



## SALES TRAINING AND THE WAY YOU THINK

Confucius observed, "He who learns but does not think, is lost! He who thinks but does not learn is in great danger."

Learning and thinking are fundamentally linked. They need to be.

Let me state a working assumption, that is, people who choose to work in sales have been through a selection process to identify competencies and the individual has a realistic understanding of the sales role, responsibilities, and challenges.

When starting a sales career, sales training plays a critical role. Development usually focuses on three key areas, technique, process, and product. Layered over these are marketing components that address networking, prospecting and promotion. Together they form the technical components of sales training. Once mastered, they only improve with practice and repetition.

Arguably, the technical learning described in the preceding paragraph is not difficult. Product knowledge may be the exception as product can be complex. The topics have been studied and presented over many years. They have evolved and adapted but there have been few changes to the fundamental concepts of selling. Perhaps the last major change was the shift to needs based selling and the impact of a more informed consumer due to greater access to information on the Internet.

So then has the art of selling been perfected?

Perhaps, but some say it's all for naught if you haven't first tackled the way you think!

In fact my experience suggests that how think should be an "up front" consideration.

Before getting on the road to technical development, there are real advantages to individuals and their organizations if both appreciated the impact effective thinking has on learning. Imagine an individual who is negative, pessimistic, lacks self-esteem, and procrastinates. Compare that person to a positive, self-starting optimist who is full of confidence and believes in himself or herself.

How you think, or your mindset, sets the tone for what follows in your career. It sets the tone for how you learn, how you interact with peers as well as prospects and clients.

In the perfect world, we would only hire those with a positive and optimistic attitude. We attempt to avoid recruiting those with a negative mindset who don't have a strong belief in self and who are not achievement oriented. In reality, we encounter individuals all along the spectrum.

The good news is someone with a negative or neutral mindset can learn to be an effective thinker. In fact, even those with a positive mindset can find ways to improve.

If one consciously understands their personal thinking style, and is able to recognize such things as negative self-talk and counter-productive behaviors, they are well on the way to affecting their mindset. Similar to learning, practice and repetition will enable and adjust the thought process. In time, the conscious re-framing, positive self-talk, and awareness becomes the new mindset.

Imagine the impact a positive mindset can have during the training event. The outcome can be significant. This permits an organization to better leverage its training investment - and ultimately the individual benefits from increased likelihood of personal success.

I'll close with a last thought on mindset from Confucius, "The will to win, the desire to succeed, the urge to reach your full potential... these are the keys that will unlock the door to personal excellence."

<https://blog.granted.com/>