

## Counter-Intuitive Selling:

### Saving Business and Avoiding Lost Business in

The counter-intuitive sales professional quickly comes to the realization that there is more hiding behind the reason for a lost sale than the customer shares.

At the heart of counter-intuitive selling is the principle that for our sales results to change, our sales behaviors and habits must change. It's hard for seasoned sales professionals to change habits-as habits are ingrained and reflex. This is readily apparent when it comes to lost business and lost opportunities.

Do you really take a look at why you lost a piece of business? Do you change your sales behavior to make sure you do not make the same mistakes again and again-leading to more lost business?

Changing your sales habits in this one area can create significant positive impact on your results. A key to changing sales habits is to analyze and review-and listen to your prospects and customers. It starts with what we refer to as **THE LOST BUSINESS REVIEW**.

#### Questions to Ask During Your Lost Business Review

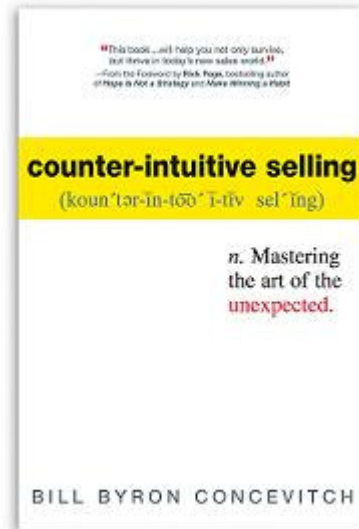
The key to your lost business review is objectivity. In order to attain objectivity, it will be important to talk to others about the lost business. The best person to talk to is the customer-preferably the actual decision maker. Until we hear the truth from the customer, we are only guessing at the real reasons why we lost the business.

How you position this conversation with the customer will be the key to gaining an accurate summary of why you lost the business. Your conversation with the customer should sound something like this:

"Jack, I appreciate the fact that you made a decision to award your business to someone else-and I also respect this decision. My goal is to learn from this experience and to fully understand why and how we lost your business. I value your thoughts and advice, and I will use your advice to improve in the future. Whatever you can share with me will be greatly appreciated."

Once you share this with the lost customer, it is important to focus on some of the following questions:

- Were we ever under serious consideration to win your business?
- If so, what occurred that eliminated us from the competition?
- As you look at our dialog and meetings with you and your team as compared to those of the company that won your business, what was the difference?
- Did your decision surround the actual solution, or did it have more to do with each company and the teams representing each company?





- Did you have the confidence that we would deliver what we represented during our meetings and dialog?
- Did what we present as a solution actually match your business need?
- What do you feel is the most important lesson that I can learn from this experience?
- Do you have any other advice for me as someone that would like to have the opportunity to do business with you in the future?
- Have you actually awarded the business to someone else?

I recommend that you have this conversation with the customer in the time period between 2-4 weeks after learning that you lost the business. I recommend that you call the customer to request a face-to-face meeting to delve into your questions, if this is possible. If you request the meeting too soon, your prospect may believe that you are trying to change their decision, and he or she may not grant you the meeting. If you wait too long, the situation and circumstances may not be clear in your prospect's mind.

Your mindset for this meeting should be to ask short questions and do a lot of listening. When conducted regularly in all situations in which you lose business, these meetings will become invaluable to your future success. You will quickly uncover patterns and trends in your sales behaviors and habits, and you will be able to make changes to avoid losing business in the future.

Remember, mastering the art of counter-intuitive selling does not happen overnight. Laying the groundwork to make permanent changes to your selling habits takes time. It's now time to take a close look at the deals you recently lost. It is time for some personal realization.

The lost-business review is one of your most powerful counter-intuitive tools, but only if you are willing to be honest with yourself. It is a major step in the journey into counter-intuitive selling!

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During the coming months, Bill will join us in our newsletters and for some exclusive webinars. He'll share some of the proven and powerful secrets from inside the book, and provide you with a condensed roadmap on how to apply counter-intuitive selling to create more revenue, better margins, and increased sales from existing clients and prospects.

*Bill Byron Concevitch is a highly-recognized sales performance expert and the author of [Counter-Intuitive Selling: Mastering the Art of the Unexpected](#). Bill can be reached at [bbc@counter-intuitiveselling.com](mailto:bbc@counter-intuitiveselling.com), and invites you to challenge him by sharing your most critical roadblocks to success in selling!*

You can learn more about counter-intuitive selling and how it can impact your career at [www.counter-intuitiveselling.com](http://www.counter-intuitiveselling.com) and by purchasing the book at [amazon.com](http://amazon.com) and at fine booksellers everywhere.

Experience Counter-Intuitive Selling live at your location! Call 610-966-6600 today for more information and to obtain a 20% discount off your initial session. (Course materials and travel excluded.) Offer expires May 31, 2008.