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STAR POWER FOR YOUR SALES

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Put a group of sales champions in a room, and what do you find? You find salespeople of all shapes, sizes, temperaments and styles of selling. Some are more aggressive than others. Some are more consultative. Some are highly educated, some not so. So how do you know they're champs? Because they're the ones who consistently build the business, keep the territory and retain their customers. And they share these five traits:

- 1) **Attitude:** Attitude makes all the difference. A particular situation may get a sales champ down, but she will not let it take her out of the game. If sales champs can't get to a difficult prospect today, they make a long-term plan to keep trying to make contact over the next six months to a year. If a great deal falls through, they study what went wrong and improve their approach for the next time. If they can't change a situation, they change their attitude about it. They won't allow the world to defeat them.
- 2) **Urgency:** Sales champs have a great ability to look at a list of tasks and set their priorities. They don't just say "I have to make some calls today." Their greatest desire is to keep things moving forward and end each day with a sense of accomplishment. They generate massive activity and get results. Urgency fuels activity. If something is urgent, you must act. In sales, you've got to make things happen, and the best salespeople can't wait to get started every day.
- 3) **Tenacity:** When sales champs know they have something of value for a prospect or client, they do not give up. If at first they don't succeed, they really do try again and again. They learn about the situation, the potential customer and the customer's company. They come back with new ideas and are not easily defeated. This trait alone guarantees you will be successful, if you learn and get smarter each time you come back. When prospects see how tenacious you are—how much you believe in your vision and your desire to help them reach their goals—they, too, will get enthusiastic about what you have to offer.
- 4) **Understanding:** Sales champions understand their environment, customers, industry and competition. They do their homework. They put together the big picture that allows them to take smart, calculated action. They stay in a questioning mode. After every action, they ask "What is this telling me?" "What do I need to do differently?" They under-

stand that change is sometimes necessary. No matter how many times you throw yourself against a locked steel door, it won't open. You may, however, be able to break through a nearby window. Sales Champs understand when they're wasting time and when it's time to move onto the next tactic or even the next sale.

- 5) **Follow-through:** To a customer, there's nothing worse than a broken promise. It's a loss of trust that's extremely difficult to regain. Sales champs do not make promises they can't keep. They are realistic. They don't try to be everything to everybody. But once they give their word, they make a commitment and stick to it.

Does a sales champ exhibit all these traits all the time? Of course not. Sales champs are human beings, with the same flaws and failings as everyone else. But they know that in the end, the harder they work at sharpening these traits, the better these traits will work for them.

Top-rated sales, management and motivation speaker Barry Farber is author of 'Superstar Sales Secrets' and 'Diamond Power'.