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**THE ONE
SALES MISTAKE**

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UNORTHODOX BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT EXPERTISE

The One Sales Mistake:

The Critical Change That Guarantees More Sales In Your Coaching or Training Business

Sharing the exact single reason you're not getting orders, and how to start getting more sales from better customers as a coach or trainer.

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Introduction

If you want to learn how to make more sales and stop exhausting yourself chasing potential customers, knuckle down for ten minutes and read this quick report.

What you've been going through as a coach or trainer is very common. Every week, millions of potential customers (who we'll start calling “prospects”) contact businesses like yours. They ask a ton of questions, appear to be very interested in proceeding with the project, and get a quote from the service provider—you—only to then abruptly vanish.

However, nobody has told you what's been happening and why you keep getting frustrated with disappearing prospects. This is what you're going to learn inside this report: what happens during your talks with prospects, why it's happening, and exactly what you can do to stop it.

We'll cover how to deal with the prospect who spends over an hour “picking your brain” about how to do what you do, and then disappears.

We'll discover what *key single change* you need to make when it comes to talking with prospects. **And with this one critical improvement, you will have the key to how to make more sales.**

You are going to instantly become much more effective at getting clients...if you use the knowledge in this report.

What would it feel like to hold your head up high, look at yourself in the mirror, and know what you are truly in charge of your business? That you work on great projects with the right people, and are treated and paid well by your customers? And that there is no longer any mystery about why prospects behave the way they do?

Let's get started.

The One Change You Need to Make to Get More Sales

To save time, I'm going to skip going into detail on the symptoms of the problem you have in getting orders. Yes, they are *symptoms*, and I want you to notice that. Symptoms conceal problems. In this case, the symptoms of you:

- wasting time with prospects who never buy
- exhausting yourself sharing your valuable specialized knowledge but not getting paid for it
- churning out detailed quotations that don't get acted on
- chasing prospects who hide after you send them your quote
- arguing with prospects about price after they see your quote

are all covering up this one problem. You've been tiring yourself out trying to fight all of these symptoms...because they are phantoms. The real culprit is not “outside”; it's in you. And we're going to unmask this problem—and show you how to fix it.

Here it is:

You have the wrong focus when you talk to prospects.

I'll say it again: when you talk to prospects, you are focusing on the wrong thing.

You are trying to sell everyone you talk to.

And that is killing your chances of getting the order.

Let me explain in detail.

Having worked with thousands of coaches, trainers, and small business owners, I can tell you that almost all of them, like you, are thinking about only two possible things when they start talking to a prospect.

ONE: Many people want to get along with and please others (and thinking this will help you make the sale).

TWO: Many people want to show how much they know about a particular subject (and thinking this will help you make the sale).

When you walk into a conversation with a prospect having either of these as your focus, your chances of making the sale automatically plummet.

But these are the two things nearly all coaches and trainers are thinking about when they begin an interaction with a prospect.

It's not your fault. Nobody ever told you what to do in this situation. So you go to your comfort zone and behave accordingly.

Let me say that again: *whatever your comfort zone is for behaving with other people—any people—has been how you go about talking to prospective customers.*

And, unfortunately, that has been a poor idea.

Let's look at why.

Why Wanting To Please Others Hurts Your Sales

When you want to get along with and please others, there's a big factor impacting the conversation called the "Need for Approval." You're looking for approval from the other person. So you will say and do things engineered to produce this effect.

Why is this bad in the context of selling?

Need for Approval causes lousy results in selling because you end up giving away too much to your prospect. In wanting to be helpful, you provide your specialized knowledge for nothing in return. The prospect gets a free education from you. All they have to do is keep asking questions, and you continue pouring out the knowledge. How much time are you investing in conversations like these?

Need for Approval can make you want to let the other person lead the conversation. You don't want to be forceful. So you let them ask all the questions and pick the direction, expecting they'll tell you what they want. Then you can respond. What's the problem with this? Again, you're giving away your specialized knowledge. You're not uncovering anything about their true reason for wanting to buy, or how they're picking who to buy from.

When a prospect gets your specialized knowledge from you free for the asking, do

they have to pay you for it?

Of course not. That even sounds silly.

But isn't that what they're supposed to pay you for?

Can you see how Need for Approval kills your chances of making the sale and getting the order—not to mention producing a bunch of those phantom symptoms that keep you tired out, poor and running around?

Why Wanting To Show Your Expertise Is Bad for Your Sales

When you want to show how much you know about a particular subject, you are also demonstrating Need for Approval. However, you're doing it from a different angle. There are three main reasons why you want to show off your specialized knowledge:

- to dominate
- to impress & overbear
- to learn technical requirements for implementation of the solution.

Let's look in detail at each.

Some people are naturally dominant. You may be. By bringing out the big gun of your specialized knowledge, your intention in a sales conversation is to blow your prospect out of the water with the power of your technical expertise. KA-POW! "Got 'em. Now they'll buy from me."

You may not be dominant. But you may believe that impressing your prospect with the specialized knowledge you've assembled will surely overbear them. Tell them what you know, lay out your expertise in front of them like a smooth bazaar vendor, and they'll be impressed enough to buy. Can you see Need for Approval at work here again?

Another very common possibility is you switch into Coach Mode. You ask the prospect for answers to What Needs to Be Done? so that you can start answering for yourself How Do I Implement the Solution? The problem here is you're bringing out your specialized knowledge too early again. You aren't getting paid for solving the

problem. Your prospect gets the advantage of hearing everything that needs to be done and how to do it without ever having to pay for it.

The Two Reasons Selling Has Been Tough For You Until Now

Why does this happen?

First, you. Your Need for Approval causes you, one way or the other, to gush out specialized knowledge and become an unpaid coach.

Second, the prospect. You can't blame them. They have, like you, been ripped off before by bad salespeople. So they don't tell you the truth about what's going on in their situation. They tell you a little—just enough for you to open up and start giving them the free education.

Now let's look behind the scenes at the next step: what's really going on in the prospect's mind. When you understand this, you'll finally know why they behave the way they do.

Recall prospects—you and I, too, when we're prospects—are cautious. And they want as much as they can get for free. After all, why not?

So when they talk to you, they will pretend to be very interested in having *you* do their project. They will make every noise and give every indication they can that *you* are their dancing partner...so they can get that free information.

And what do you do? Your preferences, your comfort zone, tell you to play right along with it! Your Need for Approval kicks in, and you start spewing specialized knowledge left and right. Trying to get them to like you. Trying to overbear them with your expertise. Trying to figure out what you'll need to fulfill their order...before you have it.

To Hell With Trying.

Where has *trying* gotten you?

Chasing prospects.

Giving away valuable information.

Becoming an unpaid—and unhired—coach.

So if you're not going to try anymore, not chase prospects, not try to impress people with how much you know, or try to figure out how to get their project done before they're paying you to do it...what are you going to do?

Many people go after “Closing” techniques in this situation. This is wrong. The problem is caused much earlier in the process, and closing happens at the end. Besides, the best closing techniques in the universe won't have any effect on a bad prospect. You'll see exactly what I mean in the next section.

The Instant Change In Focus That Easily Brings You Sales

Here's the single thing you're going to change in your focus. It is going to make your selling life so much easier.

Instead of trying to get the approval of other people or worry about implementation issues, we're going to FILTER.

The secret to success in selling is to FILTER prospects *before* you spend a lot of time with them, give them a quote, or worry about how to fulfill the requirements of their project.

This is called “Qualifying.”

Great salespeople, including great coaches and trainers, qualify their prospects first. This happens right up front in their sales process. They make sure the person they're talking to is the right kind of individual to be buying from them. Or not.

Then they sell later...if the prospect is the right Fit.

You should not be talking to prospects about matters requiring technical expertise until after you have been paid to do so.

When you qualify prospects from now on, the sole thing you are interested in finding out is:

Does this prospect have a problem worthy of you solving it?

That's it. This is your new focus, and it will lead you to success if you use it as your one and only purpose in talking with prospects. It, not closing techniques or anything else, is where 100% of your attention should be in selling.

Built into this question are a number of other key ideas.

We can boil these down into just a few, which are easy to remember. Does the prospect:

- have a *need* for what I offer?
- have the *budget* to work with me?
- have a *personality* I can work with?

If you're worrying about implementation, remember that some or all of the work can always be outsourced. You can always find expert help to supplement what you do. As long as it's covered by the project's budget, you're fine.

The answers to these questions can be quickly discovered with simple, direct, unassuming questions.

If a prospect has no need for what you offer, why would you try to sell them something?

If a prospect does not have a problem big enough to demand the budget you require to solve it, why would you try to sell them something?

If a prospect does not have a personality you can work with—ie. they are hard to get along with, argue with you about every move, have trouble controlling their anger, or expect you to respond to their emails in the middle of the night—why would you try to sell them something?

These are the questions you need to answer to keep your focus and before you ever even think of giving the prospect a quote.

And they will keep you out of a heap of trouble.

If you've had the “Client From Hell,” you'll know exactly what I mean.

If not...consider what answering these questions before you get into any kind of technical discussion will do for you and your selling success:

- If a prospect has no need for your services, you won't waste time explaining what you do
- If a prospect's problem is too small to command your attention, you won't waste time finding out about how to fix it
- If a prospect has a personality problem, you won't get involved with someone who will treat you badly.

Let's look at something else. The typical coach and trainer is quick to pop out a detailed quotation and send it on over to an unqualified prospect. In fact, they're often proud about the speed. But all they are doing—all you've been doing—is spinning their wheels.

And when you churn out a quote, you're giving the prospect ammunition they can and will use against you and the other vendors they're talking to.

It's critical that you understand this. As soon as you give the prospect your quote, they're matching it up in a table, mental or written down, with all the other quotes they received. Vendors across the top. Features down the side. Prices at the bottom.

Who do they get the most from for the cheapest price.

And now they can call vendors back and say, “Well, Company Y is giving me all this for \$X. What are *you* going to do about it?”

After all, you want their business.

Don't you?

If you qualified well, you would know before you ever thought about sending a quote over whether you wanted their business or not.

Can you see the power this new focus gives you?

Instead of trying to make the sale, you're ensuring you are only spending your effort

upon those prospects who are a great fit for you. And you are always ready to say, “Sorry, it's just not a fit.” Getting rid of prospects early who are not a fit is the filtering we're focused on here—we only want to spend our energy on prospects who are a good fit.

Got it?

Questions to Ask to Qualify Effectively

Now that you know the three things you must find out to discover whether a prospect is a good fit to work with or not, I'm sure you have begun thinking about what questions to ask to accomplish this. Here are some key questions to help you:

Why do you think someone like me can help you with your project? (Do they know the Need they have?)

Have you spoken with anyone else about your project? What have you learned? (Now you know what you're up against)

In the research you've done so far, what did you find out? (They may not have done much research, though they'll often say they have...and you'll find out things like budget and service expectations or lack thereof)

What happens if you do nothing? (How serious are they about fixing the problem?)

How long have you had this problem? (If they've had it for years, why are they approaching you now?)

What are you looking for in the person who takes care of this project for you, that would really stand out? (What is their buying criteria? How are they making their decision?)

Is there anyone else who's involved in making this kind of decision, who we should have in the conversation with us? (Prospects will pretend to be the sole decision maker, but you can bet there's at least one other person they bounce ideas off of—and you want to know their preferences.)

You want to find out:

- What does this prospect know
- How much are they planning to spend
- What do they value in a service provider like me
- How many competitors are they talking to? What are you up against?
- How serious are they about solving their problem?
- Are they someone you want to work with?

Obstacles to Using the FILTER And How to Overcome Them

I can't be here in person with you right now, but a lot of people have obstacles that stop them from making and implementing this mental change in focus. I've written down several of these obstacles and how to deal with them.

Remember, your objective is to stop wasting time pursuing prospects who never buy. You want to feel and be in control of your business, not chasing prospective customers. You want to be making sales, and the *right* sales, so you have the money and types of projects under your belt you want to have.

That's WHY you need to follow through and take action.

To do this, you need to demystify why prospects behave the way they do...and why you behave the way you do. Filtering, qualifying, and having this as your sole purpose in conversations with prospects, is the single critical change you must make.

But your self-image may cause resistance to this change.

It's easy to fall into old habits.

You try this for a day, but discover you're back in your comfort zone, asking the same old questions about project implementation. Or catch yourself trying to impress someone with your technical knowledge.

BUZZ! Fail.

When you talk to a prospect, you have only one goal: to find out whether this prospect has a problem worthy of your attention to solve.

If the problem isn't a fit with your skillset, it's not worthy of your attention.

If the problem isn't financially large enough to warrant a fee paying you sufficiently for your effort, it's not worthy of your attention.

If the prospect behaves badly and will treat you poorly, it's not worthy of your attention.

First, put URGENCY into your qualifying.

Urgency = Focus.

Urgency means you are going to qualify this prospect as quickly as you can. In or Out, doesn't matter which. As long as you talk to enough people and are filtering quickly, you will make sales—and *good* sales.

Make it your goal to qualify prospects within 10 minutes, to start. After a month, improve your goal to qualifying within 5 minutes.

Yes, you can do this. Because just one clear indicator that it's Not A Fit means they're Out. All you need is one. You can get one critical disqualification within a few minutes of talking with a prospect, can't you? And I've given you three easy-to-understand categories for Fit: Need, Budget and Personality.

Strike One, You're Out.

Second, watch your own behavior. When you feel like, or find yourself, going into 'Coach Mode' and giving away expertise in response to your prospect's questions, ask instead:

"Ms. Prospect, what you're asking me for is what I do for my clients. Are you saying you'd like to become a client?"

This will instantly smoke out the tire-kickers and free education-seekers.
Alternative, you could say:

"Mr. Prospect, what you're asking me to tell you about is what I do for my clients. Here's how I work." And then list your deposit or price to be received first, upon the receipt of which you will begin the work...answering questions, conducting your needs interview. "I can send you an invoice through Paypal right now to get us started. What's your Paypal email address?"

If you don't want to use Paypal, substitute whatever payment process you want to use.

Stop giving your expertise away for free, and wasting time with prospects you have not qualified.

BONUS IMPLEMENTATION METHOD

The Monkey's Paw

Did you know you can charge for your proposals? You can, and this is also the very best way to protect yourself from giving away a free education.

The name comes from when big ships tie up in port. Nobody could throw the huge lines down from the deck to the dock, so they attach a thinner line to it and throw that. The thin line is called the Monkey's Paw.

Once the dockhand catches it, they can use it to haul the big line in.

Using this in sales, the prospect pays you for your expertise.

“Mr. Prospect, here's how I work. I can put together a detailed plan for you on how to solve the problem. The investment, which is minimal, for this plan is \$X. We'll go over it and I'll make sure you understand everything. Then you have a choice. You own the plan. You can throw it away, let it sit on the shelf, implement it with someone else, or have me carry out the work to get the job done. That's up to you. Would you like to get started?”

The price for the Monkey's Paw is whatever you want; I usually price it at 10-20% of the full implementation.

Then they own the plan. They can do whatever they want with it, and you won't be annoyed, because you were paid.

If they use you, deduct the initial investment from the grand total. This is an extremely effective qualifying mechanism: if a store owner cannot afford a \$300 plan, can they afford the full solution? No wasted time for anybody.

You must get into the habit of, and used to, a simple alteration of the order of the steps you have been taking to make sales.

The one critical change you must make so that selling will be so much easier for you is this: **Make your focus when talking to prospects to be all about QUALIFYING.**

No more free education giveaways.

No more unpaid consulting.

No more disappearing prospects, leaving you in bewilderment.

No more generating quotes that are only used as negotiation tools.

No more bad clients.

For more information about this approach to selling, watch this Free video:

<http://www.jasonkanigan.com/free>

It's purely educational; no offer is made at the conclusion.

You can also follow my Free sales tips blog at <http://www.salestactics.org>

If you want to tell me how your selling has become much more effective with the information in this free report, or if you want to talk with me about your specific situation, email me at jason@jasonkanigan.com



Happy Selling

Jason

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