



MAINTAINING SALES DURING COVID-19

Maintaining Sales During COVID-19 – It's All About Adapting

The Covid-19 pandemic is affecting everyone. Unless you are in one of the “essential” industry sectors, your sales pipeline has probably come to a dramatic halt. You worked hard and built a robust pipeline to meet your monthly, quarterly and annual goals and now all those sales are at risk, not to mention the commissions and bonuses that would have accompanied those achieved goals. Important face-to-face meetings can't happen for weeks (at the minimum), and your once safe and existing customer base is now at risk. Fear and anxiety may be overcoming you.

Although no one knows for sure how long it will take for the pandemic and its effects to end – rest assured, it will end. And when it does, will you be ready? Will you be able to hold on to most of your key customers and pipeline? Will you come out of this pandemic better and stronger than ever? The answer to each of these questions is “yes” – but only if you adapt.

7 Key Areas You Need to Adapt During a Time of Crisis

1. Adapt your mindset.

Your goals and objectives are the same as they were before this crisis, but how you achieve those goals has changed. Imagine you are a quarterback of a football team and your objective is to score touchdowns. This crisis has essentially changed the placement of the goal line. The goal line still exists, but it has been moved . . . so, you need to adjust your strategy and tactics to score.

An adjustment in strategy and tactics starts with your mindset. Do you see the *problem*, or do you see the *solution*? You can't see both, so which one are you focusing on? Lamenting the fact that an important face-to-face meeting can't take place won't help you. Adjusting your strategy to still have an amazing “meeting” will.

You need to find your “new normal” quickly and it starts with the realization that business as usual won't work right now. Remember what George Bernard Shaw said, “Those who cannot change their minds cannot change anything.”



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2. Don't panic, keep selling.

Avoid panic and focus on what you can control. If you really stop and think about it, this could be one of the most productive selling periods of your career. Nobody is travelling, very few people are vacationing, so almost everyone is at home and available via phone, email or videoconference. When has that happened before for an extended period?

Buyers may pause for a few weeks before moving forward with a purchase order, but that doesn't mean your sales process stops. Conversations, presentations and demonstrations can, and should still take place. Focus on moving opportunities through the sales cycle so you will be poised to close them when the dust clears. Lastly, don't assume that buyers won't move forward during a crisis; let them tell you they aren't ready yet. You don't need to do that for them.

3. Focus on the things that will give you a quick start when this is over.

In addition to continuing your selling efforts, use your new-found time to focus on those activities that will help you get off to a quick start when the crisis is over. Think about those activities you have meant to get to for months, but until now haven't been able to find the time.

Use your extra time, effort and resources for prospecting and lead generation. Your business will be well-served by having a deeper pool of prospective clients to work with over the long term. You might want to clean up your Customer Relationship Management (CRM) to bring it up to date. Make sure your pipeline reflects your current situation.

4. Adjust your presentations/approach during "meetings."

With most travel restricted for the foreseeable future, web-based presentations are more important than ever. Scrutinize the presentations or demonstrations you currently utilize in person and repackage them into full-blown virtual presentations.

Also, be creative and take your client on a virtual factory floor tour using a teleconferencing app, perform an in-depth product demonstration that includes your technical team (who typically don't travel) or send a video of your product or service in action. Adapting to the current environment will help you to stimulate creativity.



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5. Spend more time with your existing customers.

Organizations often are so focused on new business and new customers that they don't spend the time they should with existing customers. Now is the time! It is easy to call on your customers when you want something, but now is the time to check in with them to see how they are feeling and how you can support them. They may just need someone to listen to their concerns during this difficult time.

Your customers will remember you cared enough to check in with them. Don't sell to them, but rather serve them. Life will return to normal soon, so take this time to connect with the people that helped you and your organization get to where you are today.

6. Adjust your sales process, if necessary.

In times of crisis, you might be required to change your sales process. It is more difficult to create rapport and develop a relationship when you aren't face-to-face, so how will you need to adjust your sales process to achieve desired outcomes? Consider how to demonstrate your product or service's value in a new way. Do not assume that your current process will work now.

If you don't know the answer to how your sales process should change, ask your prospective customers. Ask them what you could do to help them obtain the information they require to make a decision. If you ask a few existing prospects quickly, this will pave the way for future prospects. You don't need to guess.

7. Use technology.

While it may seem obvious that you need to use technology when you can't meet face-to-face, you need to consider what you currently have in place, what options are available, and what specific technology will help you achieve your desired goal.

Using technology like Zoom, will not only allow you to carry on virtual conversations, but seeing the other person will help you make a connection. Create a professional atmosphere by dressing appropriately, finding a quiet place and perhaps even creating a "virtual background." You will also want to make sure you practice with the technology before going "live."

You will be amazed how productive you can be using the technology at hand. Although it is unfortunate, we are going through this difficult time, we are fortunate to have so many tools to allow us to work remotely.

What worked a month ago, won't work today or tomorrow. Those who adapt during this crisis will not only survive, they will prosper. Focus on these seven key areas and you will come out on top!