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HOW TO ATTRACT AND RETAIN A TOP-NOTCH SALES FORCE

By Leni Chauvin

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A couple of years ago, a mailing list to which I subscribe had a question from a participant who owned a real estate franchise. She wanted some advice about how to both attract and retain a top notch sales force.

Well, for me, the answer was very simple. Just apply the golden rule of networking: treat other people the way you would want to be treated and watch them beat a path to your door, AND stay there, too! Treat them as if they're invisible, take them for granted, ignore the PERSON behind the salesPERSON and watch them run like an Olympic Gold Medalist. Since a lot of the subscribers to Networking Gazette are business owners or sales managers (or coaches to business owners and sales managers), I thought I'd share some of the suggestions I gave the franchise owner. I've edited the content a bit to try to make the information apply to any field of work. I started off by asking her:

How involved are you in your industry? Are you active in your local chapters of your professional associations? Are there opportunities for you to speak in front of these groups, serve on committees, write articles, teach a professional development course? Do a first rate job volunteering for these organizations, and you will get you a lot of attention and respect from the people you're seeking:top producers. Quality begets quality.

Regarding retaining employees, you can not only keep employees, but you can turn them into your greatest recruiters if you treat them like your most important customers! In a way that's exactly what they are because they are generating an income for you, the same as a customer does. When customers are happy, they tell their friends. When employees are happy, they tell their colleagues.

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Some simple suggestions for keeping your sales people happy and creating your own in-house cheering section:

--Remember their birthdays. Send them birthday cards. Wish them a happy birthday--doesn't cost a cent, yet it's so easy to overlook! Put a cupcake on their desk. Have a birthday present delivered to their homes! Sound outlandish? At one time I worked for a large company (2,600 employees in our office). Every single person in that company had a gift delivered to their home on their birthday! One year it was an umbrella (everyone got the same gift so you can purchase in bulk). The next it was a beautiful brass ruler. Nothing had the company logo on it. It was NOT a promotional product. It was a show of appreciation. This one does cost

a bit, but that's why you have a marketing budget, right? :-)

--Make your office a pleasant place to be

--Give everyone on your staff a pumpkin at Halloween and put candy on everyone's desk

--Take your staff and their families on a hay ride

--Have an ice skating party

--Had a good year? Share it with your employees in the form of a bonus

--Put a miniature flag on their desk on national holidays

--Praise them when praise is due

--Sponsor family barbecues

--Start a softball team

--Send anniversary cards marking the anniversary of when they joined your company

--Give them a sweat shirt with your company name on it when they start work.

It's a marketing tool for you and for them, and a nice gesture which says, "Welcome to our team."

--Have a wine and cheese party in the office once a month

--Let them know your door is always open

--Ask about their family members and use their names when you do.

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- Treat them with respect
- Stock your kitchen area with munchies
- Celebrate Christmas in July! Take the team out to lunch in the summer as well as at the end of the year
- Hold an employee appreciation day
- Place a gift certificate to Starbucks on everyone's desk
- Send a a postcard to everyone in the office when you're on vacation
- Out of the blue, hire a bunch of kids to wash everyone's car
- Ask your employees for referrals!!!

Other companies may do some of these things, but how many do LOTS of them? Try it. You'll wind up with happy employees who beget happy employees who beget happy employees, and on and on and on! Now you have not only retained your employees, but you've attracted more of the same caliber. These suggestions are inexpensive and, I guarantee you, will pay you far more than they cost!

Leni Chauvin is an executive, business, and and personal success coach andan expert in building business through strong referral networks. She workswith individuals and groups who want to play a bigger game and who are readyto ³go for it!² Visit <http://www.superstarnetworking.com> to learn more andto subscribe to NETWORKING GAZETTE, Leni's FREE e-mail newsletter packedwith tips to help you grow your business AND your life.

How To Make Your Sales Letters Bullet Proof

By Mike Jezek

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I'm going to show you in the next few moments how to make your sales letters and direct mail several times more powerful. In fact, what I'm about to emphasize to you may enable you to eat more of your competitors market share.

Every time before you sit down to write your sales letters or direct mail take out a sheet of paper and think of every possible

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objection your prospect could come up with to avoid buying your product or service. This may take a while and it may seem a pain at first but I assure you that this is incredibly important.

After you have come up with every possible reason why your prospects may say no to your offer, stop and consider any possible objections that may come up related to your specific industry or specific tastes of your target market. In other words, would your market be more inclined to buy only brand name products or services, would your market be more inclined to buy only a more attractive product over a less attractive one irregardless of quality?

Ok, now let's say you've done all of the above. Here's what you do next. Think very carefully about how you'd overcome those objections to persuade Mr. Prospect to buy or respond.

Most companies with a winning sales force have a team come in and create answers to every possible objection a prospect may raise. And they create what's called a Script Book. In fact, companies with top-notch sales teams keep their Script Books secret. Some even place their Script Books in safes. Why? The scripted answers to every objective Mr. Prospect may raise are worth their weight in gold if their answers to a prospect's objection works.

In direct sales, you must become a master of knowing every objection your prospects have and be able to articulately overcome every one of those objections.

And so it is the same with copywriting. Copywriting is nothing more than salesmanship in print. When you craft copy that overcomes objections, you're going to be light years ahead of your competition. Most people won't even take the time to do this!

Your homework is to know the objections your market has, like you know the back of your hand, and craft irresistible answers to overcome those objections. After all, if everyone of Mr. Prospect's objections are overcome, logic would tell him he should invest in your product or service. Get to work.

YOURS FREE! Get a free evaluation of your sales letters and direct mail. Find out where your copy is weak and what you need to immediately do to make it sell more. No obligation. Here's my website: www.irresistiblecopywriting.com Go ahead and find out where your copy is weak and whether it's going to work. After all – it's free! –Psychological Sales Letter Specialist (TM) Mike Jezek. Copyright 2002

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