

Top Ten Reasons Salespeople Fail

Excerpt from Cary White's book "See the People..."

Since I have spent many years out in the field specifically working with salespeople and helping them to be successful I have noticed some interesting things. Patterns, if you will, that keep cropping up. Patterns that concern me, and I want to mention them to you.

If you fall into one of these categories as a current salesperson, notice it and get out fast. If you are just starting your sales career, now is a good time to know what these career killers are and stay away from them from the beginning.

They creep into our lives almost unnoticed and before we know it they have a choke hold on us that is very difficult to break. I have seen many a great salesperson fail and end up quitting his job or getting let go because he lost focus. Let's talk about each of these ten problem areas:

1. **Procrastination** – Probably the biggest problem that I see. We push papers around on our desk, chat with the office staff, and come up with all sorts of excuses not to go out and make those calls or not to get on the phone and make those calls. Make sure you have a good plan for each day and a time set aside for making your calls and you will eliminate procrastination very quickly.
2. **Complacency** – You know you are doing pretty well and things are just rolling along their merry way and you don't want to rock the boat. You are taking care of those current customers and you have decent results, so why do you need to change anything? All of a sudden the sales activity stops and one day so does that current customer and you have nothing to replace it with. This one really sneaks up on you and gets you before you know what happened. Because there is nothing in the pipeline, all of a sudden no money is coming in. You're dead. Watch out for this one.
3. **Think they know it all** – I call this one "getting too big for your britches" syndrome. You never stop learning, never, unless you're dead. Sometimes I see salespeople who are mentally dead, although they are very much alive. They had a couple of trainings and made a couple of good sales, somebody patted them on the back and all of a sudden you'd think they were Brian Tracy. I will share more on this towards the end of the chapter about the importance of personal

development. As Tony Robbins says, “Constant and never-ending improvement.”

4. **Giving up too soon** – Somewhat the opposite of the last one. Somehow you just get rejected one too many times, the day is going crappy, no one is listening, woe is me... Things like that happen; just because you are in sales doesn't mean every day is a walk in the park. You can't give up; let me say that again, you can't give up. Winston Churchill once said, “Never give up; never, never, never, give up.” That is powerful. If you love what you do, stay the course. There will be bright days ahead, I promise.
5. **Fear** – One of the great destroyers of anything is fear. Fear of death, flying, heights, etc. All of these and others have stopped millions from reaching their goals and dreams in life. What are some of the fears of salespeople? Let's mention a few: fear of rejection, fear of cold calling, fear of success, fear of presenting, fear of closing, fear of handling an objection, fear of failure, fear of their boss, and the list could go on with each individual. The thing to remember is not that we have fear, but what do we let fear do to us? Courage is not the lack of fear, but knowing we have fear and working through it anyway. We are all afraid of something, but you cannot let fear cripple you and stop you from reaching your potential and beyond.
6. **Overcoming obstacles** – This is not overcoming objections that we are talking about here. That comes in chapter six of this book. What we are talking about is seeing our obstacles in life and in our career and overcoming them. Sometimes we make the obstacles much bigger than they are, and we are our worst enemy and defeat ourselves. There is a solution. I heard a poem once by Brian Tracy that goes like this:

To every problem under the sun,
There is a solution or there is none.
If there's a solution, find it,
If there's none, never mind it.

Overcome the monsters, the obstacles in your life. Face them head on. Find the solutions. That is your goal!

7. **Inability to question properly** – This is a huge one. I won't say a lot here since we are going to spend a ton of time on this later in chapter three. Let me say this, though, your success depends on you becoming a master in questioning skills. Most salespeople do not ever

learn this crucial skill. It takes time and practice. Are you willing to pay the price to be the best at it? If you do, you will surely reap the rewards.

8. **Do not present effectively** – This is an area that I think salespeople already believe they have mastered. For some reason, throwing a few sales sheets in a folder and rambling on about each of them is not a presentation. Let me clarify that--not a good presentation, but it is a presentation and will have consequences, just as a good presentation will. Most salespeople do not practice enough in this area. They view a presentation as a minor thing sometimes, to their demise. With a little practice you can be really good at this part. It is also something you should master, like questioning. They go hand in hand. Fail to do this and you will fail to succeed. Learn to communicate well and the world is yours.
9. **Poor goals or poor planning** – As I have worked with salespeople all over the country, I started very quickly discovering a pattern that salespeople were in. Most of the ones I worked with didn't have very strong goals and a lot of them didn't have any goals. If I asked to see their goals, the goals were always in their heads and never on paper. It became very clear to me why so many salespeople fail. They have no idea what they want. This also translated into poor or no planning. I couldn't figure out why so many who I was working with didn't even use a planner of any kind. Everything was kept in their heads. If you are going to really succeed in this profession of sales, you need to be a goal setter and goal getter. You need to have a planner to help you have a plan and to guide you there. Planners are part of our tools; just like a builder uses a saw and a hammer to build a house. The builder also has plans and needs to refer to those often. It is no less important for us. Just do it!
10. **Not loving what they do** – Attitude. This will make you or break you. I have seen a poor attitude bring a salesperson down faster than anything. On the other hand, I have seen a great attitude lift salespeople up to heights they never thought possible. Your attitude about your job and those you serve is crucial to your sales success. I have told many a salesperson, "If you don't like what you are doing, get out!" It doesn't mean you are a bad person, but if you don't love what you do you will be miserable. Why would anyone want to be miserable every day? I know, some people have gotten into sales for some crazy reason and they don't know how to get out. Please look at where you are at, and if it is not in a good place, you have to find a

way out. Don't stay in a job just to make money. Do what you love and have a great attitude about it. End of story.

As I have talked with other trainers in the field, we have agreed that these are some of the biggest problems that cause salespeople to fail. They happen to all of us at some point in our career. I have gone through each one of them myself more than once.

I will probably face them again many more times in my life. The real question is when you are faced with these challenges, what do you do about them? How do you pull yourself out?

You look these challenges square in the eye and you make the necessary changes to get out. You get more training, go out and work in the field, get a mentor to help and support you, get a planner and a watch...all kinds of things, but do something to break through them. Do not let the problem win. If you do you will end up as a statistic, "another one bites the dust."

"The Hidden Truths" book answers each one of these ten reasons and will help you beat the odds, overcome insurmountable challenges, and achieve your true dreams. Don't think that these basic guidelines are too simple. They are your foundation, and the foundation has to be strong. You are never too good to go back to the basics. Vince Lombardi, the great Packers football coach, used to go back to the basics every year with his professional players.

Don't give up. Work on each of the ten until you have mastered them. Use our programs to help.

Best wishes,

Cary White

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