

~ Tips for Sales People ~

Ground Work

Closing a sale is not an event, but rather a series of meetings and little victories that start out with the first phone call placed to a potential customer.

Rick Davis, president of Building Leaders, Inc. and author of the book, *Strategic Sales in the Building Industry*, offers these tips for systematically making inroads with prospective customers and securing the sale.

Tip #1 – Get the First Meeting – Successfully scheduling the first face-to-face meeting with a potential customer is a small victory. This is the door that opens toward a new account.

Tip #2 – Don't Push for the Instant Sale – Listen carefully as a potential customer explains his or her challenges. Before you determine how your product or service can solve their problems, make sure you truly understand how they run their business and sell their products.

Tip #3 – Establish a Reasons for the Second Meeting – When all else fails, you can always say that you'd like time to digest the information about their company before making a sales pitch. Then, schedule the next meeting while you are still in front of the client to lock it in.

Tip #4 – Always Keep the Focus on Your Client – Use a follow-up meeting to reiterate what you learned from a previous meeting. Show how you processed the information and can support their needs. While building a personal relationship, explain specifically how your product or service will benefit their profits.

Tip #5 – Follow-up – Use every resource available to you for following up personally with a potential customer. Send a written thank you note, e-mail a relevant article or document, drop off a follow-up package of materials, call and/or leave a message.

When will the sale be closed? Maybe when you connected personally while discussing your local sporting team. Perhaps when you sent a written thank you note that demonstrates your professional and personal courtesy. It's possible the close even happened when the bid was presented and the rest of the sales process was merely an administrative formality. You may never know. However, what you will always know is that by systematically tackling the ground work, you've done everything possible to build a relationship that should lead to future business.

Based in Chicago since 1998, Building Leaders, Inc. has distinguished itself as the premier sales and sales management education specialists in the building materials industry. For more information, visit www.buildingleaders.com or call 773-769-4409.

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