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Creative Selling: Boost Your B2B Sales

Dave Donelson
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Ever heard someone described as a “born salesperson”? According to the author, who has more than thirty years of sales experience, a truly successful salesperson is made, not born. With one key technique, documented thoroughly in this book, a satisfying, successful career in sales awaits those who want it.

Certainly this book is a natural for those already enjoying, or perhaps not enjoying, a career in sales. The author efficiently presents his Creative Selling System, providing ample anecdotes and a step-by-step process to increase “face” time with customers. Increasing face time is the key to increasing sales, says the author, and increasing face time is accomplished by the hallmark of this system: a switch from product selling to idea selling. For the uninitiated, a typical sales cycle can be thought of as consultative selling, which starts with an introductory call. At this call, the salesperson conducts an interview that will ultimately result in a proposal. The proposal is based on the needs identified during that first interview. When the prospect sees how well the product meets his or her needs, a signature on the dotted line will follow, which generates a commission check.

Donelson points out the pitfalls inherent, he says, to this method of selling, the greatest one being that the salesperson is limited by what the prospect says. Conversely, a creative salesperson will thoroughly research his or her prospect and develop a set of ideas on how the customer can improve business. When selling creatively, this is done before the salesperson ever makes contact with the customer. With some basic research and some creative brainstorming, a creative salesperson will generate several ideas on how to help the customer’s business, give the backbone of a proposal to implement that idea, and use their product, naturally. Though Donelson does stress the need to adapt the product line, whatever it is, to the needs of the customer. Then, and only then, is it time to make that first call.

The author also covers some of the other pitfalls to sales once the salesperson gains access to the customer, including handling objections, asking for the order, and undertaking price negotiations.

The final two chapters are devoted to “the selling life” and discuss time management, motivation, and enthusiasm, making the book appropriate for those contemplating a career in sales. Even if a career in sales is as remote as a stint on a desert island, Creative Selling is full of creative ideas, ones that can be used to make better phone calls, give better presentations, and network more efficiently. With enthusiasm that’s contagious, the author sells his ideas very effectively.

Vicki Gervickas