

Summary

Even the most successful salespeople make mistakes. Mistakes which cause lost opportunity and lost revenue. Be proactive in avoiding these mistakes and manage yourself to new levels of sales productivity and results.



ACTIVTips

Summary information or practical advice for business leaders, ACTIVTips represents best practices for businesses seeking new opportunity, predictable growth, and leadership excellence. Integrating ACTIVTips into your business can help you consistently **“Lead Like Never Before.”**



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Sales - Top Mistakes

Selling is more art than science. No matter the product, service, industry, skill level, or personality, each salesperson is going to make a mistake. It is inevitable. However, there are ways to mitigate, or minimize mistakes by understanding the most common and avoiding them from the start.

Being Unprepared: The most common mistake of all. Going into the call, or to the phones without having done adequate preparation - knowing the details of what you're selling, knowing how to answer the most common questions, and not knowing how to neutralize the competition. Be prepared to effectively sell by having done your homework before you open the door or pick up the phone.

Not Knowing Your Customer: There is no excuse for not knowing something about the prospect or customer you are going to deal with. With the availability of information, via the internet, do some research before the sales call to understand their issues, culture, values, likes, dislikes, interests, and how they do business. Know your audience and watch your success ratio soar.

Not Listening: Sure, it is easy to hear the surface issues. But, how good are you at hearing the, "... issues or question behind the discussion?" By this, how well do you probe for understanding as you discuss their needs and your solutions? All too often the salesperson will start selling on surface issues and never address underlying problems. Listen to your prospects/customers. They will tell you what you can do for them. Then, sell to that!

Selling too Soon: People buy from people. Relationship is key. Don't rush the sale and try to close before it is possible. Doing so destroys your credibility and closes opportunity. Instead, take time to educate your prospect/customer and to get to know them. You will close more easily and for higher dollar amounts.

Overselling: This is in two dimensions: 1. Never oversell the capability of your product or service; and, 2. Know when to shut up. In the first, never be so eager as to sell something that your company can't deliver. In the second, let your customer have time to reflect and make a decision rather than reacting to your being pushy or overbearing.

Wandering: As key as the relationship aspect is, the salesperson must manage the sales call and selling process. Avoid being overly chatty on those things which are unimportant to the decision or next step in the selling process. While getting to know the customer is important, closing the sale is more important. Don't wander off topic - selling the customer on your products and/or services.

Not Closing: The second most common mistake is not asking for the order. The prospect/customer expects you to ask. After all, you're the salesperson. Many customers won't make a purchase decision until they are asked. If you don't ask, who will? After you've presented the appropriate information and overcome objections, ask for the order every time. Don't wait for the customer to make the decision.

Making Assumptions: Often, salespeople will miss solid, profitable opportunity because they bring assumptions into a sale. Assumptions on the customers' business, their ability to pay, the prospect individual's background or ethnicity or appearance, or assuming that the salesperson's products 'just aren't right' for that prospect/customer. Go into every sales call with your eyes wide open, looking for opportunity - not pre-judging and assuming things that aren't there.

Failing to Prospect: Successful salespeople never stop prospecting. Even when sales are at their peak, continue to prospect for new opportunity and customers. Don't let yourself become distracted by your 'success' and forget to keep your pipeline full. A constant influx of new opportunity is critical for your and your companies survival. Keep prospecting and see greater results than ever before.

Not Following Up: Like overselling, this has two dimensions: 1. Not following up on leads; and, 2. Not following up on prospect/customer inquiry. In the first dimension, don't assume that a lead won't be interested in your product/service at sometime in the future. Just because they said no now does not mean they will never have a need for your solutions. In the second dimension, make sure that you quickly, accurately, and completely follow-up on all inquiries from prospects or customers. Never leave prospects/customers waiting... They may tire of waiting and call your competitor.

Accelerate your sales success. Avoid these common mistakes and sell more than you thought possible.