

# CAPITAL IDEAS

## CAPITAL QUESTION:

# What's the best sales advice you've received?

Entrepreneurs share tips for sealing the deal



**Sue Styles**, founder of Maximized Results Consulting (suestyles.com) says persistence is key. "You might have to ask up to eight times to make the sale; most people will only ask once or twice, but then usually give up. Studies show that eight touches can yield much better results if you really want the collaboration. Another piece of advice comes from Tony Robbins, who said that the one with the most confidence wins ... When salespeople are hesitant or unsure, then their buyers are too."

Photo by Dunsmoor Creative (dunsmoorcreative.com)



"The importance of building rapport with your customer. I believe that for retaining customers, it's 90 per cent the good rapport you build with them and 10 per cent your actual product or service. However, that's not to say you should sell a poor product or service, because part of that rapport-building is the trust your customer gains from you knowing you are looking out for their best interest."

— **Shawn Alain**, president of Viral In Nature — viralinnature.com



"Take time to listen and come up with a unique solution. Anyone can solve a problem, but solving a problem with flair is what sets you apart from the rest of the pack. Your customers will see immense value in not only having you fill a need, but also in your ability to provide more than just a quick, simple solution."

— **Natalie Blais**, owner of Natalie Blais Consulting Inc. — NatalieBlais.com



"The best sales advice I have received when starting out was the need for consistent and ongoing exposure. Advertising and getting your name out there is key. Having an ad or column in your local paper or magazine, or even a small blurb on a local radio show, can help in terms of business. Changing it up from month to month can also help; there is no set formula, so have fun with it."

— **Shannon Blatchford**, owner of Because of Energy, 'Divine Healing' — divinehealing.ca



"Always ask for the close; many entrepreneurs stop at features or benefits, and expect that the customer will come running with their wallet in hand. That doesn't happen. Ask for a close ... and always follow up. We are all busy and we procrastinate, so people who follow up are top-of-mind and more likely to close deals."

— **Devesh Dwivedi**, business coach at Idea2Inception — ideazinception.com



"If they don't flinch a little bit, you've probably priced it too low."

— **Karl Gartly**, co-founder of Zayfti — zayfti.com



"I've been fortunate to have some strong entrepreneurial mentors over the years and have had a great deal of excellent advice that I've put to the test. The one piece of advice that holds the most weight is that when you meet someone new, don't think of the sale you can make today — think of the relationship you can build for the future."

— **Dana Goldstein**, chief producer at ChicFlicks — chicflicks.ca



"Some people are born to sell — I am not one of those people, so selling does not come naturally to me. The best advice I received was to shift my view and think of selling as helping people to buy well. I love to help people, so this shift aligns with my values and helps me sell. Selling a product or service requires me to listen 90 per cent of the time and talk 10 per cent."

— **Loretta Gotmy**, co-owner of Vin Gogh — vingogh.ca



"The soft sell. A great Calgary businessperson once spoke at the library about the evils of 'puking' your sales pitch. No one wants to hear about how wonderful your product is a few seconds after they meet you."

— **Julia Harrington**, business and finance librarian at Calgary Public Library — calgarypubliclibrary.com



"Focus on providing extraordinary service to clients to increase client retention and referrals. By doing so, you should reduce the need for further marketing cash expenditures. Clients will remember those of us who interact and truly care about their family, work, a recent trip or history. It's good to think about examples of extraordinary service that you have experienced at other businesses and how those behaviors might be applied to your practice. Particularly pay attention to how problems and disputes were resolved to your satisfaction, and apply these strategies to your business model."

— **Tanya Hartz**, doctor of traditional Chinese medicine and acupuncture at The Fire Within Acupuncture & Wellness — fireacupuncture.com



"Your best customer is the one you have right now, so the best sales advice I've ever received is to provide great customer support by listening and communicating with the customer ... I believe that one-on-one personal contact goes a long way in business."

— **Valery Klassen**, owner and designer at Sun 7 Designs — sun7designs.com



"Share, don't sell. Listen to their story and only give them what they truly need, and they'll be your client for life."

— **Trina Lo**, marketing director at FreshInk Communications — freshink.ca



"Business does not just walk in the door; you need to go out and get it. If they slam the door in your face, you have to continue going door-to-door until your pitch meets with a receptive answer."

— **Ralph Meyer**, president and founder of RMMT Enterprises — rmmt.ca



"The best sales advice I've received is learn to get over the fear of rejection, and never give up."

— **Laura Pierce**, president of LP Human Resources Inc. — lphumanresources.com



"Grow your relationships and your business will grow!"

— **Donna Reid**, owner of Ellequin Wellness Centre — ellequin.com



"When meeting with a prospective client, you will have much greater success in establishing the value of your services if you can find out where or what their pain is, what it is costing them to ignore that pain, and then what the upside would be if you're able to help make that pain go away. The more quantifiable the pain is, the easier it is to determine the value of the service we provide."

— **David Saxby**, president of Spark Communications Inc. — sparkcommunications.com

## UPCOMING:

AUG

13

### BNI Vibe Breakfast Networking

A chance to network over breakfast  
When: 7 a.m. to 8:30 a.m.  
Where: Venue 1008 (1008 14 Street SE)  
Admission: \$25 (Includes breakfast). Details at [bnisaberta.ca](http://bnisaberta.ca)

AUG

19

### The Business Link's Network and Learn

Network and learn how to put together a business plan  
When: 3 p.m. to 5 p.m.  
Where: Calgary Public Library, John Dutton Theatre (616 Macleod Trail SE)  
Admission: Free. Details at [canadabusiness.ab.ca](http://canadabusiness.ab.ca)

AUG

22-24

### Startup Weekend: Solutions for your City

A weekend event hosted by Startup Calgary and the City of Calgary  
When: 4 p.m. Friday to 9 p.m. Sunday  
Where: The City of Calgary Municipal Building Atrium (800 Macleod Tr. SE)  
Admission: Free. Details at [startupcalgary.ca/calendar](http://startupcalgary.ca/calendar)

AUG

27

### Startup Drinks

Network and learn how to put together a business plan  
When: 3 p.m. to 5 p.m.  
Where: Calgary Public Library, John Dutton Theatre (616 Macleod Trail SE)  
Admission: Free. Details at [canadabusiness.ab.ca](http://canadabusiness.ab.ca)

Have an event that Capital Ideas should know about? Contact us at [hello@capitalideascalgary.com](mailto:hello@capitalideascalgary.com).



"Your job is to make the offer; theirs is to make a decision. Make the offer, then shut up — let them think. That piece of advice came from Sandra Yancey, the CEO of eWomenNetwork. It's harder than you think to not keep talking, but this works!"  
— **Catherine Scheers**, owner of Blissful You Spa — blissfultyou.com



"Give your potential client the best information available that's in their best interest, then let them decide. Your client doesn't necessarily care about how much you know as opposed to how much you care!"  
— **Barb Timmer**, intuitive development instructor and energy therapist at Clear Choices in Calgary — clearchoicesforyou.com



"Be honest, confident and transparent when pitching a product or service to a client or customer. There's nothing more damaging to your business or a potential long-term relationship than overcommitting to a project you can't complete, or selling a product that a client doesn't need. Not every product or service your company provides is a good fit with a client, and there's nothing wrong with being honest about that."  
— **Connor Turner**, president of Armadillo Studios Inc. — armadillostudios.ca

These answers were collected from Capital Ideas members. For your weekly opportunity to share your business advice the way these members have, join us at [capitalideascalgary.com](http://capitalideascalgary.com).

## NEXT QUESTION:

# What's the key to doing business online?

Making your business widely accessible can be instrumental to growth, and utilizing the Internet has become a key part of this. That's why we want to hear from you.

### What's the key to doing business online?

Visit [capitalideascalgary.com](http://capitalideascalgary.com) to respond to the question — we'll publish the best answers, along with your name and the name of your business, in the Calgary Herald.

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