

## Reasons to be cheerful: Part 1

# You already have what you need to sell more effectively

It's a tough market out there and it's getting harder to win new business. There are fewer opportunities, clients are being more cautious and competition is keen. Your budget is probably being squeezed and all the good advice says that you need to be doing *more* marketing now, not less. So that's the doom and gloom. Where's the good news?

The good news is that you have what you need to be more effective in your sales and marketing – and you don't need a huge budget for new advertising, brochures, entertaining... The trick is to focus and do what you do better – and that can be achieved with a few simple shifts. Below are three simple suggestions for things that you can do to:

- Make you or your people feel better about selling
- Make your marketing budget go further
- Increase your chances of winning whatever is out there to win.

### 1. Simplify

Now is a time to concentrate on what you are best at and what makes you different – what it is that you can do better than anyone else. A defined and targeted message will always get more attention. Now, though, it is especially valuable. People are worried and this makes them shy away from risk. When they buy they are looking for a guarantee of value. You need to be able to articulate and prove the value you deliver. Fluff and flannel will not do the job. You need a clear answer to the question "what can you do for me?" You know the answer but it might have become lost amongst the thousands of words you have said and written about your business even in the past few months. Find your answer, polish it up and use it.

### 2. Prepare

If you are selling you or your business face-to-face you will need to be equipped and ready to make the most of any opportunity you get. What you don't need is a briefcase packed with brochures and PowerPoint presentations. These are fig leaves that we use to hide behind. What you do need is:

- A succinct, targeted description of what you're offering – in everyday words that you feel confident using
- A few simple 'hooks' to capture people's interest
- Some stories, facts and examples to give credibility to what you say
- Positive answers to some of the objections and pushbacks that you are likely to face.

Armed with this simple tool kit you will feel more confident and be more successful.

### 3. Follow up

This is one simple thing that you can start doing now that will cost you nothing and will make you more successful in winning work. If you send a letter, call to follow up. If you go to a networking event and meet someone, send an email to follow up. Suggest a meeting. If you haven't heard from a client for a while, get in touch. (If you aren't calling them, a competitor may well be.)

Above all, remember to stay positive. As they say, if you think you can, you can and if you think you can't, you'll be right!

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