

NEW YEAR'S RESOLUTIONS EVERY MANAGER SHOULD MAKE

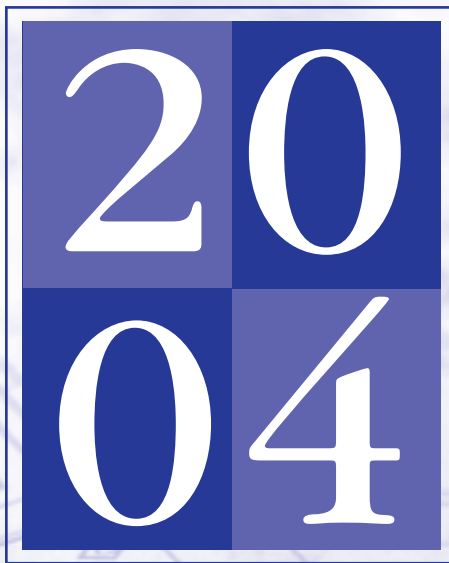
IT'S THAT TIME of year again, the time when everything seems new and we all begin to dream of ways to plan (and accomplish) what we've let "slide" during the old year. For managers, New Year's resolutions can be extremely valuable. However, many simply make broad plans to close more sales, get more done during the day or have better working relationships without considering how to accomplish those goals.

Here are some basic skills you and your team can improve upon in 2004 that will have a profound, positive effect on everything else you do.

Improve Time Management Skills

Busy professionals are notorious for never having enough time in our days. Oh, we have the best of intentions... we write in our appointment books, we set goals, we schedule this and hold meetings about that. But, still, we seem to run around playing catch up.

Devote some time early on during 2004 to improving your time management skills and the time management skills of your team. Procrastination, unaccomplished goals, poor scheduling abilities, lack of effective delegation, and inadequate strategies for dealing with interruptions all place a greater burden on your day and keep you from doing what you



really want and need to do.

When you take time to manage time, you'll be free in many different areas of your professional and personal life. It will be "time well spent."

Develop Better Communication Skills

Contrary to popular belief, "talking" is not the same as "communicating." Also contrary to popular belief is the ideal that everyone sends and receives communication in the same way. Realizing and investigating these two foundational principles can forever change the way you communicate with your employees and customers.

In order to be the best you can be, you'll want to have a thorough understanding of:

- the different behavioral styles and how they influence you and those around you.
- how to increase results through adaptability – meeting the needs of others.
- how to identifying the behavioral style of each team member or customer and know how to use it to communicate effectively.
- strategies for adapting to each customer and increasing your chances of closing the sale.
- strategies for adapting to each employee and increasing performance.

By developing better communication skills, you're equipped to speak **► continued on page 3**



**LETTER FROM
KATHI GRAHAM-
LEVISS**

When you, as a sales manager, consider the plans you have for your salespeople and department in 2004, don't neglect something vital. Yes, setting goals is paramount to achieving success, but providing strategies that allow your people to reach those goals is just as important. Empty challenges to improve closing ratios or attain more targeted prospects do little good without some method for accomplishment. When you develop your plans this year, include the funds for training as well. You and your team will both benefit in the long run.

WHO ARE YOUR CUSTOMERS AND WHAT DO THEY WANT?

You can't effectively sell to people you know nothing about. You have to discover who your customers (or prospects) are and what they want. This means learning to communicate effectively with them.

To start that process, it is necessary to understand the four basic behavioral styles. If using the DISC behavioral model, the four styles are classified as: Dominance, Influence, Steadiness and Compliance.

DOMINANCE

Those who are high in dominance possess the following characteristics:

- ▶ **VISIONARIES** - future thinkers
- ▶ **ALL BUSINESS** - no time for chit chat
- ▶ **RESULTS ORIENTED**
- ▶ **DIRECT & TO THE POINT** - give the bottom line
- ▶ **LOGICAL**

INFLUENCE

People with high scores in the influence category will:

- ▶ **WANT TIME TO SOCIALIZE BEFORE CONDUCTING BUSINESS**
- ▶ **NEED TO EXPRESS FEELINGS & OPINIONS**
- ▶ **PREFER A FRIENDLY/NON-THREATENING APPROACH**
- ▶ **WANT TO BE INVOLVED IN BRAINSTORMING**

STEADINESS

Those who are high in steadiness will:

- ▶ **REQUIRE PATIENCE**
- ▶ **NEED LOGICAL APPROACHES AND FACTS**
- ▶ **PREFER A RELAXED ATMOSPHERE**
- ▶ **THRIVE ON SEEING BENEFITS AS OPPOSED TO FEATURES**

COMPLIANCE

People high in compliance generally:

- ▶ **STICK TO DATA AND FACTS**
- ▶ **EXAMINE ARGUMENTS FROM ALL SIDES**
- ▶ **ARE NOT SOCIALIZERS**
- ▶ **HAVE A GREAT DEAL OF RESPECT FOR QUALITY**
- ▶ **SHY AWAY FROM "NEW" PRODUCTS/SERVICES**

As you can see, each behavioral style is very different. Most salespeople tend to sell to others in the same way they would want to be sold to. However, if you happen to be high in influence on the DISC model and you develop a presentation for someone who is high in compliance, a close is the last thing you should expect.

Why? As a person high in influence, you'll want to open the meeting by greeting your prospect, asking about his/her family and finding out what they did over the weekend. The prospect high in compliance will immediately become cautious of your "frivolous" behavior.

Next, you'll likely want to sit beside your prospect and go over the details - making sure to point out all the new and improved features and benefits of your product/service (because "new" is important to you.) However, your prospect will view this as a reason to distrust what you say.

The meeting will conclude and you'll most likely walk away

feeling confident that you've given a wonderfully effective presentation. However, in reality, you'll probably not hear from this prospect again.

As you can see, discovering your own behavioral style - and those of others - is one proven way to ensure acceptance by your audience. It also gives you vital information to use when creating and tailoring your sales presentations to your prospects.

Once you do, you'll understand specifically what to include and what to leave aside when working with individuals. You'll also have a better understanding of how your particular behavioral style is viewed by others. The combination of these two pieces of knowledge can dramatically increase your ability to prospect, present and close more effectively.

For more detailed information about improving your communication and presentation skills, visit www.xbcoaching.com today.



Tool of the Month

Total Selling:

EFFECTIVE STRATEGIES FOR DRAMATIC RESULTS

THERE IS NO DOUBT... selling is the backbone of every company across the globe. Without this revenue-generating activity, bills aren't paid, payroll isn't met and companies cease to expand. This is exactly why continually improving the selling strategies of your sales professionals is so vitally important.

"Total Selling" – a program that includes coaching, workshops and assessments from XB Coaching specifically created for sales professionals - is designed to compile all the necessary tools needed to lift top sellers to new heights and to effectively train novice-level sales professionals for success.

Choose to complete the entire curriculum or select individual areas to polish or update skills.

Find out more about "Total Selling" on our Web site at http://www.xbcoaching.com/products_services.html#sales.

Make Rewards Valuable

As you begin to plan the reward strategy for your employees in 2004, take a moment to ask what they would like to receive. For many people, public recognition is more valuable than cash. Others may greatly prefer time off as opposed to a gift certificate. By offering rewards your employees value, you generate another reason for them to work more diligently and effectively.

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with your team in such a way that each member will respond positively and will want to give their all.

Take a look around. What do you see in your department? Are your top performers still producing like they did when they first arrived at your organization? Have they become stale... burned out? Maybe it's time to motivate them toward success.

Top performing professionals have several things in common. One of those characteristics is the need for freedom. Freedom to be themselves, freedom to make their own rules, freedom to set their own standards.

Don't constrict the abilities of your top performers by forcing them to fit a mold. Listen to them, find out what their ideas are, ask for their input when creating policies and procedures. Then begin to alter your department into an environment where motivation is an ongoing factor and success thrives.

By allocating a little of your time, right now, to improving the basic skills on which your entire business strategy hinges, you and your team will be better equipped to move forward in accomplishing your goals. You'll also find that your days are smoother, your frustrations are reduced and your productivity is on a steady increase.

You'll find all the assessments, workshops and teleclasses you need to gain training in these areas at www.xbcoaching.com.

RECOMMENDED



READING

Rewards That Drive High Performance:

Success Stories from Leading Organizations

by Thomas B. Wilson

Revitalize Your Corporate Culture:

Powerful Ways to Transform Your Company into a High-Performance Organization

by Franklin C. Ashby

Survival of the Smartest:

Managing Information for Rapid Action and World-Class Performance

by Haim Mendelson and Johannes Ziegler

The Wisdom of Teams:

Creating the High-Performance Organization

by Jon R. Katzenbach and Douglas K. Smith

KEYNOTE SPEECHES THAT INSPIRE & INFORM

Looking for a unique change for your next meeting or event?
Want something enlightening and informative yet inspirational?

XB Coaching, Inc. is proud to offer keynote speeches and presentations that will delight your group like:

Recruiting and Training the Best Minds – Motivating Them to Stay

Today things are so competitive that it can be challenging and costly to recruit, train and maintain top performers. Your company - or any company for that matter - simply can't afford the heavy costs of old, traditional and ineffective hiring methods. There is a better way!

Through strategic, proven practices, you can develop highly targeted solutions for recruiting the best in your business, training them to work flawlessly with your organization and motivating them to stay and perform for your company for years to come.

Stop the revolving door of hiring in your business. Let XB Coaching President Kathi Graham-Leviss bring your team this insightful (and humorous) presentation filled with practical real-world tools you can implement immediately.

Do you have a specific topic in mind?

Are there issues you'd like to find solutions for?

Simply let us know and we'll gladly create a custom keynote address for you. Based specifically on your needs and interests, custom keynote speeches can be the hit of your event or meeting. Contact us today about a keynote address for your organization.

Watch, Listen & Learn

When dealing with a new prospect, business associate or employee, take time to observe.

By watching body language and listening to what the person says (and doesn't say), you'll gain a wealth of information about the person's communication style, behavioral patterns and motivational factors.

This is a valuable tool no salesperson can live without!