

## ISAG, DSAG and RESAG

Something quite remarkable happened last Friday. One of my sales coaching clients sent out an introductory email at 12:03 PM. Before he'd even finished recording that activity in his CRM, a response arrived, time-stamped 12:04 PM. It said: "Yes, I would like to meet with you. I'm having problems with my printer, need help NOW!"

I call that ISAG – Instant Sales Activity Gratification – and I can tell you from experience that it almost never happens. In fact, it happens so rarely that most printing salespeople think it's only a rumor! But yes, every once in a great while, a salesperson arrives at exactly the right place at exactly the right time.

### Delayed Gratification

It's far more common to experience DSAG – Delayed Sales Activity Gratification. In other words, a positive result that takes its own sweet time. It's an unavoidable fact that most buying decisions happen on the buyers timetable, not the seller's. Think about your own buying decisions, especially those that involve a change to the *status quo*. Another of my clients has been considering changing ISPs – for seven months! He knows he should make a change, and he thinks he's found a better provider, but he hasn't signed the contract. Can you imagine how frustrated the salesperson for the ISP must be?

But wait, it turns out that the salesperson hasn't done much in terms of follow-up since drafting the contract. He calls every month and asks the same question: "Are you ready to move forward?" My client answers: "No." The salesperson says: "I'll try again in a month."

I think most salespeople would agree that it's a mistake to push too hard. I hope *you* will agree that it's also a mistake to not push at all. Here's one of the fundamental principles I teach: *The decision about whether to buy from you or not is way too important to leave it up to them* – in other words, the person or people you're selling to. Here's another fundamental principle: *The are no shortcuts in selling, but there are accelerators*.

### Reasonable Expectations

That takes us to the third acronym for today: RESAG, which stands for a Reasonable Expectation of Sales Activity Gratification. RESAG is different from DSAG because it's *always* based on follow-up. DSAG is sometimes the result, even with appropriate follow-up, but as noted, sometimes DSAG comes when it comes, just because it's allowed to. And without appropriate follow-up, DSAG all too often turns into NOSAG.

Now, let's talk about *appropriate*. That, and *accelerator*, are really the key words for today. Let's go back to my client and his ISP situation. I'm sure you'll agree that the salesperson's strategy isn't working. The prospect (my client) has a need. The salesperson has proposed his solution. The fact of the matter is that my client has accepted the solution, he just hasn't signed the contract! The salesperson's specific challenge is to overcome the *inertia* of the situation.

It was never reasonable to expect that my client would sign the contract immediately. But it would have been reasonable to expect a decision within a few weeks, with the right kind of questioning and follow-up. Here are four questions I would have asked after presenting my proposal:

- Are you ready to move forward?
- Have I at least convinced you that I have the solution to your problem?
- Beyond that, what's keeping you from saying 'yes' to me today?
- If you were me, what would you do next in terms of convincing and follow-up?

The person who knows exactly what it will take to make the sale is usually the buyer, not the seller. *Reasonable expectations* starts with the understanding that it might take some time, and continues with an *accelerator* strategy that addresses the real obstacles and/or objections.

Sales Activity Gratification is always the goal. *Instant* is still unlikely. But I think you'll agree that sooner is better than later, for all concerned.