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Guerrilla Sales & Marketing

A Rut and a Grave

LORI TURNER

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While the actual activities take on different forms, at the end of the day, I've come to the realization that I'm a change agent for companies dissatisfied with their current sales and marketing outcomes. I was taken back recently by the clarity offered from an area CEO in this statement: "We can't expect a different outcome if we aren't willing to change what we're doing."



Lori Turner

We can surely all agree that his statement holds true. Why, then, do so many businesses struggle in executing change? Most business owners and managers will say they embrace change, but do their actions align with the words?

There has been much study over the years about the psychology of change, our natural resistance to it and how to navigate through it. Being able to embrace change, when it is foreign to you, is like breaking a bad addiction – an addition to routine and complacency.

Dr. Dawn Obrecht, an addiction specialist, describes three ingredients needed to bring about real change – honesty, openness and willingness. How open are you to hearing about the need for change? How honest are you being with yourself and others about your desire and willingness to change?

A wonderfully candid business owner recently shared with me his feelings about change, explaining, "I'm perfectly comfortable with my current behaviors but not the results. And while I'd rather not change, I'm willing to."

Willingness to change is best measured by action. If you're willing to stop talking about change and actually take action, regardless of your comfort level in doing so, that's half the battle. The key to willingness, though, isn't just to take a single action. It's about continuing to take action.

Assuming you're not pleased with your current sales and marketing outcomes, how do you assess what components of your strategy need to change?

- Talk with your customers and prospects. Ask what they see as your differentiators, how they prefer to be communicated with, what would make them more likely to buy, and what your competitors are doing to effectively sell and market. They want to share and enjoy being asked, but they're more likely to be candid if a third party asks.
- Assess what your competition is doing. Shop them just like a customer would. How do your sales and marketing efforts stack up?
- Shadow your sales team. Spend time shadowing each sales rep as they interact with prospects and customers. Identify missed sales opportunities and sales skill gaps.
- Assess the effectiveness of your past sales and marketing strategies. If your efforts can't be measured, work to find strategies that can be.

If you know that you're too close to the situation and too uncomfortable to drive real change, find someone more objective who can. It's the best gift you can give your company.

Pulitzer-prize-winning novelist [Ellen Glasgow](#) summed it up well when she said, "The only difference between a rut and a grave is their dimensions." Don't let complacency kill your business. Be an agent of change.

Lori Turner is managing partner of RedRover Sales & Marketing, www.redrovercompany.com



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BUILDING PERMITS	0	585	26,675
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