

## Overcome Anxiety about Sales & Business Development



**By Bonni Carson DiMatteo**

The other day I received a cold call from someone enthusiastically trying to place an executive assistant. Usually I hang up mid-sentence on telemarketers. However, there was something different in her tone, her passion. As we had just hired an assistant, I imagined she had taken the lead from our ad. No, she said, she was just making cold calls.

To someone like me who would rather visit the dentist daily than make a cold call, I was intrigued. "How" I wanted to

know, "do you sound so enthusiastic and confident with someone you never met?" "That's simple," she replied, "I know I'm always going to find someone on the other end that I can help. That will be a great person to know. That would never happen if I didn't cold call."

What she didn't say, but was equally true was that she will make a connection that will serve as a beacon every time I think of recruitment needs. Since that call, not only have I referred two pieces of business to her, but she has referred a recruit to me for coaching. More than that, she debunked one of the great myths of selling – cold calls never work.

This is a very convenient myth to have aboard if you have any anxiety about sales. There are several others that could effectively keep you from business development and sales. These myths are so powerful that people claim they are facts.

We tell ourselves these myths to quiet the Sales Anxiety Monster or SAM. This usually works for a while until SAM appears. SAM tells us business is going to evaporate unless you get new business. What creates this anxiety? Anxiety is created by belief, perception or actual events that register as a sense of worthlessness or failure. It is more often the believed and perceived that function as fact in the mind. Here are the typical perceptions about sales that can create a failure cycle.

### **SAM Myths**

- Networking never works.
- Cold calls never work.
- It takes too long to write a book, article, speech.
- People only buy what they are shopping for and need.
- If people wanted my product, service they would call anyway.
- It's better to deal with non-decision makers than to bother a CEO or president.

### **What can you do to overcome SAM?**

- Write down your beliefs.
- Seeing them in black and white is more powerful because you can begin to see the cracks in the perceptions and beliefs.
- Counter the beliefs with fact.
- Write down five reasons your last customer bought from you and five reasons you bought your last item. Keep a list of examples that counter your beliefs.
- Sharpen your value proposition.
- How does your product or service help others? Write it down. Say it out loud.
- Transform your attitude from tentative to enthusiastic.
- What benefit can you give and why should people be grateful you called?
- Rekindle your success.
- To defeat anxiety of failure you have to increase perception of success.
- Write down five success stories from previous clients and re-read them.
- Identify your most effective sales/business development strategy and continue to use it.
- Networking, advertising, articles, speeches, marketing through cold and warm calls, strategic alliances.
- Try one new sales/ business development strategy.
- Increasing your repertoire can decrease your anxiety if you maintain the attitude of welcoming opportunity. Taking risks helps debunk anxiety with the right attitude.

We master anxiety by identifying its sources, countering our beliefs, and trying out new behavior while expanding seasoned behavior that works. It is creating the positive actions and attitudes that create successful business development. By imaging the greatest outcome from our efforts we approach sales with anticipation instead of dread. It is identifying your greatest success strategy and mobilizing it that expands greater success.

Recalling the winning attitude and action of our cold caller, she created business by a positive action and attitude that led to success.

What can you do today to defeat SAM and transform anxiety into positive action and attitude?

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