

## WHAT IS YOUR VICTORY STRATEGY?

"Okay, team, let's win this game! We have put together a powerful offense and a solid defense. All we need to do now is to put some points on the board and to stop the other guys from scoring. Get out there and win this game!"

This scenario is played out thousands of times weekly in sporting events, as coaches inspire their teams with motivational rhetoric. There is only one thing missing—the game plan. Imagine this team running on the field yelling, "Hey Coach, what are we supposed to do when we get out here?" The disconnect between rhetoric and execution is not limited to athletic teams. I see this daily in sales teams.

"Let's go out there and get the business!" How many times have you heard that in a sales meeting? No plan. No strategy. Just rhetoric. The net result of this disconnect is a frustrated sales force because they lack the strategic guidance that a good plan offers. Witness this phenomenon in the following attitudes:

"All business is good business." Do you *really* believe this?

"Get the business, and we'll figure out a way to make money on it." This sounds like the tail wagging the dog.

"We need the volume." Don't you mean *profitable* volume?

Fewer than one-in-five employees is able to connect their day-to-day activities to the mission of the organization. This disconnect is the result of management's failure to have their strategy mapped out on paper, with marching orders for the troops. If your strategy is not on paper, you have no strategy. If your marketing strategy is not presented tactically to the sales team, you have no real plan. If it is not practical, it is not tactical.

When salespeople cannot answer this simple question, there is a problem: "What is fundamentally good business for our company?" The answer to this question provides the sales team with the strategic direction they need to allocate their sales time effectively. How can a sales force be criticized for its failure to perform when management has failed to perform its fundamental responsibility—planning, directing, and controlling resources toward achieving organizational objectives?

A battle cry without a battle plan is simply noise.

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