

Lincoln Park Chamber of Commerce Small Business Forum Summary

Five Successful Sales Strategies

1. Create and Execute a System

A systematic approach is essential for any successful sales strategy. However, you can do all the planning in the world, but the key to a successful system is execution and follow up. You cannot just send one marketing piece and expect results; you need to be consistent with your timing and appearance. For example, send a weekly/monthly/quarterly marketing piece such as an E-Newsletter, Newsletter or Flyer and then supplement in between with follow up phone calls. Create a system that works for you whether it's making cold calls every morning for an hour or just once a week for several, make sure it is something you can follow. Use a paper system or a computer management system like Outlook or Constant Contact to keep you on schedule and efficiently manage your time. With a program like Outlook you can set reminders and block out time on your calendar for returning calls, dropping off gifts, scheduling appointments, etc.

2. Focus on Building Relationships

As the economy continues to transform, people have a tighter fist around their wallets and therefore expect more value. You can overcome this by building relationships throughout the sales process. Build relationships and establish trust by giving back to your community and your clients; join organizations and volunteer on committees. Find opportunities to make connections not just for yourself, but also for your clients. Invest time and commitment into building business relationships; Think of it like courting. Send thank you cards, birthday cards, anniversary cards, etc. One of the panelists sends balloons to a prospect they've been trying to call for awhile with a note that says, "Happy Anniversary, it's been __ months since I've been calling, won't you give me 15 minutes on the phone?" Lastly utilize technology (i.e. E-mails, websites, and blogging) to enhance the human relationship not to distract from it.

3. Knowledge is Power

You have to have an opinion about everything in your industry. Know your target markets and know your competition.

4. Utilize your existing Client Base

Ask for referrals and ALWAYS send a hand written thank you card at a minimum when you do. In addition you can send a gift card, offer a discounted service, a review on yelp, or gift to be displayed (such as pottery) to remind your clients of you when they look at it. One of the panelists host an annual party for all of his clients.

5. Ask for It!

Probably the most 'essential' sales strategy is to ask your clients for their business, their signature, their commitment, etc. There is a difference between being aggressive and firm; you need to always be asking for your sale!

Book Recommendations on Selling

Secrets of Question Based Selling by Thomas A. Freese

Raving Fans: A Revolutionary Approach to Customer Service by Ken Blanchard

Relationship Economics by David Nour

Panelists

Jessica Z. Chonich, Aflac Chicago Metro

Jessica Chonich, District Sales Coordinator, has been a valued agent of AFLAC-Chicago Metro area for the past three years. She has acquired useful insight and knowledge of different industries that has catapulted her career in a less than sizzling economy. By simply building credibility professionally and personally, by following through and executing as promised, she has been able to establish the needs in her accounts. AFLAC offers value added programs, that allow companies to improve their profitably through benefit enhancements. AFLAC pays cash directly to the employee to fill in as a supplement for out of pockets cop-pays, deductibles, and loss of income.

David Kover, David M. Kover & Associates

David M. Kover, CFP® is president of David M. Kover & Associates, LLC. Mr. Kover has been helping people plan their financial future for over twenty-two years. In fact, his “common sense” approach to financial planning has helped hundreds of people sort through the maze of choices individuals are faced with today. Business planning, estate planning, college funding (for children and grandchildren), long-term care insurance, and retirement planning are just some of the areas where Mr. Kover assists his clients.