

IVEN FRANGI

Are Your Customers Suffering from Sales Information Overload?



Renaming old sales techniques and practices, won't make them work any better than they did in the past...

In a recent interview on Channel 9 with conservationist David Suzuki, the interviewer observed that with his world-wide schedule, email and the internet, must have been extremely useful tools. Amazingly, Suzuki responded that he used neither!

Not surprisingly, with the e-world upon us and Suzuki's need to stay in touch, the interviewer questioned his wisdom.

Suzuki's reply was fascinating. He said that he didn't have a shortage of information and he certainly didn't need more. He said that the majority of the extra information available was naturally interesting but not vital. I could really relate to that, can you?

A classic example

Recently, I observed an example of this oversupply of information. I watched a comprehensive sales pitch being made using charts, graphics, illustrations and creativity. All questions were comprehensively answered. The prospect said that he was very impressed but he still didn't buy. When I later asked why, he said he was

overwhelmed with all the information and options presented. In short he was totally confused.

When a sales presentation is loaded with information that is interesting but not vital to the prospect, what is created is unnecessary confusion – not opportunity. Be brief not abrupt. Salespeople cannot *know* too much but they can *talk* too much.

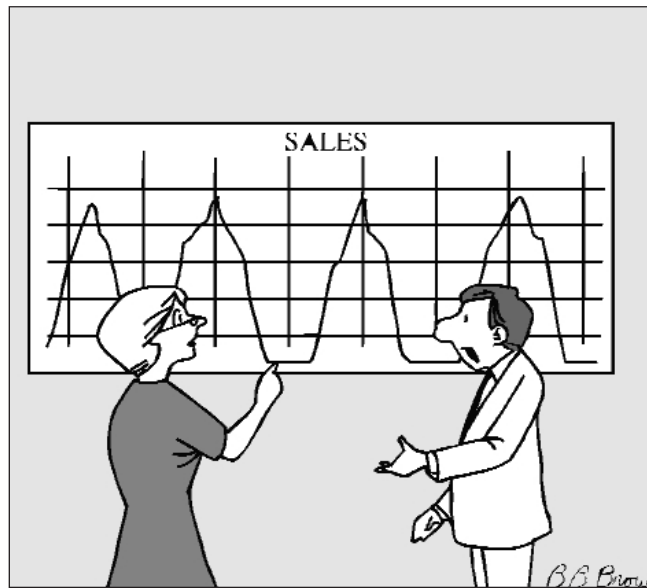
A New Lesson?

No. The great writer of Genesis told the story of the creation of the world in 442 words – about seventy five percent of the words in this article!

At a family function recently, a colleague of mine named Dennis, was asking his nephew Damien, about how his degree in communications was progressing at the University of Queensland.

Damien got very excited and animated about the latest material he was studying and in particular, a book he was reading. He enthused about how relevant, useful and pertinent it was to his understanding of the marketplace today. Furthermore, he quoted examples of how he had personally applied these leading edge, interpersonal skills.

Knowing that Dennis was in the communications business, Damien made a point of recommending the book. It was, *"How To Win Friends and Influence People"*, by Dale Carnegie. He asked if Dennis had ever heard of it?



"Well, actually, we're closed on weekends".

To many of us, of course, this book has long been a classic – and as useful today as the day it was written, over 40 years ago. This story shows that improvement is a relative measure (*pun intended!*).

There is a potential trap in seeking to improve any area of business. When we try to improve anything, for example the sales process or any other process, there is risk involved. What if the supposed improvement is not, in fact, an improvement at all? It's not the original version that is reverted to but the revamped version, which is reworked yet again.

Result? Some of the fundamentally good practices already in existence are lost and the replacements are no better and sometimes worse.

Need another new idea?

How many new ideas and practices have you been exposed to recently? Have you recently shifted a paradigm, re-engineered a process, benchmarked a business practice, shifted an internal mindset, given 360 degree feedback, upward feedback, checked your Renaissance measures, balanced a scorecard, managed a matrix, down-sized, reorganised or negatively recruited?

Surfing the latest waves

As this shows, today what is being witnessed is a propensity to 'ride the latest wave', often by merely re-naming existing practices. We are inspired by newness.

Eileen Shapiro encapsulates this in her book, *'Fadsurfing in the Boardroom'*. Sales training, for instance, is looked at as, "A process of relabelling the fundamentals of good selling as the fundamentals of inspirational salesmanship, in the hope that such re-labelling will make those techniques more easily absorbed". (*This has been edited a little but you will get the drift...*). As the French say, *Plus ca change, plus ca la meme chose* — the more things change, the more they stay the same!

With all the technology and 'change' happening around us today, it is timely to remember that

at the core of our business and at the heart of selling, are people. Whilst constantly striving to improve, selling is about our customers and how our new skills and processes – improved or proven – are able to enhance our relationships.

Iven Frangi is a business builder. He builds your business with higher sales results. His presentations are researched, customised and use humour to weave in relevant day to day examples.

Contact tel: (02) 9908 3333.

E-mail: iven@frangi.com

Website: www.frangi.com