

### What's Stopping You Selling?

BY IVEN FRANGI CSP



What I'm going to tell you came as a very pleasant and exciting surprise.

A few weeks ago I was speaking with a sales manager. "Iven, my team is doing OK at the moment. They are on target for the year and it looks like we'll hit our budget and in a couple of areas we'll be above budget."

"That's great." I said. "So why don't you look happier?"

"I suppose I'm tired. It seems that the results are always the same. The top producers always come in with the same sales results. The sales volume is very predictable and actually quite easy to manage. A couple of good ideas and some encouragement and direction and they pretty much run themselves.

Then there's the other group that just seems to hover at just below average. They seem to work hard. Harder in fact than the top group. The numbers show that in terms of the activities they should be doing excellent business. They have lots of action without much traction. More than that—they just take up so much of my time.

The top people don't ask for much of my time. It seems that they don't really want it, but someone from the average group is always knocking on my door for some piece of advice. They come in and tell me that the customers aren't ready to buy, that the market is tight, that they need more help from me. Now I know that's my job to help. It's just draining."

#### It was time for action

That's a conversation that I've had many times. This time I decided to do something about it. I wanted to find out if what the sales people told their sales managers was valid. So I designed a survey that looked at the reasons sales people don't sell.

The survey asked two questions and respondents had to choose one answer from the choices available.

Here are the results. See what you think of the answers. It's important to note that this is an ongoing and live poll. These results are a snapshot at the time of writing. Everybody who responds immediately affects the results. If you want add your view just go to [www.franji.com](http://www.franji.com) and follow the link. The updated results will display immediately.

#### What stops you from selling more products/services?

My sales manager doesn't help much	7.5%
I don't have enough product knowledge	2.5%
My products/services don't suit my prospects	12.5%
I need to upgrade my sales skills	55.0%
The price of my product/services is too high	2.5%
The market is hard at the moment	20.0%

#### What I really need most to improve my sales is:

More product knowledge	2.38%
A more helpful sales manager	4.76%
Sales skills training	45.24%
Better quality prospects	26.29%
New products to suit my prospects	11.9%
For the market to improve	9.52%

The pleasant and exciting surprise? The poll shows that salespeople are actually taking responsibility for their own outcomes!

#### Not what I expected.

I expected that the price issue would dominate. I did a straw poll of sales manager friends and they agreed. After all, price and the customers' objection to it is the most popular topic at many sales meetings.

At 2.5% the issue of price is so small it doesn't count. Raising personal skill levels rates highest in what stops 'me' selling and is also number one in what needs to be improved. Again by a large margin.

The other major issue is the market and the quality of the prospects. The good news is that finding better quality prospects is a skill. So it can be learned and developed.

Of course you may think it's obvious that a sales trainer would put out a survey that said sales training was the number one outcome. Not so. I just wanted to find out what stopped sales people selling and what they wanted to get help with. The survey was a random sample of salespeople, sales managers and business people who sell.

So back to the sales manager that started this search. Salespeople need training. No doubt about that. He was pleased that the poll showed that they actually wanted it.

Next issue we will look at what needs to be done to ensure that all your salespeople have action with traction.

#### IVEN FRANGI

Is booked and re-booked by his clients because of his ability to create sales results. His new presentation is **Stress Free Selling : How to Create Unbreakable Client Relationships.**

#### Contact Iven on:

phone: 02 9908 3333  
 fax: 02 9413 3055  
 email: [iven@franji.com](mailto:iven@franji.com)  
 website: [www.franji.com](http://www.franji.com)