

Special Management Series

How to Turn Your Sales Team Into a “Category of One”

This is a series of Training for your
Management TEAM

Presented by J.W. Owens



A Management
Perspective 303 Series



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Some companies aren't just leaders in their categories, they're the only company in their category.

When you think of rental car companies who will deliver the car to your door, for instance, you think of Enterprise; when you think about buying books or music online, you think of Amazon.com.

So what is it that makes these Category of One companies stand apart?

They are driven by a single focus: the customer.

Get your sales team to follow the **three rules** these companies follow and you'll have a **“Category of One” sales team.**

How to Turn Your Sales Team Into a “Category of One”

Rule #1: *Know more about the customer than anyone else.*

Sales people generally balk at this rule.

They say they don't have time to research prospective customers because they need to be out making sales calls.

Yet unmatched customer knowledge going into the call is the single most powerful sales tool there is.

Here's an example:

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Here’s THE example:

A few years ago, a bank contacted 3 consultants and asked them each to **prepare a proposal** on ways the bank could increase its retail market share.

The proposals would be delivered separately to a selection committee via conference call. When the day arrived, ONE launched into his presentation like this: *“This is not the time for you to be thinking about increasing market share. You have many customers out there, particularly your older customers, who are going to be very nervous and wondering whether they should stay with you or move their business to a competitor.”*

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Here’s THE example CONT:

He went on to outline the concerns that were uppermost with the bank’s employees and customers following the bank’s sale the previous weekend. *“With this surprise sale you’ve got some immediate issues that I think I can help you deal with.”*

There was a long silence and thought he’d blown it. Then the chairman came on the line and said, *“You’ve got the job.”*

As it turned out, **none of the other consultants knew the bank had been sold.** He won the sale –**on his knowledge of the customer.**

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Rule #2: *Get closer to the customer than anyone else.*

You’ve likely heard this a hundred times before, but do you know how to do it?

Here’s the secret: you sell to markets of one.

“The days of marketing to a demographic model are over, you are targeting male customers of a particular age who are in a certain income range and live in a specified geographic area, then you will probably lose to your competitor who is targeting me. Me. A marketing target of one.”

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RULE #2 cont.

In other words, you can't get close to your customers by a group at a time, you need to do it one customer at a time. Take the example of Mike, who sells men's clothing and to whom a salesperson returns again and again.

The salespeople keeps going back because over the years, Mike has **paid attention to what the salesperson likes** and how he wants to do business – and when those preferences have changed. **He calls the salesperson when certain items come in that he knows he likes.** He knows he can wave and leave him alone when he comes into the store because he is happy browsing for a long time, but Mike is there in a flash when he has a question.

“Mike isn't focused on what he wants to sell. Mike is focused on whom he is selling to. And that gets him closer to me,” says the salesperson. *“The knowledge comes first, the closeness comes next.”*

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Rule #3: *Emotionally connect with the customer better than anyone else.*

It's extremely difficult to gain **Category of One** status with your customers unless you create a strong emotional connection with them. An **emotional connection** takes you to the highest level of business where deals are an act of friendship. **So how do you create an emotional connection?** You do it **over time**, with a series small actions that take place on a personal level. **You do it by** remembering a customer's birthday with a hand-written note; by asking about your client's children, by name; by sending, instead of a generic brochure, an article on Japanese rock gardens that you saw in a magazine on an airplane because your customer once expressed an interest in this subject. ***“It's tiny actions by regular people that create the most powerful force in business.”***

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Good Selling !



J.W. Owens - 561-372-5922
results.jwowens@gmail.com

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