
Where Do You Want Your Sales Career To Take You?

by BILL BROOKS

What does it really take to be successful in sales? After a quarter of a century selling, managing salespeople, training salespeople, and delivering speeches and sessions to sales organizations, I have reached what appears to be a complex, but could be a surprisingly simple answer. And here it is.

First coined by Napoleon Hill in his early 20th century classic, *Think and Grow Rich*, it is simply the capacity to have such a definite purpose for what you want to achieve in life that you will not be denied the benefits, values and outcomes that this goal can provide you. The hard part? First determining what it is that you really want and then having the discipline and tenacity to stay on course regardless of the obstacles, roadblocks, setbacks or temptations that come your way.

But here is even more difficulty. Sometimes we make decisions that cause us to face serious difficulties

in maintaining our velocity. It might be a decision regarding a relationship, job or circumstance that tends to advert us. Perhaps it is a decision thrust on us due to circumstances. In other cases it is just a momentary lapse as we live for the moment and then lose sight of the long-term repercussions of the short-term decisions we make.

Sometimes we question whether our definiteness of

purpose is realistic, at other times whether it is even achievable at all. At other times we fall into a funk and indulge ourselves in short-term thinking that can be destructive, negative or even fatal to our career and long-term life success.

Let me ask you some straightforward questions. What is your definiteness of purpose? To make a difference? To be wealthy? To be the best at what you do? To be in control of your life and career? To leave the world a better place than it was when you arrived on it? To have customers seeking you out and paying any price for your advice?

Choosing a Long-Term Path

This is certainly not to suggest that any of these are better, worse or more significant than any other. It is certainly not up to me or anyone else to dictate your life's mission! That is solely up to you. What I am suggesting to you is that without some sort of long-term thinking that dictates why you are doing something, you will never have the conviction and drive you will need to have and subsequently expend over the long course of your sales career.

The continuous challenges you face as a salesperson, day after day, like rejection, refusal, disappointment, personal frustrations, long hours, time away

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from your family and financial reversals, are all potential energy drains on you. What is it that keeps you going? What is it that keeps “the fuel in your tank” when you’re running close to empty?

Trust me, it won’t be some short-term superficial motivational tip or audio message. It is not some trite phrase that you memorize — it is certainly not running around spouting someone else’s “motivational message.”

Instead, it should be that internal flame that keeps being rekindled over and over again, day after day, morning after morning, week after week and year after year. It is that single, driving force that is within you that you alone have formulated and developed. That you have refined and defined in clear terms that are meaningful and significant to you and, perhaps, to you alone.

It is something that you feel with your own heart and to the very core of who you are. It is something that is consistently invigorating and serves as a continually renewing resource that recharges your personal battery and allows you to call on your reserves at the very times you need them most.

The Demands of Sales

I do know this. Sales is a demanding, sometimes unforgiving and cruel profession. It is something that you can love one minute and hate the next. It is not for the weak or uncommitted. The truth is that it is possible to be uncommitted and still sell. However, you will never be at the head of the pack. You will never achieve sales greatness, financial independence or the level of satisfaction that a sales career can legitimately provide you.



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As for me, I decided a long time ago that I was going to go for the gold! To give my best every day. But I also learned that I needed to know exactly why I was giving my best so unrelentingly. Why is that? Every day in sales is not a great day. Sometimes a day is not even a good day. Some are even lousy days!

Are you shortchanging your career and your life? Unless you clarify your definition of your purpose — your chief aim in life — you may never be in a position to answer that question. Once you do have it answered, the next step is to have a proactive, consistent set of strategies and tactics to get you there. Most people think the secret lies in the tactics. That is just not true. It all starts with the vision. Identify and take ownership of yours.

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