

Sales Kickoff 20+17

By Art Sobczak

Hi everybody, and welcome. Art Sobczak here. Welcome to Sales Kickoff 20+17. I have got some great information for you today to help kick off the year and have your best year ever in 2017.

First of all, I need to congratulate you. That's right! I want to congratulate you because you're in sales. Most people wouldn't or can't do what we do. It actually goes against human nature to put ourselves in the way of potential harm. That's how most people look at what we do. We proactively expose our self every day to what some people call 'rejection'. Well, we know that it isn't rejection at all, right. Just things that didn't work at that time, and perhaps, maybe just the timing wasn't right, so we learn from it. We plant a seed, we move on. It takes a special kind of person to do that and you are that person.

Also, you're a special person because you're investing in yourself. I got to tell you most sales people don't. Every sales superstar that I've ever been around the past 30+ years, they had several characteristics. They work harder than most people. They think bigger than most people, which we're going to talk about later, and they constantly work at their craft and invest in themselves, just like you're doing here right now. You're that type of person.

First of all, I got to tell you that my promotion for this program wasn't accurate. I promised 20 strategies and techniques, and then 17 more word-for-word examples. I got a little bit carried away. I'm not sure of the exact number, but I lost count, and it's going to be more than that. Hope you don't mind.

We're going to have prizes. We've got three prizes to give away today. I'm giving away to three people their choice of either a 1-year, 12-month membership in my Smart Calling Inner Circle Coaching and Training Program. That's \$69 a month. Or, enrollment in my Smart Calling College Training, and that's my comprehensive online and live training course where we go through every step of the call. Next session starts January 23rd and all attendees become life-time members, able to attend all future programs and the webinars. That's a 795 price, but unlimited value, actually, on both of those.

Let's get into the material here. First of all, here's the format. I'm going to be going rapid fire through all these tips and techniques in messaging. I try, for the most part, to follow the logical progression of the sales call. There's going to be lots of word-for-word

messaging that I do suggest you take notes on. If you do miss something, don't worry. You're going to be getting the transcript, the replay, the audio MP3, and the slides. We've got you covered on all that.

All right, are we ready to take off?

Go Through Your Pre-Flight Checklist

Every time I fly, which is pretty often – whenever I'm boarding, I glance into the cockpit. Those guys fascinate me, and women. I notice the pilots are always doing the same thing, thankfully. They're busy going through their pre-flight checklist. Now, of course, this ensures they do everything necessary to have an uneventful flight – since, really, 90% success in flying for pilots isn't acceptable.

All too often though I see sales reps just routinely handling one call after another. One call after another they jump into the next one saying the same thing.

Before you place that next call, here are some things that I suggest you do. Take a few seconds to go through this checklist every single time.

1. **Have you mentally separated yourself from whatever activity you were engaged in previously?** You got to block out all thoughts of that previous call, paperwork, anything you're typing into the computer – Facebook, by the way, which I shouldn't be on anyway. Focus only on the person that you're about to speak with, especially today in our ADD society where we've got so many different things going on. We've got to be totally in the present.
2. **Put yourself in a prospect/customer-oriented frame of mind**, and be sure that you've got a feeling of warmth and enthusiasm ready to go in your voice. Make a conscious effort to do this. Sometimes our voices can reflect a 'down' attitude, even when we're not aware of it. Again, we have to put our self proactively in that frame of mind.
3. **What is our primary objective for the call?** I define that as what do I want this person to do as a result of this call. That's your end-point. That's your destination.
4. **Concentrate on what you are about to say.** Rehearse it in your mind for a second, so that it sounds spontaneous and conversational.

Don't Be 'Talking Spam'

By the way, there is a website called "The Talking Spam". What I mean by this is "Do you sell to everyone in the same way?" If so, that is like sending spam to every prospect, hoping that it touches on something they're interested in.

There are probably several levels within an organization you might speak with depending on what you're selling, or maybe several levels who are affected by what you sell. Just think about these levels here for a second.

1. **Executive Assistants.** They want to know, "Does this sound like a self-interested time-wasting salesperson like everybody else who calls, or is it someone who might have something worth my boss' time?"

Now, you're going to talk to them differently than everybody else.

2. **Users of Your Product/Service.** They're interested in how they will be affected, directly or otherwise. You can make their job more difficult or are you going to cause them more work, or you're going to have the positive effect? They're interested in the how-to aspects of your product or service.
3. **Managers of the Users of Your Product/Service.** How are you going to impact their overall department? Similar to Users, but they're also concerned about how this is going to fit within an overall budget or they're department.
4. **Top Level Executives/C-level/Owners.** They're not concerned about the details as much as they are about the end result that you're going to deliver, especially for the long term.

Again, when you're putting together your messaging, think about the different levels that you may be talking to on your calls, and you're not going to talk to everyone in the same way.

Getting Physical

We got to differentiate today. Let's face it, one of the biggest problems that sales people run into is standing out from the noise. In our electronic messaging society, what I'm really seeing working well is going low-tech. That is sending something physical to prospects.

Ready for this? Strap yourself in. Here we go. This is something that works today better than ever, actually. It's about as low tech as we can get, and that's that personalized handwritten note with a live stamp on it. These get opened by the way. This sets you apart from the masses, and they're cheap. Your note shouldn't be long. Really, what should be in your note is similar to what you're going to say in your opening statement. (We're going to talk about those here a little bit later). All we're trying to do here is to pique a little bit of curiosity and pave the way for your call because if somebody sees your call coming in, they recognize the name or the company, they may associate that with that note.

Getting Email Responses

Speaking of writing things, let's talk about your email. Let's talk about getting a response with your email. Everybody wants that, right. Everybody focuses on subject line and the body, well, what's the most read and usually, the first read part of a letter or an email? The 'P.S.'. Be sure that your prospecting emails have one as well, and that you use it to ask a question.

Don't misunderstand me here. I'm not suggesting you send out the mass, untargeted email campaigns that give those long-winded pitches and then they ask for an appointment. I get these all the time, and I can almost count on the fact that I'm going to get an annoying follow-up email that says: "Want to be sure you got my last message; you didn't reply." Yeah, that's because your email had no value for me.

What I am suggesting is that you can use email to warm up a prospecting call. We want to include a question as the 'P.S.'.

There is an example there for you. Let me just go through the components with you.

To break this down, notice that this is not a product pitch. If you're pitching your products/services, immediately, that gets deleted. What we're doing here is:

1. **Giving a reason for contacting them and some possible value.** The reason for reaching out in this case was a mutual connection. The possible value for them is social proof, and that is what we've done for that mutual connection, the results we provided, which likely would be of interest for the prospect as well.
2. **Intents and the request.** Notice here the rep is stating that she will call. She's not asking for an appointment up front (I don't believe in that in emails. They don't even see a reason to continue reading). Although, she does ask him to hit 'reply', which is a very easy action to take and offers a couple of good times to speak. Then she gives another soft option for the prospect to call if so inclined.

3. **The 'P.S.'** This shifts into a lighter, personal area – one that likely is of great interest to the prospect. This shows the sales rep did some homework here and cares enough to touch on something the prospects got interests in. Of course, you see that it asks a question.

What are people conditioned to do when they get a question? Answer it. Especially, if the topic is something the person is passionate about. Personally, I got an email from someone who didn't know me and his format somewhat followed this process. It wasn't too bad overall. Then at the end he said, "P.S. Hey, I know you're a huge baseball fan. At one time you were on a mission to see every stadium. (That was in one of my books, by the way). How many do you have left," he asked. Well, I did reply with a several sentence answer, and guess what. I took his call when it came in.

Your options for the 'P.S.' here are limited only by your creativity, but be sensible. You don't want to come across as the 'creepy stalker'. Keep the questions to things that you see on their LinkedIn page, not on their personal Facebook profile. Ask about previous jobs, companies, experiences, maybe about an interest that they state in their profile.

Again, I have to emphasize, email's not a replacement for selling. It's an effective complement, and when you use it wisely, it can help you tremendously.

Assistants

Their assistant can and should be your assistant too. I've got this question so many times over my 33 years in business and that is "What tricks can you give me to get around or go through the gatekeeper." I just got to shake my head when I hear questions like that. It's really a sign that the person just doesn't get it. Anyone who relies on tricks to get through the screener, likely experiences something like this. Screener puts the call on hold and says to the boss, "Alright boss, got another Bozo on Line 2 here being kind of shady. They're trying to schmooze them into letting them through. He's selling something, but won't give me any information. Should I can him?" "Oh yeah." "Ah, gladly." Keep this in mind. They're your first sell. Let me also be clear here. I despise the terms 'gatekeeper' and 'screener'. They're commonly used, so if I use them they're just going to slip out, but I prefer the term 'assistant'.

At the precise moment, an assistant picks up the phone in response to your call, that person is the most important person in your life for the next several seconds or minutes. You got to treat them that way. Too many sales reps feel that they don't have to sell until they reach the buyer. Wrong! You got to be prepared to sell whomever answers the phone. Why is that?

Let's understand their job. The role of the assistant is to protect the decision-makers time. It's not to get rid of all sales people (though it seems like that sometimes). We've got to be able to help them do their job. Really, we have the same objective to protect

the decision-maker's time. Whenever a screener asks "What's this in reference to," you got to have a persuasive reason ready. If you don't, you fail the first test, and then you position yourself in their mind as someone who's probably just selling something and that prompts more questions of you – questions that are usually designed to disqualify you – or maybe statements like, "Send some information," or "They're in a meeting." Our goal is to help them do their job.

Let me give you some tips on dealing with assistance – not rocket science, but tried and true and proven.

1. **Have your assistant strategy as part of that pre-call planning.** Know what you're going to say when you're questioned by an assistant. This is just as important as your opening statement. It really should be almost similar, almost the same as your opening statement.
2. **Do social engineering.** Ask questions of the assistant. You want to get more information that is going to help you help the buyer. I suggest you do social engineering with everybody, but most definitely with the assistant. In the process of doing this, you position yourself as a person who really cares, as opposed to a sales person with an attitude.

You could say to the assistant: "So, Pat, you probably work closely with Mr. Big, I'm sure. There's some information you could probably help me with so I'm better prepared when I speak with him."

3. **Use a confident, expectant tone of voice.** I'm not talking about being pushy, but some sales rep, they whimper their request. "Yeah, I was wondering if Ms. Davis, maybe, is available if she's not too busy." This instantly brands the caller as insignificant. It doesn't matter if they are or not. Since the assistant thinks so, that's all that really matters.

Speaking of a justification, have one ready to go. Who are assistants told to get rid of? Time-wasting sales people. The only way you can avoid that label is if the assistant feels you've got something worthwhile. A piece of garbage I've heard spread by some experts is that you shouldn't give any information to the assistant. What nonsense. If they want to know why you're calling, you've got to be ready to eloquently explain and there's an example there for you on the screen.

When you are doing that by the way, you've got to make it interesting, but non-objectionable. That means that you can't just present product because they're told to get rid of people that are just selling a product. You want to talk about ideas, concepts, and results, which are less objectionable than products, and also might make it risky for the assistant if they don't share that with the decision-maker.

Help them do their job and you're going to be able to do yours a much greater percentage of the time.

New Business

In 2017, who wants new business? Anybody out there need new business? I know I do.

How are we going to do this? As for getting that new business, I've always been amused by the arguments of the 'cold calling is dead' crowd and those people who jump on the bandwagon of the newest, shiny, trendy sales enablement object or 'social selling' or 'Sales 3.0' system. All these things really tend to ignore what has worked since the beginning of commerce itself, and that's: common sense, understanding of basic human behavior, a sound sales and messaging process, and a plan with the desire and commitment to execute it.

You don't need to go outside of your computer (or file cabinet, if you still have one of those) to get new business. I'm going to go through these with you.

The potential business that resides within the existing database of most organizations, and sales reps, is staggering. There are dollars just waiting to be skimmed from opportunities where the foundations and the structures are already in place. In the real estate world these might be known as 'fixer uppers'.

Let's look at where you can meet your quota for new business, why it's going to be wise to drill into this untapped well, and the wrong and the right ways to approach them.

1. **Infrequent Customers.** These are the companies and individuals maybe just buying a time or two per year from you, or whatever your company categorizes your 'lowest level' customers by volume. Keep in mind your lower-tier categorization of them is not a reflection of their potential, just their history. Listen to that again: It's not a reflection of their potential, just their history with you. Many of these could be spending huge amounts with your competitors, or with you.

Why are they buying just infrequently? Why are they not buying more of what you sell? Why are they not buying everything you sell? Look in the mirror. It's not their responsibility to ask you about how else you can help them. They likely won't take the time to explore the layers of your product or service to discover other things they can buy from you. That's your job, and when they don't do it, buyers go elsewhere. Just like water flows downhill, money flows to ease of buying and perceived value.

To simplify this point, you and I do the same thing with our personal and business purchases. We all do – or we have done business with a variety of companies that could have provided us with more, and more regularly – even becoming loyal die-hard fans – if they took the initiative to ask questions, make recommendations, let us know they wanted our business, and followed up with us.

For example, just over the past year I've done business with contractors for plumbing, air conditioning, my sprinkler system, landscaping, outdoor lighting, electrical work, interior and exterior painting, major general outdoor contractor work, window cleaning, housekeeping, and two general handyman jobs. (If you made the conclusion I'm not very handy, that's an understatement). I also know as a fact that many of these people and organizations offer services other than the ones I hired them for, and that I bought elsewhere. Why is that?

They didn't make an attempt to find out about what else they could help me with, and subsequently stay in touch with me. I didn't contact them. I usually go with who is convenient, or somebody that was referred, or somebody who comes to mind as "the guy that I use for my 'whatever'."

For you – two strategies here for with this group. First, don't let customers become infrequent unless they buy from you in just an isolated instance. Even those actually aren't that common if you think about it. I'm really having a difficult time thinking of an example where someone would buy from an organization but never ever have the need to do so again.

For example, I bought a specialty, high-end digital meat thermometer. (Actually, I have a couple of them. It's called a Thermapen. Every serious cook needs one). I've actually had them for a few years. I didn't buy from the company again until I wanted to give a couple as gifts. I thought that's all they sold since they didn't stay in touch in any way. I realized when I dug into their site that they have other cool specialty cooking gadgets that I do buy often, (and am a real sucker for that stuff).

The point here is, a first purchase from you is your opportunity to begin a longer-term relationship so they become a frequent, great customer. But you've got to get in motion after that initial purchase.

Back to the ones that you have now who ARE infrequent for whatever reason. What you don't want to do is call them up and say, "Yeah, I was just checking in with you. You bought a gas motor from us last year and just wanted to see if there's anything else you need." Give a little bit of credit for calling, but that opening – that's lazy and it's ineffective. The answer to that normally is, "You're with who?" Or, "We're all set."

These calls need to be treated like a typical Smart Call. Do your research, determine what possible value you can hint at to engage them in discussion, and then look for other ways that you can help them.

To simplify, let's look at what they've purchased and the intervals. This should give hints to complementary things they're likely buying elsewhere. Then confirm that by doing some snooping, doing that Social Engineering by maybe talking to

others at the company, talking to users of what you sell. Then you can craft your introductory value opening and then obviously, you'll have a better shot at creating some interest here.

Here's an example of that: "Hey Pat, it's Stan Seller with Advantage Services. First, I want to thank you for the opportunity to provide you with the Gizmodo's you've gotten from us over a couple of times over the past year. Also, I got to apologize. I see that you use those in your filtration processing and well, we work with about over 100 companies helping them in all aspects of that process. What we do is we maximize their purification results and cut their costs. We haven't discussed your other requirements to see if you could take advantage of some other options that might also enhance your outcomes."

Notice how different that is from something like, "Hey, we also sell these other things, and I'd like to talk to you about those." You might look at that and say, "Well, that's a lot of words." That's right. Here's my definition of too long in an opening. 'Too long' is not a definition of too many words. 'Too long' is a definition of 'too boring'. If everything in there is adding to what we're trying to accomplish, which is create interest, then it's not too long. Of course, the way you deliver it makes all the difference in the world.

- 2. Inactive Customers.** These include buyers who at one time maybe were decent, or even good, or even great customers, but they stopped for whatever reason. If you don't know these reasons, neglect might actually be one of the causes. In any case, if they're still in business they are likely still buying what you sell, just from someone else. If there was a problem that caused them to leave, that problem is not like a paper cut that heals itself and everything is all good; it's like a contagious virus that spreads. Bad experiences travel through negative word-of-mouth. By re-contacting this group you've got a chance to right a wrong, and pick up some new business. Speaking of wrong, here's a wrong approach: "Hey, yeah, I see you used to get all your gazmodas from us but you stopped buying, and I was just wondering why?"

You do want to find out way, but by putting them on the witness stand and interrogating them, acting as if it's their obligation to continue buying from you – that's not the way to do it.

Similar to the previous example, we want to take the humble approach. There's a pretty good chance you or your organization dropped the ball. You didn't stay in touch, or maybe screwed up. Whether you're aware of it or not, you might have caused some bad feelings there. In any event, we got to find out so we can fix it. Swallowing your pride with your hat in hand, you admit your fault for not staying in contact.

Strategy here – again, do some social engineering. Find out from someone else there if they do still buy what you sell, from whom they buy it, and why they buy

it. Yes, you can get this intel if you poke around and you speak with the right people.

In this case: “Hi Pat, it’s Stan Seller with Advantage Services. First of all, I want to thank you for the opportunity to provide you with the gazmodas you’ve gotten from us in the past. We’ve realized that we haven’t stayed in closer contact with you. We apologize for that and we want to begin fixing that today. What I’d like to do is ask you a few questions about how and if your requirements have changed, and let you know about some of our changes here that could have a positive effect on your process there.”

What do we want to do here? Well, there still might be a sour taste in their mouth from what had happened in the past, but think about it. If you’re calling, we’re here to fix that. What we do know about them is that they’re qualified. They obviously buy what you sell. You know a lot about them. They’re familiar with you, and you already have an investment in them. Yes, your investment could range from a few minutes on a simple quote all the way up to tens of thousands of dollars invested in calls, visits, and demos. Their needs might change. What we want to do here is, of course, we want to let them know that we are still interested in speaking with them.

3. **Lost Deals.** Think about this. You have folks out there that, again, you have invested a lot of time with and you didn’t get the deal. They’re there in your database. Here’s one thing that’s constant: things change. Things change. It might be people changing, might be situations changing. Maybe things didn’t work out with whoever they went with in the past. What we don’t want to do here is simply call up and just check in. If you call up and just check in then there’s really no reason to speak with them.

What we do want to do is – I would suggest that you have a stay-in-contact strategy. Some contact is better than no contact, that is if you’re just placing calls and it’s not a good call. If you have a chance to place a good call, why wouldn’t you. What I would suggest you do is you have a value-add strategy and you can even automate this depending on what type of CRM or automation software you’re using.

You could structure a campaign where you have email. Maybe you have a letter, or handwritten notes. Maybe you send out a sample, a report. Of course you can do a call. Maybe you can do an after-hour voice mail. What you do need to be sure of is that every single form of that communication causes them to say “Oh, that’s good information. That’s good. I’m glad they sent that to me.”

Again, technology is your friend here. If you can automate this, all the better. Then you want to supplement and complement those pieces of communication with the personal call, and they would take the form of something like this: “Hey Pat, I thought about you the other day in our meeting where our QA team

released their newest report on changes in the gazmoda regulations and how it's going to affect the time to market industry-wide. This is some cutting-edge stuff and thought you could benefit from the information. I'd like to send that out to you." You might be saying, "Art, where's the selling here?" Well, the selling is when they're buying. Either on this call when you transition naturally into some casual, but planned, questions, or when they've got that trigger event and they call you.

You want new business? Look in your own back yard. Follow these ideas, and you're going to beat your quota, I'm sure.

Help Them Let Down Their Defenses

Time for a money tip here: This is a technique that I've not shared with the masses, just some of my training clients. If you're in an industry where your prospects are getting tons of calls, and the product/service itself isn't very sexy, (some might consider it a commodity, but you don't because you are different), but nevertheless it's a necessity, you could try something like this: "Hi Mr. Prospect. I know when you came into work, the very first thing on your agenda today, likely wasn't your office cleaning. You probably get lots of calls from people who want to be your vendor there. We're a little bit different. Let me tell you why I'm calling."

This approach, it's a little bit disarming, slightly humorous. The goal here is to help them let down their defenses, smile, and say, "Yes, yes, you're right."

Respect Their Time WITHOUT Losing It

When I was doing some Smart Calling training for one of my clients, we were discussing the time issue in opening statements. That's whether or not (the time issue) to ask, or even mention if it's a good time to talk. Janelle Lott, who was in the training, shared this technique. I like this one a lot. At the end of your opening, always after your 'Possible Value Proposition', she says, "I'd like to ask you a few questions. I won't keep you long."

Notice you're respecting their time, but we're not risking asking for it. If you flat out say right at the beginning of an opening, "Hey, do you have a few moments to talk," chances are they're going to either say, "No, not really," or, "I'm busy," or "What do you have?" if they do stay on the phone with you.

Show the Benefit Before the Question

In your openings, always, we want to make sure that we're explaining what we can do, as I just mentioned, before we ask for something. For example, consider your reaction if you heard something like this: "Ms. Prospect, I'd like to ask you a few questions, find out about your manufacturing process, and determine if our new flange-resistor system might be able to help you." Notice there we're hitting them with a question right away, and I get this all the time. People call and say, "Yeah, I'd like to find out about your needs," or "I'd like to find out about what you're doing now," and I'm thinking "Why? Why should I answer?"

Compare that one to this one here. The premise here is that if you blindside someone with an immediate demand, asking them questions before they see any reason to comply – well, what's going to happen? Skepticism or even resistance sets in. Conversely, by first explaining how they're going to potentially gain, they move into a more positive, receptive state of mind. [prize announcement]

Create Your Own Hypothetical Questions

We just came through this political season that was interesting, to say the least, and I spend probably way too much time watching political coverage. I'm always interested in the techniques that questioners use and responses that are given. There's a lot of sales involved here.

Politicians are often asked contrived questions in order to get their opinions about something supposedly that's based upon facts. Well, we can ask hypotheticals to get prospects and customers to consider what they would do in certain situations. These are pretty powerful questions. For example: "Jane, how would you handle it if your supplier was not able to deliver because they were backordered on something you needed overnight?" This sales rep would use this question in a situation where they don't get backordered, and they are able to, almost 100% of the time, deliver things overnight. You can see what they're doing there is creating that possible problem in their mind, getting them thinking about the possible pain.

Create your own hypotheticals, and really make them designed to get a prospect reacting to some very real problems that they might encounter – of course problems that you can solve. You can reverse engineer this process working backwards from the problems you solve to create the questions. Great sales meeting exercise.

Avoid Asking About “Needs”

Look at this guy here. He’s asking “What are your needs?” “Tell me about your needs in the area of...”

Horrible question. For the most part, these phrases are useless, and they might contribute to resistance. The reasoning is this: if you hit someone out of the blue with a vague question like, “What are your needs?” are they thinking about their needs right at that very moment? If they’re not, what are you likely to hear at this point? Well, probably something like, “Ugh, we’re satisfied with what we have,” or, “We’re doing just fine.”

Bottom line, you’re not going to get them talking about something they haven’t thought of, or aren’t thinking about at that second, unless we’re able to narrow the frame for them. Unless, of course, they called you with a need. We’re talking about the proactive call where you disrupted something.

As an alternative, you could frame a question around a need they likely have – a question that helps them visualize and feel the need that you can fill. Don’t force them to come up with the possible need on their own. You paint it for them, then you ask them to react to it. For example, here’s the template you could use: “Tell me about (situation) and how (problem they’re experiencing, or the desire/thing they want).” “Tell me about your ordering process, how many different vendors you usually need to contact to find the parts you want.” Or “Tell me about your new business efforts, and what your sales reps are doing to get to more decision makers.”

Pretty generic template, but hopefully, you’re thinking about how you can plug in your situations and your problems. This is all designed to get them to talking about their problems, so we can dig deeper and ultimately make our recommendations.

Find Out Why They Ask You a Question

We often hear questions that are tough. They might catch us off guard, or maybe they’re off the wall. Maybe they’re irrelevant, and maybe we don’t have an answer prepared. We come up with a Homer Simpson reply: “Doh!”

A strategy for this is to get somebody to continue talking. Obviously, what we’d like to do is be prepared for every single question we’re ever going to hear, but you know that’s not going to happen unless you’ve been in business for 50 years, you know every single thing that somebody’s going to ask. Then again, you’ll still hear things that catch you off guard.

What we want to do is we want to buy some time and we want to help them explain their reason for the question. Or, really, why they're asking, or maybe uncover the fact that maybe the question wasn't [0:42:49 realized]. For example, I've got this question before: "So how many programs have you done in my specific industry?" I've got several go-to questions that I ask in this case. "I'm just kind of curious, why are you asking," because I want to find out where they're coming from. "Is experience in your industry one of your main concerns?" "When you say your industry, what specifically are you referring to?" or "Not sure I understand, could you explain?"

What are we doing there? Again, we're getting them talking. We want to find out where they're coming from so we can really answer the question, and again, it is buying you more time.

Don't Quit Selling BEFORE They Quit Buying

This alone can help you increase sales dramatically this year.

What this means is when you have a customer who's in dire need of what you have (especially true on inquiries or incoming calls, when they initiated the contact in anyway, maybe through the web). Don't let your preconceived notion of how much, or how little, you think they're willing to spend stop your selling.

For example, I've seen sales reps answer a question on just the one item somebody had inquired about, and then the customer bought it instantly. Really, in retrospect, those reps could have continued questioning and recommending to help the customer even further fill his need or solve his problem.

I bet you've been in situations before where you're buying something and they're continuing to recommend, and then you're continuing to fill up your shopping cart. If you quit selling before they quit buying, you are missing sales.

Selling at the Speed of Sound

Since my early years in sales, I've really been fascinated with and quite often study persuasion and influence, and credibility. Of course, Robert Cialdini's book is the classic on that, "Influence". That should be required reading for anyone. Another one I pulled off my shelf recently (and I've got tons of books here and I love just going through some of the older ones and pulling them down. It's almost like I have a new book again). It's Dr. David Lieberman's book, "How to Get Anyone to Do Anything." He's got a chapter in there on how to get people to take action in any situation. What he does is he discusses studies that show the speed of music affects behavior.

For example, slow paced music in grocery stores get people to spend more time in the aisle shopping. Fast music in a busy restaurant causes people to eat faster and therefore, turn over the tables more quickly. He said that it increases the feeling of urgency and to take action more quickly. Not suggesting you play music – what I'm suggesting here is (and actually, he suggests it as well) speak more quickly when you want someone to take some action.

When you're asking for commitment for a sale or a meeting, you might just speed up a little bit. You don't want to say, "So what do you think? You want to buy it?" You want to do it in a confident, comfortable tone of voice, but again, you can just ration it up to the next level.

How to Increase Production in 2017

Bob Burg, who is actually one of the single most nicest guys on earth. Do you know anybody who is just so nice, they kind of make you feel guilty that you're not as nice as you could be? I know that's not his intention, but Bob Burg is the author of "The Go-Giver" and several other Go-Giver books was on our live Inner Circle Training last week, and Bob had an interesting way to respond to objections and I thought it was just awesome. This alone could pay for your entire program here today.

When you here a price objection, what he said is first of all, reply with this: "Hmm, so you're thinking \$1,000 is more than what you were thinking to invest in..." He called it a McGuffin. He's not selling gazmodas I guess. The typical reply he says is, "Well, yes." Then they might even continue explaining it, which is even better.

Then what we do, is we reply with, "Well, that's certainly something to consider." That's a beautiful way to soften them up. Then Bob suggestions asking them, "If I may ask, what kind of results would you have to see to justify that price?" Now, again, that's brilliant. You're not defensive. You're collaborating here, and now you've got them talking about the value that they need to see, not the price.

Finally, before you address their concerns, now you isolate that as the main reason they're resisting. "Okay, well, we can talk about that. Before we do, is there anything else that would be holding you back from taking advantage of this today?" This is a little bit different than my approach. My approach, we soften them and then we find out is this the real reason and then we go into questioning. I like this one as well. I'm going to be testing it out in addition to the one I've been using for years, but I could see this really working well.

Money Questions to Use

Quick tips on money. Sometimes sales reps are just a little hesitant to ask if somebody has the money to pay for it. “How have you typically financed a purchase like this in the past?” “What funds do you have set aside for something like this?” “What amount did you have in mind for this type of program?” “What number are you thinking of for this project, ballpark figure?”

I’m not suggesting that we early in a call say, “Oh, do you have a budget?” because that will blow you right out of the water because most people will say, “Oh, no, our budgets already spent.” You’re giving them an easy way to get out. If you do want to qualify early on, and you want to make sure you’re in the same ballpark regarding the money and you’re not quite sure, these questions are very appropriate.

The “Three Sentence” Rule

The ‘Three Sentence Rule’ is this: Try not to make more than three statements without getting some type of feedback, or asking a question to get a response.

If you have silence, you could ask, “What are your thoughts on that?” “What do you think?” “Am I on the right track?”

The sales recommendation phase of the call, and there are seven steps to the call process, and the sale recommendation part of the call – this is where you’re doing most of the talking. We just don’t want to go on a long monologue here. We may have a lot to say based on the answers to our questions, but we want to figure out where are they right at this point. The ‘Three Sentence Rule’ is a good one to follow.

DON'T Ask Them if They are Satisfied

My next point is not asking someone if they're satisfied. I see sales reps ask that question all the time. "So, are you satisfied with what you're buying now? Are you satisfied with your present vendor?" The easy answer to that is, "Oh, yeah. They're okay." Instead, ask them a question that is designed to get a better answer. "Okay, well let me ask you, how does what you're getting now compare to what you'd ideally like to see?" Notice here, we're getting them to think a little bit more because it's likely not everyone has the ideal solution. Of course, you can modify this a little bit. I think you get the intent here.

Just Try It

When a prospect is hedging, maybe drawing out your sales cycle, and they can't make a decision, let's just do what grandma would say. "Hey, just go ahead and give it a try. Go ahead and give it a try," because trying is not as threatening, it's not as risky as actually making a huge decision. See how you can work that close or that commitment question into your process.

I've got a few more brief, word-for-word tips that you can use:

1. **In response to a "Send literature" brush-off**, try something like this: "Hey, you know what, I'll be happy to. Let's say I do and you like what you see, what's the next step?" Or, "Would you be ready to move forward at that point?"

Timing is everything here, and of course context depending on what's happened up to this point in the call. If I'm already well into a call – I've done the questioning, I've done the recommendation and somebody's just hedging and they say, "Well, you know, it sounds pretty good. Send me some stuff," that's when this would be very appropriate.

2. **If budget is a problem**, ask them, "Well, what have you done in other situations where there was something you wanted that could help your department, but it wasn't budgeted? How'd you get it?"

Now we're asking about precedent. How'd they get the money before?

3. **If you hear "I want to shop around,"** ask them, "Okay. I hear that quite a bit. What are you going to be looking for?" This might clear up any misunderstanding about what you can provide or cause them to really forego the shopping and buy

from you right now. They tell you to call back in a few months or so, you can respond with, “I’ll be happy to. What’s going to make that a better time for you?”

How to Increase Production in 2017

Let’s talk about you and your motivation and increasing productivity.

Here’s an activity that I often use in my customized training programs when I go out on sites for clients. I’ll do it with you as well.

Let’s imagine for a moment – Your boss calls you into his/her office. You’ve been informed that unfortunately there’s going to be some major cutbacks in staff. People in sales are going to be able to keep their jobs only if they sign a commitment to do the following:

1. Every minute you’re at work you’ve got to display an achievement-oriented attitude.
2. You’ve got to make a list of five things that you could do that will increase your sales production a minimum of 25%, and then you got to commit to do them.

I find when we do this – and many times I’ll have people make a list, I’ll change the number to ten. Then I’ll say, “Let’s go through those.” It’s really amazing those ten things are really not earth-shattering things. They’re pretty simple. It’s like a lot of things we’ve talked about: call more inactive customers, make more prospecting calls, ask for bigger sales. The key here is this: it’s doing it. Why not do this? Why not do this when you get off this webinar? The key here is the **desire** to do it.

If you’re focused on that one goal, the activity is going to put you over that 25% increase. It’s amazing how obstacles don’t seem significant any longer. Sometimes you might think, ‘Oh, my gosh, 25%.’ No. no, it’s not that tough to reach. When you write those things down and you look at them, your resistance to it doesn’t appear to be present anymore because they’re all doable things.

Speaking of increasing production, we’ve got the new guy here. Sales rep just joined the company in an industry he’s never been in before, never sold to before, and within two months, he was kicking major butt and became the #1 sales rep by a lot.

A few of the disgruntled and jealous sales reps who had been there for a couple of years, all of whom consistently were just around their monthly quotas, they’re all in the breakroom complaining about this guy’s success. “I don’t know how he’s doing it. He doesn’t have the product knowledge I do.” Another one said, “Yeah, I know. He doesn’t

have as much talk time as I do.” Another one said, “And he can’t be making as many calls as I do. I leave voicemails all day. I send out tons of emails.”

Then the rep who sits in the cubicle next to him offered up this observation, “Yeah, I hear his calls. He’s going to the top level of the company’s we’re selling to and he’s selling bigger deals.” One rep said, “How’s he sell to those people, I always get stalled at the mid-management level.” Then his neighbor replied, “He doesn’t know that it’s even possible to talk to mid-managers and sell our product. In his training, the new trainer told him that the only people he can talk to are those at the highest levels and that those are the bigger deals, and that’s all that we sell.” That’s a pretty simple point isn’t it?

Well, here’s my point for you and it’s time tested. All that limits us is ourselves. Thinking and acting big gets bigger results. Here’s some thoughts for you along those lines. Hopefully, you turn them into actions.

1. Takes as much energy to ask for a big order as it does a small one. As long as you’re asking anyway, why wouldn’t you ask large.
2. When you expect to sell large that becomes part of you, becomes part of your thoughts, your actions, and your results.
3. Even when you don’t get the big sale or project you asked for, you’re probably going to end up with something more than you would’ve gotten otherwise if you thought small.
4. The pros with the biggest, highest average orders and the most overall sales are typically the ones and shoot for and ask for the biggest sales. The math works on this. I’ve done it.
5. Where you target in an organization usually determines the size of the sale that you’re going to get. Where are you calling? Aim higher.
6. Percy Ross wrote a syndicate newspaper column years ago. It was called “Thanks a Million” where he gave away millions of dollars to people who wrote in and asked for it in the right way. In his, now out of print book, (if you can find one on EBay, I suggest you get it) – it’s called “Ask for the Moon and Get It,” he also suggested asking large. He said, “Take a chance. Ask for something big. Most of us have a tendency to shy away from the things we want the most. What is it your heart desires? What is it that you want the most? Who could give it to you or make it come true? Go ahead. Ask them.”
7. Also, size does matter as it relates to your thinking and your action. Think and ask big, and your results are going to follow.

Before I end here – because I’ve got one more big point that I’m going to leave you with, hopefully motivational for you – you will be getting an email with links to the transcript,

the replay, the MP3 so you can listen when you're working out on your new health program. [prize announcement]

Making a Quantum Leap in 2017

Do you want to make a quantum leap this year? Just not improve, but go to the next level? I've always been a believer, and a teacher, and a practitioner of having big expectations just like we talked about: big goals, big actions. In fact, everything I have going on right now is a result of doing what I'm sharing next.

I recently (and I shared this with my Inner Circle a few months ago) pulled off my shelf one of the most inspirational books I've ever seen, and trust me, I own a lot of them. I'm going to share some ideas here with you from a powerful, little, tiny book and it's called "The Quantum Leap Strategy" by Price Pritchett. Price talks about taking this quantum leap in our personal development, in our performance, and he says that it's not just a gradual or incremental improvement, it's this dramatic breakthrough that's huge. It's a geometric gain to the second or the third or the fourth power and beyond. This short, little book bombards you with ideas and quotes to help you realize that breakthrough.

I'm going to share some of my most important ones or significant ones, the ones that really resonated with me right now and hopefully they do with you as well.

- Just working harder is not going to cause you to make that quantum leap. Your level of effort doesn't matter as much as the kind of effort, and that means working smart. That doesn't just mean putting in more calls, that means making smarter calls. It means going after the bigger deals as we talked about.
- What you do is more important than how hard you do it. A lot of people work harder every day, but they're not getting their results. Again, doing it smarter, going after the bigger events, the bigger deals.
- If you've got to do something that is out – you have to do something that's out of the ordinary for you. If we just continue to do what we're already good at, you're not going to make a quantum leap. If you do something that is out of the ordinary consistently, that's when we have significant breakthroughs. What is it that you've always wanted to do that seemed a little bit scary that you really could do this year?
- Quantum leaps require you to start thinking about what you want instead of what common sense says is the reasonable thing for you to expect. There's a lot of people that won't make a quantum leap and they might even poo-poo your notion that you're going to try something that's out of the ordinary because that's

reasonable. Nobody ever got really wealthy by doing something that's reasonable.

- Don't worry, to begin, you don't have to know how you're going to get there, but you've got to know where you want to go. The goal usually creates the methodology. If you're climbing a mountain and you look at the top, you may not know what you're going to run into about midway, but you know you're going to get to the top. So by midway, you might find another route to take.
- Making a quantum leap does involve taking a risk. It doesn't need to be a dangerous one like walking a high wire, it's just got to be different.
- The surest way for you to lose this year is not to try, and it's sad. Don't have regrets.
- You don't need to know everything that you're going to need to do along the way to achieve that quantum leap. You can figure out something you need to do to just start, and then get in motion. Motion provides education. The pursuit empowers you, gives you information, gives you more momentum to achieve what you really want.
- We'll make mistakes. You might fall down along the way, but within those, there's clues there for your breakthrough performance this year.
- If you're unwilling to taste a little bit of a setback, well, there's no way that you're going to taste the sweet fruits of your true potential.
- Going on this quantum leap is just like building muscles, stretching. New activity bring initial soreness. Those of you that are into the gym maybe after not having been there for a while, you might be experiencing that right now. We know that by keeping at it, those feelings of soreness disappear. Same thing is true with going after our quantum leap, whatever it is that we set out for.

Let me ask you, what huge, big breakthrough would you like to accomplish in 2017? What have you always wanted? What have you said about one of these days I'm going to do this? Think about this: nothing, absolutely nothing is stopping you from going after it right now. I encourage you, I challenge you: Go out! Do it! Make this your best year ever.

Thanks everybody. I'm Art Sobczak.