

Professional Sales Secrets: Using a Consultative Sales Style with Old Sales Fundamentals to Get Results

Having a consultative sales style is great, but you cannot leave out old school sales fundamentals. Many of the consultative sales seminars and sales books offered today along with many of the sales trainings at Fortune 1000 companies are very good, but many leave out one key point from old school sales. It is that during prospecting and in the sales cycle your main objective is to get to a yes, a no, or a follow up at a later date. While it is true that the consultative sales style teaches you to find out if there is a real need for your product or service, and it does help you to find ways to differentiate yourself from your competitors to build longer term relationships with customers, it doesn't ensure you are not wasting your time. Your main goal should be to determine if the prospect is really in a position to purchase your product or service. Your time is extremely valuable. You cannot waste your time working with prospects that are just not going to turn into sales.

I have worked at Fortune 500 and Fortune 1000 companies where the company sends their new or existing sales force off to consultative sales training. It can be very good training and can teach salespeople all of the skills needed in the consultative sales approach (asking questions or probing, finding the prospects real needs, presenting the solution, etc). The consultative sales style can be an education in itself. Upon completion of these trainings they can make you feel that through this technique that you could sell anything to anyone. Unfortunately, the sales training leaves out the most important piece of information in sales, identifying buyers. Having the ability or skill to identify who is ready and willing to buy your product or service is the most important skill in sales. Usually the consultative sale training is valuable, but without the skill of identifying buyers it can lead to sales disaster and a short sales career. I have witnessed sales men and sales women trying to sell their products or services to anyone and everyone using the consultative sales style, but not identifying buyers, which resulted in no sales. The smart ones figured it out. The rest well, they were forced on to other endeavors. Seasoned sales people know that not everyone is a prospect. The lesson is that not everyone wants or needs your product or service. Even if they are identified in a vertical market, doesn't mean they are in a position to buy. Don't waste your time on those prospects and move on.

Every sales person has played this game, including myself. I have not wanted to know the answer from a prospect, so I have dragged it out for months. I didn't want to face the fact that if the sale didn't go through I didn't have enough in my sales funnel to make it up, or to make quota, or for that matter ends meat. This practice is not productive. Don't do it. You need to know your sales cycle and what you have upcoming in your sales funnel. You need to get to a yes or a no from your prospects so you know where you stand and so you can make adjustments accordingly.

It is about time management and prospect management. In sales you don't have the time to waste, especially in this economy. You want to know if they are really interested in your product/service and if they are in a position to buy, if not then move on. You can put them on a newsletter email list or follow up with them at a later time. But face the facts that some prospects just are not going to buy your product or service no matter what. They just aren't in a position to

buy. That is fine. Don't take it personal and move on. If you waste too much time on the prospects that are not going to buy, you will miss out on others that will, and you will go broke. So do yourself a favor and get to the yes or the no. Don't let it drag out. It is a fact that the longer the prospect drags their feet the less likely you will close the sale. So get to the yes or the no.

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Zach Braid is a successful entrepreneur and is an owner of numerous businesses in variety of industries. He is an expert author, speaker, and a recognized leader in his industry. Mr. Braid is a top producing salesman. During his time as a professional salesman at Fortune 500 and Fortune 1000 companies he was ranked in the top percentile of all sales people and received numerous sales nominations and awards. Mr. Braid has created and worked on national sales campaigns, marketing material, market identification, national sales tactics, and national sales strategies for AT&T. Mr. Braid is currently authoring a book on business, sales, and business success principles that should be released soon. He is also one of the founders of The Braid Corporation. The Braid Corporation is a privately held company that works across the United States as advisors and business consultants to entrepreneurs, non-profit organizations, municipalities, government agencies, and private and public businesses of all sizes. The Braid Corporation has proven programs in sales, marketing, business operations, general business principles, company culture, process improvements, and customer service. The Braid Corporation has helped numerous Fortune 500, Fortune 1000, small businesses, and entrepreneurs to achieve success. To view more articles, receive free downloads, view past newsletters, or to just learn more about his sales and success principles visit The Braid Corporation's website at www.braidinc.com.



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