

Do your sales need a helping hand?

The economic climate and our future financial security, is increasingly at the forefront of our minds. With some businesses seeing a drop in revenue and sales activity, action needs to be taken quickly in order to maintain profit margins.

But is it all really doom and gloom? There are plenty of businesses which are actually seeing growth and having to continue to recruit additional resources to handle extra work loads. If these businesses can succeed and increase activity, so can yours.

So how can you turn your business and sales around right now?

1) Find your niche

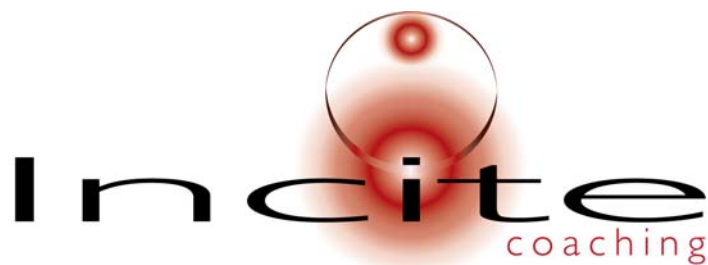
Review your products/services and clients. Which products/services are your best sellers? Which are “recession proof” and able to cope through an “economic down turn”? Think of the major fast moving consumer goods (FMCG) companies such as Coca Cola Amatil (CCA). CCA has held its share price steady over the last 3 months (even with unsolicited bids being released from Lion Nathan). This is as a result of the fact that their products are diverse, non-luxury items and are relatively low cost. This is an excellent example of a sustainable product. What products or services can you sell which will be sustainable? Be ruthless and stop wasting time on those that are not making money or are costing you money. By finding your niche market or product, rather than spreading yourself too thinly across a number of areas, you can use this extra energy to drive your higher profit products and will noticeably increase the success of these items.

2) Focus

Set timed, clear and concise goals, written in the present tense to define your focus. For example if you want to gain a 30% market share for your product within the next 3 months your goal could be:

“It is now the 1st March 2009 and I am sat in my office, looking at a market report showing that my product x now has a 30% market share”.

By writing the goal in the present tense your unconscious mind believes and acts as if the event has already occurred and therefore does not build up any internal barriers, for example “you will never achieve that”.



Ensure that your goal is challenging and realistic. If you always achieve your goals, make this goal more of a stretch. If you don't always achieve your goals, set yourself an intermediary "mile stone goal". Nothing breeds success like success.

3) Positive language

Always use positive language in all forms of communication, especially sales calls, advertising material and networking. It increases confidence in your products and services. If you are putting your products/services down and don't believe in them, who will?

For example, which sentence would you find more appealing?

"Coaching is not counselling, psychiatry or mentoring. It does not focus on the past but rather focuses on how you can move from where you are now to where you want to be by a series of goal setting and breaking down any barriers" or

"Coaching helps individuals determine and achieve personal goals by creating change in current and future behaviours. It differs from counselling, therapy or consulting as coaches focus on creating momentum to allow their clients to achieve life changing results".

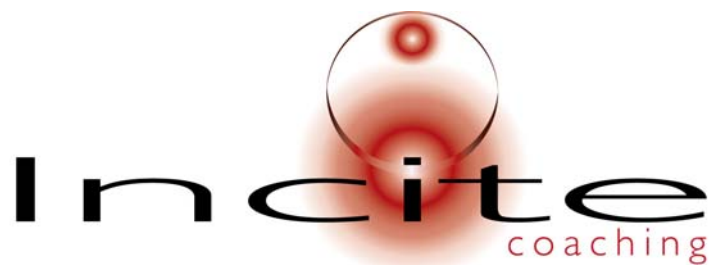
The answer for most people is the latter one. It is more positive and draws attention to what the service does. Also be careful of the use of the words 'but' or 'however.' These words tend to negate anything that comes before them in the sentence. For example:

"You really like you as a person but I believe that your management style and training leaves a lot to be desired".

Do you think the receiver of this information would feel positive or motivated afterwards? Chances are that they would not! You can get the same message across by structuring the sentence in a different, more constructive way.

"You are a really great worker and are so busy at the minute. I have recently noticed that your staff need some extra assistance with product training and that is why I would like to offer my time to assist you with this."

Now the recipient is likely to feel more positive about what message you are trying to communicate and is now drawn to the fact that staff need further training. This opens them to be more likely to take up the offer of more help, or be motivated to train their staff themselves.



4) Features and Benefits

Before buying anything, consumers want to know, “How will this benefit me?” Presenting features and benefits draws attention to this so that customers are not trying to search for the benefits. Explaining at least one direct benefit of each feature of your products and services answers that question and eliminates the “so what?” factor. This will generally result in a quicker sale – try it and see.

5) Three times convincer

Every person has a different selling strategy which determines the number of options they need to look at prior to purchasing a product or the number of times that a person has to look at the product/service prior to purchasing it (a convincer).

The number of convincers required for each individual can vary from 1 to 9, with an average of 3. Therefore if you advertise your product/service three times within a short space of time, you will reduce the length of time between sales. For example: (i) placing an advert, (ii) sending out additional information on the product and (iii) then putting in a follow up call.

If you would like more information on how coaching can be of assistance to you or your company or would like to discover more ways to boost your sales and successes, contact Jennifer Collier and the team at Incite Coaching to arrange your free introductory call.