

Practice Doesn't Make Perfect

“...only perfect practice makes perfect.”

Vince Lombardi makes an excellent point. The simple act of practicing doesn't mean you achieve perfection. Simply showing up doesn't mean you are going to be successful. Making *X* number of calls doesn't mean you will make *Y* number of sales.

Given the importance of perfect practice, it's shocking that more salespeople don't practice their profession. They won't practice their pitch, practice handling objections, or practice their elevator speech. A majority of salespeople we train despise role-playing. Role-playing is a perfect opportunity to practice. What's more troubling is that sales managers, the coach, won't encourage their salespeople to practice. In high school football, if you didn't practice, you didn't play.

In Peter Senge's, *The Fifth Discipline*, he mentions the importance of practice in the learning organization. He mentions a simple sequence; practice/performance, practice/performance, practice/performance... a simple concept that requires commitment to execute.

Here are a couple of areas where salespeople and managers should practice:

- The elevator speech—the most basic business tool that salespeople should know like the back of their hand. As a general rule, it should be roughly thirty seconds. Sales managers, you should ask your salespeople to deliver their elevator speech at the next meeting.
- The value proposition—a basic selling tool salespeople should routinely practice. The value proposition is what the customer stands to gain by doing business with you. If you're a sales manager, ask your salespeople why customers should buy your solution. If you're not convinced by their answer, neither is the customer.

Take these practice exercises seriously. Only perfect practice makes perfect. Though perfection is impossible, it gives you a ruthless motivation to get better. Improvement is about positive forward motion. If you want to become a better salesperson, a better sales manager, or a better business person, then practice.

Author byline: Paul Reilly

Customer Messaging is a basic selling tool covered in Sales and Service 101. The next Sales and Service 101 public seminar is on November 20, 2014. [Click here](#) for more information. The investment is only \$295 per participant. To register, reply to this email or call (636) 537-3360.