



Is your mind-set right
to *ensure* you
succeed
in Sales?

by Michael Edwards

GIVE YOURSELF A PAT ON THE BACK *you've made a great choice!*

Your mind set in the work place can have a huge impact on your performance, as well as career satisfaction, and even your personal life. As a sales professional, you really have chosen a great career; it's very powerful to be reminded of this.

Sales is often a career that, when asked, most people say they "fell into" (how many times have you asked a child what they want to be when they grow up, and they say "a sales person"?!), but the reality is, at some point, you did choose it. Your decisions and actions have brought you along this path; own it. Studies in human psychology tell us that we like to choose, but we also fear making a wrong decision. That's why reminding yourself why you made the right choice is a great place to start.

- **In every business, something must be sold. The sales team (you!) are crucial to the success of the company.**
- **Nothing in the economy happens without a sale.**
- **You have the opportunity to forge a great and lucrative career, without needing prior qualifications**
- **Your performance is easily measurable. If you work hard, execute your skills and develop yourself, you will get rewarded.**
- **Sales is interesting because it's varied; you have the chance to gain a career in which you travel and meet new people on a regular basis**

SEIZE EVERY

opportunity TO *improve*

“Small daily improvements are the key to staggering long term results”

The best investment you can make is in yourself. By making time to improve your knowledge and skills, you are setting yourself on the path to long term success. Every day really should be a school day!

Of course, this can be easier said than done; your time is scarce and precious. Attending training courses that take you out of the office for a week aren't often practical, and too much information at once can leave you wondering where to start. So shake things up a little and consider when you have “dead” time during your daily routine, such as on your daily commute. Don't waste this time; use it effectively to learn something new. Find podcasts and audiobooks that are relevant to your industry or teach new skills, or even reinforce something you already know. Ideally you should commit at least half an hour every day to self-improvement, and the commute is a great opportunity to do so. It also means you have the chance to put actions in place as you go along, rather than learning everything at once and never getting around to using any of it.

It can be easy to fall into the trap of complacency, especially if you already feel you are good at what you do and know your job inside out, but never be satisfied that you are where you want to be; the world changes quickly, and unless you stay ahead of the game you may find suddenly that one day you have been left behind. Your own development should not be left as a one off; even the most highly experienced professionals will always have something learn or a way to improve and refine their skills. Over time knowledge can fade and good habits can be forgotten, or worse, bad habits can form. By ensuring you are always open to improving yourself, you keep reminding yourself to keep moving forward and continue to employ the best practises. Seize every opportunity to be the best you that you can be. **You deserve it.**

BUILD YOUR *confidence*

Gaining new knowledge and skills is a great start to building your confidence and self image. Self-belief is one of the most powerful tools at your disposal; nothing is stopping you from succeeding, apart from yourself. It's time to get out of your own way!

Many of the most successful people across all fields have attributed success to a particular technique called "creative visualisation". Essentially, you take time on a daily basis to create a very detailed mental image of your success, whatever that may be to you. The idea behind this visualisation technique is that on a subconscious level these images create thoughts and emotions that invoke the actions that move you towards your goal. It can also be used to "rehearse" scenarios and processes. Your confidence increases because you have seen yourself perform and achieve. By clearly seeing your accomplishment, you outwardly portray a person that has achieved it already, and when people see you as successful, they begin to treat you that way.

Creative Visualisation Tips

- As with all things that can help us to improve long term, we must form good habits. Set aside time every day to practise this technique.
- Ensure you find somewhere quiet, with no distractions. You need to be able to concentrate and focus on your visualisation.
- Build your image carefully. Add in details; include sounds and smells. Visualise in first person (through your own eyes).
- Live what you visualise; hold onto the feelings you create of your success. This happiness and confidence is what will be portrayed outwardly, and what will project you towards your goal.

“If you were able to believe in Santa Claus for around 8 years, you can believe in yourself for around 5 minutes.”

OVERCOME
YOUR

fear of *failure*

“Don't worry
about failure;
worry about the
chances you miss when
you don't even try.”

Jack Canfield

A fear of failure in sales is very common and completely normal, but it can be detrimental and shouldn't be ignored. There are two fears that rear their ugly heads more than others for sales professionals: the fear of rejection (i.e. hearing "no") and the fear of coming across as too pushy and therefore unlikeable.

When it comes to hearing "no", the simple fact is that sales people can't avoid it. It's ok for someone not to want your product or service, because not everyone will. It doesn't mean you've failed, nor should you take it personally. The key when hearing a no, is to ensure you are clear as to why your prospect didn't wish to go ahead; if you learn something from it, it's not a failure. Perhaps they didn't really understand your product or service, and you need to refine how you present it. This "no" could still be a "yes" if you handle it well. Maybe cost is an issue, and you need to reevaluate your pricing, or how you can better convey the value. Or, it's just not right for them. And if it's not, you can reassess how you target your prospective clients to ensure you are not wasting their time, or your own.

We've all had that moment when someone is talking to you, and you inwardly roll your eyes and think, "Here we go, what is this person trying to sell to me?". And they are still talking twenty minutes later and insisting you stay longer to hear the full patter or until you say yes!

Traditionally sales people can almost set off an internal alarm; being aware of this can make you fear that you have this effect on your prospective clients. Ultimately, someone who feels they have been pushed into saying yes will not feel they have made the right decision to buy, even if they will genuinely benefit. Make sure you focus on building a relationship with your client and finding out what they need, and how you can help. You will come across clients who are reluctant to make decisions and you may need to ask for one; if you have laid the right foundation and built that trust, then it's ok to ask, and your client won't feel pushed.

Be professional, remain client-focussed, and even when it comes to hearing "no", you have nothing to fear.

BE THE

ultimate

SALES PROFESSIONAL

"The key is to set realistic expectations, and then not to just meet them, but to exceed them - preferably in unexpected and helpful ways."

Richard Branson

Never underestimate the value of professionalism. Your clients will hold you to standards, and you should hold yourself to higher ones. It's been said a thousand times before but it remains relevant; when it comes to clients, you must always under-promise and over-deliver.

You need to put your client at the heart of your activities, making sure you are always endeavouring to view things from their perspective and not just your own. Clients no longer rely on you as their sole source of information; it's so easy to hop onto google and check out your product and your competitors. That's why you need to ensure you that your clients appreciate the value of dealing with you; be the bringer of good news and have your clients look forward to hearing from you.

Ensuring your client receives a great service doesn't just help you win business from that client; it's how you get that great reputation that leads to repeat business and referrals. Statistics continue to show that referrals generate far more business than any kind of advertising or prospecting; if you want referrals, your client must absolutely trust you to do a great job, because they are putting their own reputation on the line by recommending you. If you maintain your high standards of professionalism and client service, and ask for referrals, you'll receive them.

The key point to remember, if you want to be the ultimate sales professional, is genuinely focus on satisfying your client's requirements.

BE

over optimistic

“Whether you
think you can, or
you think you can't,
you're right.”

Henry Ford

Optimism and enthusiasm can spread like wildfire; start that fire now. If you can begin and end each day with positivity, you tend to find you stop having bad days. In a career where you face daily rejection, it's important to be able to see the successes of the day, and every day really does have it's triumphs if you look hard enough.

A few small changes can make a big difference to your outlook and the attitude that you portray to your colleagues and your clients..

- Take note of the good in every situation. Write down your successes at the end of each day.
- Endeavour to spread positivity; don't be that negative person who complains about their territory, commission plan, manager, company expenses... everything!
- Surround yourself with other positive people and avoid negative people (negativity can unfortunately be just as contagious as positivity, so don't be a part of it)
- Love the job you do
- Remember that sales is a transfer of enthusiasm
- Love your company, your product, your service, your industry. Do this by knowing it, understanding and becoming an expert.



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