



DEAD SILENCE FROM YOUR PROSPECT : THE WORST SOUND OF ALL

Could this be the worst moment in your selling cycle?

You've done all the right things with your prospect:

- You've identified a real need and developed a reasonably solid relationship.
- You've determined that your prospect is interested in your solution.
- You've had a couple of great meetings or conversations that let the prospect move the sales process forward.
- You've supplied everything needed to make a final decision.
- And you've followed up, as customary, by leaving messages or e-mails to see if you can get a final decision, But instead, all you're hearing is dead silence.

Not a word. Not a peep.

"I don't get it," you say to yourself.

"Everything was going so well, there's definitely a fit, we had a good relationship.

Then, all of a sudden, nothing.

What went wrong?

I know this feeling well because just about everyone who gets in touch with me (and I speak with dozens of you almost every day) struggles with this exact desperate situation --- wondering what went wrong, why your prospect has broken off communication, and, most importantly, what you can do about it.

The only person who can solve this mystery is -- guess who? Your prospect.

You may have done all the "right" things throughout the sales process, but, somewhere along the way, he or she has never felt truly comfortable enough to tell you the truth about where they really stand with the decision to buy or not buy your solution.

Why not?

Because in most cases prospects don't want to hurt your feelings by telling you something that might disappoint you.

The problem is, something in your selling approach (your tone of voice, your attempt to create forward momentum, your use of traditional sales language) told them that the most important thing on your mind was making that sale.

However, what your selling approach must do is let prospects feel comfortable telling you the truth, all the way through the sales cycle, about exactly where you stand with them, without their having to worry that you'll feel disappointed.

This is the gap that makes it easier for prospects to break off communication, because keeping you at bay lets them feel safer and more in control.

So, how do you get to it?

Not by moving forward, but by moving backward to try to repair the hidden break in the relationship. "I don't understand," you say. "How would I do that?" It's simple:

1. Just Give your prospect a call (avoid leaving a voicemail, and send an e-mail only if you have no other options) in which you convey the following message:
2. "Hi John, it's Ari with XYZ company, how are you? John, I'm not calling about moving the project forward or anything about the project itself. I'm just calling to apologize...I haven't heard from you for a few weeks and I figured it must be my fault or something that I may have done, maybe I dropped the ball somewhere along that way...so I'm simply calling (or writing) to see if you wouldn't mind sharing some feedback so I can improve for next time?"

In other words, you apologize.

That's right -- you apologize because it's crucial for you to take the high road and be willing to be told that something on your end did cause the communication breakdown.

However, most of the time, prospects will find your apology so disarming that they'll stop worrying about you trying to "sell" them and will finally feel comfortable telling you their truth.

Try it, and let me know how it goes.

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