DNLA®

SALES POTENTIAL

- Assessed Results for the Participant -

Phil Smith

The "Deutsches Normenzentrum für Organisations- und Prozessdiagnostik e.V." confirms that the DNLA process has been thoroughly and comprehensively audited in terms of its adherence to the characteristics of the DIN 33430 Standard as well as its practical development. This relates to the planning of job-related Asseseds, the selection, compilation, execution and evaluation of suitable processes, the interpretation of the results of these processes and the coming to conclusions in line with latest scientific research. The certification was carried out by the "Deutsches Normenzentrum für Organisations- und Prozessdiagnostik e.V." and registered with the "Verband für die Akkreditierung von Zertifizierungsorganisationen e.V.". Certificate 2011: 120/11, 16.10.2011 - 16.10.2014, Deutsches Normenzentrum für Organisations- und Prozessdiagnostik e.V., Auditor Prof. Dr. Walter Simon. The above certifications were carried out by the following auditors: Dipl.-Psych. H. Seibt, Dr. W. Jeserich, Prof. Dr. J. Deller. Validity was calculated by: Prof. Dr. Bo Ekehammar, "DNLA: Technical Manual" by Ekehammar, Strasser & Bates 1993 and "evalue", Institute of Business Psychology and Evaluation, University of Lüneburg, Director: Prof. Dr. S. Remdisch (Professor for Evaluation & Organisation) and Dr. Dipl.-Psych. A. Utsch, 2003. Participants in the DNLA process have the right to request comprehensive, expert explanation of their results and to be given suggestions regarding their further professional development, as requested e.g. in DIN 33430.

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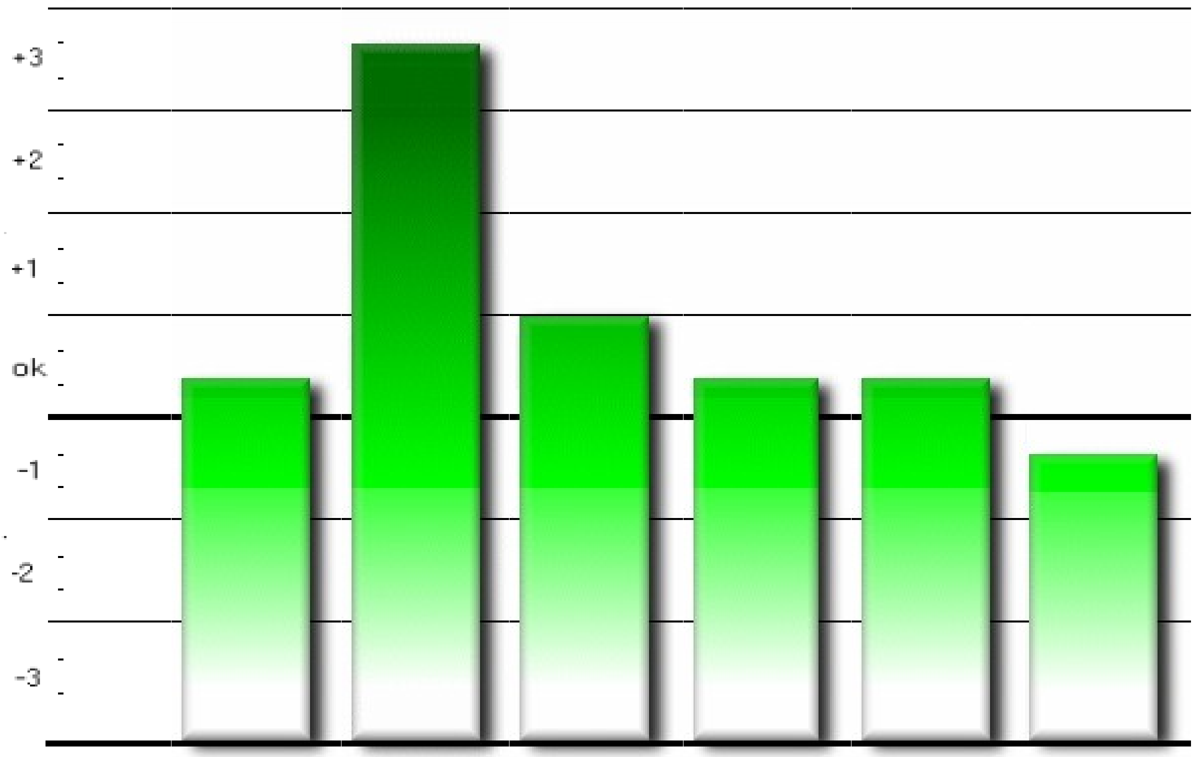
Profile template:	Consultants, vendors, general claims, Finanzdienstleistungen
Answers submitted:	12.06.2013
Assessed by:	HSC group

For the position mentioned above, the company has adjusted the values for each factor to reflect the requirements for that particular sales role.

For example: For a consultant working in "Financial Services, Business Clients" the default requirement for the factor Analysis is set higher than for a sales assistant selling "Food": For this sales assistant, the requirements focus on factors such as Rapport and Attention.

This is why the weighting of the factors is so important: For example: The weighting "0" reflects the general standard, "-3" the lowest and "+3" the highest requirement.



Factors:	**Rapport**	**Attention**	**Analysis**	**Quote**	**Review**	**Closure**
Result:	**OK**	**+3**	**OK**	**OK**	**OK**	**-1**
Weighting:	**0**	**0**	**0**	**0**	**0**	**0**

Dear Phil,

This report assesses your abilities in different areas. Each area comes under the heading of a certain "factor" or phase in the sales consultation cycle. These are:
Rapport, Attention, Analysis, Quote, Review and Closure.

Each section starts with a description of the factor or phase before moving on to your results.

On the print-out "Training and Seminars" you find useful tips for your professional development.

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Rapport

One of the most important goals of any sales consultation is to build trust and to check that some progress has been made towards achieving this goal. Quite a few consultants believe that the main point of a consultation is to come right to the point and to give factual and objective advice. They could not be more wrong. Initially, human beings do not decide for or against a certain product of service, but for or against a certain consultant.

If there is a degree of rapport from the very beginning then trust can be built. Without trust a customer will not be open to any advice. Many people form a first impression within moments of meeting somebody. Customers sense very quickly whether they like or dislike the consultant they are dealing with.

This does not just apply to the first but also to the second or third encounter while building a relationship with a new client. That's why as a consultant you should prepare very carefully for these first moments with a new customer. Try to be as relaxed as possible so that you can exude calm and confidence. Otherwise your smile might come across as forced and artificial. The same approach applies when you are speaking on the phone. The client will sense whether you are smiling or very serious, whether you are prepared to listen to them or unapproachable. During a face-to-face conversation all this is of course even more obvious. Whatever happens, try to remain as calm as possible. Otherwise your tension will also affect the customer.

There are several relaxation techniques which could be useful in this context. Try to put your customers at ease. From the very beginning of your conversation, try to create on open and friendly atmosphere. A good way of doing this is a certain degree of "self-disclosure", i.e. giving some signals or sharing experiences relating to your professional or personal life.

Expressing your own personal thoughts and sentiments requires a high level of self-confidence and self-worth. You should also be able to master the art of "small talk" to quickly build a basis for trust. An ideal-case scenario might look like this: The customer and the sales consultant find that they have many things in common and are "on the same wave-length". Moving on to the actual sales consultation becomes much easier.

Your results:

In "standard situations" your ability to establish rapport with the client is good and sufficient. There are, however, some clients who are somewhat reluctant. In such situations you will have to remain calmer and not proceed too quickly. Building trust takes time. You certainly have the potential to handle this phase in a more professional manner. Allow for a longer "warm-up" phase and engage in some small talk. Clients who are less confident or not really sure about what they want to buy will find this particularly helpful. They can see that they are not confronted with a pushy sales professional but a human being they can talk to.

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Attention

If you interpret the signals sent by your customers correctly and respond to their needs you will best be able to help them. It also ensures that you have the customer's full attention. The communication skills of the sales consultant are key to maintaining this level of attention. Important tools in this context are gestures and facial expressions, the voice, the type of language used and, above all, visualisation.

All efforts during this phase of the consultation are aimed at one goal: Focussing on solving the customer's problems. You will quickly notice whether the customer is paying attention. Do they seem interested? Do they have lots of questions, and possibly some objections? Quite a few consultants are uncomfortable with this type of customer behaviour. What they don't see, however, is that every question and every objection represents an opportunity to set things right.

Your results:

You are able to keep a customer's attention, even during a more complex consultation and over a longer period of time. You support your customers by giving them your own full attention. Your clients feel that they can talk to you about anything, even about issues not immediately to do with particular products or services. This is the ideal basis for building trust. After all, the customer will have to actively participate in the subsequent analysis phase and be ready to share personal and/or confidential data without which an objective consultation would not be possible.

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Analysis

During all sales consultations, the analysis phase is the most complicated and sensitive one. This is where the customer has to share confidential or personal data with you which are the basis for any thorough analysis. If this analysis is bad, insufficient or faulty you will not be able to put together a customer-focussed quote to solve the client's problem. Unfortunately, general customer statements such as "we would like to buy a new device", "I am not particularly happy with my current tariff" or "we need a machine to produce XY" do not provide a sufficient basis for a thorough consultation.

Every customer is primarily interested in a solution for their problems and only subsequently in the advantages of certain products or services. Before you get to that stage, you have to overcome two issues: Many customers would like to give out as little sensitive information as possible, whereas the consultant can't get enough information.

During the analysis phase, you should ask some open and focussed questions, so that the customer volunteers the required information. A problem you might encounter here is the fact that most people tend to be somewhat suspicious to start with without always showing this openly. This is why, as said above, "rapport" and "attention" are so important. In other words: How much do I as the sales consultant have to work at building a good relationship and trust with my customer so that I can carry out a thorough needs analysis at a later stage?

There are certain questioning techniques which have proved invaluable in such situations. For example: "Could you describe to me the two main requirements you would like XY to fulfil ...." This encourages the customers to think about their own situation in an analytical fashion. At the same time, they don't feel like they are being questioned. Another proven method is to let the customer carry out their own analysis. You achieve this by asking certain questions which lead to this self-analysis. You almost act like a coach to your client.

A further important aspect of the analysis is to recognise potential criteria for the customer's decision at his early stage. This requires a high degree of sensitivity and the ability to read between the lines.

Your results:

You appreciate the importance of the analysis phase for the rest of the consultation and realise that tensions and irritation during the quotation phase can only be avoided if the customer supplies sufficient information at this stage. This is an excellent basis for further improving your information gathering techniques. Obtaining even more information from the customer would allow you to carry out an even better analysis. You are not yet able to ensure that your customer volunteers all the information required. The more information you obtain, the more successful you will be at presenting your solutions and quotations and at actually closing the deal.

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Quote

A sales consultant has been most helpful if customers perceive the quote as a solution to their individual problems or as the realisation of their wishes. This is why the quote or proposal should not focus too much on actual product features (all the things this service or product is able to do) but on the psychological factor: "How and why is this particular quote a unique solution for the customer's situation?" A quote should always address the question "What is the desired state and what can you contribute to achieve the ideal actual state for the customer?"

In other words, what will change for the customer if he or she accepts the quote as it is? For example: A company looking to buy an expensive machine tool needs to have a clear picture of improvements in profitability following the purchase and not of the impressive technical data of the machine on offer. Only then will the quote be a solution. For example: A customer at an up-market fashion store buys a really expensive suit not because of the high-quality fabric, the craftsmanship or the beautiful colour but because they can "see" in the mirror that it makes them look particularly attractive and brings out their personality.

For your quote to be successful, you should bear in mind the following rule: No customer buys the technical features of products and services. Therefore the focus during this phase should be on the needs and wishes of the customer and potential benefits. During the analysis phase the customer should have given you all the required background so that you should now be able to show the benefits of your quotation. All your statements should have a positive focus and describe what life will be like for the customer once they have purchased your product.

Your results:
You always take into account the values of your customer when putting together your quote. This is a good basis for refining this technique even further. In the future you should pay particular attention to meeting the emotional needs of the customer in all situations. If you focus on the features of your product or service your customer will not share your judgement. Customers are looking for the fulfilment of their wishes and expectations. A problem you might encounter here is the fact that customers often have a completely different idea of how a solution to their problems or the fulfilment of their wishes and dreams should look. Sales consultants who, full of enthusiasm, focus too much on the benefits and advantages of products and services, are making a serious mistake during this phase of the consultation. The rule still applies that purchase decisions basically come down to "a gut feeling". This applies to small as well as large purchases and investments.

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Review

Has the customer actually understood the quote as "his" or "her" individual solution or do they only see your line of reasoning for the particular products and services?
An ideal-case scenario might look like this: You encourage the customer to double-check whether the quote actually represents the ideal solution which meets their personal expectations.

This is where many consultants make serious mistakes by describing the situation (before and after) themselves. The disadvantage of such an approach is that the consultant can't really check whether the customer has understood the quotation as the individual solution to his or her problems. The danger is that the customer might not be ready to proceed with the deal. This is where the consultant has to assess the situation sensitively. There are customers who don't really say very much because they are somewhat uncertain or can't really express their thoughts and feelings. All you can do here is to question very carefully.

Depending on how you view your client you should have several "techniques" at your disposal which you can use selectively. If your client is very matter-fact, you present your solution in a different way from when the client is much more emotional. In all situations your review of whether the customer has perceived the personal benefits should reflect the insights gained during the analysis phase. You might want to sketch out the benefits once more. Your customer might also send non-verbal signals at this stage indicating that they have recognised the benefits.

Your results:
You routinely, possibly even unconsciously, carry out the "safety review" before you move on to closing the deal (How did I present the solution and what feedback did I get? Has the customer understood the quotation as an individual solution and accepted future benefits and advantages?). This is an excellent basis for further improving your reviewing techniques. You have to always be sure that the customer does not just understand the technical features of your product or service but the personal benefits. You should put together a comprehensive catalogue of questions which you can then use for the review in a targeted fashion.

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Closure

Unfortunately, there is no guaranteed formula for definitely closing a sales deal. This is due to the fact that the decision on whether this was a good sales consultation emerges across all six phases. Closure of the deal is simply the last, albeit decisive phase in a process with which you should now be familiar.

Along with the rapport phase the closure phase is indeed the most difficult one in any sales consultation. Up to this point you have been able to more or less control the process. What you need now is a high level of sensitivity as well as life, sales and consultation experience. If you are too cautious, you might overlook the fact that the client is indeed ready to close the deal. If you move too quickly and come across as too forceful you might lose the level of trust built up during the consultation.

The situation is always the same: Frequently, the customer is not quite sure whether this purchase really represents the solution to their problems. Even if customers have accepted the proposal as "their" solution and have a gut feeling that this is good they might still have one or two doubts. The customer hesitates and can't come to a decision, in spite of the obvious advantages. Some customers are simply uncertain because they worry that they have not thought about every aspect.

In such a situation there are usually verbal or non-verbal signals on whether a client is ready to close the deal, or not. In most cases, the situation is fairly clear. Be very aware of the fact, however, that the customer might still hesitate. May be they have not understood all the information or are just not certain. Try not to overlook these signal and take one or two steps back in the consultation process.

At the same time, there are some very encouraging signals, such as positive statements or requests for further details. Provide further support to the client by once more summarising all the advantages, giving a very personal recommendation or once more painting a clear picture of "before" and "after".

Your results:
You don't focus enough on actively leading up to closing the deal and on accompanying the client during their decision-making process. The consequence could be that the customer feels uncertain, even if so far the consultation has gone quite well. The customer might think "Have I really learned and understood everything I need to know?", "Do I have all the necessary information to come to a good decision?" There is only one thing you can do in such a situation: provide more help.
A sympathetic and sensitive approach will allow the customer to realise that the product or service offered does indeed provide an individual solution to their problems. Bear in mind that a customer cannot arrive at such a conclusion on their own. If the necessary support is missing during this phase (support which can only be provided by a sales consultant) many customers start to doubt and will eventually refuse to go head with the deal.

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How we arrive at your results
You might well ask yourself why your results don't quite meet the requirements for this factor.

All the answers your provided have been evaluated. The system does this by assigning points. For every single factor, 15 of your answers are evaluated. Every answer you have given is compared to the relevant reference data.

How does the system obtain the reference data?

The data stem from long trials involving the most successful consultants in this field. When they have to judge a particular sales situation or want to steer a consultation in a certain direction they rely in their intuition, their sales skills, their knowledge of certain techniques and their personal and professional experience. This is what has made them successful and will ensure their future success. This is why their responses are the benchmark to which your own assessments of sales situations are compared. What is really astonishing is the fact that the most successful people virtually always arrive at the same assessment of a particular situation.

The closer your own responses are to these reference data the more points you collect. The answers of the top consultants have a value of 100. If your answers have collected the same number of points you will have achieved a result of "plus 3".

If you have not collected any points at all (i.e. all your answers were the exact opposite of what the reference group has said) your result will be "minus 3".

Whether your potential is high or low is not determined by those who have developed this process or by individual consultants but by the collective experience of the most successful consultants. This data is checked several times a year. Let's take two examples:

Example 1

When asked
"**I don't assume that I have won the business until I am aware that the customer sees my quotation as a solution to his problems.** "

you answered **no (does not apply to me)**

Top-consultants, on the other hand, gave the following answer:
2 x yes (definitely applies to me)

You might be surprised by this. If you spend some time looking at the background to the question, however, it might become clear to you why that particular answer was chosen. A conversation with your coach or consultant might be helpful at this point.

Example 2

When asked
"**When the customer has accepted a quotation, it would be going too far too fast to point to the place for his signature and push a pen into his hand.** "

you answered **yes (applies to me)**

Top-consultants, on the other hand, gave the following answer:
2 x no (definitely does not apply to me)

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Important tips on how to further improve your performance:

When sales performance is not as strong as it could be this is usually due to a combination of missing sales skills and low potential for certain aspects of social competence. Although results for social competence might come out as OK, they might be at the limits. This means that although there is positive potential for the dimensions which have been examined the relatively weak results indicate that top consultation performance might be difficult.

Evaluations of the results of more than 1000 participants in the sales potential and social competency assessment have shown that 49 % are affected by this situation.

Clear analysis of the data has shown that the success rate of consultations can only be improved if the participant focusses on improving sales and consultation techniques as well as social competency.

Please focus on the following dimensions:

Rapport, Self-confidence, Systematic Mentality, Self-esteem, Job Satisfaction