

Win / Loss Analysis Understanding Why We Win & Lose

By Suzanne Rabauer

How clear is your understanding of why your company wins and loses sales to the competition? Where and how do you get feedback regarding what went well and what didn't during the sales cycle?

When asked why you win or lose, if you have to stop and give it some thought, maybe your insight is not what it should be. All members of your management, sales and marketing teams need to continuously assess what is working and what isn't relative to selling and positioning.

So why wouldn't more companies want to track, analyze and change behavior to help increase their wins? Is it because they are doubtful that a prospect or client will provide in-depth, candid information, especially relative to the competition?

No matter how irrational it may appear, the prospect's decision will be based on underlying factors you won't always recognize. This is why it's so important to understand their perceptions – of your field sales force, marketing team, your company, your products, messages, sales process and performance.

For example, wouldn't you be interested in hearing what a prospect or client may reply when asked:

- What is your perception of our company and offerings?
- What key factors won or lost the deal for us?
- What are our weaknesses vs. our competitors? Strengths?
- What are those weaknesses costing us?
- Would you recommend our offering to another business?

From a sales perspective, every lost opportunity affects revenue and the cost incurred as a result of pursuing that opportunity – given that resources involved could have been directing their efforts towards an opportunity they may have won. Filling the pipeline with qualified opportunities continues to be difficult in today's economy. So winning those deals in the pipeline is more important than ever if a company is going to meet profit goals.

Conducting an analysis of why organizations win and lose sales is nothing new and the benefits received from this analysis will help your organization achieve higher close rates, shorten sales cycles, improve product development, and present more compelling marketing messages.