



THE SALES NAVIGATOR

A quarterly sales guide from EWC Consultants

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www.ewcconsultants.com

From Thomas Ellis

As I reflect on what made my sales organizations successful over the years, I realize that the key to success was simply closing more sales. I know it sounds simple, but getting a client or customer to sign on the dotted line gets harder every day.

So, in this issue of The Sales Navigator, I'd like to share with you five important steps to sealing the deal. As you review each step, you will find that these are things you probably already know. However, I challenge you to ask yourself if you consistently approach each closing opportunity in a strategic manner that brings you success every time.



The Art of B2B Closing

The days of closing a deal on a wink and a handshake are long gone. Business-to-business sales are more complicated, buyers are savvier, and budgets are tighter, making it more time-consuming and laborious to get to the closing table. Fact is, today's buyers have greater access to product information and they use it to make better purchasing decisions.

Besides that, competition is stiff! Although your "widget" is good, there is always someone who claims that his "widget" is better. And, unfortunately, the two of you are trying to sell the same "widget" to the same "buyer."

Well, here are five steps that can help you seal the deal:

1. Know Your Prospect. The more you understand about your prospects and the company they represent, the stronger you can position your product/service as a viable alternative to solving their business needs, thus creating a strong value proposition.

2. Qualify Upfront. Prepare a set of qualifying questions in the cold calling process to quickly determine if this is

a prospect or a suspect. It is critical that you get the answers to these questions upfront so you can determine which sales strategy to use in the first face-to-face meeting.

Here are some things you'd want to know upfront:

- Who makes the decision (purchasing decision or whatever is relevant to you) for the company?
- Who are the key players and how do they influence the decision?
- When is the prospect planning to make a decision?
- What criteria will the prospect use to determine if a product or service provider is right for his/her company?
- Does the prospect have the budget to purchase what you are selling?

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Are Your Sales Reps Up for the Challenge?

It is true that we're witnessing the most competitive business environment in our nation's economic history. The days of closing a deal on a wink and a handshake are long gone. Business to business purchasing is more complicated, buyers are savvier, and budgets are tighter, making it more time-consuming and laborious to get to the closing table. Fact is, today buyers have greater access to product information and they use it to make better purchasing decisions.

Besides that, competition is stiff! Although your "widget" is good, there is always someone who claims that his "widget" is better. And, unfortunately, the two of you are trying to sell the same "widget" to the same "buyer."

So, how do you overcome these challenges? You take your sales team through ADAPT EWC's unique training methodology. ADAPT identifies institutional challenges that hamper sales success, walks corporate leaders through a successful sales planning process, and exposes sales professionals to training experiences that build the skills and confidence they need to succeed.

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3. Become an Industry Expert. In today's sales environment successful sales professionals are viewed as a trusted consultants. Top sales people spend time learning all about their competition and are well versed on industry trends. This is important because when prospects ask questions about your competitors or industry developments, you can respond with industry knowledge that they should be doing business with you.

4. Develop a Strong Sense of Empathy. This is one of my favorite steps to closing sales. Top sales professionals know that listening skills are the key to developing empathy for client needs. They ask open-ended questions at the beginning of the sales process, which allows prospects to do most of the talking. If you want to win over prospects, listen to them! The information you gain from listening can get you closer to the closing table.

5. Maintain a Strong Sense of Accountability. Top sales professionals are accountable to themselves and the customers they represent.

Taking responsibility sends a strong message that you can be trusted. When your client experiences an issue or problem, get involved immediately and work diligently until the customer is satisfied.

So, you now have five steps to help you close more sales. Go make it happen!

Thomas Ellis

President,
EWC Consultants

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