



Sales techniques -5 winning styles

Why is it that some sales professionals are much more successful at selling than others? Often this success can't be attributed to better education or training but something less obvious. Putting a 'label' on a behaviour or approach can help identify development gaps and focus future training to increase the performance of each sales professional. Recent research has identified five different selling styles. To make the grade, sales professionals need to use at least three of these styles. To be highly successful, sales professionals should use all five styles.

Five Sales Styles

A recent study of sales professional in the medical arena has revealed five primary selling styles:

The Relationship Selling Style:

This style is all about cultivating a close, personal rapport with the prospects and customers. Relationship sellers are known for their friendliness and outgoing personalities.

The Technical Problem-Solving Style:

Sales professionals who are experts on their products and are able to educate their audience on the details of their offerings are practitioners of the Technical Problem-Solving style. These individuals tend to be quite analytical, and they excel at establishing technical credibility in front of their prospects.

The Account Servicing Style:

Sales professionals who use this selling style focus on keeping existing customers happy while asking for more business. This service-minded style is built upon a foundation of responsiveness, proactive follow-up, and a strong commitment to doing what is right for physicians and their patients.

The Assertive Style:

Assertive style sales professionals sell through strength of personality. Strong assertive style reps typically bring that difficult-to-train, "fire in the belly" approach to the work. They are extremely competitive, self-assured, intense, and assertive.

The Business Partnering Style:

Sales professionals who establish a business consulting relationship with their customers employ this style. Business Partners understand strategic issues and market conditions that influence business practices. They excel in helping their customers "grow" their businesses. Successful business partners display excellent big-picture thinking skills, market knowledge, persuasive communication capabilities, and creativity.



Which Styles Work Best?

Using three of these five selling styles will result in average sales results. The Relationship Selling, Technical Problem-solving, and Account Servicing styles are necessary components for most sales positions. If a sales professional does not have solid proficiency in each of these three styles, he/she may struggle to gain the respect of the customer.

The outstanding sales professionals, the individuals who consistently "knock the cover off the ball", bring something in addition to these three styles to their selling. They display a strong combination of the "fire in the belly" Assertive Style and the "learned" Business Partnering style.

At their very core, all outstanding performers display a strong desire to succeed. They are extremely competitive, goal-focused, and accountable. They utilize an abundance of tenacity, energy, and intensity to drive bottom-line success.

Beyond this "warrior" mentality, these sales professionals also display a greater ability than others to consult with their customers. They are attuned to the business strategies and growth plans of their customers. They recognize and can persuasively communicate how their company and products can add value to the customer's business. They are active students of their industry and marketplace, and they are viewed as true business partners by their customers.

Developing a Repertoire of Styles

To raise sales performance, sales professionals should think through:

1. Which style(s) am I most dependent on?
2. Do I ever over-rely on one style to the detriment of the others?
3. Based on my market and my success rate, on which styles do I need training and development?
4. Which styles do the top-performing sales professionals in my organisation utilize, and which styles can I emulate?

By understanding an individual's unique selling style and analyzing the gaps that exist between themselves and the best performers in their company, the sales professional can seek the training and advice they need to help build their repertoire of influencing styles.

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