

16 Excuses Sales People Need to Stop Using

Sales people make a number of excuses why they can't reach their sales targets or why prospects and customer don't buy. Here are just a few:

1. **Our prices are too high.** This is one of the most common excuses that sales people use and even when companies reduce their price, those sales reps still often fail to reach their targets.

2. **The competition is cheaper.** While there will always be companies who sell the same or similar product as you, very seldom is the competition as cheap as you think. However, smart buyers will often try to get a better price by indicating that a competitor is cheaper.

3. **We don't have new products.** Many sales people lament the fact that their company has not issued or released a new product. However, this is seldom a concern from a buyer's perspective unless a competitor has a newer product that offers additional benefits that are important to the buyer.

4. **Buyers are liars.** This phrase drives me around the bend. The main reason prospects don't tell sales people the truth is because the sales person has failed to establish credibility or respect. The secondary reason is because they are afraid you will try to box them into a corner in an effort to capture a sale.

5. **Customers only care about getting the lowest price.** This may be true in some cases, but price is seldom the primary or motivating factor behind someone's final buying decision. However, price will become the major issue by default if you fail to demonstrate the value of your product, service or offering.

6. **The economy is still bad.** Yes, the economy is still challenging but companies are making buying decisions. They are purchasing products and implementing new systems. The goal is to identify those companies and target your efforts accordingly.

7. **I don't have enough time to (fill in the blank).** There is no question that most sales reps are required to do more than they used to—technology has certainly contributed to this. However, many reps also waste too much time on low-value customers which sucks up precious time from dealing with higher value prospects and customers.

8. **Gatekeepers block my calls.** One role of a gatekeeper is to protect their boss's time. But that doesn't mean they prevent all sales people from connecting with decision makers. To succeed you need to befriend the executive assistant, treat her like a decision maker, and enlist her support.

9. **My territory is too small.** This may apply in certain circumstances but seldom as frequently as stated by many sales people. While a small territory may have a limited number of new sales leads, it opens the door to create additional sales opportunities within your existing customer base.

10. **My territory is too big.** Nice problem to have! Although a large territory presents challenges from an account maintenance perspective, this issue can be remedied by focusing your attention on the right customers (see point 7). If you are really serious about expanding your business, you could hire a personal assistant (at your expense) to help manage your accounts. This approach frees up time for you to focus on prospecting and adding new customers to your roster.

11. **The company expects too much.** I remember talking to a district sales manager who lamented the fact that her company was expecting a twelve percent increase in revenues in the upcoming year. However, I have never known a company to say, "Well, we just finished a record year so let's coast this year, shall we?" Do shareholders expect a lot? Of course. You would too if it was your money on the line.

12. **My sales targets are unrealistic.** Let's face it; most compensation programs do not reward sales people when they fail to reach their quotas or targets. As a result, sales reps often believe that their sales goals are unrealistic. However, top performing sales reps set their own targets which are usually higher than the quotas established by their boss. If they can do it, so can you.

13. **Customers don't care about service.** This may be true in rare circumstances, however; I don't know many people (consumers or corporate decision makers) who say, "I don't mind waiting two weeks for a service call; after all, I did get a good price." They may state service is unimportant during the initial sales conversation but I can guarantee that it will become an issue if they experience a problem down the road.

14. **People won't pay extra for quality.** Rubbish! While there are a small percentage of people who base their buying decision solely on price, these individual's are a minority. However, it is YOUR responsibility to demonstrate why the quality of your product or service is worth the additional cost.

15. **Asking for referral sounds like I'm begging.** I think every sales person on the planet understands the importance of asking for referrals. However, the vast majority fail to utilize this approach because they are uncomfortable doing so. Let me set the record straight. Asking for a referral in a professional manner will not sound like you are begging for business.

16. **I remember when....** Give it a rest already! No one cares about the good old days except for you. Yeah, things were different ten years ago. But that was then and this is now. If you want to succeed, stop reliving the past and focus on today's reality.

You can make all the excuses in the world but it doesn't change the fact that you and only you are accountable for reaching your sales targets. This may sound harsh but if you don't want the responsibility, find another career.