

This is the introduction to the new book Why Johnny can't sell by Michael J. Nick and Bob Kantin. The book will be available in the summer 2006 at bookstores everywhere.

Introduction

This book is about Johnny. (A metaphor for all of us who sell) We tried to write a book that everyone who sells can identify with. The stories throughout this book are absolutely true. In some cases we changed the names of the characters for obvious reasons. Our goal or intent was to develop a book that can be used to make us all better sales people. Our audience for this book is sales managers who want to build a better team, sales people who want to sell more and get (back) on top and the maverick sales person who simply needs more ideas on how to drive your sales manager crazy.

We begin with our observations of reality. These observations span many years of selling. We point out how times have changed, and as sales people what worked in the past just doesn't work now. In other words, techniques we used in the past to prospect, nurture, relationship build and close, are not getting the same results. Johnny is clearly stuck in the past and trying to create a future.

Next we discuss the concept of consultative selling. There are literally hundreds of consultative selling approaches. Most of us know the major companies who provide consultative sales training; Solution Selling, SPIN, Customer Centric Selling, and VITO to name a few. What most of us don't know is that there are hundreds of smaller boutique companies that provide the same type of training, but more custom: KLA Group, Beveridge, Jill Konrath, Pyramid Power Selling, Value Selling, etc. The reason this is important to Johnny is that he follows the methodology he learned (and taught) from his previous employer, and now his new employer follows a different one, just not to the degree Johnny is used to.

In the past, sales tools played a "less major" roll in the sales process. Don't get us wrong, they existed, but in silos throughout the organization. I did a project in the late 90's for Hewlett Packard to build an "ROI Tool" the sales force could use to differentiate themselves from the competition. The problem was simple; it didn't talk to any other sales tool HP throughout their sales process. In this chapter we discuss the development, use and misuse of sales tools throughout the sales process. Just like HP,

many organizations have silos of sales tools that your sales force is using, misusing, or not using at all. Johnny needed some help to tie it all together.

The next few chapters discuss many of the challenges Johnny faces in his job each day. Johnny tries to deal with the irony that we spend millions of dollars on technology each year to keep sales people from selling to us. Technology like SPAM filters, Voice Mail, Pop up blockers, call screeners, etc., and yet we don't understand why our own sales force has difficulty contacting prospects to sell to. There are many techniques we have uncovered to help Johnny "get through" to the most difficult C-level executive.

In the final chapters, we take the time to tie it all together by helping you assess your existing sales tools and the gaps that may exist in your tool repertoire. Along the way, we introduce a chapter on how to use technology and technique to beat the same technology that is trying to stop you from selling. This chapter will identify technologies that are put into place to keep you from getting to C-level executives. We tap the great minds in sales to help us break through these barriers.

Finally, a resource guide to who can help Johnny (and Janie) sell more. This guide will reveal to you companies, products and web address of some of the best sales resources in the marketplace today. Many of them we know personally and recommend, others we received referrals from our colleagues. Regardless, we encourage you to look over the resource guide and visit our web site: www.whyjohnnycantsell.com for updates.

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Johnny called us today. He told us he took over as sales director for a new division of a 20 year old software company. His job was to use the leverage of the existing corporation to sell the new products. Once the group started selling he could hire a sales staff and grow the company. His boss (Ex VP of sales for the corporation and now General Manager) will work with him to get the new company launched. He had access to the VP of Marketing from the corporation for lead generation and marketing materials.

The compensation plan had the potential to double Johnny's income. And, he was a perfect fit for his new position. He had:

- Previous experience selling high-ticket hardware, software, and professional services at the C-level
- A proven record meeting or exceeding sales quotas
- Consultative selling experience
- Good communications skills
- A rolodex of contacts from many of his previous employers

Johnny said he had been very excited about his new company, however, after a few weeks, Johnny was getting disillusioned. He was continually being disappointed with how the company was preparing him to sell this new product. Here are some of Johnny's observations;

- Johnny's new General Manager, claimed the corporation follows one of the leading consultative sales methodologies, and insisted Johnny use it as described in "the book."
- Johnny had spent almost a week in product training. He learned a lot about the functions, features, and benefits of the company's products. He also learned a bit about how the company implemented its products. When Johnny asked how they would qualify a prospect, all he got was a technical discussion about the reasons a company should buy. Johnny didn't get anything about the business issues, pains or goals their prospects might be facing.
- Johnny has been working several leads. One of his prospects asked him about the product's value proposition. The contact wanted to know what the "ROI" his company should expect if they bought his product. Johnny gave the contact some recent case studies that claimed companies were achieving over 20% return. But the contact was

not satisfied; he wanted Johnny to help calculate the true value they thought they could deliver.

- Another of Johnny's prospects was asking for a proposal because the deal required Executive Committee approval. After asking the General Manager for some support, he was encouraged to get copies of proposals from the corporation, and create one based on that.
- Johnny called many of his "rolodex" contacts and has yet to connect with one. He doesn't understand what has happened.
- Johnny tried to "cold call" today from a list his GM gave him; it didn't turn out so well.

Johnny called us today looking for help!

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We encourage you to get write in this book. Complete each of the self tests, self evaluations and templates. At the rear of the book we have included a case study of all of the forms completed by a \$26 Million dollar software company. Remember to visit our web site to download additional templates to help you build a set of sales tools that will help you close more deals. Finally, please use Why Johnny can't sell as a workbook, sales tool and reference guide as you develop your own customized sales tools and sales technique.

How to Use This Book

It will make some difference in your organization if you decide only to read the book and mentally do the exercises. Rather, if you read the chapters in order and carefully fill in the tables and complete the exercises, you'll experience a cumulative knowledge gain in two areas:

- **Assessment** Some exercises will help you to understand your current situation. It's easy to talk about concepts but it's more difficult to put things in writing. So, various exercises will help you assess how closely you're following a consultative sales methodology and the effectiveness of the sales tools you're using (or not using).
- **Application** We designed other exercises to help you apply our concepts. Again, it's easy to read about concepts but it's more difficult to decide how to apply them to your company and its products and services. You will find these exercises more challenging. We recommend that you don't skip any. Complete them all and in order. If possible, work with one or two other people. We think most readers will benefit from a team approach.

How to use this book for:

- **Sales Professionals** If you're a sales professional, this book will provide you with several resources to make your job easier. We supply you with many books, services, and ideas on lead generation. Next we believe *Why Johnny can't sell* will help you understand how following a sales process and using integrated sales tools can make a difference in your sales results. If you complete the exercises and fill in the tables, it will help you spot gaps in your company's sales process if they exist. Many of these gaps can be filled by you. This book is not intended for you to start fixing

major deficiencies in the organization because that's likely a significant undertaking, which requires management approval and support.

- **Sales Managers**

If you're a sales manager, this book will provide you with several resources to make your job easier. We supply you with many books, services, and ideas on training, managing and coaching your sales team. Why Johnny can't sell will help you understand why your consultative sales strategy, processes, tools, and training must be totally customized and integrated. It will help you identify the sources and uses of prospective customer information and the relationship of this information to sales tools. It will give you insight for working with your sales professionals and reinforcing the need to follow your consultative sales methodology. Finally, we provide a road map to filling the gap between product training and sales training.

- **VP of Sales**

If you're a Vice President of Sales, this book will provide you with several resources to make your job easier. We supply you with many books, services, and ideas on effectively managing and coaching a sales force. Why Johnny can't sell will help you get an overall look at the effectiveness of your sales methodology, processes, tools, and training. We believe by completing the exercises and filling in the tables with your sales managers it will provide not only a gap analysis, but a roadmap to implementing many of the ideas presented. Thus, improving your sales revenue, and reducing your cost of sales.

- **VP of Marketing**

If you're the VP of Marketing, reading this book will give you some insight into the complexity of your company's consultative sales methodology and all the things that must come together to sell your products and services. We describe many resources available to your organization that should help sales align with marketing in the development, customization, integration, deployment, and support of sales tools. We help you identify some opportunities where your expertise and that of your staff can help the organization, especially when sales professionals have to provide output to a prospective customer. Although it will be difficult for you to complete the exercises, we do feel you must participate in the process and strategy outlined throughout this book.

- **CEO**

If you're the CEO of a small company, reading this book will help you understand what's happening or should be happening in your sales department. It also will give insight as to how and why your sales professionals should follow a consultative sales methodology. By completing the exercises, you can spearhead the effort to assess your current situation, and help determine what is necessary to turn your sales force into a selling machine.

If you're the CEO of a large company, this book will give you some ideas about how to evaluate the effectiveness of your company's sales strategy, processes, tools, and training. It can provide a roadmap for working with the VP of Sales to define a project and course of action for correcting any deficiencies.