

How to Achieve the Win-Win Result in Sales

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In any business, a Win/Win actually means that a salesperson helped the customer select exactly what's right for them, for example the right color, the right equipment, the right look, the right feel, and of course, at the right price – everything the customer wanted. This requires a different mindset for most salespeople, one that starts with the premise that a salesperson's job is to help customers select the right product or service, the one that fills their needs, wants and desires; not simply to close a sale.

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In every business transaction there are four potential outcomes.

Win/Win – both the business and the customer are happy. The sale is made, the customer is delighted, and it was a great success.

Win/Lose – the business is happy, but not the customer. In this case, the business stood firm on an issue whether it be price or any other factor that could stop the sale. Even though the sale was made, the customer feels mistreated and unappreciated, with no plans to come back, and with the intention of sharing their negative experience with everyone.

Lose/Win – the sale is made, and the customer is happy; however, in the process something went wrong; you and ultimately the business lost.

Lose/Lose – an impasse is reached, the customer leaves, goes to another business and makes a purchase. Everyone loses, but the customer has the ability to go somewhere elsewhere. In a mobile society like ours, the customer has the ability to go anywhere, and more than likely they will drive 20+ miles to avoid being treated with disrespect, misled, mistreated, or under-valued. Remember, it's not always about price.

Why is a Win/Win so important?

In a Win/Win situation, the customer purchases, and whether it is a small item or a big ticket item – anything from clothing to a home – the customer leaves happy. And, after leaving, the customer will show off their purchase to their family, friends, neighbors and colleagues. This in turn helps drive referrals. At the same time, the business delivers a

product and pays the salesperson – earn and turn – and secures an opportunity to win an ongoing customer that will buy additional products and services that the business offers.

However, when a customer is more motivated to buy than a salesperson is to sell, the situation can become a big win for the customer and a big loss for the business. In most cases, especially for a more expensive item, the customer has to want to buy **more** than the business wants to sell. The easiest way for a customer to win is to dig in their heels on a particular point. Never forget that customers have one advantage over your business: businesses can't pick up and move to the next corner; customers can get in their car and drive to another business.

Clearly, a Win/Win is the optimal outcome, and while no one can win them all, everyone has the opportunity to improve their ratio. At APB, we help businesses to measure the number of times that they lose, analyze what went wrong, fix what's broken, and help a business and its people increase their ratio of wins to losses.

Helping Customers Make A Selection

In any business, a Win/Win actually means that a salesperson helped the customer select exactly what's right for them, for example the right color, the right equipment, the right look, the right feel, and of course, at the right price – everything the customer wanted. This requires a different mindset for most salespeople, one that starts with the premise that a salesperson's job is to help customers select the right product or service, the one that fills their needs, wants and desires; not simply to close a sale.

People love to buy, but hate being sold. Most customers come into a business having already done their homework, and are ready to buy, so a salesperson doesn't have to persuade them, he just needs to help them select a product with the features they want and a price they can afford. Buyers rate the helpful attitude of the salesperson as one of the major reasons why they purchase. They don't ever talk about being "sold" on a product, but they do describe how a salesperson created a positive "buying" experience. When this happens, sales grow and satisfied customers not only become repeat customers but also refer others. This is a true measure of value. When salespeople understand this, price becomes a secondary issue.

Setting up a Win/Win process requires commitment from every person who works in a business. Every step of the process must be designed to deliver the Win/Win. It starts with the greeting the customer gets when they first contact the business (phone, online or in person) and extends through the sales, finance, service and marketing, for the life of the product. Even the store set-up can impact the outcome.

Preparing for a Win/Win starts with the internal processes and systems that the business puts in place. We find that almost every time a transaction results in a Lose/Lose, it's

because these processes were not followed. A good process and system encompasses all parts of the business from recruiting and hiring, to education, training and career progression of its people.

As a first step, sales management must do an honest assessment:

Do you have a game plan in place? Is it a SMART plan? (Strategic, Measurable, Attainable, Realistic, Time-based)? When and how will you measure its success? After measuring, how will your people adapt?

Do your salespeople understand the plan? Can they explain the plan back to you? If not, they really don't understand.

Does your plan include a means of measuring traffic and results? Do you know how many opportunities your business gets daily, how many of those are helped make a selection, found the right fit and were asked to purchase? Without this information any evaluation, changes, or employee development will be based on incomplete data.

Does your plan include training and education? How often – daily, weekly, monthly? Does it include both group and individual counseling? Does it incorporate what you learn through measurement?

If the answer to any of these questions is no, the plan will fail. Reevaluate and change the plan to ensure it will lead to a win. As you do, place a heavy emphasis on number four – training and education. Without this, even the best plan won't be good enough.

Keep in mind, business is not about just selling products. Business is about developing and helping people who build loyal clientele and contribute to the bottom line. While no one can win all the time, 100% of everyone's effort must lead to improving the percentage of wins vs. losses. By following a plan, evaluating internal and external situations and using them to learn, everyone can increase the percent of the time they achieve a Win/Win. Are you geared to win? If so, then every time the outcome is not a Win/Win, you should ask "Why" and then, "Who Stopped The Sale?"



Richard F. Libin has written two acclaimed books that help people of all walks of life improve their sales skills, because as he says, "everyone is a selling something." His most recent book, *Who Knew?* (WhoKnew.com), was published in early 2017. His first book, *Who Stopped the Sale?* (WhoStoppedTheSale.com), is now in its second edition. As president of APB-Automotive Profit Builders, Inc., a firm with more than 48 years experience working with both sales and service professionals, he helps his clientele, through personnel development and technology, to build customer satisfaction and maximize gross profits in their businesses. Mr. Libin can be reached at rllibin@apb.cc or 508-626-9200

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