



To Be Successful in Business Development ... Know Your 3-Cs

For lack of training, they lack knowledge. For lack of knowledge, they lack skill. For lack of skill, they lack confidence. For lack of confidence, they lack victory. ... Julius Caesar

The 3-Cs, Credibility, Confidence and Courage, are three interwoven factors that are essential to an individual's success in developing business. These key elements make us efficient and effective in the role. Any one of these three attributes is powerful by itself. Acquired together, they provide a formidable advantage for the professional in Business Development and set us apart from our competition.

CREDIBILITY

Too many Business Development people rely on their offering's features and benefits, or their company's name brand, history or expertise to establish what they perceive to be their own "credibility" in a business relationship. This can be a shaky foundation in the current business climate, when a firm's perception by the general public can have more ups and downs than a roller coaster, given recent headlines.

These same folks are only psychologically comfortable calling on a prospect as long as their service or product has name recognition or their company is a known market leader. With this mindset, they leverage the offering or company name to gain "credibility" with their prospects. As a result, they tend to show, tell, push and sell, hoping that with their goal of giving more information or presentations, the more "credibility" they can establish. Instead, they exhibit immature, ineffective behaviors which are stereotypical of amateur salespeople and do just the opposite of building credibility.

True credibility, on the other hand, is both established and earned. It's established based on your Purpose being placed ahead of your Goal. Simply put, your Purpose means you ensure that clients get their needs met first ... this is Primary. Meeting your Goals comes second. The result is earning your clients' trust. Knowing your customers' world, understanding what pain looks and feels like from their point of view, knowing you are capable of helping solve their problems from their perspective is a profoundly powerful position. Credibility is that value we see in ourselves as being an integral part of helping the prospect or client, whether or not they actually buy from us. There is no higher degree of trust.

So, it's apparent that credibility is established in the mind of the customer by the level and type of questions you ask about them, their business, their problems and their pain. It's not gained by the statements you make about your product, service, company or yourself. Insightful questions that relate to the customer and their world convey that you are a credible resource in the business relationship and reveal your value as a professional. Credibility establishes trust and trust is the basis of why people do business with other people.

CONFIDENCE

Confidence is a firm belief, an absolute trust in something, someone or oneself. Confidence, in any Business Development situation, is the act of knowing precisely what to do, how to do it and why it works. Confidence in oneself and one's Business Development process evolves as a result of study, practice and learning. To attain confidence, we must persevere under pressure. We gain confidence by practicing our thinking, process and skills in low-risk situations, before testing our ability in high-stakes circumstances.

Most of us have learned that in any stressful situation, we will do exactly what we have been trained to do. Effective training in any role must teach us not only the knowledge of what to do in a particular situation, but how to do it, too. Additionally, that training must provide us a true understanding of why a particular strategy, technique or approach works. From this basis of knowledge, each of us must apply it, practice it, struggle with it and refine it to make it our own. In "owning" a process, we understand what confidence is all about. We trust in ourselves to act according to our plan, and from this firm belief and conviction, we personify confidence.

COURAGE

Courage can be defined as "the attitude of facing and dealing with anything recognized as dangerous, difficult, or painful instead of withdrawing from it." In small decisions or in big actions, all of us at some time in our lives are challenged to be courageous.

In Business Development, courage grows out of confidence. Courage comes from having confidence in ourselves - knowing who we are and abiding by the principles that anchor us. It develops from having confidence in our role as a professional and accepting our strengths and limitations. Courage comes from believing that our Purpose in Business Development is helping customers figure out what their problems or issues are, and helping them find a way to a solution - whether or not they purchase from us. Courage is all about making the tough decisions and doing the right thing for our customer, which becomes easier

when we are anchored in our principles and values. Courage is not without fear or uncertainty; but it is being brave enough to conquer fear and uncertainty, and believing in our Purpose and ourselves. Ultimately, courage is about character.

CASE STUDY

A few years back, a young engineer from a small technical services company shared her experience on a call made with a company president. She did her homework beforehand, and had reason to believe the company's industry needs made them a qualified prospect. Although a bit nervous, she stuck to her process and entered into the call without preconceived notions concerning that company's real problems. By asking business, people, financial and technical questions concerning the situation - making sure she understood all the challenges from the president's perspective - it became apparent that none of her company's services were the best solution to his most pressing problem. Consequently, she shared her conclusion with him and referred the prospect to another firm. A long term business partnership began that day, although her company did not provide the services for that one project. However, she did gain the president's trust integral to booking long-term business with his company, partnering on many other projects. The subsequent revenue far exceeded the fee from that first "lost" contract.

As this story indicates, *Credibility* is the value established by helping others with their challenges and earning their trust. Having *Confidence* in our process, we come prepared knowing what to do, how to do it and why it works. Our Character is anchored in our principles, values and ethics giving us *Courage* to do what's right for the client. The 3-Cs ultimately *guarantee revenue results*.

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