Expert Tips & Tactics

Selling: A QUIC Response

Recently, I gave a presentation at our Toastmaster's club from the Professional Speaker manual. The object of the talk was to give a Sales Staff Training Seminar to the audience and to come up with some sort of sales model. Interestingly enough, the marketing manager at my business and I had been having a working lunch only the day before, to discuss 'benefits and needs' in our marketing and recruitment strategies.

So, if you will indulge me, and at the risk of overdoing a subject about which you hear in almost business seminar, I'd like to share some thoughts with you that have crystallized for me over the last few years. I openly apologize in advance to the giants like Jay Abraham, Conrad Levinson and Brian Tracy upon whose shoulders I stand to see my marketing and selling world.

Going back to my Toastmaster's talk, I was supposed to come up with some sort of catchy training tool that I could explain to the audience. I came up with a QUIC answer:

Q for Qualifying

U for Understanding

I for Informing

C for Closing.

I am going to begin from the position that a client has walked through your business and is engaged in a dialog. We are assuming that you have successfully negotiated the first major hurdle: Some sort of marketing tool has attracted a client to your door. You have a hot prospect standing in front of you…now what?

Regardless of what you know about the incoming client you must start at the beginning of the QUIC process. A face-to-face encounter will change what both you and the client think you know from your marketing tool.

For the purposes of this discussion, I need you to start from the perspective that everything that you do in your business, from the pristine cleanliness of the restroom, to the color of the walls, the types of pictures and posters, the health of your potted plants, the smell of the place and the layout of your office is a marketing statement. In the words of Brian Tracy ‘Everything counts, nothing is neutral.’

Once a client has walked into your business everything that they see, hear, smell and feel will have some impact upon the marketing potential of the next few minutes. Whether or not the client stays or leaves in the next few *seconds*, however, will be something over which you have no immediate control.

Several years ago, one of my students told me something that has stayed in my mind ever since. He said that the first time he walked through the door, he saw a class in progress, formed an opinion and left. It was not until almost two years later that he came back for a second look and stayed.

There are two points here: 1. Neither myself, nor another instructor, nor the Program Manager got a chance to interact with the potential client. He wasn’t there for long enough. The whole event was finished in a matter of seconds. 2. Some ‘*thing*’ he saw, smelled, touched or felt had put him off. Maybe it was that he came from a different style of karate and walked in on a grappling class, the specific ‘*thing*’ doesn’t matter. The impact was *immediate* and negative. The corollary to these outcomes was that I had no immediate control of the event as it transpired, it happened too quickly. Having said that, however, something we did left an impression because he came back much later and stayed with me for seven years, until he moved to another town.

So using this example as a diving board into our QUIC solution, let’s look at how it works.

First, Q for **Qualify**. There are two aspects to qualifying a client: Motivation and Ability. Is your client *motivated* **and** *able* to invest his or her hard-earned resources of time and money in your enterprise?

It is part of your responsibility to fan the fires of motivation during the initial contact; after all, the client would not have come to see you if there were not some modicum of interest in your business.

But what can you do about the ability of your client to part with his or her resources?

It is possible for your client to have challenges to either timing or pricing. Maybe your client is highly motivated but is controlled by outside factors and simply cannot purchase your products even though they fall within an acceptable price range. In this instance the motivation is there, but the ability is apparently not.

Here is where flexibility, adaptability, and insight come into play and where negotiation begins.

Enter U for **Understanding**. Part of your job in the enrollment conference is to truly listen to your client. You are an itch scratcher, a problem solver and a need filler, but first you need know where your client itches. Your client came to you because of two things: 1. He or she has a need or a frustration, and 2. has entertained the possibility that you might form part of the solution.

These two conditions create an opportunity.

So now you need to truly, deeply understand the needs and frustrations that make your client itch. Don’t assume. Don’t work from your perception of what you think they want…find out. Engage. Care. Suspend judgment and learn. **LISTEN**. Clarify what you do not understand. Itches are specific things, therefore the needs and frustrations are specific to your client. It behooves you then, to find out exactly what they are.

Don’t simply start scratching the imagined itch in an effort to help; it will be frustrating to both you and the client and possibly annoying to the client. Imagine for a moment how satisfying it is to have an itch you can’t reach and then have someone find exactly the right spot and scratch it for you on the first attempt.

Which of course, leads us to I for **Inform**. Once you know the needs of the client, you are in a position to sell the benefits of your program insofar as they address the needs of your client. Moreover, you can surgically strike the need of your client with the exact benefit that he or she is looking for, rather than applying the shotgun approach of trotting out all the benefits, whether or not they apply.

Generate benefits lists for the different types of clients you serve and the constituencies that they represent. What is the demographic do you serve? If you know the benefits of your business for each type of client you serve, you are in a position to address the specific needs of individual clients.

So in our discussion, imagine that you have a motivated, able client, with whom you share a common understanding of needs and to whom you have positioned your program as the best answer he or she will ever find as a solution to his or her challenges.

This is the time for objection resolution. Objections are merely clarification and reassurance seekers. Overcome each objection artfully and sincerely and move to C for **Close**.

In the close you and the client enter into roles in which you each become part of a symbiotic partnership. You give the client what he or she needs on an ongoing and sustainable basis. The clients helps you to keep your business afloat, and, if you are fortunate enough to have your eyes open…might even teach you a thing or two along the way.

Make no mistake: The satisfying a client is a negotiation that should lead to a mutually beneficial relationship that lasts for years. It should be a relationship that evolves and matures over time and one in which both parties are sensitive to the changes that will occur over time.

It’s all about synergy.

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