



MENTOR

Clifton Warren

A guide to managing sales talent

One of the secrets of highly effective managers who have made the successful transition from managing to coaching is their ability to navigate through the different zones that their sales teams live in

There are four zones that you need to continually be aware of to maximise your sales talent and coaching effectiveness.

Dead zones

People in this zone are not interested in improving their performance, due to burnout, low self esteem or not being right for the role. It often occurs in individuals and teams that have been producing marginal results, and the cause can be outside their control, eg change of management, changing priorities within the organisation, poor management.

If you attempt to coach when someone is in the dead zone, they will often respond negatively to any advice or suggestions. The concern is this can spread through the team.

Techniques: Act quickly, but do not push them! Move them into their comfort zone by identifying the source of the problem and helping them to achieve some small wins. Establish some realistic team goals, and a management performance plan to move them into a new zone, into a role that is better suited

for their talents or out. You cannot afford to have people in the dead zone for long periods.

Comfort zone

These may be the ones who have been high flyers and the talk of the town but are now living in the past, thinking that the success will last forever. People in the comfort zone can be difficult to coach because they are blinkered to both their successes and failures.

Techniques: You will need to ensure that your organisational goals are aligned with the individual objectives of your team. Keep your team updated on the progress of your company plans. Develop agreed win-win performance standards. Raise the bar regularly.

Panic zone

People in the comfort zone can hit a slump and spiral out of control to the point where they need to sell something to pay the bills the next month or keep their job. The good thing is this zone can provide a wake up call. Coaching this person can be very difficult, as

they are often taking advice from everyone and not really implementing anything.

Techniques: Move them to the comfort zone as quickly as possible by agreeing on some objectives and measures. Track their progress regularly; agree on specific outcomes.

Stretch zone

This is the ideal zone. High performers do their best work in this zone. It is also where people are open to new ideas that will help them to lift their performance. This is where you can experiment with new techniques.

Map out what zone each person on your team is in. Each person's zone will change at times. The more people you have operating in the comfort and stretch zones the easier it will be to grow your business. Aim to spend 80% of your time in the stretch zone and shifting people from comfort into stretch. ■

Clifton Warren, clifton@pii1.com,
(03) 9833 4690

The truth about limousines and taxis

In his latest column, mortgage broker and referral coach *Marc Jarman* shows you an unusual way of starting 'referral dialogues' with your clients

The metaphor I describe below shows how you can differentiate yourself from the average mortgage broker. The faster you can differentiate yourself, the faster you will begin earning your six figure income.

Taxi drivers and limo drivers

When I think of "average" service, a picture which often comes to mind is of a second-rate taxi driver. We have all been in a taxi and we know what the experience is like – it is generally not all that memorable. If you provide this kind of service to your client, then you are doing what every other "average" mortgage broker is doing and the client is unlikely to keep you in mind for referrals.

When you are having your first conversation with your next prospect, say: "Most mortgage brokers work like taxi drivers. I do business more like a limousine service." See the response you get. You might be pleasantly surprised. In less than 10 seconds, you have intelligently educated your prospect that you are different from most other mortgage brokers in the mortgage industry. All you have to do from then on is provide a level of service that supports your statement.

The second part of your strategy expands on the metaphor and should be said at the beginning of your initial consultation with your prospect. Say: "I've prepared what I feel are some great lending options for your situation. And before we get into that, I want to show you what makes me different from the average mortgage broker." Then it is up to you to show them.

Doing things differently

I prefer to do business more like a limousine service. That means that while most mortgage brokers, like taxi drivers, spend most of their time looking for new clients, I spend most of my time serving clients who are introduced to me.

I ensure that a client's experience with me is first class. And, as a result, my current and past clients happily refer my service to friends, family members and co-workers who are looking for first-class service. The best part about my limousine-style service is it is no more expensive than the taxi driver service.

And if you are still not convinced, here is a little note that will give you something to think about. Some of the highest paid professionals in the world are recording artists, actors and athletes. They all have one thing in common – continually training to perfect their craft.

As a mortgage broker, you must continually develop your consulting skills so that you are a limousine driver and not just a taxi service. Your time to shine is during your consultation with your prospects, for it is during this time that they decide if they are going to use your service.

This is Step One of my three-step "Plant, Nourish and Flourish" referral plan through which, as I explained in my previous column, you can plant referral seeds. ■

Marc Jarman, freecall 1800 339 421,
www.LendingByReferral.com.au



Marc Jarman