



Corsini's Point of the Week™

July 27, 2009 — Part 1 of 5



Listen To This

Our Summer Sales Conference—**Doing Business In a Down (and Dry) Economy**—is happening this Wednesday (July 29) from 7:30 to 11:00 a.m. **There's still time to get in on this ... if you act now.** The conference is only \$99 per person. For more information and to sign up, go to www.corsini.com.

We'll discuss several timely topics during this conference—among them: **The 10 Biggest Mistakes Salespeople Make (and how to avoid them).** Because the conference covers this and much more—and because CCG is committed to helping you Do What You Do Better—I'd like to share a couple of these tips with you over the next few weeks.

So listen up. Really. Listen. The failure to really listen is costing many salespeople business and revenue. The inability to listen is widespread in today's selling environment, and I believe it's gotten worse over the past 10 years as technology has advanced. Think about it: Emails, mobile phones, tweets, texts, Internet, etc. You name it—we've got it. Talk about information overload! Technology, which is supposed to make the job easier, often just takes up a salesperson's time, and (in many cases) handling this technology has become the #1 activity some salespeople perform.

We've become so wired at work (and even during our downtime) that when we go into a sales call, we are programmed to be motivated by multimedia—instead of simple, straightforward human contact. We do not rely on our own God-given listening and thinking skills. For that reason, I must say that **not listening is at the top of the Top 10 Mistakes Salespeople Make.** Here's how to avoid that trap:

First, recognize how thoroughly **technology has numbed our listening, critical thinking and dialogue skills.** Acknowledging the problem is the first step to solving it.

Then, when you go on a sales call, resolve to **always be present in the moment.** You gotta be "all in" the conversation. You are more than just a salesperson; you are an advisor, and, as an advisor, you should be able to drive the conversation and offer solutions and ideas to your client. You can't do that if you don't understand what they need and want. They have to tell you this.

Let the other person know you are listening. By nodding your head or making affirmative sounds, you keep the client engaged and talking so you can get the info you need. This acknowledgement that you are listening does double duty of

QUOTE OF THE WEEK

"People don't care how much you know until they know how much you care."

— John C. Maxwell

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helping to keep your mind focused and hold you in the moment.

Strive to be an “active listener.” This is what happens when you not only make a conscious effort to really hear what the other person is saying, but also you strive to understand the total message.

The five keys to being an active listener are:

- **Pay attention.** Give the client your undivided attention. Period.
- **Show that you are listening.** Use your body language to convey your attention.
- **Provide feedback.** Make sure you understand the message by reflecting back what the speaker said. Ask questions to clarify points. Occasionally summarize what the client is saying.
- **Don't judge.** Don't interrupt and don't lose focus by formulating your responses.
- **Respond appropriately.** Be respectful. Seek to understand. Be authentic and open in your responses. Always assert your opinions respectfully.

Probably since you were a toddler you've heard that **God gave us two ears and one mouth so we would listen twice as much as we talk.** That advice still holds true! Yet, we know people don't place a high value on listening. In fact, I've often heard people say: “*He loves to talk so he'd be great in sales.*” My version of that is, “*She'd be a great salesperson—she knows how to listen.*”

Add to that, natural inquisitiveness, thoroughness, and the ability to be deliberate and authentic in words and actions, and you have the entire package. **So many of the people I coach do have the total package—but their listening skills need work. That's actually a fairly easy thing to fix—once you know it needs fixing.**

CORSINI'S POINT

Great salespeople are great listeners. It's as simple as that. Great listeners are engaging people. They understand the importance of really hearing what the other person is saying, and they practice the art of listening at every opportunity. Even rainmakers sometimes find it difficult to be good listeners and to be present in the moment on every sales call. You have to train your brain to tune out the many distractions you'll encounter—those that come at you every time your phone beeps and those that are just part of everyday life. For the 45 minutes or so that you are in an appointment with a client, that client should have your undivided attention. Actively listen to them. Then you'll be ready to engage in meaningful conversation.

Do What You Do Better™ with Corsini Classroom

Enroll now in Corsini Classroom's 2009 Summer Sales Conference: “Making It Rain During a Down (and Dry) Economy.”

This timely, hands-on program is set for **7:30 to 11 a.m. on Wednesday, July 29** at the Hampton Inn in Mountain Brook. **Birmingham-based entrepreneur John Cassimus will be the guest speaker.**

The investment is \$99 per person, and that includes these resources:

- **Do What You Do Better for Salespeople** book by Marc Corsini (\$14.95 value)

To receive it, please email admin@corsini.com to be removed from our mailing list. We apologize for any inconvenience.

- ***Making It Rain During a Down (and Dry) Economy*** workshop handout
- 12 months of ***Corsini's Point of the Week*** weekly e-newsletters
- Continental breakfast and refreshments

Enroll today! Contact Marc Corsini at marc@corsini.com or call him at (205) 879-0432 to enroll. Or click on the link at www.corsini.com. As always, **we offer a 100% money-back guarantee.**