

You DON'T HAVE TO PROSPECT to be a Successful Salesperson

The title of this article got your attention, didn't it? If you're a salesperson you're probably relieved that you don't have to prospect anymore because it's a task that is laborious and you're hoping there's a better way to find customers. If you're an owner, sales manager or Vice President of Sales you're probably very curious about new ways of finding customers because you're always trying to find ways to motivate your sales team so they keep prospecting. You spend countless hours and money implementing incentive programs and designing compensation plans so that the prospecting continues to take place.

Before I continue I'm hoping once you continue reading this article you will continue reading even if it's not what you expected. Ok, here's what you've been waiting for., the magic bullet that will replace prospecting.

I didn't mean to take you down a path that would trick you but it was important for me to have you feel the emotion you are now feeling as you anticipate the new way of finding new customers. I don't mean to burst your bubble either but prospecting is still the key to finding new customers. You have to prospect in order to be a successful salesperson.

The thing is prospecting gets a bad rap. Think about how you were feeling when you first started reading this article. If you're a sales person you were becoming elated with the thought that prospecting is over for you and now you can focus on the fun part of the job. If you're an owner, sales manager or Vice President you were hoping that your days of pushing and prodding the sales folks so they keep prospecting would be over.

The issue is that most people in sales have a poor attitude towards prospecting. How can everyone start looking at prospecting in a positive light? What if a sales person focuses on the fact that as long as they have the right product, the right target audience, has a company that can support the sale and knows how to sell then it's inevitable that a % of your prospecting will convert to a sale. In time referrals will take over the brunt of the prospecting.

For those who were selling before the internet became available will remember the days of calling from the yellow pages, or lists that were purchased from list companies. Researching companies was not about a few clicks of a keyboard from a computer but reading annual reports of companies and/or picking up prospects marketing material so you could understand their business and see if they make a good target.

Today we can research prospects in 20 minutes. (If you're interested in how just e-mail me and I will send you the document for free). One of the first steps I tell sales people is to have an account with LinkedIn and before placing any calls see if and how you're connected to that decision maker. Now that's how you begin to build a referral business. I'm just scraping the surface when it comes to finding the right prospects so that your prospecting time is reduced and it's more rewarding. How many groups do you belong to? Choose groups that your prospects would be members so you can find out where they struggle and what they need. It was recently reported that sales folks are reducing their traveling

time because of the use of webinars. Why not hold a webinar with your customers and have them bring people (prospects) making it an informational webinar.

These are exciting times for sales people because of the many channels of prospecting that are available and right from your computer. Every sales team should brainstorm with each other sharing what's working because the way we do business today is very different from the past and it will continue to evolve due to social media networking. I'm not even going to begin detailing the value of Twitter or Facebook. Start diving in and enjoying the process of prospecting because it's more like networking these days than cold calling.

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