

Sales Call Reluctance - Initial Pharmaceutical Results

DURING 2002 we ran a series of 6 articles introducing you to the concept of SCR, and are now working alongside a number of large companies in the UK and elsewhere in Europe.

We have already identified some strong trends, which appear to be becoming the 'norm' within the Pharmaceutical industry, and you may find this information useful in helping to review your own sales force effectiveness:

1. Overall Sales Call Reluctance Profile

Around 40% of people profiled suffer from SCR.

Think about that - 4 out of every 10 salespeople may be negatively affected by their fear of the sales job.

Remember, an average of 15 pieces of business is lost to competitors every month by an individual with SCR. For a relatively inexpensive £15 drug, that could be over **£1 million of lost business** a year for a company with 100 representatives.

2. Sales Call Reluctance Traits

The entire range of the 12 traits has been exhibited within individuals during our work, with several of these traits showing through strongly. Two traits stand out with exceptionally high scores - Yielder and Role Rejection.

As we make presentations throughout the industry, Senior Managers all readily identify with these particular issues:

| Yielder | Role Rejection |
|---|--|
| <p><i>Dislikes 'Closing' and actually pinning decision makers down</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fears being intrusive or pushy • Needs to wait for 'just the right time' to close • Elevates 'rapport building' above actually closing • Hates conflict. This can interfere with assertive selling behaviours such as overcoming objections • Grateful when the Doctor says they "will think about it", Pleased to book another meeting rather than exhaust themselves further | <p><i>Struggles with the idea that they are actually in a sales role</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • For some, "sales" is a route to a career elsewhere. Would like to move on to "better" things - management/ training/marketing etc. • Prefers to see themselves as 'Advisers', 'Specialists' or 'Medical Representative' rather than as a Sales person • For some, they believe that their parents/friends may be disappointed with the actual activity of 'sales'. (Particularly after the years and expense of University!!) |

| Yielder | Role Rejection |
|--|---|
| <p>Your Customer's Perspective: Pharmacist: "I have met regularly with the same Medical Representative for 15 months. He has NEVER asked me to get his drug on to the formulary"</p> | <p>Your Customer's Perspective: Doctor: "Its an insult to our intelligence that they think we don't know what they do for a living - it's confusing and counterproductive when they try to hide it."</p> |

Both of these conditions can be introduced to straightforward solutions, producing a less stressed individual, and increased productivity for the company.

3. Motivation and Goals

To date we have identified **lower than normal** levels of motivation and goals in many of the individuals profiled.

This can look like SCR but it is, in fact, an 'Impostor'. I.e. No real problem with 'selling'; they either don't have the 'energy' (motivation) to do so, or don't understand why they should (goals) - many have lost their way with their careers.

There are many causes, and can be social as well as business based. Business reasons may be:

- Earnings and lifestyle are at comfortable levels - why do more?
- Career seems to have hit a plateau - no new direction to push towards.
- Line managers or organisation are not supporting desired change of direction.

Once understood and accepted, they can set some clear, manageable and **personally meaningful** objectives. Energy levels that should be used for selling can be focused in the right direction.

4. Goal Diffusion

'Too many plates spinning' - this is **higher than normal**, and toxic in many profiles. Salespeople with so many goals and projects that they don't know how to use their motivational energy effectively - they ultimately lose heart.

Once understood and accepted, the necessary adjustments to their own particular situation can be made, ensuring that the energy levels that should be used for selling can be focused in the right direction.

We are constantly adding to the depth and validity of our database within Pharmaceuticals - with this comes an increasing understanding of the sales people in the industry, and the ability to add real value to your business. If you would like to talk to us about this subject, please contact us using the numbers below. The previous Pf editorials from 2002 can be viewed on our website.



Remap specialises in Managing Business Performance, and is run by Directors Martin Perry, Tim Tolman and Ian Saunders. To discover more information about overcoming Sales Call Reluctance and to find out what else they have to offer your business, you can contact them using the information in the adjacent box



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