



IS IT TIME TO CLOSE THE FILE ON THAT STALLED PROSPECT?

As sales professionals we've all most likely had this problem with a prospect at one time or another. They were a hot prospect sending you all the right buying signals and then all of the sudden they switched off. Now they don't return your calls. They are unresponsive to your emails and you are left in sales limbo. Do you keep calling? After all when you last spoke they were set to proceed. Now they are missing in action. What can you do?

I would like to share a quick little tip that works well. If you had a good relationship with the prospect and you are willing to take a last shot to see if the person is still engaged, send them an email that says you are going to "close their file".

Simply state that you have tried to reach them by phone and email and since they are not responding you would like to close the file. Let them know if their situation has changed and they are no longer in the market for your product/service, it would be best to close the file and move on.

Here's an email template example:

Dear Fred: I would like to take a moment and determine if I should be closing your file at this time. I have left a couple of phone messages and emails regarding _____ but have not heard back from you.

I respect that things change quickly in today's business environment. If you have decided not to pursue this project with us please let me know so I can close your file.

I hope you will consider us in the future if the situation changes or the need arises.

Regards,

You will be amazed at how many times you get a message back almost immediately apologizing for their lack of communication and telling you the project is still a go but they were caught up in a more urgent internal problem.

Let's face it. In the world of sales you can get "yes", "no" and "maybe". I want to hear yes, or no because they are answers that give me a clear next step. Getting tied up with the clients who are a maybe can drain you and waste a lot of valuable selling time.

By taking a minute and offering to close the file, no questions asked, you will be surprised how many valid prospects let you know they are still interested but not ready at this moment. Most often the person will tell me their new time frame or suggest we reconnect. Armed with their permission to proceed I will reconnect with them when the time is right and advance the sales process.

For more sales tips, join our free webinar *What To Do Today To Sell More Tomorrow* where we share techniques from today's top sales performers. Visit our website to register or to view the presentation video.

AIM HIGHER!

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Robert J. Weese is managing partner of B2B Sales Connections, the online sales training website with free sales resources, a specialized sales job board and free resume listing services for business to business sales professionals. He has a proven track record of success, with over 29 years of direct sales, management and executive level business to business experience. His accomplishments include being named sales manager of the year for North America for a dealer organization, being in the 100% club of a Fortune 500, and achieving outstanding sales growth in a national channel sales organization. He is currently a member of the Ajax Pickering Board of Trade, as well as an Ambassador for the Toronto Board of Trade. For more information, please visit www.b2bsalesconnections.com , or contact Robert directly at rjweese@b2bsalesconnections.com or www.linkedin.com/in/bobweese.