**Sales Management - Top 5 Things Required for a Successful Sales Call**

In today's hyper competitive market, every sales call requires a sales person to bring their "A" game. Recent studies show that 9 out of 10 prospecting sales calls fail to capture a prospective client's attention. An ineffective first call results into a lost opportunity to create trust and value and limits the desire to do business with the sales person's firm.

According to prospects, their greatest frustration is when a sales person is quick to pitch a product without understanding their need. Canned pitches, limited product knowledge and inability to solve a client's problem are the leading reasons sales people are having difficulty converting a prospect into a client.

At InStrategy Group, while we believe sales is the hardest job anyone can have, it is time for organizations to get back to basics in their coaching and mentoring of their sales people to ensure better outcomes. With this in mind, we’ve outlined the ***Top 5 Things Required for a Successful Sales Call****:*

1. **Prepare for the meeting:**
* **Review the firm's web site**
* **Profile the firm based on size, niches, management, competitors**
* **Determine potential product and service synergies**
* **Come prepared with questions to better understand:**
	+ **how they are positioned competitively**
	+ **who is trying to take their customer-base**
	+ **how are they out-performing the competition**
	+ **Success measures and performance**
1. **Arrive on time for the meeting**
2. **Allow the client to:**
* **tell their story**
* **describe their needs**
* **explain their business requirements, goals and objectives**
1. **Dig deeper - Ask open ending or clarifying questions to ensure a full understanding:**
* **listen to both what is being said and what is not. Often times, body language
or facial expression can tell you far more than the words being spoken.**
* **tailor discussion points around product and service offerings based on interest
and/or solutions to issues**
1. **Follow up and confirm discussion points, next steps and referrals to other people within their organization agreed upon to during the meeting**

While many sales folks might say these are "Business 101" techniques, the reality is they do not apply these principles routinely. In fact, many have become complacent in their sales discipline and rely on their firm's name or brand to do their selling for them. Conversely, those folks lose out to sales people who are well prepared and knowledgeable as they are perceived as being engaged, can be trusted and can contribute to long-term needs of the prospect.

One of the greatest things a sales person can do to improve their sales call performance ratios is to know, in advance, their "elevator pitch" for that client. They should always anticipate the "What if" scenario e.g., What if the client tells them they have 3 minutes to explain their value proposition? If they can't, then they are not prepared for the meeting in the first place. Surveys continue to show that if a sales person cannot establish a meaningful value proposition in the mind of the prospect within the first few minutes of a meeting, then it is a foregone conclusion you are just wasting their time. **Simply put - No impact. No sale.**

For more information on *Sales Management tune-ups*, visit us at www.[instrategygroup.com](http://instrategygroup.com/) or call us at 704.843.3207.