

ACCELERATOR

The Sales Success Publication

EDITION
Vol. 2 | Issue 4

philmjones
helping your business reach new heights



Spotlight

Common mistakes you could be making and how to avoid them

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Script

Words that you can use
in 98% of conversations
with a stranger



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Shift some of your
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A tool to get
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Welcome

My name is Phil Jones and I would like to welcome you to this month's edition of Accelerator, your sales success programme.

No doubt you are ambitious to build on your success and the difference between winning and losing is just a simple tweak of words, maybe a shift in mindset or a slight change in the actions that you take. Accelerator is designed to introduce you to new ideas and fundamentally help you to achieve all that you can wish for.

I don't have all the answers, but will draw from my vast experience to provide you with tried, tested and proven techniques to enhance your sales success.



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Who is Phil Jones

An award winning business educator, Phil Jones is committed to helping organisations grow to their true potential.

His vast experience in a variety of sectors has resulted in him being recognised as an authority of **sales psychology and negotiation, for increasing corporate turnover and profitability, and for drastic business development**. A motivational, enthusiastic and inspiring speaker, coach and author, Phil has helped thousands of business owners and sales professionals to realise their route to success and how best to set out to achieve their goals.

Founder of Reaching **New Heights** and **forum Business Development Network**, Phil continues to provide an excellent support system to the local business community – the heart of the UK economy.



SPOTLIGHT

Common mistakes you could be making and how to avoid them

The Spotlight section is an opportunity for us to explore both the art and the science of salesmanship. In this edition, I want you to look at some of the simple mistakes that people are making in the sales process, how to avoid them and how to stop this happening in your business so that you can enjoy the successes of your labour, rather than dealing with the challenges and disappointment of not getting the results that you were looking for. As a coach, speaker and trainer, I bump into countless business scenarios and I see these mistakes happening time and time again. You are aspirational people, you want to grow, be better than where you are now, you want to stop making these mistakes and get results that you know you're capable of. So I thought I'd pick the top 5 mistakes, get you to learn from them and stop making them in the future.

1 The first of the mistakes I wanted to share with you today is the **attribute of experience.**

Because people are experienced, they forget to do one of the most important parts of the sales process and that is planning. By not planning, you step in to every opportunity without understanding how you could maximise it, what your levels of success are, what success looks like to you first. By not planning, you don't understand enough about the person that you're going to meet. We all know that people buy people. Unless you take the time to do the research to identify what you can find out about that person before you pick up the phone and go into a meeting, enter an opportunity, the chances of you being able to build rapport and find common interests is slim to none. Planning also includes what you should take with you, vital things like pads, pens, paper, perhaps order forms, maybe the product itself to demonstrate should an opportunity arise. Take time to plan.

2 The second mistake I wanted to share was **tunnel vision.** As sales people, business owners and professionals, we get



very focused on the task at hand. We look straight at that goal. We forget to look left and right. There is opportunity around us at all times. We're in the people business. We do business with people. We meet people every day, each and every time that we're out on an appointment, each and every time that we're doing things in our daily tasks. As sales people, you're never off the job. An opportunity could arise at any time, so look for it at all occasions. Keep your head up. Keep looking left and right. A great example of a huge piece of business that I won once back in my property days, was purely when I was picking up my Indian takeaway from a restaurant one evening.

I had a short conversation with a restaurateur about how business was and how his investments were working and managed to stir a conversation on to the area of topic for me at the time, which was investment property. Two weeks later, the same restaurateur happened to buy from us purely because I had my antenna on, looking for opportunity in everything that I do. So take the actions that you've got in your diary today, the rest of this week and the rest of this month. Ensure you look left, right, up and down, wondering

where your next opportunity could come from, as opposed to just having tunnel vision focused on what it is that you've got happening today.

3 The third big mistake is rushing. If you rush through the scenarios when you're getting to customer opportunity, you won't get anywhere near the level of success that you can if you go at the right phase. An example of rushing is when you sit and meet with a customer for the very first time; perhaps you're even meeting them face to face. I'm pretty certain you know what their requirements are, how you might be able to help them or what your solution could be for them far sooner than they've got there themselves. If you know what you need before they do then the chances are, when you present it, they won't believe you. You need to slow your pace down. Make sure your questions are in place in order for your customer to come to the solution that you're going to present just before you get there, so when you present it to them they say "thank you". It's resolved the problem that you've helped them realise they've got, as opposed to presenting your product or service and then giving them all reasons why they need to buy it. Slow down, don't rush, do the job properly, close the doors one at a time. Also, by not rushing you see the "what next" opportunities as well as the one that's available right now.

4 The fourth area that I wanted to look at is overselling. If your product or service is not good enough to be sold for exactly what it is, and nothing more than what it is, then I would suggest that you change your product. Sales people are renowned for overselling, over embellishing. We're all ethical in what we do. We want to undersell and over deliver. But so often we oversell and then find ourselves with no option but to under deliver on the expectation that we've created for our customer. We want fantastic results, feelings and emotions upon delivery of what we've promised. To ensure that we have delighted customers, let's make sure that what we're doing is not overselling, we're taking the time

to explain exactly how our products and service helps them, giving them all the reasons why it will help, but never going past those reasons or saying that it's something it's not.

5 The final mistake that I wanted to share today is simply lack of follow-up. There are people I speak to who work hard to create opportunity, they're forever looking for people to speak to them. When they find those people, they work incredibly hard to win appointments. In those appointments, they create a genuine opportunity for that person to buy from them. In that opportunity, they get to a point where they can create a proposal or present them with a price. They ask them to make a decision over what they'd like to buy from them and then they leave that decision with the customer to make on their own - failing to follow-up or maintain control. Lack of follow-up is costing businesses thousands right now. We're all leaving money on the table by not following up. Opportunities are hard to come by and always will be. Let's make sure that we follow through every opportunity right to the end, ensuring that we get the results that we know we're capable of as opposed to the ones that just land on our lap.

Those are 5 big mistakes. I encourage you now to look at your own processes, at opportunities that you've got ahead of you now and where you can make improvements. Let's stop making those mistakes and perform at the very top of our game as often as we can.



SCRIPT

A set of words that you can use in 98% of conversations with a stranger.

This month's Script is a response to a question that you will always be asked, yet fail to find a suitable answer for. We all meet strangers on a regular basis; be it in a hotel lobby, a reception area, networking events, perhaps a social gathering or a dinner party. When we meet people in these scenarios, there's one question that we are always asked yet we fail to have a response. That question is:

“So what do you do then?”

We know that question is coming, yet so often it's answered in a very 'kind of' non-descript way. It's either a direct response or your job title. You say you're an accountant, a graphic designer, you work in construction, however you choose to answer that question it's a one word conversation stopper.

Before I give you the set of words to answer that question, you need to understand why somebody asked it. For me, there's a couple of reasons: one is that they may have been looking to find out what it is that you do so that they can see if there's an opportunity for them to introduce a product or service they can sell to you.

The second and most common reason that people use that question is because they've run out of anything to say and it was a stock question they could respond with that allowed the conversation to continue. So if you reply to that question with a one word answer like your job title, then it becomes a conversation killer, unless they're looking to sell to you or have an immediate need for that particular specialist. The other way that we choose to respond to that question, as opposed to a one word answer, is to spend the next 2 to 3 minutes giving them a presentation or a sales pitch about our business and what it is that we do. I'm pretty sure that's not the reason that they asked the question. We haven't yet earned the permission to push our products and services on to people.

“How do you help people?”

The next time somebody asks you “so what do you do, then?” I want you to hear the question



“How do you help people?” That allows you to be more elaborate. An example: I was speaking to an accountant the other day and he responds to the question with the words “Well, I help local business owners ensure they don't pay a penny more in tax than they need to.” The response is more descriptive and friendly. It explains the fact that the people who he helps are local business owners. It explains the results of what he does as opposed to how he goes about doing it. What this means is that if they want to know more, they follow with the response “So how do you do that, then?” That becomes your license to talk more about you and your business to present a solution. Until you've had those words then carry on having conversations with people that are polite and friendly. Please don't go pushing your products and services on people until they've invited you to do so. When somebody says to you “So what do you do, then?” rephrase the question to how you help people, answer that question instead of explaining who the people are that you help and what the results are of the work that you do with them. That will keep the conversation going. It will create more opportunity and people will leave with a better understanding or explanation of what it is that makes you different from your competitors rather than them pigeonholing you into a particular product or service.

SIMPLE TIP

A couple of minutes can turn huge opportunities



This one simple tip is a tool to acquire more new customers out of the activity that you're already doing. If you're calling customers or visiting them face to face, take the time to introduce yourself to neighbours. Visiting the neighbours and finding an opportunity to introduce them to how you help people will no doubt create opportunity over a period of time. You've probably tried this in the past. You've probably tried introducing your product brochures, putting leaflets or sales letters through doors and maybe had quite limited response.

I'm going to tell you a quick story about a customer in the building industry looking for extra work. He said "Phil, I'm really struggling

to find people who can trust us so that they can see that we work differently to other types of builders." I said, "Have you got work going on at the minute and are you getting opportunities to quote?" He said, "Yeah. We're doing a bit of work and we're getting some opportunities to quote. It's just not quite enough." So I said "Every time that you go to quote or to do a piece of work, simply visit the neighbours. Knock on the door and politely introduce yourself. Look for something to apologise for". What we got them to apologise for is where they've parked the van, for any noise, dust or disturbance they may have caused. They apologised in advance and handed their contact details should they need to move the vehicle or if there was obstruction

in any way, shape or form. This was done religiously for a period of just a couple of weeks.

What started to happen was that the neighbours came back in contact and created opportunity. The phone started to ring, people had seen him and had human contact. His first transaction wasn't "would you like to buy" but simply "Hey, this is us. This is what we do." It was an apology. The trust factor was far higher and people were more open to do business with this building firm.

Take that lesson for yourself. Look left and right and see who's on either side. Is there an opportunity for you to introduce yourself, explain the products and services that you do? Try and avoid making a product brochure or a sales letter. Go and see them for a different reason; apologise for where you've parked your vehicle, introduce yourself, gift them something that demonstrates your expertise, as opposed to something that explains what it is that you do. Go visit the neighbours on every activity that you're doing. It costs minutes and can return a huge amount of opportunities.

"Gift them something that demonstrates your expertise, as opposed to something that explains what it is that you do"

MINDSET FOCUS

Sales is a philosophy



Every business that fails to acquire new customers at some point will fail in business. The acquisition of new customers is essential to be the lifeblood or the pulse of any business growth and there will always be natural wastage. So bringing new customers on board is incredibly important. In this edition I want to talk to you about a mindset focus rather than a process focus, as normal. A simple shift in the way you currently see things or believe things may well have a dramatic increase or an impact upon you and your business. Lets look at sales; the acquisition of new customers, the winning of new business and understand whose job it is to do so. Who's really responsible for the acquisition of new customers?

In every business that I've been involved in, before I got involved, there was a huge divide between the sales side of the business and the operational side of the business. Sales is the sales team's job and the operational team are there to deliver the activities and the actions that result in the product or service being created. For me, sales is a philosophy, not a department. Everybody sells. I want you to look at it quite simply - that there are

two departments. One department is selling and the other department is selling support. Those are the two critical roles. People will fall into one of those two camps. So, everybody outside of the sales team's responsibility is to support the sales team, be it delivering on the promises that are made, ensuring that the products and services are delivered in a way that is fitting with the explanation, ensuring that the administrative processes that follow allowed sales people to sell more effectively. Where you can get the two working coherently, you get massive uplifts in results. This has been crucial in the success of every turnaround project that I've been involved in. Turning around retail operations in major department stores, furniture retailers, football retailers, have all come from creating this coherent response where everybody understands that they all contribute towards the sales process. If you're building a business that looks to connect with its customers, where it has long-term relationships with these customers, everybody who is involved in any customer facing role needs to be aware of how they impact upon the sales process.

Let's look at this in a number of ways and see where people impact so you can really understand

and illustrate the point that I'm making to you. Number one is identifying new prospects. You have sales people on a regular basis looking to identify the next person they can speak to. In simplistic form, if you have a dream customer, a most wanted list or a prospect list, sharing that list with everybody within your organisation may well create an opening or an opportunity that doesn't yet exist. You don't know who knows who, but when you share stuff, stuff happens. The more people that know what it is that you're looking for the more chances you've got in finding it.

Let's look again at another area which is usually impacted upon by other people in your business. The first impression on a customer or potential customer is incredibly important. When the phone rings, the way in which that phone is answered will set the tone and the expectation for how your customer believes your business to be run and what results they can expect from it. There's a sales responsibility there for the people that answer your telephones.

The uplifts that I've enjoyed purely by looking at all of the areas where sales and sales support teams cross over are huge. Where we've made it work, we've seen an increase in revenue, in profits. We've seen no late payments from our customers because we've impacted sales skills upon our cash collection teams. We have no bad debts. We get preferential treatment from our suppliers because we stand out. We understand the impact and importance of managing great relationships with our suppliers. When favours need to be called upon that allow us to win new business, fulfil challenges and stand out from the crowd, our suppliers look upon us favourably because of the way they've been treated up until that point in time. We can increase operational efficiency because our selling support teams are fully aware of the part that they have to play in supporting the sales team. So paperwork moves quickly, jobs get fulfilled quickly, stuff gets ordered quickly. Those are things that we've seen with clients in the past. We've seen improved staff product productivity when everybody is chasing the same rabbit. You can't chase more than one rabbit. It's remarkably difficult if you're trying to chase too many different outcomes. Everybody pulling in the same direction will lead to far better results. You gain more free time when everybody pulls in the same direction and understand that they have a role towards the sales team.

Overall, what you really get is improved communication. In every area, people understand what their purpose is. Everybody is accountable for better sales results, not just one person. Look at everybody in your business and look at every process within your business. Does it support your sales process or does it hinder it



right down to the delivery? One of the best examples I've got of the final touch with a customer is in furniture retail. We took time to train the delivery drivers on basic sales skills, how that delivery driver would act, what they would install, what packaging they would take away, what lengths they would go to ensure that the customer was delighted. They knew what was expected of them so they could over deliver. We then helped them understand that they were the final part of the customer experience so we said, "Let's make it a good one. Let's make sure they thank the customer for their business, are courteous and shake hands". We even went one step further. We trained delivery drivers to ask for referrals and some of them got them.

You can get everybody pulling in the same direction. You can get everybody sales-focused, everybody focused on the task at hand of acquiring more new business. Your sales results will go up because everybody is pulling in the same direction and everybody is selling.

INTERVIEW

Guest Interview- Peter Lee

Today's guest interview is a real delight for me. We've got some time with Peter Lee. Peter Lee is a huge inspiration on my life and somebody that I would put as one of the top 3 people who's impacted positively on my career and personal life to date. We've known each other over 10 years now and his lessons serve me still today and create further ambition in what I look to become in the years ahead. I met Peter when we worked together at DFS furniture. Peter was highly amusing, challenging and inspirational and very much held in high regard, not just by me, but everybody that has worked with him. With over 24 years' experience, he's one of Britain's most prominent leadership trainers. His drive and determination to bring out the best in people, coupled with his effective, humorous, no-nonsense approach, has achieved results in companies around the world. If you want to develop your people and give them an enjoyable journey, kill two birds with one stone and get them spend some time with Peter. Peter is a coach, trainer, consultant and public speaker. He continues to successfully deliver a variety of different projects with all levels of staff in many different organisations. His customer list is endless and includes names like George at Asda, Screwfix Direct, Birmingham City Football Club, Orange, Asda... need I go on? Peter's been there, done it, worn the T-shirt and he's held in regard as one of the most influential people on the leadership training marketplace today. I'm really delighted to have somebody who's a mentor of mine talking to you today and sharing some of his wealth of experience. So enough from me, let's see what Peter's got to share with us.

Phil: Peter, good day to you. Welcome to Accelerator. I'm delighted to have you here today and hopefully share some wonderful information with our listeners.

Peter: Thank you very much for inviting me.


Phil: Peter, so what's new with you, nowadays?

Peter: We've got a lot of good clients who keep us busy with new challenges and it's just always interesting. I never get a chance to stagnate at anything. We've got a couple of new products coming, one in August, one probably in the New Year which are keeping my attention and keeping me up at night working it out!

Phil: Pete, you're involved in loads of stuff. How would you describe to people what it is that you do and how you help people?

Peter: We worked for 30 years just developing people. So if they're sales people, it's developing sales skills, if they're in customer care it's to do good at customer care, and predominantly for management





You need to recognise that every day is about getting out there, doing the things that you're employed to do **harder** or **better** than you did the previous week.

right up to executive level to be better at the job that they're employed to do. It's all done in a very positive, encouraging and sometimes tongue-in-cheek way.

Phil: Brilliant! Well Pete, you've been a mentor of mine in a number of ways since I met you, probably about 10 years ago now and you've got some key ideas and understandings about success. What would be some of the key stand out moments in your life, key lessons that would lead people to be more successful and how could my listeners' best benefit from it?

Peter: *There are lots and lots of learning times and I think one of the fundamental things of that is a balance between skill and hard work. You need to have a predominant skill in any arena but you also don't need to lean on that skill all the time. You need to recognise that every day is about getting out there, doing the things that you're employed to do harder or better than you did the previous week. Never turn that focus off, never coast. When we coast, we have to suddenly start relearning or put in twice as much effort in to get back to where we should be in the first place.*

Phil: Okay. Have you got some examples of how you use that kind of mindset in your own life?

Peter: *The best example is the job that I have. I've always considered that I'm doing a hobby and getting paid very well for it. I have no real difficulties, myself. In fact, it's almost like pulling yourself back from some situations - you get exuberant about things then realise that the time's not available. It's the advice that I always give to people leaving school or college; if you can find something that you're already passionate*

about and have an interest in, you really won't work a day in your life, but get paid for it.

Phil: Really, really true. Success is interesting as a topic of conversation and people say they want to be far more successful. What does success mean to you?

Peter: *Success to me is in looking at the teams that we work with and photograph in my memory their faces when they walk into and out of an event. They've been there for 3 days or 3 weeks or 1 day or a week for 17 weeks over the summer or whatever workshops that we're running. As they leave, they know that they've paid the price but it's been worthwhile and you can see it on their faces. That's what success looks like to me.*

Phil: Anybody who has been successful to any degree has messed up a few times on their way and it's often said that we learn more from our failures than we ever do from any of our successes. What are some of the mistakes that you've learned getting you to where you are today?

Peter: *There's too many to go through them all. Spreading myself too thinly more than once cost me big. I tried developing some programs that weren't really within my passion or expertise set. We did a good job and the client was satisfied, but I wasn't and I learned that I would not do that again. Even today I've been to a potential client and they started to ask me about a piece of work that I am not really equipped to do. It could have jeopardised the whole conversation, but I told them up front, "Listen, you need to know that is not my area of expertise. If the brief includes that, I'm not going to be able to fulfil the brief" and they fortunately said "we can take that out*

INTERVIEW

Guest Interview- Peter Lee



of the brief because the other part is what we want you to do, it has a greater importance to us.”

Phil: Okay. To someone listening right now, how could they take that experience of yours, apply it more positively and take some action to ensure that they don't make the same kind of mistakes?

Peter: Probably centred around not making promises that you can't deliver and probably being really clear of who you are, what you are good at, rather than “I'll do anything just to keep the situation moving along” and making false promises. Be clear who you are and what you stand for.

Phil: Okay. The world of business is ever changing and the marketplace right now is challenging like it always is. What do you see the key differences are or changes or opportunities for business may be in the forthcoming months and years?


Peter: I think in the sales arena it is true that the marketplace is tightening up on budgets but I actually think that's a bigger opportunity for the right people. I believe that if we can fulfil a commercial need that any business has got, they need that opportunity more in the recession than out of it. Psychologically, when they talk about recession, I

just decide not to join in. I just find people who want to fight their way out of it and help them. We have to be clearer about what commercial advantage you're delivering. Otherwise they will not make the decision to spend money.

Phil: Okay. Skills are great, aren't they? You've got an abundance of skills, many of them I've had the privilege of learning directly from you first hand. If there's just one skill you could pass on to others of all the things you've learned what would that be and why?

Peter: It would be enthusiasm. If you are passionate and enthusiastic at attacking a job that's in front of you with a desire to do it well, not just do it, then that will get you through the difficult hurdles. I don't think you get fewer hurdles. I think you just accommodate the hurdles better when you decide that you're going to attack. I read a great quote from George Patton, the General, and he said “It's better to execute a good plan violently today than it is to wait for the perfect plan.” It's a bit brutal but it's a form of enthusiasm, isn't it? We're going to do this. Let's run at it. Let's make it happen. Let's get something moving. Right now in industry, it's about action, not thinking.

Phil: Yes. What can we do as individuals to help ourselves attack tasks more enthusiastically?



I think people need to learn to first of all concentrate on **priorities** that are going to **pay** them dividends and not sweat the small stuff.

Peter: *I think it starts with having goals. I think it's having a clear picture of where you want to go, whether that's today, this week or this year and documenting goals that say this is what I'm going to do. It just urges you forward when there's that temptation to stand still because you've committed to something.*

Phil: What will be a big goal for you to achieve personally in the next year, 5 years, whenever it might be?

Peter: *The one that's heavyweight on the radar right now is this new product called "Opposite Strengths". It's fundamentally based around psychometric testing but it goes much deeper than anything I've ever seen in terms of building relationships, cooperation and good will amongst teams. The evidence coming out of clients already using it, not in the UK yet, but abroad, is that it has phenomenal results in terms of teamwork, productivity, reducing staff turnover. So again there's a massive commercial argument behind it. It's not a sandal wearing exercise just to find out what profile you've got, which some of them seem to stop at. This is much more of a commercial payback for organisations. I'm really keen to get it promoted and launched and get one organisation to feel the same benefits that others have, but in the UK. I think after that it will kind of speak for itself.*

Phil: Okay. Now you study, you like to learn information. I've learned a lot, not just from the things that you've shared with me, but from some of the books that you've read too. I think we can all fast track our learning by reading some great books. If there was just one book that stands out in your mind that you could share with others what would that one book be and why?

Peter: *Without question it would be "How to Win Friends and Influence People". I had the good fortune to work for Carnegie for about 9 years, but the desire to work for him was driven out by the benefit that book did. To me, it was like a lead me by the nose; tell me how to behave, to get on with people, to winning circumstances like sales situations that no one had ever described so simply and effectively before. Practical, down to earth and yet inspiring. I read it religiously.*

Phil: Likewise. It was the book that you introduced to me, with life changing results. What are some of the things that you bump into in your experience that people spend time doing that is perhaps not helping them towards their goals?

Peter: *People staying with activities rather than thinking about results and then they procrastinate. I think that is like throwing a lead weight around yourself. I think people need to learn to first of all concentrate on priorities that are going to pay them dividends and not sweat the small stuff. Make decisions towards working it, concluding it, getting through it, progressing it rather than the standard market time pauses that people build into. Me too, by the way, but I think I'm a little conscious of it.*

Phil: We're all guilty of that, aren't we? People are messing around and not getting the results that they're capable of. Now, businesses have training budgets, people will spend money on their personal development. If budgets were tight where would you say people should be investing their time to get the most out of people?

Peter: *Right now I think everybody needs more customers. If that's the case, my activity and drive*

INTERVIEW

Guest Interview- Peter Lee



would be directed to the sales team or largely, where we get involved, it's directed to the sales management of that team to make that more supportive, efficient, cooperative, encouraging and get better results, not just squeezed out of the team.

Phil: Okay. Sales is an interesting word, often pointed at one department. In a business regardless of size, who's responsible for the selling?

Peter: Well everybody represents the business, don't they? So you could say that everybody's in sales in some form. But who spends the most time belly to belly with the customer? They are the people that are the greatest influence. Now, that could be over a counter or in the customer's office, but it's where that quality time takes place that needs to be the most efficient, cooperative and supportive that builds a partnership.

Phil: Where do you see mistakes happening in businesses where maybe the sales team's done a great job to acquire the orders but somebody else in the business has maybe undone some of that work, what things have you bumped into the past?

Peter: You do see support people, customer care people, the delivery people or whatever making mistakes in terms of how they treat the customer, believing that the sales made in their business is secure. That might be true to some extent but it's not secure forever. The next order is not secure from that family if it's a consumer. The next order is not secure from that factory if you've upset the factory manager just on delivering the goods in the wrong way, far too late or in the wrong packaging or worse, with the wrong attitude. So, in that sense, everybody is in sales because they influence future sales, if not the signing of the contract, the relationship.

Phil: I agree with you entirely. Now, in terms of getting the most out of your people, what kind of key things should we understand about the people that are working within our organisations to get the best results from them?

Peter: It's an often used phrase, but happy people produce the best results. If people are glad to be at work, they enjoy what they're doing and that means they feel accepted and recognised by the people

they work for, whether that's a manager, director or a business owner. They will produce more and they will instinctively deliver better service. We often see companies that are squeezing the sponge, ringing out the results but not actually investing anything in terms of the psychology of the individual. The impact is obvious. You get lack of cooperation, people being resistant to change. It all stems from "were they considered happy in their work? Did they feel like they were welcome?"

Phil: You've given a lot of advice over the years. I'm sure lots of people have shared valuable insight with you. Is there one piece of advice that stands out that somebody else has shared with you?

Peter: I would imagine the biggest piece of advice was being encouraged largely to go and work for myself and start my own business. It was a very scary time that I was reluctant to risk, almost. It was a strong character who gave me a significant nudge to do that and a lot of encouragement and it was the best thing I ever did. I wish, as usual, that I'd done it years earlier. At that time it was still a risky venture and I was doubtful whether I should do it, but I'm delighted I did.

Phil: What has been the tipping point between that kind of new start-up business, which I'm sure a lot of us can remember as turbulent challenging times and reaching a level of success where you said "Hey, the game's changed". You've stepped up a level, found a new gear. What was that kind of tipping point?

Peter: Referral. That doesn't happen straight away. You have to prove that and earn that from a number of other people's minds. But when it starts to happen it feels fantastic.

Phil: Brilliant! Now, information's so widely available today. We get emails coming in left, right and centre, social media, websites huge amounts of information that's available to us. How do we pick and choose who to listen to?

Peter: It's very difficult because there's so much of it and everybody's got a great idea or 3. You can learn every day from a number of people, which means you have to absorb quite a lot of information to find it. If you were forced to choose, you would have to go for people with reputation, people with a track record who other folks you know say "Hey, this guy's worth listening to. Trust this guy." I think there's an awful lot of electronic information, which is difficult. I think a lot of organisations lean on that instead of the real personal contact stuff. I would much prefer the personal contact but you can't get away from the amount of stuff coming through the email and somewhere in there would be a cracking idea.

Phil: You can't possibly service and filter it all, can you?

Peter: No. It's too much.

Phil: How do people find out about you?

Peter: Well, we're on the web as most people are. Anybody that's interested in receiving mails from us and inspirational notes are very welcome to add their name to the list and anybody that needs a particular opinion or anything can call us. All the contact details are on the website.

Phil: Okay. And where do they find your website?

Peter: It's www.instil.co.uk.

Phil: That's brilliant. Well thanks ever so much Peter. It's been a blast.

Peter: Great! Good to see you.

Always Be Closing - The art of the direct close



The Always be Closing section is a chance for us to explore the myth of that secret art of getting customers to say “yes”. This is an area that so many of us struggle with, largely for fear of rejection, customers saying “no”. Yet the funny thing is, is if we don’t ask, we don’t get. So surely, just by asking for business, we’re going to get better results. I think the challenge is slightly different to that. I think the challenge is not knowing how to ask, rather than being scared of asking. Here’s just one more tool that you can add to your toolkit - how you can ask for business more effectively.

I’m going to explore my least favourite form of closing which is closing in a direct fashion. This is what so many people refer to as “closing all the time”. This is things like “Shall we go for it, then?” “So what do you want to do next?” This turns small decisions into big decisions. It is the form of closing that creates the most objections and I would encourage you to avoid it at all cost. However, direct closing does have one place where it can become particularly useful and that’s dealing with potential customers I would pigeonhole as fuffers. You know, those people that just can’t

make their minds up. They’ve asked you to revise your quotation and your recommendation many times. They’ve toyed with the idea of being a customer for a number of months, flirted with the idea of taking on board your proposition but never truly committed, forever wanting you to change. You’ve invested time, effort, energy, perhaps even money into the acquisition of this customer but you’re still stuck on the fence.

As professional salespeople, our job is to bring people into decision and if we’ve got somebody faffing and stuck in indecision, this is our time to bring them to a close as effectively as we possibly can. So I would use a direct close when you’re happy with a “no”, when a “no” allows you to move on and if you’re comfortable with a “no” in this scenario, I would draw from your bag the direct close. Be prepared to ask direct questions of people pushing for a “no” by saying that you’re not going to go ahead with this; “if I don’t get a decision from you today, then unfortunately we’re not going to be able to move forward with this project”. By pushing for a “no”, you will find some people snatch back and say “yes”. Try being direct in those scenarios and you’ll find out where you stand.

BUSINESS BUILDER

A tool to help you acquire more customers



The business builder is a chance to find out a simple strategy or technique to acquire more customers, get customers to spend with you more often or get them to spend more money when they shop. This edition's Business Builder is simply focused on the acquisition of more customers.

This is about creating opportunity from what otherwise would be wastage. We've all had opportunities where we've met with customers, we've introduced what we'd like them to buy from us and it's been too rich for them at that period of time, too big a decision. They were interested, but couldn't say yes at that moment in time. Typically in those scenarios, we leave with our tails between our legs and we put it away for another day to revisit in the future. You've all heard about how effective it can be to upsell, to add to people's purchases, to add stuff on top, to increase the average transaction value. But what I'm talking about here is the power of a down sell, the opportunity to acquire a customer when otherwise they would have said "no".

Let me give you an example of an incredibly effective down sell that happened with a client of mine around 12 months ago. The client in question runs a relatively new start-up accountancy practice looking to acquire new customers. The key service she was looking to introduce was a high level accountancy non-exec financial director position, a fair sum of money, a fair size investment. She'd meet lots of people who were interested in the proposition, they would show a level of interest, maybe ask for some details to be sent or written down, and then she'd typically get a response of "I'm going to need some time to think about it." This happens in all of our businesses.

What's the simple thing that could've been introduced as a product or service to get them on board as a customer right now so we could

build their value over a period of time? What she chose to introduce was some fabulous online accounting software. In fact, it's the same accounting software that we now use ourselves and she'd introduced it to these clients for a low monthly fee, for an initial start-up and they take on board this product because it was a no-brainer.

Introducing your down sell is what I call your "Columbo Moment". Columbo was famous for saying "Oh, just one more thing." That was his chance to get his real golden piece of information.

You're going to introduce your down sell almost as you're heading out the door, as if it's a no-brainer so that you get more customers from your activity that you can then revisit to grow into the size and scale of customer that you would like. But a customer at a low value is far better than no customer at all.

MAGIC WORDS

I'm always intrigued as to how simple changes in language can dramatically affect the results of our communication. In sales, we're often looking to win people around to our way of thinking and help them to make their minds up. With years of practice, I've developed simple sets of words that have guaranteed results. One of these sets of words can help ensure that whoever you are communicating with believes and trusts with complete conviction the outcome you're going to present them with.

The magic words are simply "if" followed by "then". You form a conditional sentence using these words in this sequence. It lets your prospect believe that the result that follows is highly likely to occur. An example relates back to the way in which we're conditioned as children. Mum said "If you're not back by 10 o'clock then you'll be grounded for a week". She may have also said:

"If you don't take the time to revise then you won't get good grades at school".

Success was achieved from the belief that the result will happen or might happen. I think we all believed Mum, didn't we? You've seen the power of this in practice for yourself.

Taking this in to your business can allow you to make profound statements that influence consumers in a considerable way. Some simple examples would be "If you can get me your order by close of play today then we can meet your delivery requirements of Tuesday next week". "If you



choose to come on board working with us then I promise you won't be disappointed".

There are so many ways that we can use "if" followed by "then" to help persuade and influence our customers and potential customers to take the actions that we would like them to. Getting this working in your daily sales language and written copy will start to win you more business. So if you're looking for more customers then you really should try these techniques.

FINAL SUMMARY

So that's it. I'm hoping you've learned something and feel empowered to take action. We looked at the Spotlight section and shared the 5 common mistakes that we bump into all the time in our business.

You now know how to avoid those mistakes. We shared a script and a set of words that you can respond with more effectively when somebody asks "So what do you do, then?" We looked at the Mindset focus, sharing my belief that everybody sells and understanding that in your business you've got 2 departments, selling and selling support and how you can have everybody pulling in the same direction. The guest interview was with Peter Lee and I'm sure you took loads from that. We shared a

simple tip of visiting the neighbours - don't forget to do that on your next appointment - perhaps you could even try it today? In the Always be Closing section we talked about the use, place and power of the direct close in examples where people are faffing about. The Business Builder introduced you to the power of a down sell. We finished up with Magic Words. So until next time, keep moving forward, keep picking up pace and let your momentum carry you as far as your ambition guides

you. Remember, if you choose to take action, then you will no doubt get better results.

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