



## The Six Questions You Need To Ask Yourself This Month

### Description

December is a great time to reflect on your past year and plan for success in the year ahead. At BDU, we take a "triage approach" to business development. This process helps individuals and companies determine the three areas that, if approved upon, will have the biggest impact on performance.

Here are six questions to ask yourself to help you find your "triage areas." These questions will help you determine what you need to **start** doing, what you need to **stop** doing and what you need to **continue** to do in order to get the results you want in the new year.

1. **Did you hit your sales goals in 2016?** If you did not, it is critical to figure out why. Were you unable to retain your existing customers? Did you not effectively leverage your existing customers to create other opportunities to up sell and cross sell? Were you not able to fill the pipeline with good qualified prospects on a consistent basis?
2. **Did you have a well-defined game plan last year, or did you proceed with no rhyme or reason to what and how much you were doing?** Time is your most valuable resource! In order to spend that time most effectively and to maximize your ROI, it is critical that you put together a strategic business development plan that is customized to you and your business.
3. **What was your average size sale, and how does the sale size compare to the previous years?** The size of your sales can have a major impact on your numbers. If your average sale size is not where it needs to be, you may need to implement a program to target larger opportunities in a very defined and repeatable fashion. For example, **BDU's STAR Program\*** is a pipeline enrichment program that helps our clients target larger opportunities (elephants) within their territory. (\*Want to learn more? [Contact us](#) for information about BDU's Star Program.)
4. **What was your close ratio?** If you are in business-to-business sales and your close ratio (proposals/sales) is lower than 30%, you may need to work on optimizing your sales process. This could include taking a look at how you conduct your prospect meetings, uncover key information, effectively present your solutions, handle objections and ultimately close the business. Sometimes a small tweak in the sales process can end in huge results. By the way, if your sales ratio is too high you most likely get a lot of your business from referrals or you only

quote businesses that you feel you can close. If that is the case, there might be areas of opportunity for you around getting more prospect appointments.

In addition to just looking at your sales numbers, you also need to ask questions about yourself.

5. **Did you give 100% effort this past year, and did you keep a positive attitude? Did you go above and beyond the call of duty?** Half of sales success is attitude and motivation. Successful sales and business development professionals understand that sales is a numbers game. Superstars are not only willing to do what it takes to be successful but are committed to doing it day in and day out, week in and week out and month in and month out. In addition, they understand that although sales is one of the most lucrative careers, it is filled with a good amount of adversity and challenges. It is so important to make sure that you maintain a positive attitude.
6. **Did you do anything to make yourself better than the previous year? Did you set and accomplish goals and, perhaps most importantly, put in the effort to track your progress against those goals on a consistent basis?** Sales professionals often do the same things over and over again expecting different results. You need to ask yourself if you have worked on improving yourself in a way that can impact your results.

Most successful CEOs, executives and top-level business development professionals engage coaches to help them identify their triage areas and assist in implementing procedures to maximize results. Whether you decide to take advantage of outside assistance or you perform the triage yourself, this approach is critical to your ongoing success.

At this point in time, there is nothing that you can do about the last year, the last month or even the last two minutes. However, you can absolutely do something moving forward. It's only through this self-evaluation process that you can begin to address and fix the correct concerns and problems within the context of your own work.

Now is the best time to reflect and make the appropriate modifications so at the end of next year, when you ask yourself the same questions, you'll be proud to have hit your goals!

**Need more assistance?** [Contact us](#) to learn how BDU can guide you through our triage approach and help you plan for a strong 2017!

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