



Corsini's Point of the Week™

August 17, 2009 — Part 4 of 5



Quitting Too Soon — Another Mistake You Don't Want to Make

Mistakes. We all make them from time to time. That's life. But the real problems happen when we make the same mistakes over and over. That's tragic.

Know what *not* to do!

For the past several weeks, I've offered some mistake-avoidance tips. Drawing from **The 10 Biggest Mistakes Salespeople Make (and how to avoid them)**, a topic we addressed in our recent sales conference, I'm sharing five of these tips with you, and we're on tip No. 4.

You can review the previous Points—the pitfalls of **not listening**, the problems that come from **a lack of opportunities in your pipeline** and the perils of **procrastination**—at www.corsini.com.

Here's the short version: Successful selling is about focusing on the client—not yourself and your own productivity goals. In order to build a solid, working relationship (and position yourself as an advisor to your client) you have to **actively listen to what they are saying**, constantly (this means year-round!) **build and maintain a working list of both current-client and new-relationship opportunities** and **never put off to tomorrow what you can do today**. And while you're at it, resist the temptation to let technology take over your work day.

Today let's look at the all-too-frequent mistake (and general bad habit) of quitting too soon.

A lot of salespeople take themselves out of the game way too soon. If someone doesn't buy after initially showing some interest, many salespeople will discard the opportunity—perhaps labeling it as “not qualified”—only to find out some months later that this same customer did indeed purchase—from someone else.

Here are my thoughts on that: **If you feel in your gut early on that the relationship has a future, keep working at it.** Spend time and effort developing the relationship rather than veering away at the first sign of a bump in the road.

Jack Canfield, author of the **Chicken Soup for the Soul** series of books, said: *“Some people fold after making one timid request. They quit too soon. Keep asking until you find the answers. In sales there are usually four or five ‘no’s’ before you get a ‘yes.’”*

I have seen this play out time and again. Several years ago, I coached a highly successful rainmaker in his 60s who had

QUOTE OF THE WEEK

“Winners are
not those
who never fail,
but those
who never quit.”

— Anonymous

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enough experience to know he had to keep going even when the going was tough. This rainmaker is in a business where buyers must “renew” and purchase from someone each year. He told me that for eight long years, he’d offered a viable business solution to a company president. **This tough customer finally purchased from him in the ninth year of their business relationship. Now that’s what I call staying in the game!**

Rather than abandoning a customer he had a good feeling about, this go-getter was steadfast and optimistic. He told me that **he kept educating himself on the customer’s business and on their specific needs.** He said **his strategy was simply to stick around so he’d be there when they were ready to make their move.** He did, and they did. When all was said and done, he ended up with their business, and they ended up with a knowledgeable advisor and a solution that works.

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CORSINI’S POINT

Make sure you are not quitting too soon. I recently read that 80 percent of sales are made in the 5th to 12th sales call. We know that percentage changes from industry to industry, but what doesn’t change is the value of staying with a promising opportunity. And speaking of value: In most business-to-business sales, the successful salesperson offers some type of value-add. The most obvious is the working knowledge you bring to the table when you make the effort to become an advisor to your customer. This kind of relationship grows with time, frequent encounters and trust. I’ve often said, “Selling is a contact sport.” You make contact happen by staying in the game.

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