

How To Reach Your Sales Goals

1. Invest time prospecting for NEW business every week. Most salespeople rely on existing clients to generate their sales. Allot a specific amount of time to look for new business opportunities whether it's within a current account or a completely new company. How much time are you prepared to commit to prospecting for new business?
2. Expand your reach. I know a VP of Sales who regularly gets his team together to brainstorm new industries they can target for their products. This helps his company consistently exceed their sales goals. What new industries or vertical markets can you target?
3. Improve your value proposition. Forget the tired approach of "Here's what we do and here's the awards we've won." What RESULTS do you help companies achieve? Focus on developing a 30 second pitch on this and make sure it is focused on your prospect, not your company. How can you improve your value proposition?
4. Improve your questioning skills. Most sales people think they ask good questions but in fact, they don't. Learn how to ask high-value, high-impact questions that make your prospects think and that differentiate you from your competitors. It may sound easy but it isn't. It requires forethought and courage to ask. What new questions can you start asking?
5. Ask for referrals. I know, I know. You've heard this before. So have I. But I'll be the first to admit that I don't execute consistently even though I know better. And the fact of the matter is referrals have a shorter sales cycle not to mention a higher closing ratio. What will you do to ensure that you ask for referrals more consistently?
6. Perfect your presentations. I'm not talking about memorizing your sales pitch. Instead, this is about adapting each sales presentation so that it addresses the specific needs of each prospect or customer. It also means investing time to rehearse every sales presentation before you meet with your prospect. What do you need to do to improve your sales presentations?
7. Gain agreement. This may sound obvious but many sales people fail to ask for some type of commitment when they meet with, or talk to, prospects and customers. Asking for some form of commitment at each stage of the process increases your opportunity to close the deal. This can be as simple as asking, "What are the best next steps?" or "Are you prepared to move forward?"
8. Keep your name in your prospect's mind. A call or two is not enough. You need to find creative ways to keep your name in your prospect's mind. This can include snail mail, email, networking, drop-by calls, etc. and make sure that every contact offers some type of value to your customer and prospect. What can you do to keep your name in your prospect's mind?

9. Improve your selling skills. The business world has changed in the last 12-24 months. If you have not adapted your approach you run the risk of being ousted by the competition. This means you need to read a book, listen to a podcast, take a training program, get some coaching, or join a Mastermind group. And don't just listen to what being said; work at applying the concepts into your business. How can you improve your sales skills?

10. Show customers why they should keep doing business with you. Just because someone has bought from you in the past does not mean they will continue to do so in the future. In today's business climate you need to constantly prove to your existing customers why it makes sense to continue buying your product/service. What can you do to reinforce this to your customers?

Don't wait for sales to happen. Apply the concepts in this article to make this year your best year ever!