

A close-up photograph of a person's right hand holding a light gray rectangular sign. The hand is positioned on the right side of the sign, with the thumb and index finger gripping the edges. The background is plain white.

SALES PROFESSIONALS TAKE RESPONSIBILITY

BY PHILLIP BRAND

At a recent event, a group of salespeople were asking each other: “What do you mean when you say, sales is a profession and career?” This has come up many times as professional salespeople struggle with those in the business who do not take responsibility for their decisions. Clients appreciate a salesperson with empathy and the ability to develop a total solution versus simply presenting a product. Although the basic rules of selling, like credibility and effectiveness, haven’t changed a lot over the years, techniques that may have been effective years ago need to be re-examined to meet changed circumstances. There are new rules in sales now. The new rules include honesty and integrity; trustworthiness and dedication; fulfilling the real needs of the clients.

Here is the list that group came up with that you can use as well:

1. Instead of deflecting, choose to take responsibility for fixing the problem and wrestle it to the ground. Instead of spreading blame, professionals own and address the issue.

Your first job is to serve. That is the foundation of the value you should hold for your clients. A true professional always delivers. Always meet your commitments or let people know well ahead of time if you may not be able to. While all your actions in some way determine whether you will earn the trust of our people, this final choice in our “better choices” series relates most directly to our ability to build, earn, and grow trust with your leadership.

2. It’s not about you. It’s about everyone else. People will remember how you behaved. Leadership is about reaching that shared vision of a desirable future. It’s about the greater good, not the leader’s good. Leadership is not about you!

Your philosophy of life is the greatest determining factor how successful you will be. It’s a set of beliefs and principles how you choose to live. It’s also the way you think and act in your life. The challenge is to constantly revising, fine-tuning and changing it if necessary.

Your sales career can flourish or flounder strictly on the basis of your philosophy. Philosophy is the study of thought. How your customers think, what they think and even why they think what they do, all goes into the study of sales philosophy.

3. People are smart. And they're depending on you.

Business in recent years has taken on many new and complex dimensions, and this trend is likely to continue. Today's salesperson, as well as today's buyer, is better educated, more informed and has more options than ever before. These changes have created new, exciting and challenging possibilities in every organization. Sales warriors need to acquire a working knowledge about these changes and have a comprehensive understanding of sales fundamentals.

The selling process is a dynamic interaction between a professional salesperson and a client. The salesperson's main objectives are to find out about the client's needs and determine how to help the client fulfill those needs. To be successful at this process, one must learn the basics first. As with everything else, it's a learning process. It must be built from the ground up, with a thorough understanding of the fundamentals.

4. It doesn't matter whose "fault" it is.

The buck stops here: why leadership requires taking responsibility. Leading an organization means accepting responsibility for what happens within it, for better and for worse

Under-promising and over-delivering. Surprise your clients with unexpected levels of service and caring that will knock their socks off! Have them become your best advocates. Let them share news of your remarkable service to other potential clients.

Professionals know when to accept mistakes they have been made and take it upon themselves to fix them. It doesn't matter if one of your team members messed up or you did. If you are the leader, you need to take responsibility.

5. Move on. Don't wallow. There's lots to do.

Choosing to take responsibility, in short, has four key steps:

- a. Own the issue.
- b. Deal with it swiftly, honestly, and as completely as possible.
- c. Pledge to not make the same mistake twice.
- d. Move on.

The next time you're in the midst of a crisis, don't try to deflect, or underestimate people, or nitpick about whose fault it was. Leaders take responsibility. Own the problem, take a hard-nosed approach, present a solution, get to work, and don't make the same mistake twice. You'll stave off disaster, fix problems faster, build trust, and get better results.

Excellence in sales isn't an accident. You have to make the conscious decision that you're going to become excellent in your field. If you want to get better in selling and achieve sales superstar status, you have to commit to continuing your education. Become an expert in your field, take time to understand your prospect and tailor your approach to every individual's needs.



ABOUT THE AUTHOR:

In [Become a Warrior at Selling](#), Mr. Phillip J. Brand takes the audience on a journey of understanding deep interpersonal mechanisms of selling to ingrain the Warrior approach of structured values and principled integral behavior to acquire successful results as career sales professional. To learn more or to connect with Mr. Brand visit his website at: www.phillipbrand.ca.