



SELLING STRATEGIES

by Maura Schreier-Fleming

Kiss Theory Goodbye

You've probably noticed that great salespeople sell differently. What you might not know is how they do it. Here's the answer to that question.

Sell What the Company Has

Bob Prosen is the author of *Kiss Theory Good Bye*. With executive positions at AT&T, Sprint, Sabre, and others, he's managed hundreds of salespeople in his business career. Prosen says that less successful salespeople complain that they could sell more if only different products were part of their company's offerings.

Instead of focusing on what they have to sell, they focus on getting "one off" products added to their company's offerings. This slows a company down. Successful salespeople focus on what they have to sell, not what they would rather have to sell.

Sell More than Your Product

Prosen says that talking about your product without understanding what your customer is using it for makes for less successful selling. He says, "If you're selling software, customers don't want to buy software. They want to improve the quality of their billing systems to stop customers from getting

inaccurate invoices."

Salespeople need to understand how a customer uses the products. He finds that 75% of customers buy to solve a problem. The rest buy to try something new. He points out that the ones with problems have a higher sense of urgency to buy. Uncovering these problems quickly is what the best salespeople do.

Sell To All Your Customers

To get the best sales results, salespeople

need to understand that they've got many customers. Prosen says, "An additional customer is their customer's customer, who can either be the end consumer or a different internal customer."

For example, you may be selling a new piece of equipment with technology that increases productivity. Your customer may have a boss who is more risk averse with technology and may be more comfortable with older technology.

Instead of embracing the new technology, your customer's boss is thinking, "This will require additional training and might introduce quality problems."

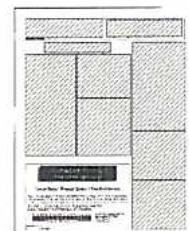
The salesperson's job becomes helping the customer sell his boss on the value of the equipment and prove to his boss the benefits you offer. Prosen says, "You have to help your customer sell it to his boss, who is his customer."

They Know How to Help

Successful salespeople prepare for their sales calls. Prosen recommends that salespeople know who their future client's competitors are and how well they are doing.

They also need to research the prospect's financial health, understand how well the industry is doing, and how well they are doing within their industry.

Why do you need to know? It will show you what to focus on and how to sell. If the whole industry is down and the client's business is down, you will focus on efficiencies and cost savings. If the industry is doing well and the company is not, you have lots of potential to be a real hero.



Companies not doing well are more concerned if they'll make it another year. They lack flexibility and are more risk averse. Every single decision counts for them. Salespeople whose products and services can turn these customers around quickly can create customers for life.

Do Creative Follow-Up

Prosen sees another difference in top performers after the sale. They're great at follow up. Prosen says, "After the sale, look for ways to help customers without asking anything for yourself."

Sending articles on topics your customer's mentioned demonstrates you've listened to them and are interested in helping them achieve their success. Making introductions to prospects and people they want to meet is another way to creatively follow up with your customers.

Prosen often says, "At the beginning of the day, it's all about possibilities. At the end of the day, it's all about results." That sounds like the world of sales. Now at the end of your selling day, you know how to get the sales results you want. ■

Maura Schreier-Fleming is a professional salesperson, sales trainer, and motivational speaker. An engineer by training, she was Mobil Oil's first female lubrication engineer in the U.S. With over 20 years of sales experience, she teaches the art and science of selling with a unique, hands-on perspective and a great deal of real-life insight. She can be reached at Maura@BestatSelling.com or 972.380.0200.

