

Win / Win

**What it really means and how it can help you
become a better salesperson?**

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*“Can I write about you writing about me in
your column in my column?”*

Win / Win

The concept of 'Win / Win' is not new. It is a timeless principle that has stood the test of time.

But even today in the 21st century, many salespeople ignore it (to their peril).

But firstly, some background. Stephen Covey wrote a classic business best seller called 'The Seven Habits of Highly Effective People' in 1989. One of the habits is **Think Win / Win**. In the book, Covey talks about how there are two fundamental views of the world when it relates to resources.

One view is based on the concept of scarcity. In essence, if you get something, then I lose out. This view of the world is based primarily on the emotion of fear. Unfortunately, we have all experienced this fear quite a lot in life. For example, when we apply for a job we are worried that we will not get it. Someone more qualified or experienced will beat us and we will lose out. So it is perfectly understandable to see the world as highly competitive and that if someone else wins, we lose.

The other view is based on abundance. This means that the world has abundant opportunities and that if one works hard to find them, there will be plenty to go around. So to use the job example again, if we look hard enough, there could be plenty of jobs that could utilize our skills and abilities. Then we can find the right match for both us and the employer and we get the right job. Everyone wins in this case.

Note that both these views (or attitudes) are valid. It is up to the individual to choose.

In summary, Win / Lose is based on the scarcity view of the world and Win / Win is based on the view that there is abundance.

So how do these attitudes affect salespeople and selling?

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If a salesperson thinks that a sale is something he needs to win, perhaps even at the expense of the customer, then we have a problem. Both a short term and a long term problem.

In the short term, the customer will sense that the salesperson is pushing hard to get the deal and that this is her/his most important objective. But what does the customer care about? The customer cares about fulfilling needs and wants and does not care very much whether the salesperson achieves his quota (especially if they don't know each other). So the salesperson resorts to 'tricks' or 'techniques' that try to persuade the customer into buying something right here and now. The obvious effect is resistance from the customer.

Even if the salesperson gets the deal, then the customer may have felt that he or she was coerced into a premature decision. This leads to dissatisfaction. And this is certainly not effective in winning over customers long term.

The above situation, while not good, could be made worse if a salesperson then tries to win in other areas.

For example, a salesperson may realize that the customer may not know what the realistic price for the goods are. The salesperson may resort to inflating the price so he can increase the profits. Or the salesperson may try to convince the customer that the deal ends today and this will pressure the customer into making a decision quickly.

But let's face facts. Most customers are smart and they will work it out eventually that the salesperson won at their expense and they 'lost' in the transaction.

What is the typical reaction?

Anger, I would say. The customer will try to react by 'getting back' at the salesperson. There are a number of possibilities. The customer could complain, ask for the money back, tell other people to avoid your company or even worse - take legal action (if the deal involved a big financial amount).

The attitude in this case has caused a long term problem.

A salesperson who takes the attitude of Win / Lose does nobody any favours. He has forgotten one of the Golden Rules about selling:

A salesperson's job is not getting deals. It is getting customers.

Now let's look at the situation again using a Win / Win mindset.

If a salesperson wants the customer to also win, then a different set of behaviours occur. The salesperson then ensures that the customer's needs are met and that the customer has found a solution that addresses a need or want. The salesperson will also ensure that the customer is happy with the pricing, and the after-sales service and answers any questions that arise.

Note that the salesperson still gets the deal (or is even more likely to get it) but because of a different attitude, the deal is done in a mutually beneficial manner. Everybody is happy with the outcome. The customer would probably come back for more products and services in the future and may even refer other leads to the salesperson.

One important precondition for Win / Win is that you are ready to walk away from a deal if you feel that it would end in a loss for the customer. This is a tough call for any salesperson who has to fulfil a quota. But it is crucial to the question:

Do you want to get a deal or a loyal customer?

Win / Win



Henry Ching is a Sales Trainer and Coach at Progress-U Limited. Henry works with sales managers, salespeople, entrepreneurs and anyone else who want to further develop their sales skills and methods using Best Practice thinking. Today, even top sales performers face ever-increasing challenges in:

- How to shorten the sales cycles;
- How to avoid being drawn into a margin destroying price war;
- How to qualify better so they work on higher quality deals;
- How to close effectively and
- How to maximize the return on investment on the sales efforts made.

Henry assists his clients in tackling these challenges through Progress-U's innovative and unique "Stop Selling!" approach and by sharing his extensive experience gathered during his corporate career.

Henry is known for his creativity and humour when it comes to tackling difficult sales situations or working on complex deals. He has developed sales strategies and training that have helped many clients address their sales challenges. During his corporate sales career at IBM Australia, Fujitsu and Information Builders, Henry has worked with Blue Chip clients like Mercedes Benz, HJ Heinz, Dun & Bradstreet and the Australian Defence Force. He succeeded in highly competitive sales environments that required thinking 'outside the box'.