

# 10 tips for successful B2B selling

With a large sales organisation and thousands of customers, we know most things about B2B selling. As we are a friendly bunch here at Lime, we'd like to share our knowledge. That's why we have put together this post with 10 successful tips that will make you a better sales rep. Go get 'em!

1

## Compute your sales activity ladder

What are the different steps you need to take to close a deal? What's your hit rate and what's an average deal worth? Put numbers to each step in the sales process and work out how many activities you need to perform during a year. This will make sales more tangible and manageable!

Let's say you're targeted to achieve SEK 1.5 million worth of sales and your average deal is typically worth SEK 75,000. This means you must close 20 deals. If your hit rate is 50% at every step, then you need to submit 40 proposals, have 80 follow-up visits, 160 company visits, 320 calls to book meetings and 640 prospect discussions.

2

## Be structured when planning your cold calling

First and foremost: set aside time in your calendar to ensure you stop loafing around. Set up a well thought through call list and make notes of relevant references to highlight. Get mentally prepared by jotting down potential objections and responses in a script or a phone tree.

3

## Apply pain selling

Pain selling is about identifying and articulating the issues a potential customer is facing, before you present your product/service as the solution. It may sound simple, but many cannot cope with "the pain" (cognitive dissonance) and deny the problems. Humans want to be rational. If you can help your customers be rational, then you will soon be on a winning streak!

4

## Use BANT for proper sales qualification

Prioritise your time on the right deals, using the BANT process: Budget, Authority, Need and Timeline. You want to spend your time and energy on companies who have BUDGET available to spend, where you work directly or indirectly with the person with AUTHORITY to make decisions, where you can help (NEED match) solve a problem, and where you have visibility of their TIMELINE for when they need to have a solution in place.

5

## Dare to ask about new deals

There are three situations where you should ALWAYS ask for new prospects: customer visits, cold calling and follow-up calls with existing customers. Ask the person you're speaking with if they possibly know of someone else who (also) needs your product/service? There's nothing to lose!

6

## Be quick in following up incoming leads

Which prospects have visited your website? Are they able to contact you? Take advantage of incoming leads by using smart tools and acting on subtle, but critical, buying signals. Being fast is key! Calling a lead within 60 minutes means it's seven times more likely you will have a meaningful conversation, compared to if you call after an hour.

Source: "The Short Life of Online Sales Leads" | Harvard Business Review

7

## Always have your business mind turned ON

Generally speaking, a good sales manager is ALWAYS looking for new deals. Pay attention to who's driving around in company cars, read the newspaper ads (spending money on ads in the Financial Review means they have deep pockets), follow various groups on social media, check out which companies have their names on big sign boards in the business/industrial parks... There are business opportunities to be found everywhere!

8

## Use mass communication

Mass communication is dead... right? No, it can still be used effectively in a sales process! If you, for example, invite completely new companies to a seminar, you will soon understand with whom there is potential to do business. Mass communication can also be applied when deals are near closing, as well as for add-on sales to existing customers. As long as you can measure the reactions, mass communication is an effective way of finding out what's hot or not!

9

## Understand the potential within your existing customer group

Did you know that retaining and selling more to existing customers is much more cost effective than chasing new ones? A tip is to segment your customers based on loyalty and potential/budget. Plot them on a matrix and spend more efforts on the Cash Cows (high loyalty, high potential) and Predators (low loyalty, high potential).

10

## Twin match your best customers

Doing a twin analysis means you pick one of your best customers and then try to find similar companies to approach. There are sales tools available to help with this and where matching is done within seconds. So, why twin analysis? Because: a) you already know the challenges facing a particular industry, or a particular type of company, and you have the solution to these challenges, b) you already have experience from similar deals and feel confident in your interactions with new leads, and c) you have relevant references, which means you have already gained a few credibility brownie points.