

CLIENT	Michael J. Hughes Inc.
PROJECT	Case study - Kinnear Office Furnishings
OBJECTIVE	Create a compelling case study for publication in the company's e-zine and other marketing communications.

COPY EXCERPT

How Kinnear Office Furnishings Made its "Tough Sell" Much Easier

Offering superior products and services sometimes makes *selling* more difficult.

That was the problem for Kinnear Office Furnishings. Based in San Francisco, Kinnear doesn't just sell office furniture. Their interior designers create functional but stylish office spaces that promote productivity and enhance the client's image.

But because of this difference, they can't compete on price alone. And they can't rely on normal advertising or direct marketing. They need to pitch their services to the right decision-maker.

"One of our toughest problems is identifying who in a company we need to contact," says Kinnear CEO, Janice Bell. "There isn't an obvious title. Sometimes the office manager is in charge of furnishings and office space. But it can just as easily be the CEO! We just can't buy a mailing list. So we need to spend a lot of time networking to find the right person."

Creating More Sales Opportunities through Networking

"Networking is of critical importance to our sales team," says Bell. "They need to aggressively network in order to identify the right contacts at prospective companies and get them talking about furnishings and interior space design."

And that networking must be done efficiently. Salespeople need to establish contact with new prospects quickly, but without being so aggressive they knock those prospects out of the sales funnel.

That led Kinnear to look at networking skills programs. "We have a 'product' that is of very high value to a company, but, quite frankly, difficult to sell," says Bell. "So we're constantly looking for any edge we can get to get our foot in the door."

"Obviously, for us, the better our sales team is at networking, the more sales opportunities they'll generate for us."

No Fluff, Just Useful Tips and Tactics

Kinnear's choice? The Networking for Results Success System.

Here's how it works: The program starts with an introductory webinar which describes how the system works. Then each sales person works through a series of 12 online modules. These can be accessed via computer, or through a personal device, like a Blackberry. Each module is just 30 minutes, so they're easy to complete during lunch or after the day's last appointment. And to help each salesperson implement the system, six months of one-on-one coaching and support are also provided.

"What I really like about the program is that there's no fluff or theory," says Bell. "Right from the first module, there were tips and tactics our sales team could implement right away."

Bell also says her sales staff has improved its results significantly since adopting The Networking for Results Success System. "Without a doubt, it's a very effective program, especially for sales teams like ours that rely on networking to build sales. I'd highly recommend it!"

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