



The X-Factor In Selling

Why You Can't Teach People To Sell By Teaching People to Sell

Pat and Terry, two sales professionals with the same background, knowledge and experience, both excelled in training. So why is Pat outselling Terry by five times or more?

For sales managers, it's an all-too-common puzzle: You've hired two sales people who look equally skilled on paper. They've both aced the training and mastered all the selling techniques. But when the numbers come in, one blows the other out of the water.

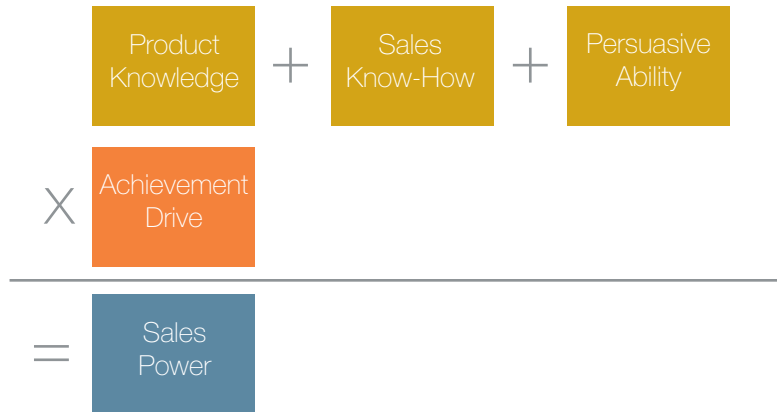
Who You Are Trumps What You Know

Skills are one thing, but they're not the only thing. In fact, if you look at what makes the high producers so successful, it isn't that they know so much about the products or practice all the selling tricks and tips. And it's not because they were taught how to sell.

That crucial difference between two sales professionals who seem so alike on paper but perform so differently on the job? **It's the X-Factor.**

For successful sales people, their belief systems—their attitudes, motives, beliefs and values—create **a drive for achievement that multiplies their sales power.**

In other words, *who you are* is ultimately more important than *what you know*.



If you want to multiply the power of your sales professionals, you can't just teach them to sell; you have to draw out their own personal achievement drive. To do that, you'll have to challenge some of the common myths about sales training and what it takes to be a successful sales person.

Myth #1

You Can't Teach That.

The emphasis on teaching selling skills and techniques in training often comes from a view that you can teach sales skills, but those other traits—the “fire in the belly” that motivates someone to push for ever-greater results—can't be taught. You either have it or you don't.

Fact: Achievement drive can be developed and nurtured.

We've found what works best is a combination of:

1. Training that helps sales people expand their views of their abilities and redefine their beliefs about selling.
2. Managers who appreciate and recognize the value of sales people trying new things, and who support them in learning from their failures as well as their successes.
3. An environment that encourages and rewards people who step outside their comfort zones.

Myth #2

When Long-Term Client Relationships Change, The Sales Person Has to Start Over.

No matter what business you're in, the selling landscape is changing. From new decision-makers and new competitors to new regulations and tighter cost controls, many sales people are losing the trusted, long-term relationships they've spent months or even years developing. There's nothing worse than feeling like you have to start all over again.

Fact: That "start-over" mentality comes from a belief that the sales person's role is to try to convince someone to buy something, a belief that's underscored by training that focuses primarily on sales techniques. When sales people view selling as a way to identify client needs or problems and create value for them, it breeds an entirely different attitude. No matter who the decision maker is or what the circumstances are, the sales person's role as problem solver and value creator doesn't change.

Myth #3

Our Sales People Call It A "Solution," So Our Customers Understand Our Value.

With profits shrinking and competition heating up, many companies are working hard to reposition themselves so they're not viewed as just another commodity. They're training sales people to "sell solutions" to change customer perceptions of what they offer.

Fact: When it comes to selling solutions, many sales people talk a good game, but they don't really do it. The problem is they've changed their script, but they haven't developed the mindset for solving problems and creating value. It's not just a matter of learning what to say; in many cases it's a matter of "unlearning" old beliefs and attitudes.

Selling Power to the X Degree

The X Factor is achievable for your entire team, but the myths above represent just a few of the misconceptions and misguided approaches that will get in the way.

To take their selling power to the X degree, start here:

By focusing on belief systems rather than just on teaching people to sell, you can develop that fire in the belly that will deliver exponential returns for all your sales professionals.

10 Principles for Selling With Integrity

These 10 principles are based on the underlying beliefs that motivate success and drive achievement in top performers.

1. Selling is a mutual exchange of value.
2. Selling isn't something you do to people; it's something you do for and with them.
3. Developing trust and rapport precedes any selling activity.
4. Selling pressure is never exerted by the sales professional; it's exerted only by people when they perceive they want your products.
5. Selling techniques give way to values-driven principles.
6. Truth, respect and honesty provide the basis for long-term selling success.
7. Ethics and values contribute more to sales success than techniques or strategies.
8. Understanding customers' wants or needs should precede attempts to sell.
9. Negotiation is never manipulation. It's always a strategy to work out problems—when customers want to work them out.
10. Closing is a victory for both the customer and the sales professional.