

Don't Be Part of the Sales Prevention Team

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by Dan Solin



Photo by Jose Aragonés on Unsplash

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I see a parallel between good investing and sales.

The less investors do, the more likely they are to achieve their financial goals. Buy, hold, pay no attention to the financial media, and basically do nothing is sound investment advice. It's widely espoused by those who embrace "evidence-based" investing.

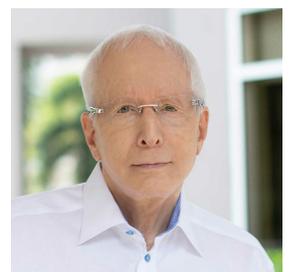
Do the same principles apply when you are trying to convert a prospect into a client?

Yes.

If you do any of the things below, you are on the "sales prevention team."

An odd response

I recently made a short inquiry to a vendor related to the manuscript for my new book. He sent me a lengthy response, setting forth his qualifications and expertise (which I already knew from his webpage) and then stated: "I will be on vacation and generally unavailable for 10 days or so in February. I already have work scheduled upon my return. I can't give you a price or a timeline until I review your manuscript. I am making no guarantees I can do your work."



Hardly welcoming! All I asked was whether he would review my manuscript, tell me whether the assignment was suitable and give me a price. His response should have been:

Thanks for reaching out to me. Please send me your manuscript and I will get back to you.

If I had received that response, I would have pursued a relationship with him.

But I never responded to the e-mail he sent me.

Avoid oversharing

Few prospects are interested in the details of your personal life. Unless they inquire, don't volunteer that information.

Another vendor responded to a different inquiry by telling me about her family, the difficulties of raising teen-agers and other personal information. All of it was unsolicited.

When you receive an inquiry, be thankful. Something you've done generated it. That's not easy. Respond directly and succinctly, and then ask if they need anything else. Don't overshare. Don't assume what's interesting to you is of interest to others. It probably isn't.

Avoid clichés

My recent article about avoiding clichés stirred up a lot of interest. Since I wrote that article, here are clichés I've received recently from different vendors interested in my business. None of them know me:

I hope you are well.

Have a wonderful Thursday.

I hope 2020 will be your best year ever.

I hope the New Year is off to a great start.

Why would you start a sales pitch with an opening line that screams: *I'm insincere?*

Respond promptly

One of my clients needed a social media consultant. It's not work my firm does, so I asked someone I trust for a recommendation. I sent the firm she suggested an inquiry and asked for times when we could talk. He responded by providing a date a month away, with a specific time on that date.

I didn't pursue a relationship with him and quickly found another vendor who sent me a nice note thanking me for the inquiry and giving me his Calendly link. We spoke two days after my initial inquiry. He landed the business.

I always respond to new business inquiries the same day, unless I'm traveling. Even then, my assistant will call and explain the delay.

If you want the business, respond as quickly as possible.

For more information about marketing and branding opportunities with Dan's upcoming book, Ask: How to Relate to Anyone, click here.