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Overcoming Challenges to Sales Performance



Slideshare Edition

Welcome



- Your Presenter:
 - Deb Brown
 - Practice focus:
 - Sales coaching
 - Sales training
 - Clients include:
 - Small businesses
 - Growing companies
 - Fortune 500



Agenda

- The nature of sales challenges
- Common challenges facing sales professionals
 - Mental
 - Behavioral
 - Intellectual
 - Relational
- Effective responses and solutions
- Visioning and next steps



What are sales challenges?

- Sales challenges are obstacles that:
 - Impact all sales professionals
 - Often surprise the sales person, even though ‘warning signs’ may have been present
 - Drive ‘turning points’ in your sales career
 - Should I continue selling as I have?
 - Should I rethink/reform my approach?
 - Should I re-evaluate my suitability for sales?
 - Are best addressed with a clear frame of mind (remove fear and ‘head trash’)



How do I identify them?

- Warning signs that you are facing an unanticipated sales challenge:
 - You expected to exceed quota, but instead didn't reach your numbers.
 - You start to feel like existing customers are less appreciative of your time/effort.
 - New prospects are responding inconsistently to your sales presentation.
 - Qualifying has become wildly inaccurate.



Types of Sales Challenges

- Four types of sales challenges:
 - Mental
 - Behavioral
 - Intellectual
 - Relational



1. Mental Challenges

- Rooted in misguided assumptions:
 - “My customers will always stay loyal to me.”
 - “I don’t need new technology, since the fundamentals of sales never change.”
 - “My prospecting process is always sound, so my pipeline problems are because of weak leads, a weak territory or lack of support.”
- The common theme is fear, which drives personal resistance to change.



2. Behavioral Challenges

- Rooted in misguided habits:
 - “I’ll get to new prospect calls tomorrow, since I need to take care of my clients first.”
 - “I don’t have time to update the CRM with my pipeline while I am busy selling hard.”
 - “I’ll hit my numbers, just let me make a few more golf dates with my biggest accounts.”
- The common theme is comfort with the status quo, which drives denial.



3. Intellectual Challenges

- Rooted in misguided processes:
 - “My sales contact says they have the budget; I don’t want to disturb the CEO.”
 - “I’m confident that they know we have the best features; they have our data sheets.”
 - “I just know this major account is going to close, so don’t tell me to go for little fish.”
- The common theme is overconfidence, which drives disillusionment.



4. Relational Challenges

- Rooted in misguided priorities:
 - “I’m going to close that account next week; they’ll buy for our end-of-quarter discount.”
 - “I’ll front-load quota by counting a verbal close this week toward next month.”
 - “Let me just move this account’s territory code and the add-on sales will flow to me.”
- The common theme is expediency, which drives manipulation.



Sales Challenge Examples

- **1. Mental Challenge**
 - Wishful Thinking
- **2. Behavioral Challenge**
 - Prospecting Paralysis
- **3. Intellectual Challenge**
 - Qualifying Confusion
- **4. Relational Challenge**
 - Buyer Bending



1. Wishful Thinking

- **Challenge:**
 - Quota ratcheted up; leads going thin
- **Temptation:**
 - Count weak leads as strong; false-qualify
- **Solution:**
 - Clean your data
 - Push harder to qualify prospects
 - Remove 'dead wood' and tire kickers
 - Rebuild your lead flow



2. Prospecting Paralysis

- **Challenge:**
 - Business from old accounts fading; new leads harder and harder to come by
- **Temptation:**
 - Try old methods; hit up current clients
- **Solution:**
 - Ask for qualified referrals from customers
 - Focus on fresh, consistent prospecting
 - Look for 'warm' introductions



3. Qualifying Confusion

- **Challenge:**
 - Your 'sure bets' didn't close, and your sense of whether accounts will buy now is way off
- **Temptation:**
 - Fudge pipeline reports; give up
- **Solution:**
 - Rethink each prospect's actual problems
 - Identify urgency + budget + decision power
 - How to simplify story for prospects



4. Buyer Bending

- **Challenge:**
 - Too many prospects stuck in pre-closing stages; quota deadline is approaching fast
- **Temptation:**
 - Push meaningless discounts or irrelevant products to artificially force dealmaking
- **Solution:**
 - Identify customer-based reasons for a deal
 - How can clients benefit from action?
 - Open fresh discussions and qualify



Visioning Exercise

- Use this visioning process to guide you:
 - Identify the real problem
 - Identify the desired solution
 - Identify obstacles to success
- Develop your SMART plan of action:
 - S – Specific
 - M – Measurable
 - A – Achievable
 - R – Reachable
 - T - Timely



Taking next steps

- Think about how you can begin tackling your sales challenges:
 - Focus on one issue at a time
 - Be honest – with yourself, with your customers, with your sales manager
 - Commit to SMART goals and actions
- Deb Brown Sales can assist you:
 - Sales Planning
 - Sales Coaching
 - Sales Strategy



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Thank you!



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