

A man in a dark blue suit, light blue shirt, and patterned tie is walking through a city street. He is wearing glasses and talking on a mobile phone held to his right ear. He has a black bag slung over his shoulder. The background is a blurred city street with a yellow and blue car, a person on a bicycle, and other pedestrians.

# 4 Ways to Master Your Competitive Sales Skills

# Introduction

Do you want to make more **sales**? “So called” solution-based selling and consultative selling will only take you so far. They sound like they are on the right path, but that’s like saying there are two kinds of driving: *regular driving* and *careful driving*. Really? There is only one right way to drive — driving right *is* careful driving.

Selling done right is *consultative* and *solution-based*. So, what would the alternative be? First, you must consider what the real issue is: how are you going to win a sale when your competitors are trying to get the same one? They are going after the same type of budget you want from the same person you are trying to sell to! How do you gain a competitive edge when you are both practicing the same consultative selling?

Selling is a competitive game that only produces winners who *consistently* practice their competitive sales approach. On top of competing against others, the competitive seller is always competing against themselves — striving to make themselves better by getting more sales this year than the previous year.

# 1. Focus on a financial target



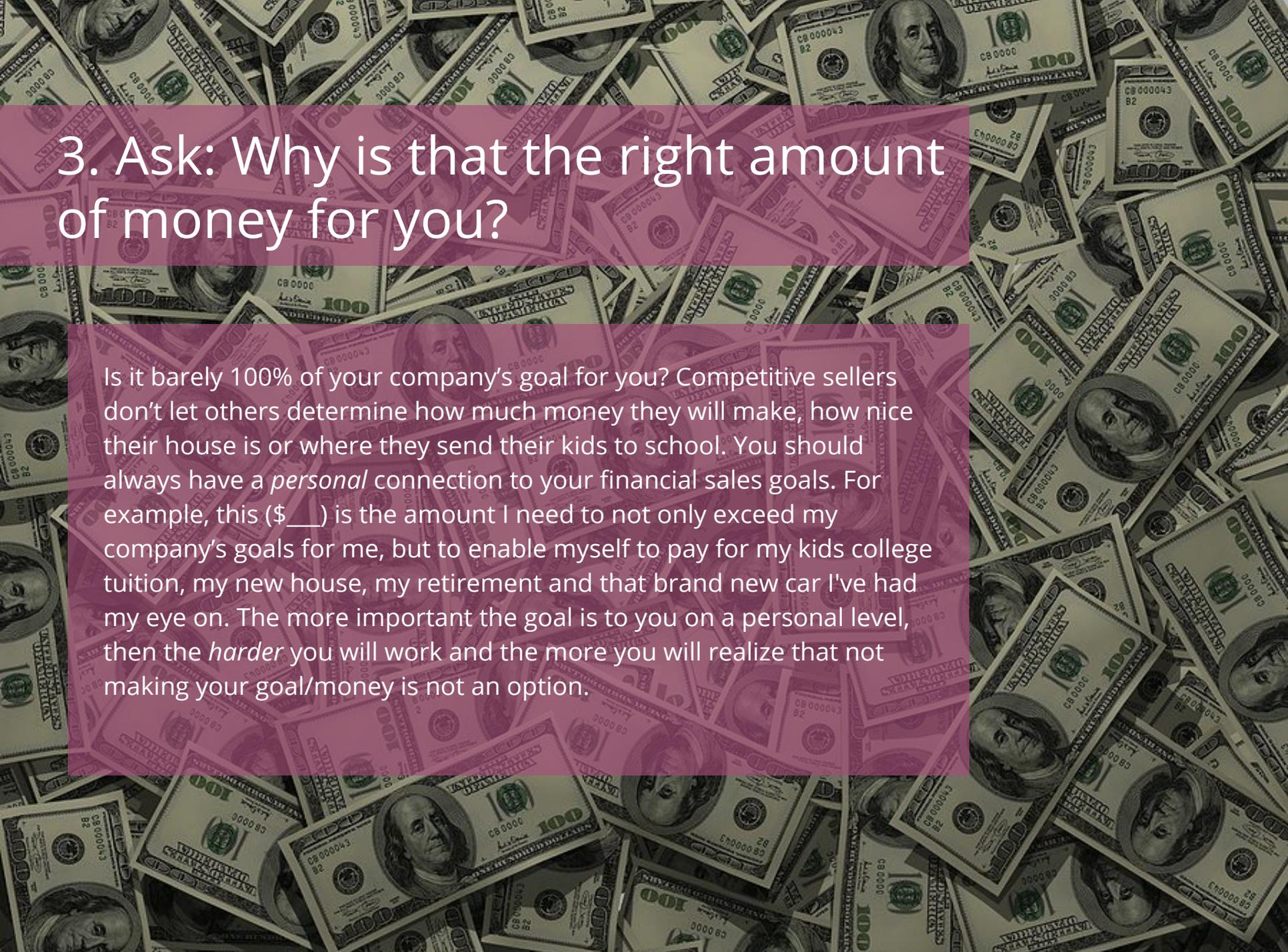
Ask yourself, how much money do you want to make this year? Ultimately, the competitive seller will stop at nothing to get it. Picture yourself at the end of the year. Visualize that you've made that goal — how *happy* are you? Now imagine you missed that goal. How *unhappy* are you? What went wrong? Some excuse?

Sellers *don't* have the luxury of excuses. They believe an excuse is a well-planned lie. You already know before you begin what the litany of excuses will be if you miss your goal. Do you know what trumps a great excuse? Not needing one!

## 2. Reverse engineer how you can achieve your goals.

What is the total number of sales needed to hit each month's goals? What is the most *realistic* and "do-able" combination of big and small sales, new and existing, renewals and up-sells needed to reach my goals? What will that "portfolio" of sales look like each month? How much will you need each month through a combination of salary, bonus, spiffs and commission? Can you do the math that leads you to making that money?

Often times, that's the first problem you are faced with when trying to assess what you need to do in order to accomplish both your personal and professional sales goals.



### 3. Ask: Why is that the right amount of money for you?

Is it barely 100% of your company's goal for you? Competitive sellers don't let others determine how much money they will make, how nice their house is or where they send their kids to school. You should always have a *personal* connection to your financial sales goals. For example, this (\$\_\_\_) is the amount I need to not only exceed my company's goals for me, but to enable myself to pay for my kids college tuition, my new house, my retirement and that brand new car I've had my eye on. The more important the goal is to you on a personal level, then the *harder* you will work and the more you will realize that not making your goal/money is not an option.

## 4. Achieve the Monthly Portfolio of Sales

Ask yourself, what will your **pipeline** have to look like at the start of every month to achieve the right balance and portfolio of sales? That pipeline picture is your “ideal” pipeline. Every month, every week and every day you need to compare your actual pipeline to that ideal. Only then can you do a real gap analysis that reveals the specific prospecting, qualifying, selling and negotiating changes you need to make.

Going through this analysis of your sales process will help you understand the motions you go through and then aid you at pinpointing the areas that you need to develop and improve upon. **Time management** is a crucial element of this process. Reducing your sales cycle is a function of doing *more prospecting* while being more effective with the accounts you've just started working on.

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