

9 Skills of a Super Salesperson

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You know it as well as I do: there are far more originators, 'salespersons', than ever before, and even fewer clients. Those that truly understand, appreciate and apply essential sales skills daily will swiftly rise above the competition in the months to come. My primary objective is to assist you in this process. Here are 9 surefire ways to becoming the best you can be in selling.

1. Overcome the key negative psychology about sales. Almost every average salesperson, if left to their own devices, starts out by giving a new client a sales presentation. The problem is that when clients are getting the presentation, they feel like they are being "sold to" and they become defensive. People don't like to be sold, but they love to buy! Top salespeople trump this problem by building the relationship *first*, making the buyer comfortable with them. Second, they ask the client about their requirements - the issues, the pain, the problems, the needs, and third, they come back with a solution. The whole psychology has changed because the salesperson is now helping their new friend solve a problem. Become an advisor, a counselor, a problem solver.
 - ***Average salespeople: Present solutions first***
 - ***Super salespeople: Build relationship first, ask about requirements second and then present a solution***
2. Understand the power of referrals. Top salespeople are trained to always ask for referrals. The absolute best source of referrals is the salesperson's current delighted clients. The difference between average salespeople and top salespeople is that the average ones never ask for referrals. Top salespeople always do.
 - ***Average salespeople: Never ask for referrals***
 - ***Super salespeople: Always ask for referrals***
3. Take advantage of the Triangle of Trust. The Triangle of Trust is all your friends, family members, business associates, former co-workers and anyone else in your sphere of influence. Ask them if they currently are, or have ever, worked with CPA's, financial planners, attorneys, realtors and other business professionals. Your Triangle of Trust should be feeding you all the information you're dying to know as a salesperson: the requirements, the

pain, the issues, the incumbent, the competition, the money available, etc. If you maximize the Triangle of Trust, the probability of getting in to talk to the referred is 80 percent; without it's only 20 percent.

- ***Average salespeople:*** Do not utilize & maximize their Triangle of Trust
- ***Super salespeople:*** Will rarely pursue an opportunity unless it involves the Triangle of Trust

4. Utilize excellent telephone calling practices. First, introduce yourself. Second, have a power statement, which snares the client's attention. The best type of power statement is mentioning the name of your Triangle of Trust partner. For example, the salesperson could say, "Dan Smith suggested I give you a call." If they know and trust Dan, then they know there's a good reason he recommended you so they'll listen to your pitch.

Third, state why you're calling them, and fourth, answer the question: what's in it for them. The fifth step is a request for the client's time. An example might be, "Hi, this is Sally Smith of 1st Metropolitan Mortgage. I'm calling at the suggestion of Ron Jones. We currently have an amazing program for first time homebuyers, allowing them to buy a home with NO money down. Ron indicated you may be in the market to purchase soon. Do you have a minute to discuss this?"

- ***Average salespeople:*** Do not use scripts when making phone calls
- ***Super salespeople:*** Use the classic five step phone call procedure emphasizing the power statement/Triangle of Trust and the answer to the prospect's question: "What's in it for them?"

5. Conduct the classic three step sales interview process used when you sit down with the prospect for the first time. In the first step, focus on building a relationship with the customer and selling yourself. This includes learning how to dress, seizing control of the all-important first impression and how to research prospects before going on the call. The second step is asking questions, probing and diagnosing the clients unique situation. The third step is offering solutions. Unfortunately, average salespeople do the opposite, and present the product first. Again, top salespeople reverse the psychology.

- ***Average salespeople:*** Present solutions first
- ***Super salespeople:*** Build a relationship first

6. Engage in active listening techniques. Peter Schutz, the former CEO of Porsche, says, "If you listen closely enough, your customers will explain your business to you." The CEO of Columbia Sportswear says, "We ask our customers what they want, we make it, we sell it to them." You must listen to the customer first, and active listening is the key technique.
 - ***Average salespeople:*** Do 80 percent of the talking
 - ***Super salespeople:*** Do 20 percent of the talking
7. Overcome client objections and prepare for the sales call. If you can overcome prospect's objections to your offering, you have a 64 percent chance of making the sale. On the contrary, if the client has no objections, you have little or no chance of making the sale. The reason is that a client's objections show they're interested, engaged and listening. Before going on any sales call, top salespeople think of all the questions and objections that could possibly come up and are ready to overcome them.
 - ***Average salespeople:*** Do not think of objections in advance of talking to the prospect
 - ***Super salespeople:*** Brainstorm all possible objections that the prospect could have and have thought out the answers
8. Eliminate the four famous Dale Carnegie selling fears. The first fear is the seller's fear that they really don't know what they're talking about and they're not competent with what they're selling. To overcome this, top salespeople always know their products and services and the competitions' products and services better than anybody else does. Therefore, they come across as the most credible salespeople.

The second fear is the fear of rejection. Studies show that the top salespeople have totally overcome this fear and average salespeople have not. After losing a sale, average salespeople stay in a funk and don't want to make the next call. Top salespeople brainstorm with others, figure out what went wrong and how to improve it. They rationalize objections. They know that sales is a numbers game and they cannot win them all. They pick themselves up off the floor and robustly go after the next sale immediately.

The third fear is the buyer's fear that they don't really understand what the salesperson is selling. To overcome this, get the customer involved as much

as possible with the product or service. For example, invite them to visit your plant to see the manufacturing process in action, give them a demonstration, or let them take the car home for the weekend. Confucius said, "What I hear, I forget, what I see I remember, but only what I *do*, do I understand."

The fourth fear is the buyer's fear that if they buy the salesperson's product, the salesperson will mess up and embarrass them in front of their boss. Overcome this fear by using Dale Carnegie's "killer argument." Explain that many other customers have successfully used your services in the recent past. This experience reduces the risk in the buyer's mind. Say, "We've solved this exact same concern you've had for three other clients right here in San Diego." They follow it up with their proposed solution and one or more of three classic sales messages that help sell it:

1. The killer argument (We have done it before)
2. The unique selling proposition, key and ghosting discriminators (Why the prospect should buy from you and not the competition)
3. The return on investment analysis (How the product will pay for itself)

1. ***Average salespeople:*** Do not know about and/or address the four selling fears

2. ***Super salespeople:*** Understand all four fears thoroughly and how to overcome them

9. Utilize classic architecture structure when making a presentation. The average salesperson starts the presentation by showing how great their product is, but the top salespeople start by explaining their understanding of the client's problem. If the salesperson has diagnosed the client's problem correctly, this can have a terrifically positive impact on the buyer. They know the salesperson has done the necessary research and that they really understand their problem.

0. ***Average salespeople:*** Present first

1. ***Super salespeople:*** Discuss the prospect's problem first, then propose a solution and back it up with sales messages

