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# CHUCK TALK: Drop the sales title, you're in business development

by **Chuck Mache**

The word "sales" should be banished from every business card in every company. If you have the title of sales representative, sales manager or vice president of sales, then you are instantly putting yourself in a subservient position when it comes to advancing your revenue opportunities.

Think about this for a second – the most successful CPAs in accounting firms are the ones who bring in the most clients. The most successful attorneys in law firms are the ones who have the most cases with the biggest clients. Does either of them carry the word "sales" on their business cards? The answer is obviously absolutely not.

Yet, what separates them from the rest of their peer group is their ability to bring new clients into their firm. I recently asked a managing partner of a large regional accounting firm what his top three challenges are in his business during this economic climate. His response was 1) more billable hours, 2) more billable hours and 3) more billable hours. Can I translate that into simpler terms? More sales.

For those whose life is dedicated to selling, what can you learn from the very best in these industries that would greatly benefit you in your strategic approach to business development? I will tell you up front that if you are in the world of generating revenue, a great majority of you will not agree with my next statement. Selling as we have traditionally known it is dead.

Pounding on the door, picking up the phone and cold calling, canvassing an area and continued aggressive approaches to growing revenue are rapidly becoming a way of the past. I can hear you right now. "You don't know my industry! You have to sell hard!" I'm here to tell you that selling, by its very nature, puts the salesperson in a subservient position. And that, my friends, is a place that a solid CPA or attorney will never find themselves. One major reason is that the very best, regardless of their occupation, will never get caught "selling." Here are two examples of how salespeople and business developers handle situations.

## Example 1 – No return call back

Salesperson – leaves 6 messages and doesn't get a call back. The salesperson continues to call and call and call. Through sheer timing and/or irritation, the potential client picks up the phone. The discussion doesn't go very well.

Business developer – leaves a message and doesn't get a call back. The business developer finds a common relationship that the two have and asks for an introduction. Once he receives the meeting he determines if there may be a business fit, and if so, they discuss and agree upon a logical next step.

## Example 2 – You got the meeting

Salesperson – Fully loads his guns by preparing a pitch about the company, its products and talks for 80 percent of the meeting, working his way up to the big close.

Business developer – At the meeting, the business developer has a list of questions – in his head – that

serve several purposes. These questions are designed to determine if there is a potential fit, find out if there are any pain points that the developer can solve and gain a real understanding of the potential client's business. With that information, and after discussion about what differentiates the business developer's company from the rest, they agree that there is a reason to take things to the next step, which they mutually determine. By the way, the potential client did most of the talking.

Take a lesson from the very best who are in sales but aren't called salespeople. The best leaders, managers and professionals in any industry spend their time determining and solving problems with real solutions. That is how they grow companies and get business. They remove roadblocks with their solutions. They find and spend their time with people who really want what they have to offer.

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Chuck Mache, president of Chuck Mache Communications, is a speaker, executive coach and consultant. His work is dedicated to helping companies and individuals break through to their next level, and he is the bestselling author of the "The Four Kinds of Sales People: How and Why They Excel and How You Can Too." Learn more and sign up for Chuck's complimentary monthly newsletter at [www.chuckmache.com](http://www.chuckmache.com).