

20 Ways You Can Blow a Sale

As in any area of business we can learn many things from our mistakes. There is no better way to refine your selling craft than to do a candid analysis of how or why you lost a specific sale to a competitor.

Every [sales professional](#) wants to leverage previous sales successes while minimizing repetition of prior strategic and tactical selling mistakes. It's the true professional who constantly looks for ways to remain at the top of their game and effectively eliminate most of his competition. Losing a sale now and then can offer reminders and/or specific insights into how to further improve your chances on closing your next deal.

Selling is More Than a Legal Definition

Selling is a complex process between a minimum of two people by which at least one person makes a purchase commitment for goods or services offered for sale by another acknowledging party. A complete sales transaction must be concluded with a written or oral commitment, validated by [financial remuneration](#) from the [purchasing party](#) to the offering party. Correspondingly, the transaction is validated only when an actual exchange of the predefined purchased goods or services from the offering party has been completed.

Although the above sales definition may be somewhat stale and too rigid, it will give you some insights into where and how you can go wrong throughout the selling process. Below are just 20 of the most common selling mistakes one can make:

1. The seller's failure to demonstrate enough perceived value of the products or services offered to the buyer for the final asking price and terms.
2. The seller's inability to effectively define a cost effective solution to the buyer's business problem(s) as originally was assumed by the buyer of the seller's products or services.
3. The seller's lack of product or service knowledge
4. The seller's personal or professional transgressions made to the buyer during the selling process
5. The seller's inaccurate definition of the buyers [purchasing authority](#)
6. The seller's incorrect definition of the [buyer's financial resources](#) – ability to pay for the goods.
7. The seller's misunderstanding of the [purchase decision](#) process within the buyer's organization.
8. The seller's previous product or service performance inconsistencies
9. The seller's inability to effectively access his competitor's product or service offering performance and the buyers perceived value of same

10. The seller's mistake of assuming his competitor will maintain previous pricing thresholds
11. The seller's lack of strategic timeliness of when to make a final proposal or pricing position
12. The seller's lack of anticipation of unprecedented competitor transaction terms and conditions offered to the buyer
13. The seller's inaccurate assumption that the buyer was able to correctly assess his own valid business problem(s)
14. The seller's inability to document all the required information the buyer needed to make a purchase decision
15. The seller's incorrect assumption that a seller warranty of provided products or services would garner such a level of purchase consideration
16. Either the seller or the buyer chose to be dishonest during the selling process and that was determined to be the case prior to a final purchase decision
17. The seller chose to bring in the wrong resources, human or otherwise, to help close the sale
18. The seller could not guarantee delivery of the promised goods or services
19. Price was actually the ONLY purchase criteria
20. The seller did not know who the actual competitor salesperson would be at the account for this sales situation

Again, these are only 20 possible areas that can cause a sales failure. Sometimes the valid cause of the loss of the sale can never be known because it is only truly known by the [buyer](#). The buyer often chooses not to tell you why you really lost the sale or simply wants to be polite and exaggerates the cause. **BUT YOU MUST ASK!**

The most important point to be made here is to develop the desire to ask why you lost a sale and to ask! If you don't ask you will never know! If you don't ask for every sale you lose you can never truly achieve optimum selling performance.