Insight JULY 2010 HuthwaiteFleming

"Do you want the truth or something beautiful? I am happy to deceive…" Paloma Faith, 2009

Many partners and business development directors might feel that this Paloma Faith hit song from last year accurately describes the approach their people take when submitting sales pipeline reports. But do sellers ***deliberately*** deceive the boss and say what they think he or she wants to hear? We don't think so.

It's just that the sheer complexity of a major sale creates huge knowledge gaps that allow optimism to fill the space available. It's easy to assume that we have identified all the key players. It's tempting to believe that they are all on our side and our competitors are trailing in our wake. When the sales cycle is spread across months or even years, it's especially easy to think that it's progressing faster than it is in reality.

Worse still, the complex nature of the sale often relies on a range of people collecting and reporting account intelligence. If they don't have a method of capturing, recording and sharing it in a consistent manner using commonly understood terminology, truth is easily obscured by the beauty that optimism creates.

Of course those of our readers who are SPIN® trained will know the range of recording and planning tools that we provide. They enable strategy and planning to result in the capture and sharing of ***meaningful*** account intelligence. Up until now, these tools – the T-form, SPIN® Call Planner and Persuasive Case Analysis – have been paper based. From this month, electronic versions of these, with some new ones, form the SPIN® Selling Tools. Together with the Account Strategy Tools they complement our skill development programmes to form what we call the 'Huthwaite Sales System'.

The SPIN® Selling Tools can be available as part of a SPIN® Selling course delivered by Huthwaite International and anyone can purchase a download of the Account Strategy Tools and the e-learning that accompanies them. Put them together and account strategy informs actions, and actions generate intelligence to inform future strategy.

But it is the 'Team Edition' of the Toolbox, shared between members of the same sales team, that can really uncover those truths and prompt actions to deal with them. You can even link the Toolbox to an existing CRM system to enable single-entry data. Information entered in one is automatically copied across to the other.

Click here to learn more about the Sales Toolbox and the Huthwaite Sales System that surrounds it. After all, whether you're a seller or a partner, we don't want you following another line from Paloma's hit:

"Just close your eyes and make believe"

Downloads

Account Strategy Tools online brochure

SPIN® Selling Tools online brochure

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