Selling Guides for the Professional Sales Person

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Stratcom

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Fred Mady initiated many of the thoughts that formed the basis for this piece. He is an incredible sales professional and the inspirational leader of sales organizations in the Southwest. You can find Fred at fmady@wesellortho.com

Over the years **Yon Demmink** has generously shared his expertise on managing sales associates. His sales success belies the importance of this information. Jon continues to run an independent sales group in Oregon. You can find Jon at yon185@msn.com

Marsh Moore has a conundrum. He is one of the best sales managers in the business. But he would probably make more money selling. Many of the ideas in this document came from long hours talking sales, sales management and how to grow the businesses we worked on together. He is the consummate pro. You can find Marsh at mmoore@bledsoebrace.com

Please feel free to post this on your blog…
or email it to whomever might benefit from it.

For other ideas on sales, sales management and strategic marketing, visit our forum and library at www.RyanHixenbaugh.com

Introduction

Sales Management for Regional Managers contains quick reference material and professional handouts that can be used to help you in the field. This book will remind you of the key elements of sales management.

There are three sections to the material in this book.
The first section is an overview of the metrics you should be using to manage the region.
It outlines your responsibilities as a regional manager.
It also outlines the independent rep group's responsibilities to you.

The second section includes a series of quick reference or handout materials.
These guides are based on the most frequent concerns and shortcomings of professionals in the field.
The guides will help remind you of the types of disciplines you should be mentoring during co-travel.
You'll find that your sales reps also appreciate the handout to help them learn to sell more successfully.
We suggest that you make several copies of the handouts so that you have them to readily give away during your travels and debriefs.

The third section is a private section for the Regional Manger.
It is a guide to determining whether or not you should be changing representation in the market.
You already have a gut feeling for this. These questionnaires may help you think and document what you already know as well as prepare your next move.

Some of these forms are available in Customer Relations Management software programs.
Obviously it is easier to maintain the programs than keep a written record. However, many field reps are not tied into a CRM software. Others prefer to carry the information with them to make notes in the field. Our preference is the software. If you don't have it, these written forms have worked well for years.

Setting Priorities

Know your priorities.
They'll help you plan your day and evaluate your productivity.

#1. Spend face time with customers and decision makers every day.

#2. Spend time with the staff of customers and prospects….every day.

#3. Spend time planning how to get face time.

#4. Follow up on commitments promptly. Do what you said you would do.

#5. Develop business reasons to spend time with Key Accounts and Target Accounts.

#7. Find a way to <u>go to the extreme</u> in behalf of your customers.
Prove your worth. Establish your personal standards of service.

#8. Get 'caught' going to the extreme.

Key Account Growth Plan

Customer ____

Location ____

Rep ____

Prior Year Sales ____________________ Target Growth $ ________________ ______________%

Product Used	Last Year's Volume	This Year's Goal

Sales Plan:

Products to Leverage ____

Products to Introduce ____

____

____

____

Competitive Opportunities ____

____

____

____

Account Expansion Plans (locations, additions, acquisitions etc) ______________________________

____

____

____

Prospect Profile Record

Office ______________________ Phone _________________

Address ______________________ Fax _________________

______________________ Web Address _________________

Decision Maker ______________________ Phone _________________

Email ____________________ Cell _________________

Other Customers at local ______________________ _________________

______________________ _________________

Contacts

Receptionist _______________________ Email _________________

Assistant _______________________ Email _________________

Champion _______________________ _______________________

Other _______________________ _______________________

_______________________ _______________________

Other Offices _______________________ _______________________

_______________________ _______________________

Notes

Last Call ____

____

____

Spouse's Name ________________________

Children's Names & Ages ______________________ ______________________

______________________ ______________________

Activities & Hobbies ______________________ ______________________

Birthday ______________________

Key Staff Birthdays ______________________ ______________________

______________________ ______________________

Office Notes & Observations ____

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Objectives / Products Discussed / Objections / Commitments / Follow-Up / Dates

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Key Products Plan

Product Weighting

Objective: Focus on Products based on

- Profit
- Dollar Volume
- Annuity Volume

#1: Plan Differentiate products by commission opportunity.

#2: Report Product Ranking by Gross Margin (unburdened)
Rank by per unit profit with input from Regional Manager.

#3: Report Product Ranking by annual unit volume.
What are the top sellers in your market?

#4: Report Sales Contribution by Category
Contribution to Gross Margin by Category
What categories are most successful in your territory?

Discussion: Identify popular 'Door Opener' Products

Identify Competitive Gaps in Service

Identify planned New Product Launches

For Consideration:

- Develop a base of annuity products
- Identify 'lead' products for Target Account Plans
- Identify new product opportunities and share them with your Regional Manager

Pre-Call Sales Planner

Pre-Call Planning is the discipline that ensures you are prepared to successfully use your time in front of the customer or prospect.

An effective Pre-Call plan gives you a specific goal to accomplish on the call.
It means knowing who you will see and what you want them to learn.
It is also a way to make sure you have the appropriate materials on hand.

What is the goal of the call?
(EG: Convert from a competitor's specific product to a specific product of yours)

Who will you see?
(EG: Specific people in the decision chain)

Who else might you see?
(EG: Who will actually use the product and how?)

What is the specific business reason for being in the clinic?
(EG: Is the prospect dissatisfied with the competitor's performance or service? Are you aware of advantages you deliver over the other product? Why should they be offering you this time?)

What do you want to sell?
*(EG: Have a specific product and reason in mind based on having done your homework.
Don't waste this time with a fishing expedition.)*

Why this product?

(EG: What is the specific vulnerability of the competitive product and how will you outperform it?)

What needs to be done after the sale to help with the transition to your company and product?

What can you do to facilitate it? (EG: Product training, return old inventory, etc)

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In Front of the Customer

You've waited a long time to get in front of a prospect.
Are you ready to be there? Have you fully prepared?

Know what they are buying. Take the time to review that product.

Know what you want them to buy. Have a reason.

Know about any problems. Talk to staff prior to your visit.

Clear up the problems before you're in front of the prospect.

Invest a percentage of every meeting enriching your personal relationship.

Have a business reason for being in front of the decision maker.

Ask a lot of questions. (After you've asked the question, stop talking)

Know how your product fits the client needs before you present it.

Do not oversell. Fit the product to the customer and their customer.

Do not trust the product to generate interest itself. You'll need to 'create' interest.

Never pretend or lie.

Always ask for the business.

Look for something to do next. Create a reason for a follow-up visit.

Make a follow-up appointment. Identify the 'next steps.'

Providing Personal Value

Ten Ways to Add Value to your prospect's business

1. Learn their business and what makes it successful. Find ways to contribute.
2. Provide materials to enhance their customer's experience.
3. Help build their business through awareness and endorsements.
4. Be respectful of their staff. Support their work and their day.
5. Look for creative ways to add revenue to their business.
6. Take responsibility for staff training on product attributes.

   Train everyone who touches the product.
7. Provide your prospect with 24 hour cell phone access. Be there for emergencies.
8. Provide your own, personal "Service Guarantee" in addition to the company's

   product warranty.
9. Provide support for competitor's products to help your buyer/customer.
10. Volunteer to help.
11. Care.

What else can you do?

After the Call

You've just completed your sales presentation.
Before you start thinking about the next appointment, take a few moments to debrief the sales call.
A debriefing helps you better understand what you did right, what you can improve and what you should do next. Focus on the debrief. It is a tool to help you identify and establish your own standards. It will also become your follow-up plan.

Did you see who you planned to see?
Why or why not? Can this be improved through planning?

Were you able to see other important folks during the same visit?
How?

Did you do what you intended to do?
Did something get in your way? Could it have been avoided with preparation?

Did you enhance the relationship due to this meeting?
Capture whatever information you learned on your Profile Sheet.

Did you uncover any problems you can solve?
Explain and capture. Did you schedule follow-up?

Did you resolve any issues satisfactorily?
Make notes. Does the customer know you resolved them?

What did you say that was effective?
Where else might it be used?

What could have been handled better, and how?
Is there someplace else this idea should be used?

Based on this meeting, what should you do now?
Should anyone else be made aware of the meeting's result?

Did you achieve your goal? If not, what are the next steps?

Did you ask for the business? How did the prospect respond? Can you follow-up?

Remember the paperwork: Document. Follow-up. Thank.

Performance Killers

1. Not Having a Plan

Too many reps wake up each morning unsure of what they will accomplish that day.

They are in a hurry to get on the road, but leave without a clear plan for success.

Planning is not only your guide to success, but it is your yardstick to measure productivity.

Without a plan, you don't know where you are in achieving your month's objective.

Elements of a Plan

- Identify your Key Accounts
    - Develop a growth plan for each of these customers
- Target Prospects
    - Identify a specific target account. Decide what you want to sell them, and why.
    - Learn everything you can, over several calls, to understand how you fit in.
    - Take the time to build relationships with the decision maker and staff.
    - Invest the time.
    - Focus. Focus. Focus.
    - Don't sell everybody. Sell somebody. Make a plan.

2. Lack of Priorities

Not having priorities means you don't know where to invest your time to earn the greatest return. Without priorities, you have no framework to make decisions.

This leads to procrastination. It affects your productivity.

Limit your options. Determine the most lucrative thing you can do with your day.

Create priorities that help you determine how to spend your day.

3. Lack of Information readily available.

We've all seen sales professionals dig through their briefcases; their cars; their desk trying to find a piece of information that will help them close a sale. It not only gets in the way of a presentation, it wastes time and diminishes your professionalism.

Where could you be better organized to improve your productivity?

Your desk?	Your paperwork?	Your filing?
Your Call & Travel Planning	Your car?	Your briefcase?

Set your organizational priorities and invest the time to improve it.

What information, if readily available, could help you be more focused and effective?

- Your Key Account Growth & Leverage Plan
- Your Target Account Forecast
- Your Pre-Call Planner
- The most recent Customer Ranking Report
- Your monthly Product Mix Report
- 90-Day Planner
- Sales Support Collateral

Organize your plans and reports so the information is readily available to guide your plans and decisions.

The Result of Performance Killers

Not having a plan, means you can't identify your priorities.
No priorities mean you can't make decisions based on your goals.
An inability to make focused decisions leads to procrastination.
Procrastination eventually results in over-commitment.
Over-commitment leads to crisis management.

Too many sales professionals end up working in crisis management mode. They claim they function better under pressure. That they get more done when they have more to do. Unfortunately, it isn't really their preference. It is simply the result of not having an organized plan, readily available for reference.

Be careful of these Performance Killers.

- Not Having a Plan
- Not Setting Priorities
- Disorganization and a lack of information readily available
- Procrastination
- Over-commitment
- Crisis Management

About the Author

D. Ryan Hixenbaugh is a strategic planner involved in Sales, Sales Management and Marketing.

He is a Principal with the Strategic Marketing firm Stratcom that provides hands-on marketing services on an outsource basis.

Through Stratcom, Hixenbaugh has worked extensively in a number of industries including Healthcare, Apparel, Technology, Communications, Airline and Aerospace and Marine Transportation. The company has also supported a large number of non-profit organizations.

He has built and managed several national sales organizations, been involved in all kinds of strange configurations and advised numerous companies on sales strategies and marketing support.

His consumer experience is based on years in the Advertising business with various agencies, including May/Partners, with offices in Seattle and Portland, which he owned and ran.

To book Ryan to run Sales Training, speak at your next event or support your marketing efforts, please contact him at Ryan@RyanHixenbaugh.com