

Designing A Culture of Selling

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In a larger architecture practice, sales and profit are always strongest when there is a well-defined selling process that can be contributed to in many different ways, by many different people, with many different skills. When your selling process is adopted by everyone in the practice it creates exponential opportunities for revenue growth. But how do you get everyone to commit to helping with selling? After all no-one goes into architecture to become a sales person.

To create a culture of selling that will build new revenue in your practice, your architects, engineers, and support people need to believe:

1. Sales is everybody's job
2. They can all contribute based on their unique skills, in their own way
3. In the value of supporting the firm's well-defined selling process

Does your practice have a culture of selling? To find out take the simple test below answering either True or False to each question.

Does everyone in your firm...

- Consider sales to be a part of their job? T/F
- Have time allocated for sales in their job description? T/F
- Track their selling activity? T/F
- Know at least three things they can do to contribute to the selling process? T/F
- Get rewarded directly for their selling activity? T/F
- Receive information on the selling activity of the firm? T/F

Give your firm one point for each True and zero for each False answer and match your scores to the ranges below.

- 5-6 You have an established culture of selling
- 3-4 You are on your way but still have a few weak spots
- 0-2 You are starting from scratch

The good news is that even if your practice scored zero on this test you can change that.

New Attitudes Will Drive New Revenue

When you took the test I bet you found it hard to answer some of the questions because your firm is not one homogenous individual. In fact it is many people with many attitudes.

Dawn-Marie Turner PhD, President of Turner Change Management and founder and chair of the International Council on Organizational Change proposes that instead of preparing to overcome resistance to a new culture, shift your thinking to raising your employees readiness to adopt a culture of selling. And then help each individual move toward this new culture from their unique starting point.

Some individuals need first to become comfortable with the concept of selling before they can adopt a selling attitude and the new behaviours while others will be ready, with some direction and training to jump right in and get started.

If you were to pursue increased sales simply by enrolling your practice in a sales seminar you would be assuming that everyone is at the “chomping at the bit” stage, but that is usually not the case. Spend some time developing the culture, before you spend any money on the training. The best sales training programs incorporate this culture shift into their offering and return better ROI as a result.

Architects Can Do It All

The techniques that architects need to sell their services are taught to them in university - communication, inspiration, listening and creativity are the foundations of the profession and also the most important skills in sales.

As a partner you can achieve exponential increases in revenue by creating a culture of selling in your practice - one with a clearly defined selling process and an environment that supports it. Adding skills alone or mythical rain makers will add cost and risk, with limited incremental sales.

Architects are designed to become great sales people. The right culture will inspire them to sell.

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