

Inside BUSINESS

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The Canterbury Sales®

Rescuing the non-compliant salesperson - A Trek in from the Wilderness

By Andy Gole



Rescuing the Toxic Salesperson – a trek in from the wilderness.

1. Why the Problem Exists

In general, managers are often reluctant to challenge non-compliant employees. This is especially so when the employee is a relatively high-performing salesperson.

For fear of losing the salesperson's customers, the organization makes a Faustian bargain. Management "looks the other way" at the corporate culture indirections to ensure the sales person is happy and the company retains the business. By allowing one or more toxic salespeople to be "lone wolves," all employees experience a diminished sense of corporate justice. This exception undermines compliance throughout the organization.

The salesperson continues the toxic behavior either unaware of his/her impact or just not caring.

2. A Solution

Most companies want to "save" their higher performing employees. The starting point is perspective and attitude.

Consider this salesperson as someone lost in the wilderness, someone needing rescuing. If the employee has exhibited this

behavior for some time, the company bears responsibility for enabling the behavior.

A "command and control" approach probably will not be productive – although it might set up the termination. If more than a quick route to termination is sought, if the company wants to rescue the salesperson, there are at least four components to consider:

- 1) A strong support and transformation plan, beginning with a gap analysis and a plan for filling the gap.
- 2) A change leader skilled in transformation.
- 3) Top management's willingness to go "all in" and make future non-compliance a hanging offense – "We want you on the team, but you must be a team player."
- 4) A reason for the toxic salesperson to

put skin in the game – to be motivated.

The change process includes mandatory participation in seminars and one-to-one coaching. The seminars show the "lost" salesperson how the rest of the team is doing in the program and having success. The one-to-one coaching spurs the change process.

3. A Success Story

With the above elements in place, the toxic salesperson predictably started by resisting the program, explaining how his market is unique. Over a period of months the shared team experience started to have an impact. The change process began after top management had a strong "heart-to-heart" talk with the salesperson.

The salesperson then started to become compliant. Small successes were acknowledged in seminars every two weeks, leading to larger successes. The entire team reinforced the change process. The salesperson will need continual reinforcement for some time but is on the right path.



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Andy Gole has taught selling skills for 19 years. He started three businesses and has made approximately 4,000 sales calls, selling both B2B and B2C. He invented a selling process, Urgency Based Selling®, with which he can typically help companies double their closing or conversion ratio. Learn more about Andy's method at www.bombadil.com, at www.urgencybasedselling.net/entrepren.html or by calling him at 201.415.3447.