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DREAM BIG!

**WHEN THE GOING GETS TOUGH,
REPS WORK HARDER & SMARTER**

TIPS FOR SELLING IN A TOUGH ECONOMY



JOHN CHAPIN

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You hear it everywhere you go: “Sales are down because of the economy. My customers simply aren’t buying as much.” There are some people out there saying the economy doesn’t matter, it’s what’s going on in your own head that matters. **While it’s true that what goes on in your brain is always more important than outside circumstances, the economy is still what’s affecting many businesses.** If your business is one of them, put the following ideas into practice and you’ll find that the effect on you will be minimal, and in fact, you may notice no change or even a positive one.

Don’t let the economy be your excuse. After a tough day or some difficult sales calls, it’s easy to use the economy as an excuse. If you do, people will hear it in your voice and you’ll sell less. This attitude also leads to working less. In a down economy, when salespeople should be increasing their calls and activity level, the average salesperson cuts calls by 37 percent. The answer? Use the down economy as a warning and motivation to work harder and smarter, not as an excuse to back off. If you back off, business will go down, if you work harder and smarter, business will improve. As the saying goes, “When the going gets tough, the tough get going.”

Get better at selling. When there are fewer sales opportunities and prospects, you must do better with the ones you have. The way to do this is to get better at selling. Read books, listen to tapes and CDs, watch DVDs, become a sponge and absorb everything you can get your hands on. Using this strategy has helped many salespeople improve to the point where they actually sold more in a so-called down economy than they sold when times were good. Now is the time to improve your skills; constant and consistent learning is the best way to grow your sales.

Keep a good attitude. Your attitude is the most important sales tool in your arsenal; you have to keep it sharp. Now is not the time to read the front page of every newspaper and watch every newscast. Our brains are like computers: “Garbage in, garbage out.” What you should be doing is putting as many good ideas as possible into your brain. Pick up anything that is inspirational, motivational, positive, and upbeat and use it to keep a good attitude and stay focused. Be positive and persistent. In addition to putting good ideas into your brain, surround yourself with positive people and stay away from negative people.

Prepare for the price objection and build value. People are focused on price more than ever these days. Prospects and customers will do everything they can to commoditize vendors and simply go with the lowest price. Thus it is very important that you build value. What are your primary benefits? How are you, your company, and your product better than the competition? Are you local; is your long-term cost less, can you respond to service calls faster? You need to accentuate your primary benefits, make them as powerful as possible, and provide proof in ROI Models, testimonials, and the like. Finally, come up with some solid responses to the price objection.

Build relationships. The relationship with the salesperson is the number-one reason people give for doing business with a particular company. We’ve all seen it happen — you make an overwhelming case for your product vs. the competition and yet, the prospect still buys from your competitor because they’re golf buddies. Relationships are extremely important — in most cases more than anything else — so you need to focus on not only staying in touch with and keeping your name in front of customers and prospects, but also on taking that next step and building solid relationships.

Go back to the basics. Now is the time to increase the personal touch. Make more face-to-face visits to customers, send handwritten notes, stop by occasionally simply to say “hello,” and drop off the proposal in person instead of mailing or e-mailing it. Your objective is to touch the customer more often on a more personal level at a time when your competitors are calling less and being less personal.


Remember, you are completely responsible for your success. Five years from now you and your career

THE SKY IS THE LIMIT — SO STAY POSITIVE, WORK HARD, WORK SMART, AND DREAM BIG!

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will arrive somewhere, the question is: Where? If you decide that something outside of you, such as the economy, is responsible for your success or failure, you give away control of your destiny and your ultimate success. The way to change that is to remember that your success is up to you, you own it, and you control it. Provided you have solid goals and strong enough reasons why you need to get there, you will arrive where you decide to arrive, regardless of the economy, or anything else for that matter. Reminding yourself that you are 100 percent responsible

for your success keeps your success under your control and within reach.

If you put the above tips to work, you will see an improvement in business, perhaps a significant one. Many people have found that as a result of the above tips, they are doing more business now than they were when the economy was good. What are you capable of if you really set your mind to it and get to work? The sky is the limit, so stay positive, work hard, work smart, and dream big! 

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