



Are you a Cultivator or a Stalker?



It turns out the vast majority of us are connected in one way, shape or form to over 5 million folks. That's a lot of Christmas cards. (Dunbar's law to the third power)

The point is as we relate this little known calculation to business, the "holy grail" of selling is the referral; just ask one of the 5 million people you know. It opens more doors and sells more product than any other technique. Forget cold calling.

By the way, if your sales manager suggests that you'd better crank up the cold calling if you'd like to keep your sales station with International Widget Inc., the likelihood that he or she has ever been a "Sales Star" is slim to none. Yes, sir I'm telling you right here and now, cold calling and collecting a gazillion cards at the next meet and greet or trade show is not how you will place yourself in the top ten. And that sales manager has probably not read a single new sales offering from the best minds in the business since the turn of the millennium. Unless they're the exception, sales managers are all about accountability and covering their own, ah.... station. Not you of course.

If you're racking up the numbers no one is going to bother you. Except maybe some colleagues who are tempted to key your new BMW or at the very least deflate your Michelins for making them look like losers.

The truth is being a top sales pro requires you to demonstrate an air of confidence in yourself and your product. By cold calling it's obvious you need the prospects business.

People, who are successful in creating a "buying climate or the will to buy" as opposed to trying to sell something, do so by demonstrating their success and giving the perception that they are not desperate for sales; which automatically makes prospects want to do business with them. In many cases the act of cold calling gives the impression that you are needy or desperate and will do anything to scrape up some business. Would you buy from you?

Look, I'm not saying that cold calling is worthless. In many cases it is a necessary evil. (Like keeping your job) What I am saying is this; creating a "will to buy" is far superior and often more successful than the remote chance that some poor manager you cold called will buy something from you. Don't believe it?

Think about this.

You're buried under a pile of work, you're falling behind on a major project, your wife calls to say the joint meeting with the therapist has been moved to 3PM when you get a call from a dental group that says, "hello this is Dr. Winston Paine's office, we'd like to set up a time when you might be available to come in for an inspection so that we might determine if you have any problems we could treat should you decide to become a patient".

Sounds outrageous; but that's how many prospects feel when they get a cold call from you. It's called interruptive marketing.

The point is this; a qualified buyer or referral will always be far more valuable than leads found by cold calling.

So how do I create the "will to buy"?

Let's start with getting a referral from a friend, acquaintance or even better one of your ecstatic customers.

More often than not we take for granted the customer that has been a loyal and happy recipient of your product or service. We spend more time stalking the new elusive prospect and not nearly enough cultivating the ones we have.

You may be surprised at what works best in getting the referral from one of your clients.

Now you may think simply because you have great rapport with your client that they would be willing to put their reputation on the line for you by sending you to one of their friends.

Ask yourself this.

How eager am I to refer one of my valued customers to another sales or business rep?

Just what would it take for you to give an acquaintance a valued referral?

Here's one idea that will produce a positive result.

There is something known as the "rule of reciprocity" that is a very powerful influencer.

Since the beginning of civilization we have been developing this sort of unspoken rule. It goes like this; if I do you a favour, you feel obliged to return or reciprocate the favour. It may be as simple as the Christmas card exchange.

It could be of similar value or more; we have a tendency to over-compensate a favour particularly if it catches us off guard.

Want your clients to give you a referral?

Send them a referral first. In fact, take the referral and introduce them to your client over coffee or lunch. Then pick up the tab. The "rule of reciprocity" will begin to kick in.

Don't confuse sending a Christmas gift with introducing a referral it will not have the same effect.

Incidentally if your situation at Widget Inc. depends of how many cold calls you make rather than how many sales you rack up, guess you better get a few in the funnel buckaroo, but if the reverse is true, get ready to close sales.