

Start Your Sales Engine!

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**Start Your Sales Engine!**

**By Kimberly Stevens**

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Does your business run on a sales engine or a sales effort? A sales effort is something that has to be done every time you want to make a sale. But, a sales engine is something that, once put into place, can bring you sale after sale without added effort. Here are a couple of examples ...

A photographer gets to know a handful of bridal consultants that refer every new bride they meet to him. Each time they get a new client, he has the opportunity to get a phone call from that bride without having lifted a finger.

A home cleaning company establishes a relationship with organizations that provide temporary corporate housing for companies with newly relocated employees. The temporary housing companies contact the cleaning company each time they have a person vacate one of their units so they can prepare it for the next resident. Since the nature of the residences is temporary, they have a continual need for cleaning services.

In both of these examples, instead of spending valuable (potentially billable) work time on marketing, these companies are earning money. And during the time they do spend on marketing, they are focused on developing long-term relationships with sources of continual referral instead of tracking down each individual purchaser.

In the cleaning company example, they could be running classified ads, taking calls, visiting individual homes to provide cleaning estimates, etc. But all that effort only results in one job. There is an opportunity to clean each temporary residence 3-4 times per year. Multiply that figure by the number of units the temporary housing company manages, and you've got some regular business rolling in. And all from one relationship. Now, that's a sales engine!

In the case of the photographer, the service is not being performed for the bridal consultants. It's being performed for their clients. So, rather than being a repeat-service relationship, it is a referral

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relationship. However, it is not reciprocal. By the time the photographer hears from brides, they have already started planning the other elements of their wedding, so it's too late to refer them to the bridal consultants he knows. But, he could reward the bridal consultants with a referral fee that he creates by either discounting his services when dealing with those brides they refer to him or by marking his services up by 15%.

Despite all the stories you hear, most business owners are honest people who have the desire to treat their customers fairly. In the case of the photographer, the bridal consultants provide the brides with a list of photographers that they can choose from. This allows the bride to make her own decision based on quality/price rather than being pushed into a relationship with a particular photographer.

Would you prefer to invest your time in building a relationship that brings you sale after sale or one that brings you a one-shot sale? It's not magic. It's not a get-rich quick scheme. It's a simple key to business success.

So, the question is .. are you going to spend this afternoon pitching one account that could lead to one job or building a relationship that could lead to several jobs? Don't get me wrong -- it can take more than an afternoon to establish the most ideal relationships. But, in more cases than not, it's no more difficult to form this one relationship than it is to form any other.

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Kimberly Stevens is the author of the ebook series, *\*The Profitable Business Owner: A Step-by-Step System for Starting & Running a Successful Service Business\**. Download Sample Chapters & get her free MiniCourse, *\*The 10 Most Common Mistakes Business Owners Make & How To Avoid Them\** at:

### **Sales: The Engine that Drives EVERY Business**

**By David Geldart**

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No matter what the business, every company needs sales. It doesn't matter if it's in the business of manufacturing, services, a worldwide conglomerates or a corner grocery store. As difficult as specialized technical functions may be, with years of training and expertise, sales is equally challenging. While a salesperson could never do the job of an engineer or a programmer, they couldn't do the job of a salesperson either. Without sales, they don't have a job.

Every business is essentially a people business. Machines don't buy things; although they may execute transactions, people do the buying. When sales falter, every area of the business suffers – targets aren't met, investors lose confidence, budgets are cut, people are laid off, top talent looks elsewhere. Innovation feeds sales, and sales feeds innovation and growth.

Sales is oxygen to a company. There's a saying that goes "sex is like air, it's only important when you

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aren't getting enough". Sales is like that too. When orders are flowing and everybody is working to fill them and keep the customers satisfied, dealing with the logistics and problems, they might not really appreciate the contribution of the salesperson – sometimes the staff may even grumble and wish the sale had never happened, so they wouldn't have to deal with the customer and the hassles of getting the order through!

However, the moment sales slow down for even a short time, the company feels the impact. Everyone suddenly become acutely aware of the need for sales to feed the company.

In the movie business, before you make a movie you need a script. The screenwriter is the original creative person on the project, and if the writer doesn't write – there's no film.

Sales is like that too. If sales people don't sell, nobody else works for very long. It's the engine that drives every business on the face of the earth – and if you are really good at it, you'll go far. Many people have risen to CEO status mainly because they know how to drive sales.

So, if you are in sales, be proud of your status. If you're not, don't forget that, without sales, there's no work!

David Geldart is a partner with Bob Gernon in [www.salestrainingtips.com](http://www.salestrainingtips.com), which offers resources for sales training and development to sales professions.

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