

Get *UnComfortable*

*STRIP OFF YOUR MENTAL FEARS TO BE VULNERABLE
AND ACHIEVE SALES SUCCESS*

by Tom Goos



Tom Goos is president of Image Source, a promotional merchandise agency based in Kirkland, Wash. During his more than 15 years of branded merchandise experience, he has successfully executed many major launches and campaigns for Fortune 500 companies, which puts his personal sales the top one percent of all distributors nationally. An active industry volunteer, Goos served two years as president of Northwest Promotional Marketing Association (NWPMA), and he currently sits on the board of directors for the Promotional Products Association International (PPAI). Reach him at tom@imagesourceteam.com.

When was the last time you allowed yourself to be vulnerable? When was the last time you exceeded your sales goals? Could these two actions be tied together?

When arriving at the office each morning, it's easy to sit down and get really comfortable. That feeling of being inside your safe zone where no one can throw you off your game is reassuring. In this zone, no one can tell you "no," and no one can deny or reject you.

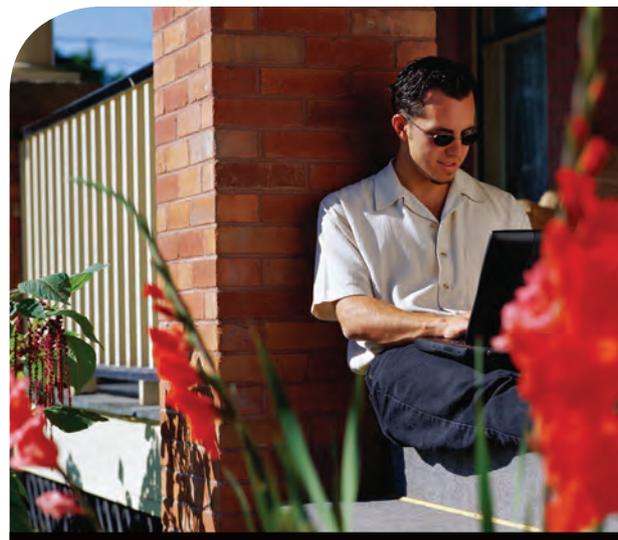
Humans are creatures of habit who tend to follow the same routine: grab coffee, check email and tend to the busy work that reveals itself each day. It's possible to spend 12 hours a day doing this busy work to perfection. In fact, many people do—and they achieve the same results year after year. But are you happy with those results? Are you exceeding your goals and thriving in sales success?

EMBRACE VULNERABILITY

So what does it mean to be vulnerable, and how does getting there fit into this? To achieve sales success, you must expose yourself to clients and prospects. No, not that kind of exposure! I'm talking about exposure that puts you outside of your comfort zone and into situations that drive opportunities—and, yes, even possible rejections.

We all have different boundaries that define our sphere of vulnerability, but few of us truly transcend beyond it consistently. When is the last time you pushed yourself to an uncomfortable place and afterwards felt that high of accomplishing something you wouldn't normally do? You know you're transcending outside of your comfort zone when your heart races, adrenaline rushes through your body and you tell yourself "this might be a bad idea."

Many sales professionals have a fear of rejection and just want to be liked by their clients and prospects. It's not easy to ask a tough question, request a meeting or attend a networking event, because it might open you up to a vulnerable position. Pushing beyond your boundaries might lead to rejection; prospects may tell you that they don't need your services. And that's the key: Not needing your services isn't a personal rejection. Many of these people may really want to work with *you*, but they just don't know it yet.



“When is the last time you pushed yourself to an uncomfortable place and afterwards felt that high of accomplishing something you wouldn't normally do?”

In order to transcend your comfort zone, you must first identify it. There's a cold dark world outside your window, and it can be scary. I know firsthand how comfortable the sanctity of the office can be. So what's your comfort zone? For many, email communication is more comfortable than picking up the phone—or, God forbid, going to see a client in person!

Think about this: Do you most often send proposals via email instead of asking for a meeting to pitch it in person? Do you send messages through Facebook or LinkedIn because your contacts probably don't want to be bugged with a phone call or meeting? Your mind is always right; they don't—well, unless they do and don't know it.

Push Your Boundaries

“Be accountable and push yourself to learn and grow by getting in a routine of uncomfortable actions. A competitive routine is a consistent, repeatable and successful routine that brings familiarity and confidence to your selling.”



5 WAYS TO CREATE DIFFERENTIATION

How can you differentiate yourself from the competition with an email or social media touch? It's not really possible, is it? While technology tools have their place, it is only possible to develop relationships you need by meeting people and humanizing yourself. To *get naked*, follow these tips:

1. Get to know clients personally and professionally.

People want to deal with someone they like, who understands them and who cares. Meet face-to-face with clients, tell them about yourself but, most importantly, listen to them and ask great questions. People love to talk about themselves and share their experiences. Interact with them like you do with your friends.

2. Be vulnerable and take down that sales wall.

Humanize the selling process by, well, being human. Get out of your office and see clients, ask for referrals and network with those you have been reluctant to ask what they do for a living.

3. Share your intentions.

Let your network of friends, clients and prospects know that you are ready to grow your business and need their help. Nearly everyone likes to help others, but few people take the step to ask. You know the old adage, "Ask and you shall receive!"

4. Create trust.

There is an inherent distrust of salespeople because of unscrupulous tactics some employ to close the deal. Overcome this by breaking down the walls of the selling process through honesty and vulnerability. Demonstrate your integrity in every action and communication. Only then will clients know you are being a good steward of their marketing dollars.

5. Drive your business-development efforts.

You are not a passive passenger. Take control by defining your fears and attacking them. Develop yourself personally and professionally by sharpening your skills. Finally, create a positive mental outlook; it can make all the difference in how you approach your business—and your life.

GET STARTED

No one wants you to succeed more than you do. Be accountable and push yourself to learn and grow by getting in a routine of uncomfortable actions. A competitive routine is a consistent, repeatable and successful routine that brings familiarity and confidence to your selling. Your future is not defined by your past. Look forward and steer your future instead of sitting in that cozy office chair with your feet up on the desk. Be vulnerable—and see your sales soar. ■

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