



## Transcript Episode 003



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# MONDAY SALES COACH EPISODE 003

## START YOUR SALES WEEK ON FIRE!

Today we are going to take a look at teaching. No, we are not going back to school but to be honest **Teach, Don't Sell** is one of the best pieces of advice I can give you.

In this week's episode we are also going to discuss having contingencies in your pipeline and we are going to take a look at being played off against a competitor.

Hello I am Peter Gianoli and this Mondays Sales Coach connecting you to a community of sales champions on radio and online at [MondaySalesCoach.com](http://MondaySalesCoach.com)

We have the site, the place where you can get all of the great material when it comes to helping you achieve sales domination. Awesome podcasts – social media plus our regular Newsletter, please join us at [MondaySalesCoach.com](http://MondaySalesCoach.com)

## TEACH DON'T SELL

**Teaching is about providing quality insight as part of the sale.**

If you're a sales person, you're a teacher.

Do you remember your 5th-grade teacher or your biology teacher at high school? Good, because that's you now. Like Miss. Little or Mr. Martin, it's your job to cultivate the mind of your customer and help develop their mind around the problems they are trying to solve.

If you're in sales you're a teacher and the better you are at teaching, the better you will be at selling.

So what kind of “teaching” am I talking about?

I'm not talking about teaching about your product and all its fancy benefits and features. I'm talking about teaching your customer how to improve their organization, their business or their lives by helping solve the challenges and problems they are facing. It's about bringing insight and information they don't have or are unfamiliar with to the table. Teaching is about providing quality insight as part of the sale.

You need to challenge your customers or prospects thinking.

If you don't have the insight or information that can teach your customer or prospect something new, you're going to be **relegated to the pack...and the pack is crowded.**

Your job is to teach. Know more than your customer and then teach them. Just like your favourite college professor. It'll make all the difference in the world.

## GETING PLAYED OFF AGAINST A COMPETITOR

**Problem:** David got trapped by the prospect; maybe “squeezed” is a better term. Here’s what happened.

His prospect was playing him off against the incumbent. It’s a familiar ploy and it goes like this. The prospect holds out the carrot by suggesting that the incumbent vendor is doing an “okay” job, but suggests that having an alternate (backup) supplier might be a good idea, “just in case.”

(Ever heard that one? Salespeople invariably assume that because the door of opportunity seems to be opening, the prospect must have some dissatisfaction with the incumbent.)

But the hitch is that the backup vendor needs to have a better price than the incumbent to be considered. In this case, the prospect was paying the incumbent \$100 per unit and wanted David, the “hungry” secondary vendor, to come in at \$90 per unit.

After all, the prospect “reasoned” that if a supplier wanted their business they should be willing to price aggressively in order to have a shot at it.

**Diagnosis:** Long story short, David took the bait. His sales pipeline was spurting air at the time and he needed the business. He agreed to try to get the pricing approved, but on the way back to the office he suspected he’d been duped. But now he had no way to get back to the prospect without losing credibility.

Sometimes we sales folks, being so emotionally attached to the prospect of getting an order, just can’t see the obvious. Perhaps it’s never happened to you, but you probably know someone who has fallen into this trap.

The question is...what can we do to get ourselves out of this predicament?

**Prescription:** This is a tough one, but there is a way out. Like the old “good cop, bad cop” tactic, you’ve got to blame someone else. In this case, blame the “home office.”

Tell the prospect, “When I went back to the office and told them what you wanted, they just laughed. In fact, they’re still laughing. They said we’ve got the lowest costs in the business, and that nobody can offer a \$100 per unit price for long without taking shortcuts somewhere. I had no idea the margins were that tight. The bottom line is that I can’t offer you the \$90 price. In fact, the best I can do is \$105, and that’s for a minimum of 25% of the business.”

This might create some fear, uncertainty and doubt with the prospect and encourage him to back off his unreasonable demand. At the very least, it gives you an excuse to bail out of the difficult situation you’ve gotten yourself into.

But let’s address the real problem.

First, David didn’t plant his feet.

He didn’t recognize that he was being used by the prospect and played right into the trap. When you’re emotionally involved in the result (“I need this sale”), you’re vulnerable. So plant your feet, look at the situation realistically and find out if the prospect really needs a secondary source; in short, develop the prospect’s pain.

Find out why he needs a secondary supplier, what happens if the primary vendor can’t deliver and if there are any specific reasons why he’s worried about their possible failure to deliver. If the answers don’t make sense, then don’t play the game. If the answers do seem to add up, then treat it as you would any real sales opportunity by providing well thought out solutions to the prospect’s problems.

In short, play the game from a position of strength, not weakness.

## PIPELINE CATCH UPS

Do your pipeline catch ups go something like this:

**Sales Manager** – “Hey Bob, what’s the status on the Techform opportunity?”

**BOB** – “It looks good, we’re waiting on the results of the demo and for the CIO to approve the solution.

**Sales Manager** – “Are we going to close it?”

**BOB** – “Yes, things are coming along. I should hear about it next week.”

**Sales Manager** – “Is there anything we can do to move things along?”

**BOB** – “No, we’re good. I spoke with them last week and they told me everything is good.”

**Sales Manager** – “Great, keep me in the loop.”

THIS EXCHANGE, UNFORTUNATELY — IS HOW TOO MANY PIPELINE REVIEW MEETINGS GO.

It’s a status, that’s all. It provides almost no value. The only value a “good” status can provide is it sets us up for the real discussion.

The real discussion being, what are we are doing and why. Status pipeline discussions need to go. They waste everyone’s time.

The most effective way for a manager to increase sales, next to finding and developing talent, is to help sales people move opportunities through the pipeline. In a nutshell, that’s it.

The sales pipeline represents the state of the sales environment at any given point. It’s dynamic and needs to be managed that way.

To avoid status meetings and put some meat into the pipeline meetings, get to the heart of the situation, look for evidence, ask probing questions, push the sales person to be creative and connected.

Here are some types of pipeline movement questions for this sales manager;

1. Is there a chance the results of the demo won't be favourable?
2. If so, what happens?
3. What is the customer looking for in the demo?
4. Will the demo provide the results they want?
5. How will they be measuring "success?"
6. When's the last time you spoke with the CIO?
7. What does she need to approve the deal?
8. What evidence do you have that even if we get approval it will close next week?
9. You said you are waiting on the results, what exactly are you waiting on?
10. What evidence do you have that is going to happen?
11. Could the results divide the customer into two camps?
12. If so, what will we do?
13. What is our backup strategy?
14. What can we do now, that can influence the decision?

## 15. What is OUR next step, besides waiting? Why?

There are a million questions that could be asked. The objective is to not get a STATUS, but to understand the issues with the sale AND then formulate a response to them. Deals must be moved from stage to stage.

A static pipeline is a dead pipeline.

It's a sales manager's job to keep the pipeline dynamic and help their sales people move deals from stage to stage. Sales managers need to be maniacal in uncovering the issues obstructing a deal. Sales managers need to be fanatical in identifying the best approach to keeping a deal from getting stuck.

If you are or want to become a Sales manager, you need to be creative in helping solve the sales challenges your sales people face every day and the pipeline is the best tool to help you do it. Don't waste time on useless status updates. Get to the core of the sales challenges and figure out how to solve them. It's the only way to move them to the next stage and that is your job.

There you go that concludes this week's episode of Monday Sales Coach. If you missed any part of this episode go to our podcast. Also make sure you connect with our newsletter.

These can be found at [mondaysalescoach.com](http://mondaysalescoach.com)

That was Monday Sales Coach and I am Peter Gianoli, thank you so much for connecting and listening to us and being a part of our team of sales champions.

Until next week, happy selling.