

Management Profile: Tom Snyder, Chairman

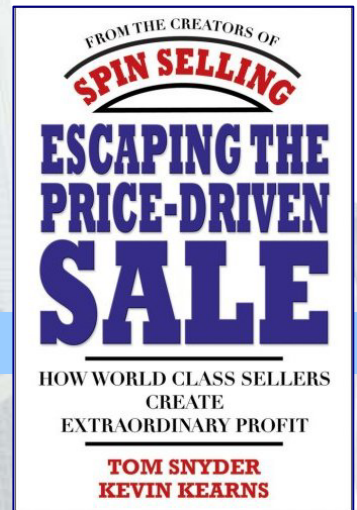


Hundreds of international business leaders have relied on Mr. Snyder during the past 15 years to help launch products, develop new business, and increase shareholder value. Clients include Reuters, Google, Bank of America, IBM, UPS, HP, Canon, Boeing, AOL, CIGNA, Bayer, Ernst & Young, Eli Lilly, Time Warner, Citibank, and Microsoft.

Through radio, i-casts, seminars and publications Tom has also helped a broader audience of sales decision makers on topics such as consultative selling in major sales organizations, creating client value and innovative ways to strengthen competitive differentiation in an increasingly crowded marketplace.

His best selling book, *Escaping the Price-Driven Sale*, was published by McGraw Hill. He has appeared as a featured guest on internet radio shows. Tom can also be heard each week on What's Happening in Biz on Microsoft's Windows Media and other affiliate networks.

Before joining Teton, Mr. Snyder was CEO of one of the world's largest sales consultancy, Huthwaite Inc – an Informa company (London Exchange.) After receiving his MBA, Tom spent eight years with the Federal government, two of which were on the White House staff. After moving to the private sector, Tom founded several companies, including a risk management company and a Cash & Carry, serving as CEO and/or Chairman of each.



Recent Interviews and Articles

Sales and Marketing Management Magazine - 4/5/2005

~ Interview of Tom Snyder

To Forecast Accurately - Change Your Sales Strategy

Does this sound familiar? It's a week before the end of the third quarter and you're scrambling to come up with revenue to meet your forecast. "We can't just tell the Board we fell short!" moans your CEO. Or what about the flipside to that conversation, when the CEO remarks: Wow. We are way over what we thought we'd do for this period. I love these kinds of surprises. In truth, these kinds of surprises shouldn't happen at all with the right forecasting, says Tom Snyder, vice president of business development at Sterling, Virginia-based Huthwaite, a global sales performance improvement company. In his study, "Rational Forecasting: The Convergence of Skills, Strategy and Pipeline Management," Snyder points out that inaccurate forecasts, while common, are unnecessary and "a symptom of a more pernicious problem: failing to incorporate the customer's point of view in the development and implementation of sales strategy."

In other words, poor forecasting isn't the problem in and of itself. The real problem is a seller-focused sales strategy. Too often, says Snyder, sellers think activities such as giving presentations or submitting proposals constitute a sales strategy. Sure, these activities are important to making a sale, but they miss customers' perspectives and thus contribute to poor forecasts. After all, you might be checking off all the boxes in the early stages of your pipeline, but your buyers might be in the latter stages of their buying process. If that disparity isn't accounted for, your forecast will be off.

"Effective pipeline tools are representations of two aspects of each sale: the events that the seller has conducted or completed arrayed against the buyer's incremental commitments to make a buying decision," says Snyder. "Aligning these two points of view allows sellers to quickly develop an event-oriented sales strategy that focuses on pipeline milestones that most need addressing."

To determine where buyers are in their decision cycle, consider the results of a 12-year study Huthwaite conducted on buyer behavior. The organization found that buyers in complex sales always move through a set of four predictable stages as they make or reaffirm a purchase decision:

- Recognition of needs – when buyers define a problem in terms of what a successful solution will look like



- Evaluation of options – when buyers differentiate between the various suppliers
- Resolution of concerns – when buyers evaluate the consequences of following through on a tentative decision
- Changes over time – when a decision is made, buyers move to this stage when they become comfortable with the status quo

The development of an effective sales strategy, says Snyder, requires sellers to have three skills for this buying cycle: the ability to recognize where buyers are in their decision cycle at any particular time, the ability to execute the specific skills that create value for customers at each stage and the ability to move buyers both forward and backward in their decision cycle. Once you attain these skills and develop an effective strategy, accurate forecasting should follow.

"Accurate forecasting is the natural bedfellow of an effectively executed customer-driven strategy," Snyder concludes. "With the skills to incorporate the customer's point of view into the sales strategy, accurate forecasts are the natural byproduct of a good sales pipeline tool."

Fortune - 6/2/2005

~ Interview of Tom Snyder

Great Salespeople Aren't Born - They Work At It

How to survive - and thrive - in today's competitive business climate.

No question about it: Sales is a hot career these days, with lots of big companies eager to hire top salespeople, even if they have to raid competitors to do it. But the salesperson's role has changed radically in recent years. Glad-handing and golfing are (for the most part) out; analytical thinking and creative problem-solving are in. I recently chatted with Kevin Kearns, president of giant sales training firm Huthwaite, based in Sterling, Va., about what it takes to be a sales star now. Here are some excerpts from our conversation:

Q: You say that salespeople need different skills now than they did in the past. Why is that?

A: Partly, it's the Internet. So much information is easily available to people now that they can get detailed product descriptions, and do comparisons of products and services online. So selling now is not about hawking a product, describing its features, and so on. Instead of communicating value, customers want you to create value. It's a big difference.

Q: What do you mean by 'create value'?

A: People buy something because it solves a problem—their particular problem. So, to succeed, you need to be adept at figuring out what each customer's problem is and how you can help solve it. Sometimes, to be truly effective, you have to enlist the support of other people in your own company as well. For example, you might arrange for your IT department to design a way for the customer to order and inventory your product more easily. Or your marketing people might pitch in and help a customer sell its product or service. Sometimes you can identify a way to build more unique customization into your product or service so that it fills a customer's exact need. But to arrive at anything like that, you have to be an excellent listener. Mediocre salespeople talk most of the time, during a sales call. Great ones listen most of the time.

Q: What else do great salespeople do?

A: They plan each sales call meticulously rather than "winging it." They also conclude each meeting with suggestions for moving the process along, rather than using high-pressure tactics to close the deal. Incidentally, lots of people think that great salespeople are "born, not made," that is, that you have to have a certain kind of personality or you're out of luck. But all the behaviors of successful salespeople can be learned. In fact, anyone thinking of going into sales should take a couple of classes, partly just to see if they like it.

Q: Another idea people have is that it helps for the salesperson to develop a personal relationship with the customer. Is that still true, if it ever was?

A: Well, of course you want to be cordial, and so-called soft skills do matter, as they do in any job where you're dealing with people. But there are very few golf outings anymore. Nobody has time.

Selected White Papers by Tom Snyder



What Buyer Value Really Means

Escaping the Price Driven Sale

The Four Truths of Behavior Change

Rational Forecasting: *convergence of skills, strategy, and pipeline management*

www.tetonsands.com

Q: Do you foresee any more changes coming in what salespeople will need to know or do?

A: I think we'll see a real winnowing out—and, in fact, we're already seeing it. Truly good salespeople who know how to identify and solve problems for customers will be increasingly successful, with more and more employers competing for their talents. Mediocre salespeople will disappear. Only the very highly skilled will survive.

Q: This new emphasis on succeeding by solving problems is interesting, because frankly it sounds like that is what any businessperson—in sales or not—has to try to do. Isn't it?

A: Yes, it is. If you really think about it, any job in an organization has some element of sales in it. Now, as president of my company, I find myself doing more selling than ever before, even than when I was technically a "sales guy." So there's no question that learning some of the basics of good sales techniques can help anyone build a more successful career.

Value-Added Selling 21 - 9/26/2005

~ By Tom Snyder

Prospecting: What Winners Do – and Losers Don't

Prospecting is painful. A full 63% of salespeople say this is the part of selling they dislike most, according to research by the sales consultants at Huthwaite International, Inc. That's not surprising, given the attitude of managers who receive prospecting calls. Our research also shows that 91% say they never respond to cold calls and 88% could not recollect an incident where a cold call offered something relevant.

It's clear that salespeople making cold calls aren't offering their customers a reason to listen. But cold call prospects will snap to attention if you offer them value.

What is value? As Huthwaite defines it, value can be created by uncovering an unrecognized problem; offering an unanticipated solution; or becoming a broker of resources your organization can provide as part of your solution, such as an inventory system, custom design or marketing support.

Value, then, is something that's particular to the individual customer. Leaving the same voice-mail message with every prospect, something salespeople routinely do, clearly isn't offering value.

Once the need to offer value during prospecting calls is understood, the remaining challenge is to create a target-rich prospecting environment.

The entire process can be summarized as a four-stage model called RIMS, for Research, Implications, Message Building, and Sales Cycle.

The Teton Sands Group *is* seasoned C-level managers with partner-level "big-six" experience.

We bring ideas and best practices from numerous industries to your business. You experience the creativity and communication skills of "practiced operators" – never of freshly minted MBA's.

Quick turnaround, challenging assignments are our specialty. We subordinate our ego to help build client capabilities and skills. You fully participate in the process. We care for our clients as people and organizations, even when we are not serving them.

www.tetonsands.com