motivated to be motivated, Sales folk are more likely to be motivated by money than by vision, Nobody likes to be micromanaged, and Inspiration is more powerful than motivation. For one to be successful in any business venture they chose to begin, whether it be in sales or otherwise, they have to be amped. Others couldn't get amped if you put forty-million volts through them. Many sales managers can't tell the difference. So they hire people who are technically proficient, and spend countless hours and tens of thousands of dollars trying to motivate them to be good sales people. Great sales reps aren't great because they're experts in metallurgy, or brilliant systems analysts, or noteworthy academicians; they're great because they are so energized that other people follow them. So, sales managers, recruiters shouldn't look for reps with just industry knowledge, rather zealots.

(Zimmerman 2012)

Sales reps are not driven by vision as much as highly successful entrepreneurs are. This is why companies have commission plans. Sales training asks sales reps to change behaviors that they've come to believe, right or wrong, make them money. These programs try to sell the sales reps a vision of success that's built on unfamiliar practices. The company's CEO usually sees the connection, but the frontline sales reps don't. To them, any unfamiliar paradigm is counterintuitive. So, instead of trying to change the

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way your sales reps choose behaviors, take a closer look at your commission plan, and consider retooling it to reward different behaviors.

Inspiration is more powerful than motivation because No one responds to motivational posters positively. And in the long run, the same can be said for sales trainers. It's fun to get pumped up at an event, but long-term inspiration comes from within. (Zimmerman 2012) So instead of investing in seminars and workshops, the sales force needs to see the vision for the organization. Sharing deep personal commitment to the company's success and make note of those who respond viscerally. Talk with these self-appointed ambassadors about how they can lead their peers by example. And publicly praise brand-positive behaviors when they occur organically in the organization.

Location is also required for successful global selling. To achieve needed growth, many U. S. firms are focused on global expansion and improving international sales. This is especially true for U. S. food, service, and consumer product companies. (Mahoney 2012) For example, the Wall Street Journal recently highlighted the struggling China operations of Best Buy, Home Depot and Mattel as part of an article on selling to the Chinese consumer. All three companies tried to sell and market their brand/product without initially adapting to the local cultural environment. They failed to realize cultural localization is the key to globalization. In comparison, McDonald's, Oil of Olay (Proctor and Gamble), and Wal-Mart are all successful, household names in China because they did localize their products and services.

McDonald's has maintained global brand integrity while successfully adapting to local consumer and cultural requirements. They have adapted menus, serving styles, kitchen design, restaurants, and advertising to local conditions across the globe without abandoning the Golden Arches. A great example of this is their successful "I'm Lovin It" marketing campaign. This campaign and slogan are used across every market throughout the world. However, while the words are the same, the execution, style, and content associated with the slogan are localized to better match each market's individual consumer culture. (Mahoney 2012) Success selling globally via cultural localization is not limited to large multinational companies like McDonald's.

For example, China now buys 25 percent of all U. S.-grown pecans. A large portion of these sales are direct to market by the growers, whom for the most part, lack the financial and marketing prowess of a Coca-Cola or Wal-Mart. Their success stems from the willingness to localize their marketing. Once they became aware of the Chinese interest in the product, U. S. pecan growers successfully aligned their existing health benefits-based marketing campaign to local Chinese culture. (Mahoney 2012)

As U. S. companies continue to look abroad to strengthen and diversify their business, understanding how to position your brands in the global marketplace is vital. In non-luxury consumer products and services, cultural localization is the most effective and cost efficient method to assure success. (Mahoney 2012)

Fit Assessment

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As a sales manager, I would definitely assess myself and my business to find ways for growth. There are always risk when it comes to consolidating or growing your business, however, planning carefully and using the right strategy are key steps. It can deliver stability, security and long-term profits. I will also assess my current strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats to my business and how well it's equipped to handle them. As I build my strategy for growth and think of ways to ensure development is smooth, on time and on target. I will measure growth by looking at key statistics such as my turnover, market share, profits, sales etc. Because I am happy with your current performance, I would hire myself for the job, however, it would be important for me to keep looking for ways to develop. If I don't, I would risk allowing my competitors the room to grow and take market share from me, which could seriously weaken my position. As far as training is concerned, I would look into partnerships, joint ventures etc. Why, because I can expand my business by joining forces with another business. Successful co- operation can deliver more resources, sharing of the managerial load, larger skills and talent base, bigger pool of contacts, increase in markets, diversification and organic growth using increased resources, reduced commercial risk.

It is important to know who you're linking up with, however, partnerships and joint ventures can also offer both partners significant benefits, including sharing experience, skills, people, equipment and customer bases. Through a partnership or joint venture arrangement with a complementary, non-competitive business, you may be able to open new markets or improve your offer to existing ones.