

## **Can You Finish?**

By Roger Bostdorff

I have been attempting to come up with the right topic for this column for about two weeks. As I was sitting in my office this morning doing email, as well as research for one of my clients, my cell phone rang. As I answered the phone and realized that someone was attempting to sell me something, and they were calling me on my cell phone, I became irritated with the caller. It was not her fault. I was busy and she was interrupting my plan for the day and doing it on an unlisted number. The issue was my time. She was only following the script. In fact, she did not read the script, when that happens I simply tell the caller that I am not interested and hang up. No, she conversationalized the script.

The caller wanted to know if I wanted to save money on my health insurance. Who wouldn't want to save money on health insurance? This is one of the fastest rising costs in America today. For crying out loud, this problem is so huge that even Hillary attempted to fix it years ago when Big Bill was in office. Even she couldn't get it done. All I had to do was answer a few questions and this company would provide me with a comparative price for health care insurance. They typically saves their customers between 20-30%. Am I interested?? Let me at those questions!

Name? Address? Age? Children? Diabetes, Cancer? On any medication? Smoke? Wife's name? all of the above same questions for her. Who provides me health insurance now? All reasonable questions, right? I mean they are going to provide me with a price for Health care insurance that might save me 20-30%!! "How should an Agent contact you and what time would be most convenient?" Nice job, well done on her part.

I then asked two questions, "When the Agent calls me he will have a price for the Health care insurance, right?" "I mean, you have gathered the data necessary for him so that he can provide me my comparative pricing?" ..... Her response-"I don't know." I responded with, "What do you mean you don't know? You were the one that told me that if I answered a few questions your company could provide me with a price that could potentially save me 20-30%?" "Well," she said, "I have never really met the Agents that work for this company, I just make phone calls."

At that moment how much credibility did she have with me? What am I anticipating is going to happen when this Agent calls me? Am I looking forward to that call? The responses to all three of these questions have negative connotations for this insurance company. So how could have the company increased the odds of success for this poor lady that was on a roll, and probably others that were on the phone that day as well?

It is like basketball. The guard can steal the ball with his lightning quick reflexes but if he does not put the ball in the hole you say he did not finish. If you are going to finish, you need to practice putting the ball in the hole. This company had a good game plan and a good caller but they did not finish! All it would have taken was for the caller to understand the process that was going to take place after she hung up. She then could describe that process with confidence and enthusiasm on the call. She could have told me that the company would be looking at the answers to my questions and either provide

me with my comparative shopping quote or determine that a few more questions would need to be asked. In either event, the amount of time invested on my part would be minimal. Had she said that I would not have known that she had no clue who the Agent was, nor what they did, and I would not have a negative feeling anticipating this call.

As you put together sales game plans for your company have you and your team practiced your finish? Have you asked yourself what happens if the customer says this or that? How will you respond? If someone else is representing your company to potential customers have you insured that they know enough about your company and your processes that they can answer these simple questions so that the odds increase not decrease of making the sale?

This insurance company only had one chance to make a good impression. How do you think they did? How are you/your company doing relative to finishing?

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