

How to Keeping Sales Up In A Down Economy
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What's happening? Sales cycles are longer, budgets are shrinking and there will be more last minute decisions. **Here's the good news:** People and businesses are still spending money they just want to make sure they are choosing the right companies. How can you position yourself to be the person they choose?

What can you do now?

1. Focus on what you can control. You can't control the economy, but you can control how you react to it:

- Your mindset: Turn off the news, surround yourself with positive people. Read inspiring books. Listen to tapes. It is estimated that 80% of your success is your mindset.
- Your health. Health is wealth. Get plenty of rest, exercise, eat right

Action Step: What can you do every day to improve your mindset? What can you do every day to improve your health?

2. Be a creative prospector:

- Offer a free "business promotion" tune up to all your customers
- Form alliances with complimentary businesses
- Work with sales people in other industries
- Leverage all your contacts

Action Step: How are you being a more creative prospector?

3. Use Web 2.0 Tools:

- Selectively join social networking sites
- Comment on blogs
- Start your own blog

Action Step: What social networking sites will you join?

4. Give them a reason to purchase:

- Both ASI and PPAI have done studies on the effectiveness of promotional products with great results. People will invest when they know what's in it for them. Share case histories of successful promotions you have done.

Action Step: Get a copy of the ASI or PPAI Survey to share with your clients.

5. Stand out from the competition:

- Have testimonials on your web site
- Provide case histories of successful promotions

Action step: Whom can you ask for a testimonial? What case histories can you add to your web site?

6. Have a consistent stay in touch strategy:

- Send a promotional idea of the month.
- Keep in touch with "A-List" clients at least twice a month
- Send marketing tips and case histories

Action step: How will you keep in touch?

7. Understand your client's business challenges:

- Go to their web site frequently
- Read annual reports.
- Ask great questions
- What challenges are they facing now they weren't the last time you spoke?
- Always think, WIIFM. What's in it for them to buy now?

Action step: What do you know about your top ten customers challenges?

8. Provide superior service:

- Do surveys to find out what your customers most want
- Make the ordering process easier
- Provide tracking numbers
- Provide marketing tips
- Enhance your web site
- Add additional services
- Provide faster turnaround
- Guarantees

Action step: What can you provide that will make you stand out?

9. Target specific markets:

- Eco friendly
- Healthcare
- Women Entrepreneurs
- Direct Mail
- Safety and Motivation Programs

Action step: What new markets will you target?

10. Deal with the new economy issues:

- **Budget cuts:**

Solution: Give people 3 options: High, medium, low. People will buy if you can work within their budgets.

- **Price cutting:**

Solution: Get full payment up front. Get a credit card. Get a testimonial. Get something in exchange for a price reduction. Make sure the price reduction makes sense otherwise walk away.

- **Last minute decisions**

Solution: Let customers know you can provide faster turnaround. Have a group of quality suppliers that offer faster turnaround.

- **Payment**

Solutions: Ask for deposits that will cover your costs. Know the purchasing and paying process of all your clients.