

Are you the new salesperson? You can have a “rookie of the year” season in 2018!

So you are the new salesperson?

This is always a big challenge - whether you are a green, young rookie or a veteran that just made a big change. And the answer to success in both cases is much the same. The confidence you need comes with the same disciplines that assure it for pro athletes: learn your playbook and practice your offense/defense. Simple huh? But do it quickly and do it with heart.

When I say learn your playbook I mean get training! As a sales professional it is imperative that you acquire three components of training: product, the value-added of your company, and fundamental selling skills.

To be a sales professional consultant with confidence, you need to study and learn everything you can get your hands on about your product such as features and benefits, competitive comparisons, industry applications, strengths and weaknesses. You also need to sell the added value that your new company brings to the table. Some call this your value proposition. Why you? Why should your customers buy from you versus the competition? You must know these answers – so ask for that training or find it out! Most companies seem to know intuitively that you need product and application training. They typically indoctrinate you in orientation with the advantages of the organization you now sell for. But do not stop there. If you just learn this stuff you may be inclined to “show up and throw up”. Product and value training is vital, but without the next piece of training you may be predisposed to a presentation-based selling instead of consultative selling. Present your brains out - and your hyped-up, pseudo confidence will soon wane.

You also need training in fundamental selling skills. Yes, both rookie and experienced veterans in a new position can benefit from training or refreshers in the basics. Truly, solid confidence is a result of training and practice in selling skills. You play like you practice. An obvious part of this would include relationship skills, communication, and listening. But you need one more item in training that seems to be missing in most sales organizations. Often, the key to success right out of the gate, and the thing that will bolster trustworthy confidence is learning and applying the *selling process*.

Learning *The SELL Process* (as I call it in my book of that title) will equip you with a framework to prepare and execute highly effective selling. If you learn how to pre-call plan for each call (your *offense*) – and you have a framework to anticipate, prepare, and practice responses to objections (your *defense*), this will provide you with a sure confidence that comes from preparation. Many coaches have said, “The will to win is not nearly as important as the will to prepare to win”. Professional quarterbacks run their patterns and plays over and over and over. Then, when on the field in the actual game, they execute with confidence and precision. Why not sales professionals? The days of winging it are over.

Confidence with notable success right out of the gate in your new territory is possible. Oh, it might come eventually after years of hard knocks. But we don’t have time for that. Plus, that path is plagued with ruts, bad habits, confusion, frustration and oblivious patterns of going through the motions. Don’t wait for training – get it. Don't just wing it – practice.

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