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"Let's Talk Selling"

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The Baron Group, Inc.

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About this issue...

Dear Friends:

We are well into 2005 and we hope your year is off to a good start. Most of the people we talk to complained about a sluggish January, an improved February and a solid March. That is certainly encouraging and most people are quite optimistic about the second quarter. Let's keep our fingers crossed.

Anyone who is familiar with our work or has ever participated in a Baron Group program knows how much we value teamwork. Using

your colleagues as resources will only make you more effective. And with that in mind, this newsletter is devoted to that subject. We hope you enjoy it and get a few new ideas.

We wish you all success in the second quarter and beyond. And by all means keep those cards and letters coming...

Eric R. Baron

Team Selling – The Internal Component

Teams vs. Individuals

Teams outperform individuals. That has been proven in dozens of studies, including NTL's wonderful research back in the 70's. First, the participants would take a multiple choice test individually. Then they would be asked to reach consensus on every answer as a group.

Finally, the individual scores were compared with the group scores. *Invariably, the group did better than the average individual—proving once again that **when teams work together well, the total exceeds the sum of its parts.***

What does that have to do with selling? Everything. Because





Team Selling – The Internal Component- cont'd



sales organizations who learn how to make teamwork a norm and encourage salespeople to use each other as resources will outperform the competition, again and again.

Teams vs. Individuals

Teams outperform individuals. When teams work together well, the total exceeds the sum of its parts.

At its best, the joint sales call can be a work of art. With effective planning and a solid understanding of goals, objectives, roles and responsibilities, the joint call can show customers that your organization is superior .

The Internal Side of Team Selling

Sales Managers need to get their teams together on a regular basis. If face-to-face meetings are too costly, then they need to do it through conference calls, phone or video. It is a critical activity.



There are no better resources to salespeople than other salespeople who share the same business challenges every day.

When sales teams come together they can share perspectives, help each other solve problems, review different parts of the sales process, explore new approaches, share suc-

cesses, commiserate over disappointments and generally learn from each other. Even if you locked a sales team in a room with no managers, no facilitator, no subject matter experts, no agenda and no resources, *they would still walk out better salespeople.* That's because **there are no better resources to salespeople than other salespeople** who share the same challenges every day.

For example: the team gets together for a day, once a quarter. Each person brings to the meeting one sales related problem; it has to be real, relevant and important.

The manager (or appropriate substitute) facilitates a problem solving session. The salesperson explains the problem and the group offers ideas. **Half an hour is spent generating ideas; the other half hour is dedicated to evaluating/refining the most exciting ideas.** In an hour, a salesperson could easily end up

with one or more new approaches or solutions to his/her problem.

Since many of the team members have similar problems, everyone benefits from every session. But *the key is for the team members to help each other* – that's one of the best team-building "exercises" there is.

Other resources to the team can be invited to these meetings. The collective expertise of Customer Service, Marketing, R&D, Manufacturing, Operations and other functions can be very helpful in solving difficult problems facing the sales team.

The day of the "rugged individualist" is long gone. We should all relish competing with those who go it alone, while we make good use of the many viable resources behind us.

All too often, asking for help is perceived as a sign of weakness. It is actually a sign of strength. When an individual feels good



Team Selling— Other Ways to Use Teams

about him or herself, he/she will feel comfortable seeking advice from others. That is what these sessions attempt to accomplish—and the results will be extraordinary.

Other Ways to Use Teams

Some other ways to get teams working together and helping each other:

- **Building Trust with Customers**

When customers are worried about **risk**, it is harder to trust salespeople who are asking them to do something new and different. A great team exercise is to *share the kinds of things they have done to reduce the risk the customer fears* when trying something new.

- **Asking Difficult Questions**

Many salespeople have questions they want to ask, but worry about how the customer might react. A useful

exercise is to have team members list such questions and then collaborate on ways to ask them comfortably.

Remember, a *pre-question statement*—which gives a reason to ask the question or a benefit in answering it—will always help when it is time to ask those challenging questions.

- **Reviewing Customers’ Needs**

Successful selling comes from truly understanding and addressing the customer’s needs. Some are obvious, some aren’t; some are business related, others are personal. *We rarely know all our customers’ needs.*

One exercise has the group list as many customer needs as possible. Don’t forget to include *needs the customer may not even know he/she has.*

Remember, **most needs are verbs**, so list them that way. Start with the words “to _____,” to ensure that they are needs, not

(salesperson-driven) ideas or solutions.

- **Reframing Objections**

For most salespeople, resolving objections is the most challenging step in selling.

Be aware that *most objections are unfulfilled needs*. And that turning an objection (“your price is too high”) into a need (“to see the value in what we offer”) is the key to objection resolution. We call this *reframing*. When salespeople transform objections into needs, they become more resolvable.

So this team exercise reframes the most common customer objections, and *then discusses ways to address the needs uncovered*. You will be amazed at the resulting insights.

These are just a few of the exercises that sales teams can use to enhance their collective productivity and make sure that they approach *selling as the “team sport”* that it should be!



Building Trust

Successful sales teams share the kinds of things they have done to *reduce the risk the customer fears* when trying something new.



Resolving Objections

Turning an objection (“your price is too high”) into a *need* (“to see the value in what we offer”) is the key to objection resolution.



Who We Are:

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The Baron Group is a consulting firm that researches and teaches the skills involved in the sales process, the sales management process and problem solving. Our primary focus is on the role of the salesperson as a problem solving resource to his or her clients. The salespeople who can help their clients solve their business problems by combining industry and product knowledge with proven problem solving skills will clearly become valued-added resources to their customers.

We develop programs customized to your needs-- creating a uniquely effective sales process for your organization. We then provide the required training for your salespeople, sales managers and other professional colleagues.

◆ OPEN REGISTRATION PROGRAMS IN 2005 ◆

The Baron Group offers two different Open Registration Programs, held at our Westport, Connecticut training facility and available to individual participants on a first come, first served basis. The diversity of the companies and industries represented in these programs greatly broadens perspectives gained in the learning situation— especially in classroom dialogue and role-play activities. Remainder 2005 training dates:

- **Consultative Selling (2 days): Apr 20-21, May 25-26, Jul 27-28, Sept 14-15, Nov 16-17**
- **Coaching for Improved Performance (2 days): Jun 22-23, Oct 26-27, Dec 7-8**

These two offerings are our premier selling skills process programs. **Consultative Selling Skills** teaches consumer needs-oriented skills/processes for all salesperson/customer interactions, including relationship building, situation analysis, product/service presentation, objection resolution, and closing the sale. **Coaching for Improved Performance** teaches the internal coaching skills/processes which monitor, evaluate, reinforce and improve these selling skills. *Please visit our website for details:* www.barongroup.com

For more information, fill out the form below and fax this page to: 203-221-8411, or email us at: info@barongroup.com

Name _____ Company _____

Title _____ Email _____

Address _____ State _____ ZIP _____

Phone _____ Call Me Send me information on:

- Consultative Selling Negotiation Sales Action Planning Strategic Team Selling
 Coaching Problem-Solving Meeting Facilitation Advanced Objection Resolution