



# Silver Bullets for Business Growth

*Providing unusually creative solutions to difficult marketing & sales challenges, based on experience with companies in over 50 different industries.*

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Summer is here and business is drifting into a quiet period for many. I would like to urge you to take this time to make better preparations for the fall surge in budget planning and race for year-end sales results.

Review sales and profit results from your first six months. Hold a “debriefing” session with your key sales and profit drivers. Get them to list ways they could have been better in the first half; problems they faced that were unanticipated; and ideas they have for making the second half better.

Use this “slow” time more wisely and get ahead of your competition.



## **Tip # 1 - Look far ahead for the US economy.**

Some of the more reliable economic forecasters are calling for a “softening” through 2006 and then back up to full steam in 2007 and 2008. How does this compare to your

current sales numbers and forecast for the rest of this year and next? If it looks similar, I would suggest these actions:

- Review your sales force and start weeding out the poor performers today. Waiting will hurt you in several ways:
  - A shrinking sales pot will encourage your better performers to look elsewhere.
  - Some of your better sales prospects will not be courted as well as they should be thereby giving your competition more opportunity.
  - Senior management will have more stress with poor sales people thereby diverting growth energy that could be applied more successfully elsewhere.
- Create new ways to put your customers in a “no-buy” mode. Maybe you can lock in long-term orders with delayed deliveries.
- Put your entrepreneur hat on and see what new ways you can expand your business. Think outside your box and explore new markets, new selling tactics and new product bundling offers.



### **Tip # 2 – Sales teams are being asked to deliver more – so help them.**

A recent survey shows employers are asking for more results from their sales teams. The whip is out and busy. However, more results can be achieved with honey. If you are asking for more sales results, consider these more positive ideas:

- Give your sales force some fresh sales skills training. Selling is different today. Does your sales force know how to handle this as well as they used to?
- Take the step you have been avoiding for months and fire your weaker performers.
- Get more secondary information on your prospects and customers. Increase sales force productivity by eliminating their calls to poor prospects. A good place to start gathering information is: [www.skyminder.com](http://www.skyminder.com).
- Have some of your customers and prospects interviewed by an outside professional and find out what they “really” think about your company and products. (Believe me, they won’t tell you directly.)



### **Tip # 3 – Shake up your marketing department**

The facts are coming in that verify traditional marketing efforts are not working as well as they once did. The American consumer is becoming more cynical and tuned-out to the increasing volume and types of marketing messages.

If your sales revenues aren't where they should be, the problem could be in the currency of your marketing knowledge. When was the last time you had an objective, professional qualitative survey of your customers, prospects and competitors? When was the last time you tracked your marketing costs for positive benefits to the bottom line? (Don't buy into the notion marketing can't be measured!)

Americans are living and staying active longer. They also are reacting to the changing sources of product and services. Make sure your marketing efforts are in sync with these permanent changes.



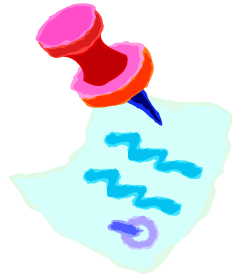
### **Tips For CEOs During The Next 30 Days** (to be more effective)

- ★ Leave your office at least once a week, when it is least expected and visit 10 minutes with your most junior employee(s), asking how they like their job.
- ★ Drop into offices of two senior staff members and just say “thanks for being here and doing what you do.”
- ★ Send a short hand-written note (and envelope) to 5 of your best customers, thanking them for their business and continued confidence in your company.
- ★ Ask for outside advice on a subject you really don't feel comfortable dealing with. This can be a signal of strength.





***Remember: The well-proven single action for success is leveraging the desires and talents of others to help you achieve your goals.***







Rick is also available for:

-  Strategic Planning Sessions & Counsel
-  Sales Force Assessments & Training
-  Rapid Business Development Talks
-  Competitive Intelligence Gathering

**\*\*\*\*Send us a personal email within the next 72 hours and receive a FREE sales behavior assessment (a \$75 value). \*\*\*\***



***Have a sales or marketing question? Email us for a personal response.***

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