



It's Half Time!

July marks the kick-off of the second half of the year. Just like a good football or basketball game, it's time to "huddle" up and evaluate what's working or not working. Here are three areas to evaluate when analyzing your win/losses for the first half of 2006.

Right People: Let's face it folks, even Zig Ziglar can't close the deal if he's not in front of the right buyer. To win business, you must know who owns the outcome of the project? Who signs the check? Who else is affected if this problem doesn't go away? Effective sales teams consistently honor their sales process by talking with people that make decisions and not settling for second best...which always results in second place.

Right 'Stuff': Effective salespeople know the difference between being a vendor and a trusted advisor. A vendor is presented with a problem by the prospect and goes about solving the problem. A trusted advisor looks beyond the problem and asks questions to discover the root cause of the problem, trends in the industry, and how the biggest competitor is dealing with the problem. A vendor is a small picture salesperson that is easily replaced; a trusted advisor is a big picture partner that creates value by helping customers think through all angles of a challenging issue.

Right Timing: I remember my first sales job where bonuses were rewarded in the summer. If approached with products or services prior to that time, I'd give an honest answer of "call me in July." Make sure you have a 'drip marketing' program that keeps you in front of prospects and customers. As companies grow and change, so does the need for your services. "Out of sight and out of mind" doesn't win business.

Get your team in a huddle and figure out which plays need to be developed, sharpened and executed. It's only half-time and you can still win the game!

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