



hoolock

Solving the equation of sales

Newsletter

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Welcome



Welcome

This is the second month of my new format and hopefully this works correctly for everyone. My thanks to everyone who pointed out the problems with the last one, which I hope were only for some of you. They ended up with a newsletter where every line only contained one character! I had tested the process a number of times but clearly not enough!

I hope that you have all had a good month and for those of you in the northern hemisphere, a great summer, despite the weather that has either been too hot or too wet. As well as being glued to the World Cup this month, I have been at the Edinburgh Fringe and Weyfest Music Festivals so have been amply entertained. It has been a bit of a shock having to work all this week.

Working with Charities

A couple of weeks ago I participated in a workshop aimed at charities in the local area who needed to grow using evergreen marketing and fundraising. The event was organised by Delivered Social and attended by a number of charities in the Portsmouth area. Delivered Social work with lots of charities, all of whom have similar problems so the event was aimed at delivering the help that they needed in a single session.

I joined in as I already run Presentation Skills for Charities training (<https://www.hoolock-consulting.com/presentation-skills-for-charities>) plus I am looking to get more involved in this sector to try to use my skills and knowledge to help charities to be more successful.

It was really interesting to learn about how some businesses support charities. I learnt about one restaurant that gives their total revenue from a specific table to charity every night. The 30 table restaurant is full every night and people are disappointed not to end up on this specific table. You do not have to jump out of a plane or run a marathon to provide great support to a charity.

I would encourage every business to engage with local charities to support them in their work. Raising funds is so difficult just now. However, there are more ways that you can support them but you will only ever find out when you ask them.

Asking Better Questions

Great sales people ask great questions. This is how you find out all about your customer's specific needs.

The first step in becoming a better questioner is simply to ask more questions. Of course, the number of questions is not the only factor that influences the quality of a conversation. The type, tone, sequence and framing of the questions also matter.

There are four types of questions:

- Introductory questions ("How are you?"),
- Mirror questions ("I'm fine. How are you?"),
- Full-switch questions (ones that change the topic entirely),
- Follow-up questions (ones that solicit more information).

Follow-up questions seem to have a special power. They signal to the other person that you are listening, care and want to know more. People interacting with a person who asks lots of follow-up questions tend to feel respected and heard. The great thing is that you do not have to think about them in advance. Plan your opening questions well and the follow ups should come naturally.



Late Payments

Whenever I work with a group of sales people, we typically run through an exercise called “What does a good customer look like?”. We are looking for the characteristics of a company that make them the sort of customer we want to work with.

Almost every time that we do it, one of the criteria that they apply is “Do they pay us on time?” Getting paid on time is critical for any business but particularly for small businesses. There is no reasonable reason to not be paid on time yet new research by FreeAgent has discovered that 43% of all invoices sent in the last year by UK freelancers and small businesses were paid late.

It is therefore great so see some ideas as to how to prevent this problem being written about here: <https://www.freeagent.com/blog/late-payment-problems/>

Podcasts

I’ve released a few new episodes of my podcast, Solving the Equation of Sales recently. They are:

Episode 7 – Good opportunities, with my guest Charles Czajkowski

We need to have a set of criteria that define what a good opportunity looks like so that we can judge them all equally. By focussing on the best opportunities, you are more likely to be more successful and make more money.

Episode 8 – Finding Needs, with my guest Anthony Williamson

Understanding your client’s needs is crucial to being successful in sales. I would contend that no business buys something that they do not need. It is the role of the sales person to identify those needs, propose a solution that involves their products and then get the customer to want those products.

Episode 9 – Why are you unique, with my guest Helen Kerr

Your uniqueness is a critical part of value. You will almost certainly have some competition for your products and services. Your competition will be able to do many of the things that you can and in those areas, it is difficult for your client to distinguish you. So, the things that make the difference are the things that make you unique and they are why your customer will work with you and not your competition.

And Finally!

My two favourite jokes from the Edinburgh Fringe were:

“The most British thing I’ve ever heard? A lady who said ‘Well I’m sorry, but I don’t apologise.’” By Liz Guterbock

And

“Nationwide must have looked pretty silly when they opened their first branch.” by William Stone.

For non-UK residents, Nationwide is a building society that has branches in most towns.



Online Training

Check out our online training courses:

[How to find a great sales opportunity](#) - Everything you need to know about finding great opportunities for generating revenue.

[How do I maximise my chances of closing a deal?](#) - Everything you need to know about giving yourself the best chance of winning sales deals.

[Sales Negotiations](#) - All you need to know to be successful during negotiations.

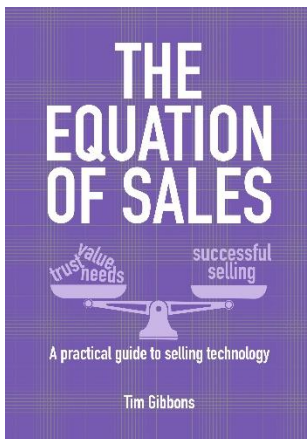
[Cold Calling](#) - How to be more successful at gaining a first appointment with a new customer.

[Selling yourself as a consultant](#) - How to successfully win more work as a oil industry consultant.

[60 Seconds in 60 Minutes](#) - How to create interesting and memorable 60 second pitches for the start of business networking meetings.

[The Equation of Sales](#) – Free. introductory training course for anyone working in business to business sales.

The Equation of Sales



The Equation of Sales is a practical guide to selling technology. It is the distillation of more than 20 years of sales experience into practical tools for people selling technology or technical services. The book will help you to understand how to establish trust with your customer, how to identify their needs and how to demonstrate the value of your product. As a result, you will make more sales and earn more commission!

While the book is most useful for people in the early years of their sales career, it can also provide value to people at any stage of their career. There are tools and techniques that can help even the most experienced sales people.

You can buy the book here: <https://www.shieldcrest.co.uk/about/featured-authors/tim-gibbons/>

Podcast

My podcast is available on all good podcast sites including Apple and Spotify or from <https://solvingtheequationofsales.buzzsprout.com>

Other Resources

We provide a variety of videos on YouTube, mostly short sales tips but also some longer videos recorded during webinars. You can find them here: <https://www.youtube.com/@hoolocktim>



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