

Managing the Sales Process

THE POLITICAL DIMENSION

Whether you are aware of it or not, and regardless of whether you understand it or not, in corporate life, **the political dimension is all-important.**

The higher your contacts are up the ladder, within an organisation, the greater the extent to which the political dimension is important.

At director level, in all large organisations, the political dimension can shape the decision making process very considerably and will often be the major determining factor. Therefore it is of paramount importance that you recognise this dimension and that you consistently employ the full range of communication and questioning techniques to ensure that you are aware of and exploiting your contacts' political agendas. You ignore this dimension at your peril!

Generally speaking, directors and senior managers will often only be motivated to make decisions if there is a “compelling event” that impacts them personally and that is likely to create an exposure. Given the political nature of corporate life and the potential implications for both financial and job security, most directors and managers will, quite understandably go to almost any lengths to avoid experiencing such an exposure.

Compelling event

A “compelling event” is the result of changing situations that impact on an organisational and individual performance.

Exposures

An exposure occurs when the impact of these situations or issues causes individual performance to become accountable.

For an individual director or senior manager an exposure is greatly increased where a perception of under performance may be exploited to the detriment of the company or, more pertinently, the personal interests of the individual, which is quite likely in corporate life.

Exploiting exposures

Understanding these decision -making dynamics is important because you can exploit them and benefit from them!

The skilful salesperson will do everything within his power to *increase* the perception of an exposure within the mind of his customer until he has reached the position in the sales process where the customer shares his perception that his solution is the answer.

In commercial terms the greater the perception of an exposure, the faster the decision will be made. Also, there will be less resistance to price and payment will be prompt.

In contrast, the inexperienced salesperson does the opposite and attempts to mitigate or diminish the client's perception of exposure.

This is invariably a mistake as it weakens this basic and most powerful emotional drive that will otherwise bring about a successful sale.

Whilst the salesperson in this situation enjoys an excellent relationship with his customer, he will seldom generate business, and will experience much angst and dissipate a lot of time and energy trying to work out “what's not happening”.