

Welcome to the Jungle

5:45 PM. Rick Johnston, VP Business Development, sank into his office chair, dialed his voice mail pass code and heard, “*You have seven new messages.*”

“Hi this is Sean Preston from HiTech Corporation. We’re providers of customized software solutions that help companies like yours streamline their ordering processes. I’d like to...” Rick pressed the delete button and started listening to the next message.

“Mr. Johnston, Susan Meyers from Analytic Metrics. I’d like to schedule a short meeting to show you how our newest product will save you time and money...” Delete.

“Rick, it’s Brian from logistics. We have a major problem with the Global Software program. Call me right away.”

And it continued. Fortunately, Brian’s voice mail was the only one Rick needed to take action on. However, his email in-box was another story. Forty-two new messages waited for him and that was just since 2:30 this afternoon. Today, like every other day, was a blur.

He had arrived in his office at 7:15 AM and spent forty-five minutes responding to outstanding issues from the previous day. Then, for the next several hours, he hustled from meeting to meeting. A half-eaten sandwich on his desk reminded him of the minor crisis that had interrupted his lunch. Unexpected problems with their new CRM system they had recently implemented company wide absorbed his afternoon forcing him to cancel two other meetings and delay a decision on yet another project he was overseeing.

On top of that was the directive to reduce spending yet again. It seemed that the CFO was completely out of touch with reality with his demands to cut back expenditures. Marketing, training, and other operational expenses were continually under the microscope. Employee lay-offs were rampant and head count was rapidly shrinking. “*How can we possibly run so lean and still cut resources?*” Rick had challenged. The CFO simply shrugged and said, “*That’s why we pay you the big bucks.*”

But the biggest thorn in Rick’s side was the political battle he was fighting with Drew Strick, VP New Accounts. Every time Rick attempted to implement a change that would improve the company’s results,

Strick challenged him and attempted to derail his efforts. The VP had an uncanny ability to uncover the slightest shortcoming in Rick’s plans to improve the business and could was more adept at aligning himself with the other executives. In fact, Strick made every effort to publicize the fact that he frequently dined with the CEO, CIO, CFO, and President.

He broke away from his reflections and sighed. *Another three hours of work to do and I still feel that I haven’t made any headway.* He grimaced and dialed Brian’s extension to discuss the problem in logistics.

And that, my friends, is a typical day in the life of an executive. Internal politics, budget cutbacks and spending freezes, an impossible amount of work to accomplish, and limited resources. It’s little wonder that they don’t return your calls or seem to take forever to make a decision. Even if you have a solution that is a perfect fit for your prospect’s company, it’s going to take a lot of work and patience to get through to your decision maker.

Put yourself in the shoes of your buyer, customer, or prospect. How would you manage their situation?

In today’s hyper-speed, octane-fueled business world the outdated and traditional methods of selling are now ineffective. Yes, you are under pressure to reach your sales targets but your prospect is under similar, albeit different, pressures. The above issues along with hidden agendas and personal motives dramatically influence the decision-making process in a company.

Welcome to the jungle!

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