

Successful Selling



In Tough Times
By Diane Helbig

About the Author



Diane is an internationally recognized business and leadership development coach, author, speaker, and workshop facilitator. As a certified, professional coach and president of [Seize This Day Coaching](#), Diane helps businesses and organizations operate more constructively and profitably. She evaluates, encourages, and guides her clients.

Whether she is working one-on-one with clients or speaking to a full house, Diane delivers on her messages of embracing the possibilities and maintaining Clarity of Course™.

In her book, [Lemonade Stand Selling](#), Diane offers a straightforward, common sense and clear guide to the sales process. She reminds her readers that selling is as easy as when you had that lemonade stand as a child.

Through her internet radio show, [Accelerate Your Business Growth](#), Diane brings valuable, actionable information to her listeners. In a conversational format, each show features guest speakers who share their wisdom and take questions from the audience.

Diane is a contributing expert on a variety of business websites including [Small Business Trends](#), [Toilet Paper Entrepreneur](#), [COSE Mindspring](#), and [Top Sales Experts](#).

Diane is ready to work with any small business owner or entrepreneur to guide them to realizing the success they want to achieve.

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So You Think Times Are Tough

Too many people blame the economy for a downturn in sales. In reality, they just aren't adjusting to the circumstances around them. In a good economy prospects for your products/services abound. The process you employ to find them and sell to them should reflect the makeup of those many possible clients.

In a challenging economy, the landscape changes. Buying strategies shift, so you must shift your process. Before you go thinking the sky is falling, remember this – people still buy when the economy is tough. The questions are – who and why.



When times are good, people buy because of need or desire. When times get tougher, the 'desire' purchases dwindle but the 'need' purchases remain. They may look different, but they ARE there. Given that our current economic situation is tending toward the tougher side, we're going to look at those 'need' prospects and leave the 'desire' prospects for better times.

A Basic Discovery Process

There is no doubt that selling in a tight economy takes work. You have to dig to find those people who need your product or service. So, how do you discover who and where those prospects are? Go back to basics.

1. Ask yourself these questions: What is the real value of my product/service? How will my product/service solve a problem; improve someone's business; enhance their bottom line; improve their life? Remember, we're talking about need here. Most people offer a product or service that is **needed** by a pool of prospective clients.

Write your answers here:



2. Once you've figured that out, determine where the people are who need your product or service.

A great way to figure this out is to look at your current client base. Who are they? How did they become clients? Where are they?

One strategy that I find works well is to critique your best clients. Take a look at them and identify the reasons they came to you. Then start researching other companies/individuals who match some or all of those characteristics. Sometimes it's as easy as vertical marketing.

Write your answer here:



A Different View

I said earlier that this takes work. All sales takes work. It doesn't have to be hard work! In this situation it is best to take a different view of things. Step outside of what you are used to doing and look at the possibilities from a different angle. After all, you're in a different climate now, aren't you? Don't be afraid to challenge what you believe to be true.

Go Deep

Are you doing everything you can for your current clients? If you have clients with multiple departments or locations, there's a good chance you aren't handling all of the work for all of them. Now is an ideal time to go deep. Explore inside your current customers to see if you can establish additional relationships and add depth to your connection. That depth will serve you in good and bad times.



Take Time

You may find that you aren't as busy as you are used to being. No problem. Now is the perfect time to reconnect with your clients. Take them to lunch or coffee. What a great opportunity to learn more about them and their business. You might be surprised by what you learn.

Venture Out

There are most likely plenty of networking events to attend. In the past, you may have been too busy to go to the meetings you wanted to. Guess what? Now you can! So, check them out. Find out what's going on around your town. And don't limit yourself to business events. What about civic and social organizations and events? You never know who you'll meet and what you'll discover.

Who Knows

When you know how your product or service brings value to a client you can then ask yourself this question – who knows what my client needs? Here's an example: towing companies most likely know when someone's car is in need of repair or replacement. Wouldn't it help a car salesperson to establish a relationship with some towing companies in their area? How great would it be for that salesperson to be recommended?! Now he has other people looking out for him and referring him to people he would probably not even know about otherwise. Building those alliances is invaluable.



Box or Parallelogram

You know the saying 'think outside the box?' Why not think differently **about** the box. Get creative with your marketing. In a tight market, when it's more competitive, you need to stand out from the crowd. When you offer the same product or service as many others in town, how do you differentiate yourself? Market in a way that is memorable.



Those people who struggle in a challenging economy just aren't trying. Harsh words, for sure. And yet, true. You can't keep doing things the same way and expect the same results because times have changed. And if you blame your lack of sales on the economy, you aren't trying at all, are you?

After you've thought about it, set up a plan of attack. Keep it focused and structured. You have to take action to create the energy for your business. If you wait for the phone to ring, or someone to walk through the door, you'll be sunk. Go get 'em! Get out and meet people; find out what's going on with the businesses and people around you. Establish the connections. **Find the need!!**

You'll feel better because you'll be doing SOMETHING. And something is always better than nothing. So start today – grab a pad and a pen and begin the process of selling in a challenging environment.

Interested in exploring this and other sales and marketing strategies? Contact Diane for a Discovery Coaching Session at diane@seizethisdaycoaching.com. Or give her a call at 216-534-2030

