

***Coach Stephanie Chung helps business consultant use modern sales process to generate higher close rates***

When Lori Carr faced the ultimate entrepreneurial challenge—how best to manage growth—she knew that her handling of selling and closing processes held the key to achieving that goal. But for Lori, as for many small business owners, the right sales approach seemed hard to define and even harder to perfect.

“I had come to a point where reaching out to my primary network for referrals had achieved about all I could hope for,” Lori said. “If I wanted to grow faster, I had to sell to executive prospects who didn’t yet know me or my work. I understood sales, but I had a perception, and I didn’t want to cold-call executives or use tacky selling and closing approaches that made them (or me) feel uncomfortable. Stephanie told me, ‘That’s not how sales is done today. The process is now much more about asking questions and listening, in order to truly understand a prospect’s needs.’”



In her work with clients, Stephanie finds that managing outdated preconceptions about the sales process is half the battle. “So many times, it’s about changing minds. But for people who don’t work directly in sales, there’s a lot of anxiety, and they frame it as ‘now I have to get you to buy me or my product whether you need it or not.’ That can make anybody uncomfortable, because it’s not a very authentic way to express the value you offer. Nobody wants to risk a horrible sales experience, as we’ve all been through a situation where someone is trying to sell us something—someone who doesn’t care about our needs and is just pushing their product. So, with my coaching clients, I have to get that image of a manipulative, pushy salesperson out of their heads.”



For Lori, the ultimate payoff came when Stephanie helped her to focus on the “trusted advisor style” as a way to communicate with prospects. Lori was already adept at employing this style after the sale, but Stephanie wanted her to use the same style before and during the sales process, with an approach emphasizing recipient-based communications.

“Stephanie and I worked on how to develop trust with people I didn’t know and how to communicate my value so the prospect, over time, would connect that value to their own business needs and eventually close themselves,” Lori said. “She helps you to build that relationship foundation without putting pressure on prospects during the process or asking for the deal too quickly.”

As with many of her clients, Stephanie found that when Lori made these adjustments, change came quickly. “For people like Lori, who quickly gravitate toward and grab hold of the philosophy, I work with them to accomplish an understanding of what the person they’re talking to really needs, and to assess whether their product or service can truly help them. So it’s deprogramming people to get that old vision of sales out of their heads and rebuild it with ‘let’s figure out what your product or service does for companies, who it can best serve, and if there is a need, who needs it most.’”

By making Stephanie’s suggested adjustments and receiving ongoing coaching to help structure prospect calls, evaluate responses, and keep sales processes moving along, Lori was able to rapidly ratchet up her sales. Through Stephanie’s coaching, in tandem with additional enhancements, Lori has seen concrete results, including closing more deals in her quickly expanding sales pipeline.

“I love the sales process now and actually look forward to it every day—and it’s because of Stephanie,” Lori said. “I went from not wanting to focus on sales all day to the point where I can’t wait to get up in the morning to [cultivate](#) what’s going on in my pipeline.”

Lori realized distinct benefits from Stephanie’s holistic view of customer-oriented sales and her coaching on several key principals, including the following:

- **Detachment can be a good thing.** As in finding the right way to communicate, Stephanie describes how her clients’ psychological mindset must also be reshaped: “You have to get to a place where you don’t feel like you’re being rejected personally. If your prospect isn’t getting back to you, remind yourself that it’s likely because they’re busy; your product or service proposition may be perfectly viable in their minds, but your conversation might not be their top priority. Not everyone works on your timetable.”
- **Communicate confidently.** “The reality is that most business people are pretty savvy and can see right through someone who isn’t self-assured. Confidence is crucial. If you don’t [have](#) confidence in yourself, why should I, as an executive, have confidence in you?”
- **Cross out “salesperson” and write in “value expert.”** “I tell salespeople, ‘Don’t use the term *salesperson*; rather, call yourself *the expert*.’ It helps to keep yourself in the consultative frame of mind and to emphasize that you’re there to convey and provide specific expertise, much like a doctor or an attorney or other expert professionals in your life.”

