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COMMERCIELE
REVOLUTIE

COLUMN

Wessel Berkman

SALES AS A COMPETITIVE ADVANTAGE

In the past generating revenue was relatively easy. But technological developments and changes in customer demand have created different market dynamics. In the past, the market was not transparent, and the number of competitors was limited.

Due to the major changes in all these areas, many organizations have ended up in a situation where their product or service is seen as not being distinctive enough, as a commodity and having the lowest price is key. Many organizations even have products and services that are obsolete, they are no longer needed.

Organizing your sales team and your distinctiveness is more important than ever! At what level is your organization?

MAKING A DIFFERENCE.

Making a difference in your market can be done in different ways. Essentially there are three ways:

- 1. With the price:** having the lowest price. This is not preferable for many organizations as they are not a prizefighter or do not want to be in this situation as their cost levels are not significantly lower than the competition.
- 2. With unique products and services:** In reality, the distinctiveness of products and services is limited, and suppliers are overestimating the added value of their supposed distinctiveness to their customers.
- 3. Sales as a buying reason:** You have a distinctive way of doing sales and creating customer intimacy.

HOW DO YOU CURRENTLY MAKE A DIFFERENCE IN SALES?

SALES IS CREATING MORE VALUE THAN OTHERS.

For many, sales is something with a nasty taste that they prefer not to do. In job titles, the word 'sales' is often avoided and one prefers to call itself advisor, account manager, initiator etc.

Sales is creating more value than others. The value is added by helping the customer to realise his dream or ambition. Who is best at this will win as he is distinctive and surprises the customer and closes the major part of the deals. What's wrong with that?

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In most cases, the customer's dream goes beyond the products and services you provide. It often takes more than your products and services and you are part of the total dream solution. In fact, sometimes your products even get in the way and are not needed to provide the best solution.

You add value by helping a customer with a need that he is not completely aware of and providing him with a total solution. This is what we call the latent need or pain of a customer. Sales is about helping to make active a latent need of the customer and then providing the best total solution. This will keep you out of competition merely on price.

If you do this, you will take your customer to the next level of sales. If you do this most creatively and energetically and make it part of your organisation DNA then you will make a significant difference in the marketplace with each other.

Every contact moment being a visit, a call, or a mail should be aimed at making something latent active in an energetic and fun way. The standard is that your customer tells you this was the most energetic moment of the week that added the most value. How do you rate yourself on this?

If you work in this way, you will create real fans that want to connect with you and that trust you. For your employees, this will mean that they have a more meaningful and fun job. As a result, your turnover and margin will grow exponentially.

So, the million-dollar question is: to what extent do you know the ambition and dream of your customers and are your products and services enough to realise these?

MAGIC EXCELLENCE IS THE NEW REALITY.

- **LEVEL I 'operational excellence'**
Organizations do exactly what they promise. This is quite hard already ...
- **LEVEL II 'operational excellence++'**
Organizations that deliver a little more than what they promise, i.e. a bit faster than they promised. In practice, a lot of organizations doesn't get to this level.
- **LEVEL III 'Magic excellence'**
These are organizations that have made the most latent need active and solving these needs in a way that has been elevated to an art in the most fun, energetic way.

With 'magic excellence' you surprise the customer. The great thing is that there is always a latent need. The question is how you do discover it and make it active?

Level III organizations create the most added value as a team. They are stars in making active the latent need around the ambition or dream of the customer.

They ask the best open challenging questions around the customer's dream or ambition and offer the best broad solutions. Often even wider than their products and services. This way of working is recognizable in everything they do and is part of their organizational DNA.

The managers and directors have deliberately chosen this sales philosophy as a philosophy as part of their culture and structure. All their customer processes, sales training, their pitch, commercial systems even the layout of the building with the walking routes for customers are an integral part of this. It's a super-smart sales system that every employee- including those outside sales (i.e. lorry drivers that deliver the goods)- have adapted as their daily routine. Management is there to assure that no concessions are made on the defined way of working.

CREATE YOUR OWN MAGIC

Who doesn't want that, Level III? All employees in Level III organizations, regardless of their role, can without a doubt as a team write down clearly what is distinctive in the details in their daily way of working. These common points are referred to as the 'Golden Bullets'. These are not buzz words or multi-interpretable core values. It is the details in your daily way of working both in culture and structure with which you make a difference.

Golden Bullets are proof that you are distinctive in your execution as a team and make sure you as an organisation are future proof.

WHAT ARE THE 'GOLDEN BULLETS' IN YOUR ORGANIZATION AS A MAGICAL PROOF OF DISTINCTIVENESS?



WHERE IS YOUR ORGANIZATION?

Sales might be the only distinctive element in your value chain.

It's the most beautiful profession, embrace it, be proud of it and don't go to sleep until you're the best at it!

Many managers think their organization and sales is distinctive, but is this true?

If you want to know where you are with your team and organization, do The Commercial Revolution Inspiration Session with your team or read the book The Commercial Revolution.

Unleash a commercial revolution within a quarter and make a difference!

■ SALES, LOVE IT ■



Wessel Berkman

Founder of "The Social Selling Company" and "The Commercial Revolution". Berkman and his team have been able to profile themselves over the past 19 years as a commercial specialist and expert in the field of significant organic growth in online and offline commerce with result-dependent remuneration models. For feedback and challenges you can email him: wb@d-c-r.nl

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