

✘ The world may not be divided into black and white, but in the realm of B2B Sales and Marketing, there are only two kinds of actions: those that are *acceptable -strategies* that are considered beneficial and sometimes even fall into the category of brilliance, and then there are *actions which are a complete waste of time and effort*, those which do nothing but destroy the very purpose of it all.

No matter how grand one's intentions are, success will always be dependent on what was done, and not on what was planned. When you make certain actions in sales and marketing, there is no gray area - only right and wrong.

With that point raised, one's awareness of such blunders is crucial in the trade business. These are the "capital sins" and how to make your way to total salvation:

1. Over-emphasizing a good price. On face value, a good price is always, and universally, a good thing. No B2B buyer could say that a good price is something he doesn't look for in a business deal. But to put too much emphasis on this can also break down the innate advantage that it has, making buyers think that they're making a "deal" rather than acquiring something that has great value. Although there are people who would sacrifice quality just to save a couple of bucks for the company, there are still those who perceive that a "too-good-to-be-true" price means *lesser* value and would rather go for something that's pricey yet acceptable in quality.

2. Smoke and mirrors. A dazzling presentation is, at best, only good in board meetings or kitchen knife demonstrations that you see in malls over the weekend. In B2B, simplicity is beauty (or a similar aphorism applies). Most, if not all, B2B buyers would much rather accommodate a quick, straight-to-the-point discussion of what the product/service could do to make them better. Make them think that the benefits alone are enough to dazzle them, and any other enhancements aren't necessary.

3. No customer value. Speaking of presentation: If you're convinced not to build a Las Vegas show around your sales pitch, find another thing to put your spotlight on. And what better thing to choose than the B2B buyer itself? Make your presentation be less about the "deal" and be more about the client - their needs, their goals, and how your product/service could facilitate in achieving them. Listen. Allow them to talk freely, but do not lose control of the conversation. **Don't overdo it, too.** Most people think that a "let me help you" perception can improve a sales relationship, when in fact what it really does is to give them a "deceitful" impression towards the marketer. Try "let's help each other" instead.

4. Lack of selling skills. One would think that a solid knowledge of the product would

already suffice in bringing it out to the buying market. However, under-appreciating the importance of beefing up one's skills and expertise in selling can create a damaging backfire, especially when giving adequate attention to the buyer's emotional needs, and also in extracting unstated desires. If these personal tools are not sharpened regularly, brace yourself for lost sales opportunities.