

# Small Business Success

September 2014



Community  
Futures Newsask



## 20 Days – 20 Habits – Super Sales Part II

Published in cooperation with [Blue Beetle Books](#)

### 11. Ensure you are selling to the right person

This is a rookie mistake that happens all the time. Salespeople home in on people that look easy to sell to and spend inordinate amounts of time trying to convince them to purchase something, when they are not in a position to buy. Before you waste any time on a potential prospect, spend a few minutes talking to them; discover whether he or she is a bona fide prospect. The quicker you discover they aren't, the quicker you can start selling to someone who is.

### 12. Track your sales progress

This is another great habit to get into, and works in tandem with setting targets. Everyday assess how well you are doing in moving towards your targeted goals. Motivation comes from seeing that you are exceeding them, and when you're not you'll know you need to pull your finger out, pronto!

### 13. Learn to love objections

Poor salespeople avoid objections as if they are bad, top performers not only welcome them, they



actually dig for them. As long as there is an unspoken objection you will not get the sale. Get into the habit of listing all the objections people might have for not buying what you sell and come up with answers. That way, when an objection arises you have the answer ready at hand.

### 14. Probe and clarify effectively and listen to the answers

This goes hand-in-hand with the habit above. Constantly ask questions to make sure the prospect is hearing, and understanding, what you are telling them and clarify any misunderstandings.

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## **15. Use interesting presentation materials**

The more involved your customers are with your presentation, the more likely they are to buy. Use samples, demonstrations, colourful sales literature, or whatever is relevant to your product or service to generate interest and excitement.

## **16. Keep extensive notes**

Top sales performers know their customer's birthdays, children's names, hobbies likes and dislikes, and anything else that will help build a relationship with them.

## **17. Use trial closes**

Get into the habit of asking prospects if they like certain aspects of what you are trying to sell them. This will provide an indication as to whether they are leaning toward purchasing, or highlight potential objections.

## **18. Ask for the sale every time**

This is probably the oldest piece of advice out there, but at the end of the day more sales are lost simply because the salesperson simply did not ask for the order. Come up with several phrases that you feel comfortable with such as: "So, delivery next week is okay for you?" or, "Okay, so let's write this up." Both are assumption closes; in my experience this type of close is the most effective and easiest to employ.

## **19. Evaluate every call**

Top performers are constantly aware of how well they are performing. Remember sales targets and goals, and tracking your progress? Well, it's not just about the numbers; after every sales interaction carry out a post mortem and look at what went well and what could you improve.

## **20. Follow-up every call**

Following up after a call is not just polite, it's good business practice. It's far less expensive and takes a whole lot less time and effort to sell to an existing customer than to try to find a new one. Start building relationships by following up each sale and then regularly thereafter.

## **6 Really Simple Things You Can Do To Improve Your Financial Security**

*The financial strength of our company can wax and wane like the moon depending on how good our cash flow is, but there will be times when we need support from our bank or possibly outside investors.*

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### **Build a strong relationship with your financial institution**

Here's a question for you; is it easier to borrow money from a complete stranger or from a friend who trusts you? No, it's not a trick question, but often the first time a business owner meets his, or her, bank account manager is when they are in financial difficulty. If your account manager has never met you and knows little to nothing about your business they are not going to be in a strong position to help you when things get tough.

Get to know your account manager during your businesses good times; when your finances are good, you've just got coverage in a local newspaper or magazine, or just landed a major new contract. Why? Because there's no pressure on either party at that point - you probably don't need money and if you do the bank is likely to offer it before you even ask. This is the ideal time to give your business plan to the bank, let them know you are planning for future growth and perhaps alert them to the fact that sometime

down the line you might be looking for help to fund this growth. Then, keep them informed of how you are doing from time to time.

If things start going downhill keep your account manager informed; let them know the market is tightening up and that you might need some help in the near future. Banks don't like surprises, but the more they know and understand your business the more likely they are to help you out in difficult times.

Take your account manager out for lunch, or a coffee occasionally and build a professional relationship with them so they feel they are part of your team - a professional adviser. Bring them onsite and when you need money, they will be there to support you.

### **Build your credit rating when times are good**

I know this may sound crazy, but consider borrowing money when you don't need it. For instance; your office needs some new computers and you have the money in the bank to pay cash but instead go to the bank and get a loan to pay for them. Assuming you then pay the loan back ahead of time, you are building your credit rating for that time when a major expense crops up where you definitely need financial support from your financial institution. There's a lot to be said for having a good track record!

### **Get a line of credit (or extend it) during the good times**

Beyond just building a good relationship with your financial institution, consider requesting an increase in your line of credit at a time when your finances are strong. Banks love lending money to companies that don't really need it. Then, when times get tough you can call on the credit you established when things were good.

### **Build strong relationships with suppliers**

You may not think of your suppliers as being important to your financial success, but they most certainly are. As with your financial institution, take time to get to know the managers and owners of your suppliers. Building a strong relationship will help you get better discounts, and better payment terms. Also, if you ever get into cash-flow problems, they are likely to be more understanding about an occasional late payment.

### **Network with potential investors**

This tip only applies if you think that at some stage in the future you might want to bring onboard a partner, sell shares, or attract investors. Building a strong network of people with deep pockets can be very worthwhile. Create a corporate portfolio that can be used to promote your company to anyone you think might be useful in the future. This promotional piece can also be used to give to journalists and writers to solicit media coverage, or to potential customers.

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When it comes to financial health, it's always better to be ahead of the game and promote your company during the good times. Don't wait until you are in financial difficulty before seeking financial support, or you may find that those who should be helping you closing their doors on you instead.



## 7 Killer Ways To Make Your Testimonials More Believable

*Testimonials are a great way to build credibility whether you use them on printed promotional material or on your website. But what can we do to give them greater impact?*

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### **A picture is worth a thousand words**

So, a local business person has given you a great review, but how do you provide the reader with that comfortable feeling that the person did actually write it? By adding a photograph of the individual it gives the person reading it a greater feeling of security that it's not fake. Of course it could still all be a lie, but far less likely. When someone gives you a testimonial ask if they could supply a photograph of themselves.

### **Real signatures**

It's important to have the person's name and company listed after the testimonial, but even better is to have a scan of their actual handwritten signature. This adds the personal touch along with a greater level of credibility.

### **Audio or video testimonials**

In this age of YouTube and other sources of promoting audio-visual material, why not tape testimonials and put them on your website? These days digital recorders are not only low in price but exceptionally high in quality - so much so that even a recording taken using a speaker phone is good enough to put on a website. A word of warning: you may have to convert the digital file to an online audio file, but it's not difficult just Google it!

It's easy these days to record a video - our smart phones, tablets and cameras all have this functionality and the quality is remarkably good. Not only that, it is easy to upload a video to YouTube and direct people to it from your website, or even have it play within your website. Nothing gives a higher level of credibility than one of your customers on camera extolling your virtues!



### **Add a profile**

Another way to add weight to a testimonial is to provide a bio of the person - this gives the writer credibility which in turn gives the testimonial itself more power.

### **The testimonial letter**

If you get a testimonial in the form of a letter, provide a link to the scanned letter at the end of the quote so people can actually see the whole letter. Again this increases credibility, and also helps with longer letters of praise.

### **The email testimonial**

From time to time you may get an email that is praising your work, your products or your customer service. If you plan to forward it to potential clients, or publish it on your website, consider showing the entire message including date, time, subject line etc. Although you can show who the sender and recipient is, be careful not to divulge email addresses as this could cause privacy issues if the person praising you gets inundated with emails.

## Ask for permission to refer potential clients

Just as you do when asking someone to act as a reference for you, ask your satisfied customers whether they would mind if potential clients call them to ask about the service they have received from you. This will allow potential customers to ask your current customers questions about your product or service before they buy. Obviously, hearing a testimonial from the source is significantly more powerful.

Testimonials can be a powerful selling tool - they can help overcome a reticence to buy in many people. Think about how often you check reviews when you buy products, or choose hotels, and how much they sway you one way or another. Make sure you use this valuable promotional tool to its best advantage.

## Cartoon

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**"Man, is that salesman persistent."**



# Embracing Diversity

*We need to shift how we work and do business with each other!*

**Wednesday, October 22, 2014**

**10:00 a.m. to 3:45 p.m.**

**Tisdale Civic Centre, 901 100<sup>th</sup> Street, Tisdale, SK**

Funded in part by Newsask Community Futures Development Corporation and the Entrepreneurs With Disabilities Program and in partnership with the North East Supported Employment Program, the NE Newcomers Services, Tisdale & District Chamber of Commerce, Nipawin & District Chamber of Commerce, and Melfort Chamber of Commerce will be holding a luncheon with keynote speakers, Cory Johnson and Milton Tootoosis. Cory will also provide a ½ day workshop...*Exploring new possibilities in the workplace and starting your own business...Overcoming obstacles and turning them into possibilities.* Milton will be providing a workshop...*Making the Connection: Treaty and Economic Livelihood Today.*

The luncheon and workshop will be open to employees, entrepreneurs, employers and the general public.

We envision full inclusion in the workplace and diversity in the communities of North East Saskatchewan!

Gain insight into diversifying your workplace, by employing people with disabilities, aboriginal people and newcomers. Become inspired to start your own business!

For Details about the workshops, please contact:  
Newsask Community Futures, (306) 873-4449  
[admin@newsaskcfdc.ca](mailto:admin@newsaskcfdc.ca)

## Guest Speakers:

Milton Tootoosis

Cory Johnson

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10:00 a.m. Making the Connection: Treaty Rights to an Economic Livelihood

12:00 to 1:00 p.m. Keynote Presentation – Cory Johnson and lunch

1:00 to 1:15 p.m. Break

1:15 to 2:30 p.m. Exploring New Possibilities in the Workplace and Starting Your Own Business

2:30 to 2:45 p.m. Break

2:45 to 3:45 p.m. Turning Your Disabilities into Possibilities, Hiring Aboriginal People & Newcomers

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## Lunch Provided

RSVP by October 14, 2014

**Contact:** Newsask Community Futures  
[admin@newsaskcfdc.ca](mailto:admin@newsaskcfdc.ca)

Tel: (306) 873-4449

\$10 per person

If you are on assistance, fees will be waived.

## About The Speakers and Workshop Presenters:

### Cory Johnson



Born with Cerebral Palsy and suffering a stroke at the age of 11 has not deterred Cory Johnson from living life to the fullest. He uses his life experiences, inspiration and education to overcome the barriers that others impose on him.

He encourages his audiences to see new possibilities within themselves and others. With his own perception on life, he'll challenge you to remove some of your barriers.

*Kiwanis Western Canada Governor 2011 – 2012*

*Semi Finalist in Canada's Next Top Comic – 2011*

*Canadian Record Holder in the 100 m and 200m for Para Athletes/National Champion 2012*

*Member of the Canadian Association of Professional Speakers  
Professional Speaker since 2007*

### Milton Tootosis

Milton has over two decades experience in human resource management and Indigenous policy development at the tribal, provincial and federal levels of government. His professional and personal interests enhance and build communities of collaboration with attention to building positive relationships and advancement. Milton has served on numerous committees with a focused attention to skills development, creating capacity, effective governance and economic independence within Indigenous communities. He is the past Chairperson of the Indigenous Leadership Development Institute Inc., founders of the World Indigenous Business Forum (WIBF).

Milton is from the Poundmaker Cree Nation in Treaty Six Territory. Milton received his undergraduate education from the First Nations University of Canada, has studied public administration and taken numerous professional development courses. He is an accredited Professional Aboriginal Economic Developer by the Council for the Advancement of Native Development Officers. He is also a student of the Native Nations Institute for Leadership, Management and Policy at the University of Arizona.

Milton will share his personal experience as an Indigenous person who is part of the first generation to earn a livelihood off the Indian reserve. No more restrictions due to the 'Pass System' that was a policy of the federal government that impacted and restricted the movement and freedom of his parents, grandparents and great grandparents.

There are challenges that he has overcome that are still common today and proving to be significant barriers for some. He will share the spirit and intent of Treaty No. Six between the First Nations and settlers in 1876. Tootosis will share current business trends, challenges and opportunities associated with the creation of wealth and improving the standard of living for Saskatchewan's First Nations people. There is silent renaissance in the Indigenous community. The potential to realize the vision, the spirit and intent of the Treaty will enlighten you.



## Challenge 4 Communities 2014

**4 Weeks 4 Challenges 4 Winners 4 Prizes**

Community Futures Newsask is hosting our fifth annual "Challenge 4 Communities"

All community groups (service groups, neighbor groups, youth groups, etc.) are invited to submit community projects that compete for prize money. The public will decide the winners with weekly voting on the internet over a four week format beginning October 31, 2014. Rules and an application form are available on our website at [www.newsaskcfdc.ca](http://www.newsaskcfdc.ca) (click on Challenge 4 Communities)

Get involved with your community today, submit a project, and compete for prize money!

**Challenge 4  
Communities  
2014**



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