



Best Practices for Companies Moving to the Next Level

June 10, 2009

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7 Synergies

for Business Success

1. Grow from the inside out
2. Develop a brand promise and live it daily
3. Put people first.
4. Hire leaders and managers
5. Values validate valuation
6. Lead to create and maintain wealth
7. Monitor, monitor, monitor ... whatever you measure will improve.

And the intangible ... the quality of the CEO is directly proportional to the quality of the company.

Wondering how you stack up on these issues? [Take our Growth Assessment](#) to find out!

Check out the SmartGrowth [Recommended Reading List](#).

Order NOW! Get Pam Watson Korbel's book *More Money, Less Work, More Fun* and face your business challenges!

SmartGrowth provides business coaching for CEOs

Double Your Profits in 6 Months by Bob Fifer - Join us Monday, June 15, 12:05 to 1 pm for this book discussion through the Executive Stimulus Plan: A Book Club for Fast Growth Executives. Stay in your office and just call into 1-712-432-0080 and use participant code 855905#. The program will be valuable even if you have not read the book as we will review Fifer's 76 ideas to grow profit. [Click here for all the details.](#)

See how your business stacks up to other fast growth companies. Assess your business and then participate in the 7 Synergies of Business Success teleseminar on Monday, June 22, 12:05 - 1pm. First go to the 7 Synergies assessment to complete the 32 questions to see how your business stacks up. Then on June 22, stay in your office and just call into -712-432-0080 and use participant code 855905#.

This program will tell you how your firm compares to other growth companies on each of the 7 Synergies and tell you where to focus your attention. Be sure to take the assessment by June 18 so that you can get your report back by June 22. (Use June 22 as your group code on the assessment.) [Click here for the details.](#)

How does emotional intelligence drive your business valuation? Summer is a great time to work on yourself and build your team. Join SmartGrowth's special summer program to help fast growth firms improve their valuation by increasing their emotional intelligence. [Learn more about emotional intelligence and this program here.](#)

Top 9 Reasons Salespeople Fail

By Colleen Stanley

Guest article from our [Team 100](#) partner

David Letterman has his "Top Ten List." Stephen Covey

and executives, strategy facilitation, and management development training.

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has "Seven Habits" and John Maxwell has his "Twenty-One Laws." Here are my "Top Nine Principles for Success or Failure in Sales."

Sales Success Principles:

1. Ask for Help

Average producers are not good at asking for help. This may stem from lack of confidence in not wanting to be transparent about a weakness in their selling process. Lack of asking for help may also come from not being committed to doing what it takes to succeed. If you ask for advice, people expect you to execute on the advice. Top producers, on the other hand, are confident and have no problem admitting they are not perfect. They are also committed to do what it takes to become excellent in their profession. Top producers seek out advisors and mentors. I have also noticed they are the best students during a sales training course. They bring case studies for review or call for extra coaching. Top producers understand that no one gets great by themselves.

2. Sales Activity

When I first entered the sales training profession, I had a sales coach. The first question asked during our weekly coaching sessions was, "Tell me about your sales activity plan." At first, I found this question puzzling. I was in the sale guru business. Wasn't he supposed to ask me about my ability to find "pain" on a call or uncover corporate decision making process? This wise coach understood that the sales training business is no different than any other business. If my sales activity plan didn't lead me to prospects, it didn't matter how good my selling or training skills were....no one would ever know! Top revenue producers understand that a consistent sales activity plan is the key to finding new clients and driving revenue.

3. Eliminate Excuses

Poor producers spend most of their time discussing excuses that prevent them from making their sales goal; i.e. increased competition, problems with operations issues at the company, or the current market. Top producers invest most of their time discussing how to achieve results, how to beat increased competition, ways to improve/work around operations issues, and how to sell regardless of economic issues. Top producers live by the mantra, "We are judged only by results, not by excuses."

4. Lose Your Mediocre Friends

Remember your mom saying, "Tell me who your friends are and I will tell you what you are like." (Okay, so maybe it was just my mother.) This quote is absolutely true in sales. Tell me who you "hang" with and I will tell you what you are like. Mediocre performers like to "hang" with other mediocre performers. The bar for success is low and

membership criteria is easy....expect and accept less. The weekly agenda for meetings is always predictable and preset: Bring one new excuse for discussion.

5. Get Rid of Arrogance

A top producer that has achieved the "top of the hill" status can quickly move to the bottom of the hill because of arrogance. Arrogant individuals stop learning because, after all, they are the best in the business. What can they possibly learn after 20 years in the profession? The real issue is that young, hungry, competitors haven't caught the disease of arrogance. The competition continues to learn, change and grow. The result is a new king or queen of the hill looking down at a stunned, retired past king or queen.

6. Get Focused

A poor producer can work very hard. Lack of sales isn't from lack of effort; it's that the effort is focused on the wrong prospect, activity and partnerships. Top producers have clearly identified their ideal client and have built a strategy around meeting, influencing, and creating value for that specific client. They are very clear on who they will sell and what they will sell. Top producers walk away from prospects that don't fit their ideal profile; leaving them more time to walk towards best fit clients. They leave the price shopping prospects to their competitors who get to invest all their time in writing proposals that go nowhere.

7. Manage Your Time

Top producers are good at calendaring. They set aside very specific times each week for business development (prospecting calls, client retention calls, calls updating referral partners, etc.). Top producers have discipline and don't allow outside distractions to deter them from their most important appointment - the appointment with themselves and working their plan.

8. Invest in Yourself

Top producers don't wait for someone else to make them good (I.e. I will only attend a sales training course if the company is picking up the tab). I am reminded of a client, "Jill," who came to me seven years ago. She was an administrative assistant desiring to enter the sales profession. Her current employer would not offer her a sales position because they just didn't think an administrative assistant could sell. Jill believed she had the ability to be very good in sales and invested her own time and money in sales training. She eventually applied for a sales position at another firm and became the number one salesperson at the new firm. (By the way, Jill also practiced all of the success principles listed above.) Jill did not wait to get good based on someone else's beliefs or dollars.

9. Get Going

Are you getting ready to get ready? Listen up: Perfection is highly overrated. While you are waiting to get all the research done on a prospect, perfecting your technique, or redoing your PowerPoint one last time, the salesperson that is showing up is getting the deal. Strive for perfection, but don't wait on perfection.

About the Author

Colleen Stanley is president of SalesLeadership Inc., a business development consulting firm specializing in sales and sales management training. The company provides programs in prospecting, referral strategies, consultative sales training, sales management training, and hiring/selection. She is also the author of "Growing Great Sales Teams: Lessons from the Cornfield." Reach Colleen at 303.708.1128 or visit www.salesleadershipdevelopment.com.

More money, less work, more fun!

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