



Corsini's  
Point of the Week™

December 1, 2008

The Secret Nobody Talks About

Let's get back to our discussion of how you can be a rainmaker during turbulent times. I've laid out the steps in my new book, **Do What You Do Better For Salespeople**. (For our Birmingham-area readers: If you'd like a signed copy, I have an upcoming book signing at **St. Vincent's Birmingham** (on the second floor of the main hospital building, 939-7766) on **Tuesday, December 16 from 11 a.m. to 1 p.m.**)

Now, as promised, I'm outlining the four crucial components of our **Best Bets™ Sales Model**; these four ideas are your keys to doing what you do better. In our November 17 Point, we discussed your being an advisor to your clients and new relationships. (Go to the archived Points at [www.corsini.com](http://www.corsini.com) to review this.) In short, I told you that if you change your approach and work with your clients as an advisor—rather than simply a salesperson—you will be amazed at how it changes your relationship. For the better. Many times over.

Advisors command trust, respect and admiration. Just imagine the power of being positioned as an advisor with your clients! I'm talking about a relationship where the client depends on you to help them do what they do better.

Today **we're going to focus on developing a strategic sales plan for a select group of clients and new relationship opportunities** that we call the **Best Bets™ Opportunities Pipeline**.

We'll begin by sharing a nasty, little secret: **Very few salespeople today have a viable strategic sales plan**. And if they do have a sales plan, more times than not, it's the once-a-year report they put together because their boss made them do it. And that report is just that—a report. It certainly isn't something they look at with any frequency—let alone a strategic sales plan they can actually follow with positive results.

If ESPN reported that a professional football team had not prepared a playbook before the season or, worse yet, that they had decided not to develop a game plan before a Monday Night Football game, everyone from the general manager down to the casual fan would be calling for the coach to be fired. Yet, **we think nothing of coming to work each day, every week and throughout the year without any type of plan for success**—never mind a strategic plan for being a rainmaker.

Here's another reason to develop your strategic sales plan: Today, most people have some type of active-deal list. (We call them

#### QUOTE OF THE WEEK

*"If you don't know where you are going, how can you expect to get there?"*

— Basil S. Walsh

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**Best Bets™**, and they are the active opportunities that you have some expectation of winning in the short term.) And then most people have some type of database of names (perhaps in Outlook or one of the currently popular CRM systems). The challenge is that most people have 1,000, 3,000 or 5,000 contacts in their database. **They are overwhelmed by the magnitude of the database—so they just focus on their active deals and hope for the best.** They don't have a plan for developing these other promising contacts into viable **Best Bets™**.

We apologize for any inconvenience.

That's where our **Future Best Bets™ Opportunities** concept comes in. This is your way of dealing with (and developing) future opportunities—both clients and prospective new opportunities—that you've identified outside of your current sales cycle. These contacts are promising enough to keep an eye on. These are the opportunities you consider a significant part of your future success in terms of revenue and/or profit potential. These are clients who quite possibly could have a big future with you and you with them. (This group varies from industry to industry and from salesperson to salesperson. Normally, you would not have more than 100 to 120 opportunities on your **Future Best Bets™** list. **Do What You Do Better For Salespeople** explains this more fully.)

Your strategic sales plan also should include your goals (and, at a minimum, your goals for the year). Additionally, your strategy should include your professional-development plan; your referral sources; and touch (drip marketing) programs for your **Best Bets™**, **Future Best Bets™** and other key relationships you want to develop in the next one, three and five years.

Finally, as a business coach who takes a whole-life approach to coaching, I'd also recommend you include goals in *all* areas of your life using our **7 F's of True Success** model. (We cover the 7 F's in this new book and in our first book, **Do What You Do Better With the 7 F's of True Success**.) Take an advisory role, work it with a plan and pay attention to all the important areas of your life. That's how you Do What You Do Better.

## CORSINI'S POINT

The old adage, "failing to plan is planning to fail" is true in many ways. Yes, you can be successful without a plan; people prove that every day. But we also know that if you act without a plan, you do a lot of needless work and you use up more energy and resources than if you were working smarter (with a plan). Think of your strategic plan as a roadmap to your success. Bridge the gap between your active deals and your database using our **Best Bets™ Opportunities Pipeline**. This will free you up to focus on fewer (yet more lucrative) strategic opportunities, and it will give you the time and energy to demonstrate how you are an advisor when it comes to your clients' success. An advisory role worked according to a strategic plan—these are two of the four ingredients for your success in sales.

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