

9 Sales Habits You Need to Develop

To achieve long-term success in sales means that you need develop a variety of habits. Here are nine sales habits that will help you improve your results.

Habit #1: Prospecting. Top sales pros devote a significant amount of time to prospecting for new business and this habit prevents the peaks and valleys that many other sales people experience. Colleen Francis suggests that having 300% percent of your targeted budget in your pipeline will ensure that you reach your quotas.

Do you have a prospecting plan in place and do you execute that plan?

Habit #2: Asking great questions. Many of sales people I have encountered do not ask high-value questions when meeting with prospects. Top sales people have learned to ask tough, probing, thought-provoking questions that make prospects think. The challenge with this is that many sales people are uncomfortable asking these types of questions because they feel that questions of this nature are too intimate or too probing. The key is to verbally rehearse asking these questions BEFORE you meet with your prospect or customer. Experience has taught me that most people will tell you anything you want IF you have the courage to ask.

What powerful questions are you prepared to ask?

Habit #3: Listening skills. The best sales people I know are excellent listeners. They listen carefully to what their prospect says and listen for underlying clues and hidden messages. They also seek clarification when necessary. They use prompters such as “tell me more” or “go on” which encourages the other person to divulge additional information. And, they also make strong eye contact which demonstrates that they are paying close attention.

How can you improve your listening skills?

Habit #4: Creativity. In today's ultra-competitive environment, the ability to stand out from the competition is critical. Top sales reps look for creative ways to achieve this. They use creative approach in their prospecting methods, in their sales calls, their voice mail messages and emails. In everything they do, they try to ensure that their prospect will remember their name.

What are you doing to differentiate yourself from your competitors?

Habit #5: Effective Presentations. During my tenure in the corporate world, I endured many sales presentations and most of them were ineffective because they focused on the seller's company or product. Great sales presentations focus on the prospect's situation and clearly demonstrate how they will benefit by using your product, service or solution.

How can you improve your sales presentations to ensure they are client-focused?

Habit #6: Persistence. We all know that it takes more than one call, one letter, or one email to connect with decision makers. In fact, it's been reported that it now takes up to 14 touch points to connect with senior level executives. Successful sales people know that it takes persistence and diligence to make contact and they use a variety of strategies to achieve this goal (see creativity).

How many attempts do you make before you stop trying?

Habit #7: Organizational skills. Let's face it...sales people have a ton of responsibilities in addition to meeting their quotas and targets. Juggling multiple priorities, managing dozens of accounts, filling out paperwork and dealing with client concerns absorb a lot of time. Successful sales people prioritize their time and use technology to help them manage their workload.

What can you do to improve your organizational skills?

Habit #8: Asking for Testimonials. Most sales people don't seek out and use testimonials even though they know the importance of doing so. The challenge is that they don't know how to ask or they are afraid that their customer won't provide a testimonial. Top sales people consistently ask for testimonials and even help their customers develop an appropriate endorsement.

What can you do to develop this habit?

Habit #9: Follow up. Many a sale has been lost due to lack of follow up. And given the technology we have at our fingertips today, this should be a no-brainer. However, too many sales people fail to follow-up after sending a proposal mistakenly thinking that the prospect will call them if they are interested. News flash! It's up to you to follow through afterwards and I guarantee that you are losing sales if you are waiting for people to call you back.

What follow-up system can you develop?

Develop these sales habits and integrate them into your routine and you will quickly notice an improvement in your results.

© MMX Kelley Robertson, All rights reserved.

Do you know what sales blunders are costing you money?

[Increase your sales](#) with a FREE audio program, **Sales Blunders That Cost You Money** and two other sales-boosting resources by subscribing to Kelley's newsletter at: www.Fearless-Selling.ca.

Kelley helps people master their sales conversations so they can win more business and increase their sales. He does this by conducting sales training workshops and delivering keynote speeches at conferences, sales meetings and other events. Book Kelley for your next event: 905-633-7750 or Kelley@RobertsonTrainingGroup.com.