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The SalesPulse™



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The Monthly Sales Briefing for Directors

Issue 44, October 2008

In November will be packaging our Account Planning methodology with new software that provides real time documentation of your account plans. If you would like to know more please click [here](#)

Quote of the month:

"A person who never made a mistake, never tried anything new."

Albert Einstein

KoruTips™

Dear Bob

TO BID OR NOT TO BID, THAT IS THE QUESTION

This morning I received an invitation to tender (ITT) from a potential client and have spent a bit of time thinking about it. Times are tough for many companies at the moment and likely to get tougher; opportunities are becoming scarcer as both public and private sector organisations hold back on investment but shouldn't I really put in a bid. You never know I might just get lucky. This logic, if you can call it that is going through the minds of sales people everywhere, and like me they are in a quandary as to what to do with this invitation to tender. There are a few guiding questions upon which to base my decision to respond, and these questions all have binary (Yes/No) answers as that should remove any element of doubt and prevents emotion from outweighing reason.

- Do I or anyone in my company have any personal/business relationships with this potential client?
- Have we done business successfully with them before (are they a satisfied customer)?
- Have I had any influence on this tender request?
- Does the style and wording in the document reflect the words, values and Unique Selling Proposition of our company rather than those of a competitor?
- Is my company stronger than the competition in three or more of the following areas?
 - a) Product/and or service
 - b) Customer intimacy
 - c) Value (or price in a commodity environment)
 - d) Demonstrable experience/references
- Are the client's bases of decision clear and unambiguous?
- Is bidding for this business truly a good use of my time and the resources of my company?
- Do we win more than 60% of bids when we make the short list?

When times are tough existing relationships become more important - focus on your customers.

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Steve Rowe
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*Sell More, Sell Better
and Sell Faster*



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the sales improvement people

- Have we won business like this in this market sector before?

If you have answered yes to at least seven of these questions then invest your company's time and money, if not then qualify out. Even if you are well positioned to answer only do so if you have the time and resources to put in a high value response. Cobbled together proposals are just that and lose you credibility.

Another question it raises though is why should a salesperson even contemplate answering an ITT when the chances of winning are so low? There are several reasons; firstly people are seduced into this type of activity if they have a shortage of sales leads. Secondly they feel that they should be seen to be taking positive action, for example writing proposals or their commitment may be called into question, and finally they lack the skills and/or confidence to create opportunities with their existing or potential clients. While there are clearly some sales person issues here there are also some leadership ones as well. A good sales leader will help their people through this qualification process and provide coaching to help the sales person overcome their other issues. This would be a much better use of time than bidding for a lost cause.

So what have I decided to do? I qualified out and wrote this newsletter instead.

Regards

Steve

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