

How to make your presentation when you are unable to talk to the decision maker

"I will have to run that by the committee." Have you ever ran into that objection? Have you ever used a higher authority when someone was putting pressure on you? It is a great strategy to have in your arsenal.

I once asked a hotel clerk for a discount and she informed me that she would have to check with the manager. She walked through the office door behind her and returned in about 10 seconds informing me that the manager said no. As I waited for the elevator I heard another guest ask for a discount – same thing – she walked to the office behind her only now I could see the entire office. The office was empty! She simply walked into the office, waited about five seconds and returned telling the guest that the manager said no!

Another good lesson learned was from a sales person in Twin Falls, Idaho. A friend of his sold a service station to someone from another country that didn't understand how we do business. The new owner would order a part from the auto supply store and then try to negotiate the price with the driver.

You may be thinking how anyone could do something like that. However, if we go into an account and are not talking to the decision maker, we are doing the same thing.

Sometimes a decision maker will use a "higher authority" to hide the fact that they are the decision maker. For example: "This agreement looks good, but I will have to run it by my committee (or wife or any other higher authority)."

If you are the one making the presentation and the presence of someone important is impossible, set a short one or two day time limit for his or

her higher authority approval.

You can use this same strategy. You can start your presentation with the same question. "If I show you a program that will not only save you money on your operating expenses, but also lower your labor cost as well as increase your sales, is there any reason why you would not want to give it the go-ahead?" If the buyer has to get approval from a higher authority you will know how to tailor your presentation.

If you are making a presentation to a person who does not have authority to make the decision, the best strategy is to build up the person you are presenting. Suggest to the person that the committee is surely influenced by what he or she says. If you can get them to commit to making a "sale" to the committee, it can be embarrassing if he or she is not able to get it through for you.

Another strategy if you are selling to a buyer who has to "run it by the committee" is to ask about the possibility of making a presentation to the committee yourself. This can either call their bluff or it may present you with an opportunity to actually make a presentation to the buying committee.

When making YOUR presentation it is to your advantage to present a higher authority from which you must get approval. Even if you do have complete authority over the selling price, you may want the buyer to believe you have to get approval.