Through the Keyhole

Mirza Ajanovic is promoted to sales manager, entertainment and tour & travel at The Sutton Place Hotel... **Toni Frankfurter** leaves the Novotel Mississauga to join The Waterside Inn as director of sales... Toni replaces **Carla Olivier** who departs The Waterside to become assistant director of sales at The Trump International Hotel & Tower Toronto... **Meagan Tavenier** moves from the Delta Sunpeaks to join Delta Hotels & Resorts as national account coordinator... **Stephanie Saagi** leaves the **Delta Chelsea** to become the SMERF sales manager at The Renaissance Toronto Downtown Hotel... the new 566-room/24-suite Delta Toronto will form part of a new development from York Street to Lower Simcoe and will open in 2014. **Debbie Stellinga** former Regional Sales Manager at Metropolitan Hotels is now Director of Sales & Marketing at Novotel Mississauga. **Franca Helsdon**, former sales manager at Novotel Mississauga is now catering sales manager at Senses at the SoHo Met. **Karen Poppel** is leaving the Windsor Arms at the end of January and moving to Vancouver. **Carolyn Poole** is the new Director of Sales and Marketing at The Windsor Arms. **Nikki Sayers** leaves Tourism Toronto to join the Ontario Bar Association as a planner.

Congratulations

To Amanda Zappia of Tourism Toronto and her husband Mike on the arrival of their son Ryan Robert on November 2, 2010.

To Sanjeev Jadhav of the Holiday Inn Toronto International Airport and his wife Sonia Dupte on the arrival of their daughter Rhea on November 5, 2010.

To Scott T. Duff of Starwood Hotels and Resorts Worldwide and Colette on the arrival of their daughter Ainsleigh Cassidy on February 7, 2011

Welcome New Members

Jacques Bernier, Stagevision, Inc.
Michael Gibson, The Westin Prince Hotel
Catherine Griffith, Seneca College
Lynda Madsen, Ontario Place Corporation

Programs

At The Second City in October, Wendy Burgess provided us with an educational and interactive presentation on optimizing revenue and profit. The principles behind selling "The Right Room, for the Right Guest, at the Right Time, for the Right Price!" are now more clear!

In November, we were captivated with the entertaining and thought provoking "Mastering the Marketplace" messages from Keynote speaker Curt Skene at the Strathcona Hotel.

For our next event on February 24th, we are very excited to have Jill Harrington from salesSHIFT ! Jill will share her insight on smarter prospecting at Archeo in the beautiful Distillery District. You won't want to miss this event!

That's not all that's coming up....our annual GM's night is just around the corner! This memorable event will take place at The Renaissance Toronto Downtown Hotel, and we are privileged to have Ryan Brain, Partner at Deloitte, as our keynote speaker. Be sure to join us on March 24th and enjoy an unforgettable night of networking and fun with industry professionals alike!

KEY access

Winter 2011 Issue

Key Access is produced twice a year by the Canadian Hotel Marketing & Sales Executives, 26 Avonhurst Road, Toronto, Ontario M9A 2G8

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Editor: **Colleen Curran-Fotopoulos**

Layout/Production:
Design Engine Studio

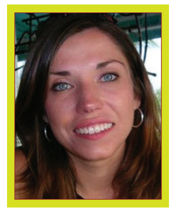
DES Design Engine Studio

We reserve the right to edit for space.

CHMSE Canadian Hotel Marketing & Sales Executives

KEY access

Winter 2011 | CANADIAN HOTEL MARKETING & SALES EXECUTIVES • THE HOSPITALITY NEWSLETTER



President's Note

By Leanne Nicholl, President

The ringing in of the New Year evokes thoughts of change within almost everyone. We need to lose those last 10 pounds, or vow to eat better and work out more. At the end of the year, how many of those things have we accomplished?

Most times - not many.

I think we should commit this year to simply being better. A better seller, a better employee, a better relationship builder. Whatever it is that you do well - do it better!

Some folks might think of this as just a polished way of being mediocre - that by not having a "grand goal" to work towards these goals are not worthy enough to have. We all have goals set out for us - think of those budgets and quotas and all that you are measured against every day, quarter and year. These goals are not negotiable and are fairly finite - and it is your job to work towards them. Consider these your "grand goals" - if you need one to get the wheels turning!

I want you to think of the smaller things you do everyday that affect those goals and quotas. Interacting with clients and coworkers; what could happen if you committed to making those interactions better? What if we listened just a little better to our clients? We might get some insight to a nuance of exactly what it is that they need from us - and make their experience with us better. The results could be dramatic! If we were to commit to doing 5 things better each quarter, by the end of the year - we'd all be doing 25 things better than we were doing them last year!

This concept might sound a bit simplistic - but isn't that what we always talk about - "Getting Back to Basics"?

Don't let those little things that we could do better everyday fall by the wayside while we strive for the big goal at the finish line. Let's commit to do all things - big and small - better! In turn, we'll find ourselves better for it!

CHMSE is committed to helping you be better; whether you're striving for a grand goal - or polishing up the basics. Our educational training covers many topics that can help you improve your skills. If you'd like to get involved with CHMSE, please see page two for a list of our current board members, all of whom would be happy to have your volunteer help on your committees. We'd love to have you get involved!!

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MEMBERSHIP DEAL

CHMSE offers excellent and affordable educational and networking opportunities within the hospitality industry. We are offering **"buy one membership get the other at 50% off"!** This special offer is applicable to different companies as well, so all can share in the discount. ACT NOW! Register before June 1, 2011 for this amazing offer.

Come network with seasoned professionals and develop your sales skills with cutting-edge affordable education. It is an excellent investment in personal development and helps us all to maintain our competitive edge. Membership in CHMSE is an investment in your employee's professional development resulting in more qualified and skilled staff.

To submit your registration to become a member of CHMSE you can register online through our website at www.CHMSE.com, or contact Bonnie Howell, Director of Hotel Memberships at bhowell@torcvb.com

***memberships are transferable at no additional cost. This offer does not include current memberships up for renewal, and does not apply to long distance or associate memberships. Registration fee of $25.00 will be waived as well for new memberships.

Contact *Shelley Macdonald*: *info@chmse.com* or call the office at *(416) 252-9800*.

One Step Ahead:

Taking Control of Every Sales Relationship so You are Closing on Every Conversation!

By Colleen Francis

It has often been said that among the many musical talents of renowned jazz trumpeter Dizzy Gillespie was his skill for blending harmony with the unexpected. He himself summed it up best by saying: "It's taken me all my life to learn what not to play." Dizzy knew it was never enough to just give an audience what they thought they wanted. He recognized, as is the case with most professionals, that there needs to a discipline to what you do. People tend to be motivated and moved best when you take the lead, with the occasional surprise thrown in for good measure.

This is a way of thinking that's not just limited to jazz musicianship. There's a lot of insight in there that applies just as much to sales. After all, both involve connecting with people and only those who hone a mastery of their craft are truly successful.

Whether you are a business owner or part of a sales team for a medium or large-sized company, your performance as a salesperson is determined by how often you successfully close sales—sealing the deal that translates goods or services into revenue. To close more business effectively, you must be the one who is controlling and directing the customer through each step of a sales process. Don't expect the customer to know what to do next. Most people are commitment-phobic. They're not going to make a decision until they are presented with options.

Have you ever faced a situation where you follow up with a customer after several months, only to be told that they have just finished negotiations with different vendor? It's frustrating and yet it's entirely preventable. By waiting so long to follow up, you may have been doing what you assumed the customer wanted. However, this does nothing to help position you where you need to be for when that customer is ready to buy.

Stay in control of your sales process by adopting a strategy that gets your customers to commit to a series of steps–and to stick to it. In my sales coaching sessions, my advice is that you need to be following up with each of your customers at a minimum of every 30 days in some way. It doesn't necessarily have to be by phone, but you need to be doing something to stay in that top-of-mind position.

Plan and backup

Before you engage any customer in a conversation, you need to have plan on how you're going to close more business with that person. You also need to have a backup plan. For example, if you can't meet your primary objective—to get a commitment to meet with a decision maker in your client's firm, for instance—your backup can be to get the name and contact information of that decision-maker.

Know what's next

If your best efforts don't result in closing a deal with a customer, you need to decide what is going to happen next. It's not enough to simply agree to talk again later. When will you talk again? Be specific. Your goal needs to include setting a date, and a well-defined set of next steps.

Those who have attended one of our Engage Sales Mastery Workshops have seen me map out a series of possible next steps in great detail. In this article, however, let me give you a glimpse of what we cover. When attempting to close a sale, your customer can choose to say "Yes," "No" or "Maybe." If they say "No," find out why. Is it because there are no projects going on? Is it because they have chosen another supplier? It is simply the wrong time for a new project? The answers you receive to those questions will give you something to build on for your follow-up strategy.

Apply the same approach when the answer is "Maybe." If, for example, a customer says: "We are not doing anything until the end of the fourth quarter of this year, call me back in December," you would respond by asking some probing questions. "I'd be happy to call you in December...is that when you expect to have your project ready to go, or will that just be when you're ready to start investigating a possible start to the project?" Similarly, if the customer says: "what you're proposing sound like a great idea, but we really just don't have the budget yet," you can respond by asking: "when is your budgeting process starting?" The answers you obtain give you added insight on formulating your next steps with each customer.

Use the right tools to help keep you on track

Keeping track of every conversation and every commitment you make to pursue next steps in sales...these are not the kinds of things you can simply commit to memory. This is why a customer relationship management database (or CRM) is absolutely vital. It could be as simple as a PC-based ACT! database, as intuitive as Daylite for Mac, or as substantial as a Salesforce.com account. No matter which one best suits your needs, a CRM is a wise investment. It's far from being an administrative nuisance. Think of it as an extension of your brain. It remembers all the commitments you make and the people you talk to, and it doesn't get sidetracked the way all of us do in our day-to-day lives. Deals get lost too easily by simply forgetting to make a note to follow-up with a prospect. Don't take that risk! Rely on your CRM instead.

Give your customer the opportunity to do the closing

Do the unexpected! One of my favourite ways of doing this is by asking the following question: "What do you want to do next?" It's a great closing question because it will tell you right away whether or not your customer is ready to move forward. In cases where a customer has a complicated buying process, you can ask: "Who else needs to review the presentation documentation or proposal?"

It is a very disarming question. By giving your customer the opportunity to do the closing on a sale, you give them the feeling that they are in control of the conversation (even though you are doing so while still being very much in control of the sales process). When used properly, it is a powerful question that helps you move a conversation forward and close more business in less time.

Much like Dizzy Gillespie in full flight on his trumpet, your job is to keep things moving in a conversation–to win over your audience, to help them know what's going to come next in the process, and to leverage the power of the unexpected. By creating and nurturing great dialogue, people will want to talk to you more often, you'll close more business more often, and you'll have the dynamite sales records as proof.

■ ■ ■

Colleen Francis, Sales Expert, is Founder and President of Engage Selling Solutions (www.EngageSelling.com). Armed with skills developed from years of experience, Colleen helps clients realize immediate results, achieve lasting success and permanently raise their bottom line.

Start improving your results today with Engage's online Newsletter Sales Flash and a FREE 7 day intensive sales eCourse: www.EngagingIdeasOnline.com.

The CHMSE Board of Directors is made up of a dynamic group of hotel sales professionals and affiliates from the Greater Toronto Area.

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Revenue Manager's Corner

Revenue Management + Sales = SUCCESS...Right?

By Ric Poeltl

As I sit down to write this article my first thought is about sales... yes I know...sales.

You may wonder what kind of thoughts a revenue manager may have about the sales team at his or her hotel. As I have seen both sides of the coin when it comes to sales, (having been a sales manager myself) and revenue management (I am a revenue manager now) I do have a unique view on the sales manager's desire to book business. At the same time, I understand the revenue manager's responsibility to the financial goals of the hotel: the business must be a good fit.

These two concepts might at times seem to go together about as well as oil and water, right? Invite me to a sales meeting and some of of the time the sales team will look upon me as the uninvited ugly distant relation at the family picnic coming into break up the party. How many times have you heard this line "Sure, a rate of $99.00 is great on a Sunday, but don't bring it to me on a Tuesday!" or "How many freebies are you going to give away this month?"

Revenue managers may often look at the sales team as the orphan child Oliver - always asking "Please sir, can I have more?" and never being satisfied with the rates and controls given to work with. Granted, these examples are a bit extreme, but I think the point comes across.

My own philosophy on revenue management is that the revenue management strategies should be closely aligned with the sales strategies and that it demands constant attention of hotel executives looking to streamline operations and achieve greater profitability. Having a perishable product such as hotel rooms or to a lesser extent, meeting space, one must apply the correct strategy at the correct time.

It is imperative to have weekly or bi-weekly revenue meetings with the sales team to be sure that all strategies are brought forward and analyzed so all involved can make an informed decision on the direction the hotel is going to take. These meetings should cover a 3 to 6 month out 'Rooms on the Books' report highlighting need times. This will give you a good idea on where to best deploy your sales force. It should also cover any segments that are first, close to budget and second, coming in behind budget. This will help in maintaining a highly targeted approach where one can as a DOS move her or his sales people into a 'tag team' to take on some of the segments that may be struggling and focus short term marketing initiatives to boost a segment.

Group pick up should also be on your list of things to review, nothing bothers us rev managers more than a block of rooms sitting on the books without any pick up and then finding out with 3 weeks to go the whole group is a wash. Sales managers need to remember that once the contract is signed and it is in the PMS it is still their responsibility to follow up with the group contact until the block is filled with actual guests. Revenue managers reading this also need to be on top of groups and cut off dates - because not being on top of group pick up means you are going to find yourself opening all the opaque website booking engines to try to put 'heads in beds' to cover for a lost group. And that means potentially leaving good money on the table from lack of proper planning.

Last and certainly not least: try to use each joint sales and revenue meeting as a learning experience for all involved. Celebrate your victories and dissect any missed opportunities... I also find that a box of doughnuts goes a long way!

We are all looking to increase our market share or shift business into our hotels; and for this to work, sales and revenue managers must be on the same page, as this will play a critical role in building your business and your success for 2011.

Ric Poeltl, CHRM is the Director of Revenue Management at the Pantages Hotel & Cosmopolitan Hotel in Toronto. You can reach Ric at ricpoeltl@hotmail.com.

SAVE THE DATE
GENERAL MANAGERS NIGHT

Thursday, March 24, 2011

KEYNOTE SPEAKER: **RYAN BRAIN**, Deloitte
Topic: HOSPITALITY 2015

Join us when Ryan covers a wide range of topics including a brief economic update, recent Canadian research including traveler intentions, as well as discussing key trends shaping our industry from a Deloitte's research paper entitled Hospitality 2015.

Student Members

Mirza Ajanovic, Director, Student Membership

The CHMSE student program requires some dedication, but your involvement will help you stay on top what's happening in the Hospitality industry. It is definitely one of the best ways to NETWORK with peers across the whole industry. You have the opportunity to learn and work alongside your fellow members and future employers, and make some friends along the way. CHMSE offers students from the surrounding post secondary institutions the greatest instruments for meeting industry veterans and finding career advice and assistance. Membership of your college or university offers you access to the CHMSE website and all its contents and the opportunity to meet with the association and its members every month.

Take a minute to look us up. Your future position may come from your participation in this great association!

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Conquer Call Reluctance

By Jeb Brooks

Have you ever found yourself "putting off" important sales or prospecting calls? This article will show you how to conquer call reluctance for good. You'll learn five specific strategies you can use to approach prospects with confidence.

What is call reluctance? Whether you call it procrastination, wasting time or just plain avoidance, there's no doubt you're familiar with this problem.

Think of the salesperson who hangs around the office drinking coffee, talking to co-workers, reading emails and shuffling through papers. The real issue is what that salesperson is NOT doing. They're NOT out in the field, they're NOT making sales calls, they're NOT making prospecting calls ...and consequently they're NOT going to make any sales.

When you look at it objectively, it makes very little sense. Here's someone who's paid on commission and is avoiding the very activities that lead to a sale.

So what's going on with this salesperson?

If you're like most salespeople, you've probably had to face this problem at least once in your career, so you know that it's not a matter of being lazy. After all, you get up early, get dressed, fight your way through traffic and come in to work with the best intentions of accomplishing something. And you're not stupid. You're certainly aware that hanging around the office won't help you make any sales.

So what keeps you from charging out into the field to make sales calls? What stops you from making those important phone calls?

It really boils down to avoiding things that are unpleasant or uncomfortable. But since most people have a hard time admitting and accepting their own self-sabotaging behaviour, the real challenge in conquering this problem is confronting it. There's just no technique or motivational strategy that can help you overcome call reluctance until you acknowledge it and recognize it for what it is.

It starts with simply not feeling comfortable approaching a prospect. Usually, there's something going on in your mind that's making you believe that talking to that prospect will turn out to be a negative experience. So you put it off for a while and do some other things. But the longer you put it off, the more you believe the nagging idea that making the call will be a bad experience. If it goes on long enough, you may even start to believe that you're just not capable of making that call... and if it becomes a pattern you may even start to believe you're not capable of selling at all.

What's happening is that your behaviour is reinforcing your negative thought-pattern and at the same time your negative thought pattern is influencing your behaviour. It's a vicious, self-defeating cycle. The only way out is to make up your mind to change both your thought-pattern and your behaviour. Just confronting the habit of avoidance with the determination to chase it out of your life is not only the first step, but a giant leap that will take you at least halfway toward reaching your goal.

Once you've made the conscious decision to think and act differently, here are five practical steps that are certain to help you get positive results, fast.

Step 1 - Choose Prospects You Can Feel Good About Calling On

Call reluctance is directly related to two variables that you can control. The first is how much you know about the prospect and the second is how confident you are that they're likely to be interested in what you offer. Try to learn as much as you can about your prospect before calling him or her (without going overboard and using this as another excuse to procrastinate).

In your research, look for specific reasons that this prospect might be interested in what you offer and then plan your call around this knowledge. This strategy helps establish you as an insider. It also allows you to distinguish yourself from other salespeople, both in the mind of the prospect and in your own mind. Once you start focusing on why your prospects would be interested in talking to you, you'll feel a lot better about calling on them.

Step 2 – Make Sure You Are 110% Sold On What You Are Selling

Ever heard the expression "Have the courage of your convictions"? It can be tough to have much courage if you have no convictions. The most convincing salespeople are the most convinced of the merits of their own propositions. Selling is all about trust. How can you possibly expect others to trust you if you feel untrustworthy?

It's not surprising that salespeople who don't believe in the superiority of what they have to offer – or doubt the importance of that offer to the prospect – would have a sick feeling in the pit of their stomachs when facing a prospect.

It's absolutely essential that you build a genuine sense of pride in what you offer. You can start by examining how your product or service has benefited your current customers. Has it made their lives easier? Saved them money? Solved their problems? Helped them start or stay in business? You may be surprised at the tremendous positive impact that your product or service has for your customers.

Once you have an understanding of how vital and valuable your offering has been for your existing customers, you can use your creative imagination to build a vision of what you can offer to your new prospects. In order to successfully sell your product, you should have such a sense of the superiority, worth and importance of it that you can't wait for the next opportunity to tell someone about it. If you are trying to sell something you cannot feel that way about, you should probably think about finding something else to sell.

You'll also want to make sure that you're 110% confident in what you personally have to offer to your customers as a sales professional. Can you be proud of the level of knowledge, expertise, integrity and personal enthusiasm that you offer your customers? Are you confident in your communication ability and your persuasive talents?

How do you see yourself – as a beggar, pleading for a little bit of time and attention from a busy decision-maker or as a highly skilled, appreciated and respected expert? As an "order-taker" or a customer-oriented problem solver? Do you see yourself as being at the bottom of the business totem pole, or as one of the most important people in the corporation as well as the driving force of the American economy? Do you consider yourself at least an equal of the prospects you are calling on and the clients you are serving?

If you don't like the answers to these questions, you may need to work on improving your knowledge, skills, customer focus and self-image in order to feel more confident about calling on prospects.

Step 3 – Recall Past Accomplishments

If you're in the habit of living fearfully or skeptically, your self-image is probably wallowing in your frustrations, disappointments, and failures. That can make it very hard to approach a prospect. It can also mean that you approach prospects "knowing" that you'll meet failure. The result? You'll prove yourself right every time.

On the other hand, if you constantly visualize your past successes, and focus on the times when you were able to overcome challenges, you'll feel more confident about making sales calls that you might otherwise dread making. If you replay these successes inside your mind a sufficient number of times, you are sure to start feeling confident and successful. This sense of confidence will most certainly help you overcome call reluctance, as well as avoidance in other areas of your life.

Step 4 – Mental Rehearsal

What if you're new to selling, or at least new to certain selling situations, and you don't have lots of past accomplishments to recall? How can you build on your positive experience if you lack experience? The answer is to manufacture "synthetic experience."

One of the greatest gifts of the human imagination – and possibly also the greatest liability – is the fact that your entire system, mind and body can be as affected by synthetic experience as real experience. It's really a matter of what you choose to "feed" your mind. Think of the hypochondriac whose mind is focused on every ache and pain, whose imagination magnifies every symptom... With these thoughts poisoning their mind, it's only a matter of time before that person starts feeling physically ill.

Mental rehearsal involves perfecting an experience in your mind down to every detail until it becomes a very vivid mental movie. Then you can play that perfect scene over and over in preparation for the real experience. This technique is commonly used by all kinds of people whose success depends on outstanding performances – athletes, trial lawyers, negotiators, fighter pilots, surgeons, actors and entertainers.

In sales, it is helpful to mentally rehearse any and all questions that the prospect may ask, so that when these questions arise, you will be prepared.

If you perform this step often and well enough, when you actually make the call you will feel like you've already done it.

Step 5 – Relax

If you show up full of stress and anxiety, your prospect's natural reaction is to meet you with resistance. How can you put prospects at ease if you can't tame your own tensions?

Think of how you feel when you call or visit a friend. There's no tension, no fear or dread involved. But consider for a moment how successful you would be at making and keeping friends if you approached your friends the way you sometimes approach prospects: with reluctance, anxiety and apprehension.

Now consider the reverse: how successful would your sales calls be if you were able to approach every prospect with the comfort and ease that you approach a friend? It's easy to see that what you bring to the situation sets off a chain reaction that determines the outcome.

Relaxation can be a difficult thing to achieve, especially when you're under pressure to make a sale. You can start by focusing on ridding your body of tension – relax your shoulders, unclench your fists, stop grinding your teeth and smile... Once you relax your body your mind will automatically begin to relax as well.

Whatever the reasoning behind your reluctance to make certain calls, applying these solid steps can surely help get you in front of your prospects with confidence. But the first step lies in making the conscious decision to change your thinking and take action. As soon as you stop avoiding unpleasant or stressful situations, you can start feeling, and being, a lot more successful.

Jeb Brooks is Executive Vice President of the The Brooks Group, one of the world's Top Ten Sales Training <http://www.BrooksGroup.com/> Firms as ranked by Selling Power Magazine. He is a sought-after commentator on sales and sales management issues, having appeared in numerous publications including the Wall Street Journal. A member of the Global Sales Council, Jeb authored the second edition of the book "Perfect Phrases for the Sales Call," is currently updating the classic book "High IMPACT Selling," and writes for The Brooks Group's popular Sales Blog <http://www.BrooksGroup.com/Blog/> He can be reached at + 1 (336) 282-6303 or jeb@thebrooksgroup.com