



Profitable Sales Tip #6

Grease The Rusty Old Wheels “So They Don’t Squeak”

Invariably, when you make a change that involves prospecting, especially when it means making changes to have sales people prospect more often, you are going to run into 3 types of resistance:

1) Those sales people that aren’t cut out for sales

2) Those that have gotten comfortable not prospecting

3) The lazy bones

These 3 types of people use 3 common forms of “Squeaky Wheel” tactics to deter you and others from pursuing this prospecting improvement “project.”

Believe it or not, these types are all common in any sales organization of more than 50 – 70 reps

Here’s how they squeak, and how to grease each one:

We all have moments when we react in a hostile manner, are indecisive or feel unwilling to be flexible on an issue, but people who are difficult by nature are consistently troublesome to deal with.

The only way to cope with their impossible behavior is to learn how to minimize their negative impact in most situations.

Difficult people have learned that their upsetting behavior keeps others off balance and incapable of effective action.

If we respond by passive acceptance of their behavior, the problem continues because the difficult person has been given a signal that their tactics work.

However, when we respond in ways they don't expect, we have taken some of the control away from them and empowered ourselves.

Dealing With The 3 Common Types of "Difficult Salespeople"

Hostile Aggressives:

These people try to bully and overwhelm by bombarding others like a tank, or making cutting remarks like a verbal sniper.

Complainers:

Complainers gripe incessantly but never try to do anything about their complaints, either because they feel powerless, or because they refuse to bear any responsibility.

Negativists:

When a project is proposed the negativists are bound to object with "It won't work" or "It's impossible." They are always ready to pop other's balloons.

Coping Strategies for Hostile-Aggressives

The bully who rolls over people like a tank has a strong need to prove that their view of the world is always right. These human tanks value

aggressiveness and confidence, and tend to devalue persons they believe lack these qualities.

Unfortunately, demeaning others is one way to create a sense of self-importance and superiority.

Coping with bullies requires that you stand up for yourself. Give the hostile person time to run down by letting them rage for a short while.

Remain in place; look directly at them and wait to jump in when the hostile person's aggression loses some momentum. Don't worry about being polite. If you are interrupted, then say, "You interrupted me!" If the tank doesn't stop, say it again.

It often helps to take verbal control by saying the person's name clearly and loudly. Body language is important too. Rise deliberately from your seat.

Conversely, try to get them to sit down;

Most people behave less aggressively when seated. Speak from your own point of view, "In my opinion, it's a good idea...", "I disagree with you...". While standing your ground, it is important not to escalate the conflict. Hostile people are unlikely to back down, so forcing your views on them will not work.

If instead of a tank, it is a sniper you have on your hands, then the coping tactics vary. Snipers take shots at you, or others around you, verbally. They indulge in innuendoes, not-too-subtle digs and non-playful teasing.

Most people feel completely pinned down by a sniper.

Snipers have a "superiority" complex that makes it difficult for them to see things from others perspectives. They crave having control of a situation.

In dealing with a sniper, surface the attack by saying something such as, "That sounded like a dig, did you mean it that way?" If the sniper strikes in front of others, during a meeting for example, stop and address the attack.

Phrase your response as a question which gives the sniper an alternative to fighting. If you are a third party who witnesses a sniper attack, be wary of

intervening. Remember that a common fate of peacemakers is often to be scorned by both parties.

Coping With Complainers

Complainers find fault with everything and have their accusatory style down so perfectly that they turn the tables on people, putting them immediately on the defensive.

There are also complainers who specialize in complaining to one person about another person who is not present to defend themselves. Complaining is the behavior of people who feel powerless, want change but won't risk anything themselves. They want to remain blameless in all situations

The way to cope with a complainer is to insist that a problem solving perspective be taken toward their complaints.

Listen attentively so the complainer can let off steam and then paraphrase their main points.

Don't allow works line never and always to go unnoticed; require specific examples and time frames. Acknowledge what you are hearing but be careful not to agree. Agreement may confirm that you are responsible.

Ask the complainer for specific problem solving suggestions; if appropriate, get complaints and suggestions in writing.

The complainer needs to see how the very act of complaining will lead to direct involvement they want to avoid.

Coping With Negativists

Negativists find fault with everything and are eternal doomsayers. They have a big impact on work groups. Negativists have a deep-seated conviction that any task not in their own hands will fail.

We all are vulnerable to discouragement and the chronically negative person is looking for confirmation that things are indeed hopeless. State your own realistic optimism. There are always alternatives and options.

Don't try to persuade the negativist to see a brighter side to things. Question the worst thing that could happen in a given situation. Usually the worst case scenario isn't the end of the world.

The goal when coping with difficult people is to negate their controlling behaviors so that you can get on with your own business. Only when their destructive behaviors fail to work will difficult people have an incentive to change. We have dealt here with only a few of the behavior types one may encounter in people.