



As author Henry David Thoreau said, “What you get by achieving your goals is not as important as what you become by achieving your goals.” The more we achieve, the more we become, and the more we become, the more we achieve. It all starts with written goals.

AUTHENTICITY

There is no one way to succeed or live, but there is the opportunity for each of us to figure out how we can accomplish both by developing successful attributes within our personalities.

Authenticity is a superpower, and there is research from Duke University confirming it. People who are authentic:

- Have better mental health
- Are more satisfied with their life
- Have better quality relationships and social networks
- Are more likely to reach their big life goals
- Are better at sales because

highly authentic people have better sales conversion rates

- Are more resilient and able to cope with life’s challenges
- Have fewer regrets on their deathbed

Charting the Course

Rethinking the sales role No. 2.5

BY STEVE HASENMUELLER

BEFORE WE JUMP INTO THE SALES PROCESS, I want to explain a few things and how they relate to you specifically.

WRITTEN GOALS

Just about everyone has hopes, dreams or goals — whatever word you want to use — something short or long term they want to accomplish. If they are not written down, they’re actually a wish instead of a goal. There is magic in writing goals down, as well as research that supports the difference in accomplishment between written and unwritten.

With the average daily screen time in the U.S. being between 11 and 13 hours, according to a 2022 All About Vision survey of 1,000 workers, we are exposed to an overwhelming amount of information every day. Our brains are not designed for this much information, so thinking we can stay on track with our goals using pure mental energy is delusional. Writing them down formalizes the intent of what we hope to achieve.

These are compelling reasons to STOP trying to be a salesperson and begin the journey of becoming a person developing sales skills, and the key to that is using your uniqueness to develop your sales process.

SEVEN STEPS OF THE SALES PROCESS (EACH STEP REQUIRING EXPERTISE)

- 1. Preparation:** Developing strategies and expertise in how we incorporate our values, our Life Principles and the other six steps.
- 2. Prospecting:** Finding and engaging with qualified leads. Opportunities are the lifeblood of any business, sometimes referred to as the sales funnel.
- 3. Approach:** How we get started with a prospect and continue with the process.
- 4. Presentation:** The most critical aspect of building value in all areas of the sale.
- 5. Overcoming objections:** The better the presentation, the fewer objections, but they occur and you need a solid strategy for dealing with a delay, price or competitive objection.
- 6. Closing the sale:** Requires great listening and connection skills.

7. Follow up: Another critical component of higher closing ratios and success.

I like to use the Roman arch as a metaphor and representation of the sales process — the arch was one of the greatest architectural developments in history because it allowed weight distribution to create bridges and buildings that lasted thousands of years. The most important part was the keystone because without it, the arch has no strength.

For every step of the sales process, there is an equal step in our personal growth process:

- 1. Preparation:** Values and Life Principles bring a multidimensional aspect to work.
- 2. Prospecting:** Seeking mentors, new ideas and strategies.
- 3. Approach:** Awareness and decisions: Optimist/pessimist? Positive/negative? Humble/aggressive? Patient/impatient? Tolerant/complaining? It all matters.
- 4. Presentation:** What we physically and mentally bring to the world every day.
- 5. Overcoming obstacles:** There is no such thing as a smooth ascension; everyone who has accomplished anything has had their trials and tribulations. We use values and principles to prepare for these moments.
- 6. Deepening relationships:** An 85-year Harvard study of life

happiness determined that the biggest factor of a happy life is the relationships you have with others.

7. Follow-through: Doing what we say with the ability to be trusted in all circumstances.

CONVERGENCE

Instead of a one-dimensional (typical) sales effort, you are now delivering an inclusive presentation to the 7th power. This is the catalyst to going beyond, in both your personal and professional life.

When we move beyond being a typical salesperson, we can establish a vision of what is required to become excellent at our jobs (selling), not just for one year but for all years. We understand we have much work to do, and it won't happen overnight. There is no hack or shortcut to excellence and sustainability; it is a continuous effort of growth and development.

Next up is how companies can attract, develop and retain sales talent in this \$23 billion global industry. ■



STEVE HASENMUELLER writes and speaks about what it takes for businesses and employees to thrive in the demanding and ever-changing marketplace. With over 35 years of experience in front-line selling, he has conducted seminars and keynotes in nine countries, delivering challenging and uplifting messages along with real-life solutions for improvement. After 30 years on the road in sales, Hasenmueller retired and devotes his full-time efforts to speaking, training, writing and philanthropy. He currently resides in Belize with his wife Jane.

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