

How NOT to Sell

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I have to admit that we've been spoiled – spoiled by a strategic and responsive network of sales professionals who work in partnership with us on everything from tradeshow booth graphics to media buys. If you need a resource for virtually anything to do with marketing and promotion, we can point you in the right direction. These relationships have been built over time (and, frequently, under fire) so, when we are looking to develop a plan or get something produced for a client, we can almost always count on working with an experienced and friendly partner who shares our goal of delivering the best possible product or service for our clients, on-time and on-budget.

In vivid contrast to our normal experience, once in a while a rogue sales rep makes an appearance, something we have had the unfortunate experience in dealing with recently. This rep has pestered, cajoled, threatened and complained until none of us can take it anymore. In the interest of sharing (and, yeah, perhaps a little venting) here is a list of the rep's five most obnoxious tactics:

1. Call and email every single person in the company in rapid-fire. Don't let up until someone answers and tells you "no" for the umpteenth time. Repeat process weekly.
2. Once you have been given a chance to brief someone at the firm on your services (in person, no less!), nag relentlessly about getting introductions to other people in the firm.
3. After you have been told "no", start whining. Caterwaul if you must. Beg them to recommend you to the client. If they are unresponsive, proceed to step #4...
4. Contact the client yourself. Complain that the agency won't recommend your services – or better yet, insinuate and/or declare that the agency hasn't been responsive. Put some real pressure on. When that doesn't work, proceed to step #5...
5. Send an email to the entire team on a Friday afternoon complaining of unfair treatment, and cc: the boss. Demand an explanation for why the agency won't recommend you (if they've already given you a reason, ask for another). Go for a really plaintive tone. Whine some more. Criticize the team and then sit back and wait for a terse email slamming the door shut to all future communications, forever.

Monstrous tactics like these make us really appreciate all of the great sales people out there who work together with us in a spirit of mutual success and understanding.

As for the sales-rep-from-hell, go away. Leave us alone. Leave our clients alone. We don't want you. We don't want your services...

...but thanks for the blog fodder!

- Posted by Alison Moore