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TIME FOR A MINDSET CHANGE

By Leanne Hoagland-Smith, M.S.

2017 was a good year for many. We know this because the Dow reached incredible highs. Filed unemployment claims continued to drop, and consumer confidence also reached another high. With all that good news, what results did your small to medium business achieve in 2017?

Possibly your results more closely mirrored what CSO Insights has reported for the last four years: the reality is that there is an inability to achieve sales goals. In 2016, only 55.8 percent of salespeople achieved their sales goals.

Interestingly, in the 20 plus years I have been working with salespeople, my research indicates well over 85 percent of them know of SMART goals. Those who are not aware of this goal-setting criteria tend to be new to sales and under 30 years of age.

SMART goals have been around for over 50 years. In my early sales career, I read a book by Zig Ziglar where he shared and defined SMART goals: **S**pecific, **M**easurable, **A**chievable, **R**ealistic, and **T**imely. Given his sustainable sales success, his belief in SMART goals made sense.

By listening to Ziglar's presentations and reading his book, it seems to me that Ziglar has other unstated criteria to his SMART goals. Perhaps he presumed these were no-brainers. Maybe that is why he never included them in his books or speeches on SMART goals.

Presumption #1 - Written: The first unspoken criterion was that the goal must be written down. We all know what happens when we fail to write important actions down such as the common, everyday grocery list. When we don't remember to take

our written list to the grocery store, we end up buying more than what we need, spending more than what we planned, failing to purchase ALL items on the list left at home or the office, wasting more time attempting to remember what was on the list, and feeling rather dumb for not remembering the list.

In 2007, 3M conducted some research and discovered 42 percent of the people surveyed are more likely to complete a task they have handwritten. Many of us know the power of the written word when we take notes as salespeople. We are more likely to remember what was said.

Presumption #2 – Actionable: Think for a moment about your sales goal. Is the first word an action verb? Thinking and writing down our goals with action verbs subconsciously helps us to achieve the goal. Action verbs remove the future

and make the goal more present. Consider “I will close the deal” in contrast with “Close the deal,” which makes the goal more real. Here are some exemplar action verbs: close, increase, improve, secure, collect, identify, and build.

Presumption #3 – Yours: How many sales goals are set by sales managers and not by the individual salesperson? When goals are owned by the salesperson, there is a greater internal desire to achieve the goal rather than merely being told what you must achieve.

If you disagree, think back to being a child and being told by your parents what to do. Do you remember some internal resistance to those parental commands? Since human beings are creatures of conditioning, you may have subconsciously replaced one of your parents with your sales manager. Possibly, you are internally resisting any goals you did not set.

Presumption #4 – Mindset: Zig Ziglar was a highly, internally-motivated person. He had the mindset to keep going. Some today may call this *positive mental attitude* or *grit*. Anyone who listens to any of his presentations can see Zig’s mindset. He understood the necessity to master his craft, to be autonomous, and to relate to others.

Today, Zig’s mindset has been captured in the 1970’s theory of self-determination research done by Edward L. Deci and Richard M. Ryan. This theory of motivation looks to support our intrinsic tendencies to behave in positive ways. In 1996, Deci, along with Richard Flaste, published the book, *Why We Do What We Do*, to explain this fairly simple motivational theory.

Before Deci and Ryan, probably the most noted 20th Century work on motivation and mindset was through the efforts of Gordon Allport’s *Types of Men*, which built upon the research of psychologist Dr. Eduard Spranger. In Allport’s book, he described six major value types: 1) theoretical, 2) economic, 3) aesthetic, 4) social, 5) political, and 6) religious.

Today, these six values have been

incorporated into online assessments published by several different organizations. When the economic driver is in the top 50 percent of all value drivers, there is a greater likelihood that the salesperson will be more successful.

I have given one of these assessments to hundreds of individuals, including salespeople, and my own findings confirm this is true. Salespeople with a higher economic driver have the necessary mindset potential to achieve sales goals more so than those with lower economic drivers. Salespeople with the economic value in the lower 50 percent can still be successful provided they have clarity around these drivers. (See Presumption #7.)

Presumption #5 – Specific, VERY: My sense is that Ziglar was very specific in his sales goals. Possibly, he did not write all the specifics because they were intrinsic to him. However, I have learned that the more specific the goal is, the greater the likelihood of success. Unfortunately, what I know to be true after working with salespeople and business professionals is that the majority of sales goals lack specificity. (See Presumption #7.)

Presumption #6 – Aligned: Sales goals must be aligned to the salesperson’s purpose, passion, and overall sales plan. Misalignment creates misguided decisions and misdirected actions. While working with salespeople, I have come to realize that when individuals connect their purposes (Why are you here?) and their passions (What moves you?) to their overall sales plan, there is a far greater likelihood of success. One of the undiscovered reasons for sales burnout is because there is a lack of this alignment.

Presumption #7 – Clear: Ziglar had clarity. He knew where he was going and how he was going to get there. What I have discovered is that the majority of people, including salespeople, do not have such clarity.

This lack of clarity, from misalignment to lack of specificity, prevents salespeople from achieving their sales goals. Additionally, if sales managers and those

in executive leadership roles lack clarity, it only makes it more difficult for salespeople to achieve their sales goals.

Presumptions Creates Problems

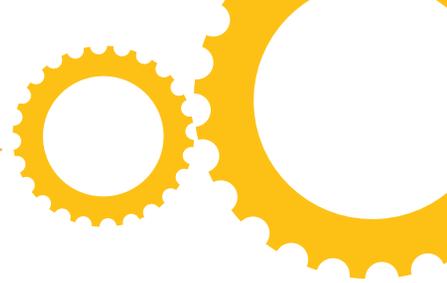
Most of us have experienced the problems with presumptions. We fail to see the entire picture or presume facts that are not evident. This is one good reason to update SMART goals to WAY SM²ART and eliminate these presumptions.



Look at the goals to the right. When you compare these two examples, which one gives you greater clarity and possibly even inspires you more to be a goal-driven and goal-achievable sales person?

Yes, change is good, and you can now change with this update to the traditional SMART goals. Now that you know how to write a WAY SM²ART, just do it. Take action to be one of the few to achieve your sales goals in 2018 instead of one of the many who continues to fall short. **N**

Leanne Hoagland-Smith is the Clarity Strategist, solving people and process problems. As a thought leader who challenges the status quo, she turns tomorrow's goals into today's results. Follow her on Twitter @CoachLee.



- W** = WRITTEN
- A** = ACTIONABLE
- Y** = YOURS
- S** = SPECIFIC (VERY)
- M²** = MEASUREMENT TIMES MINDSET
- A** = ALIGNED TO PURPOSE, PASSION AND PLANS
- R** = REALISTIC STRETCH
- T** = TARGET DATE, TIME DRIVEN

WAY SM²ART Comparisons to Traditional SMART Goals



	WAY SM ² ART	SMART
Example #1	Close 10% more sales than in the past 30 days from those in my sales funnel in the next 30 days by not giving up and staying true to my purpose of being the trusted authority for my clients.	I will close 10% more sales in the next 30 days.
Example #2	Identify 20 new qualified sales leads in the next 7 days to keep my sales funnel full thereby demonstrating my passion as a committed salesperson with an unstoppable mindset.	I will find 20 sales leads in the next 30 days.