

Why "Embracing Rejection" is Stupid!

By Jill Konrath

Every once in a while, I read something that a so-called sales expert says that really ticks me off. The other night it happened again. I was doing a quick scan of the latest issue of a popular magazine when suddenly I came across a whole slew of idiocy in just one article.

Here's just a taste of this lunacy ...

"In sales, the results are in the rejections."

"Every time a contact results in a rejection, your salespeople can view the rejection as making money."

"The secret is for each salesperson to realize how much rejection is necessary for success."

"Sales managers must coach their teams to embrace rejection."

This is the stupidest advice you could ever get. Think about it. Can you ever imagine yourself saying this:

"Hallelujah! I've made 66 calls today and actually connected with 24 people. But of that number, 23 of them were total failures. Those decision makers blew me off as fast as they could. But one person asked me to send a brochure, so it was really a great day. With all those rejections, I'm well on my way to success."

Let me tell you why it's even stupider than you might think.

Guess what happens if you embrace rejection as a part of the job and quickly move on to make the next call. You're doomed to repeat the same mistakes over and over.

What do I recommend? In my opinion, a rejection is a failure. It's a sales call that did not result in a desirable outcome. If you want to get better at selling, it is imperative to analyze your failures to determine if a different approach could have yielded a better outcome.

There is NO other way to improve in this profession.

To be successful, you must take a serious look at all aspects of the interaction that were within your control. This includes:

- Your word choices.
- How you positioned your company.
- The sequence of what you said.

- How much you said: too little, too much.
- Your tone, pace and sound.

Each one of these can be changed and potentially yield an improved outcome. So where do you start? I suggest you pay close attention to:

The specific obstacles you encounter.

What are your prospects saying: too high price, too expensive, currently satisfied? All these are indicators that you need to rethink your approach.

When you encounter these obstacles.

Take a look at what you said just prior to hearing the objection. Most likely the words preceding the client's comments are key offenders.

The key point is that rejection is data. Simply data. It can be analyzed to determine trends, frequency, and even specific sales behaviors. When you think about it this way, you can experiment with various approaches.

You can simulate conditions by listening to your phone calls from your buyer's perspective. You can get input from colleagues to see if what you say would sound interesting if they were your prospect. You can check with other sellers to see what strategies they use.

Stop listening to those sales gurus who tell you to "embrace rejection." They're spouting old-style selling techniques that won't get you in the door of major corporations. They don't have a clue what it takes to succeed in today's marketplace.

Get smart and start analyzing your rejection. Look at it as a puzzle that needs solving. You may not know what it takes right now to crack into those corporate accounts, but you certainly have the ability to figure it out.

Jill Konrath, author of *Selling to Big Companies*, is a recognized sales strategist in the highly competitive business-to-business market. A popular speaker at sales meetings, she helps her clients crack into corporate accounts, speed up their sales cycle and generate demand for their offering..

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