



David Carew

Sales Life

from **SolutionsforSales**

Our regular feature 'Sales Life' invites senior salespeople to give their views on key sales issues.

This quarter we talk to David Carew of Invensys Process Systems, part of Invensys plc, the global industrial automation, transportation and controls group.

What is your job title and what do you do?

Sales Director for Invensys Process Systems. I am responsible for sales into North West Europe, Kazakhstan and English-speaking Africa.

What is the most important thing to learn about your industry?

To be honest there is not just one thing to learn about my industry. At Invensys Process Systems we work in many vertical sectors and they are all different. The one factor they all have in common is the need for automation.

Describe a memorable deal

The most memorable deal I have ever been involved in was a transfer technology project to China. It was one of the first multi-million dollar deals of its kind and was very exciting to be a part of.

Who in your industry do you most admire?

Henry Hoge, the CEO and President of a controls and automation company in San Francisco, is the most inspiring person I've ever worked with. He is a very successful businessman and has tremendous humility. One of the most important things to remember in business is that no matter how successful you become you must hold on to your humility. It is what makes the good become great and Henry is a fantastic example of this.

What is the most significant recent development in your industry?

It is the ability to provide a total enterprise control and automation environment. Whereas previously we provided 'islands of technology', we can now connect all the elements together. The benefit of this is that our customers can make more informed decisions. By integrating all the information you can see what is happening throughout the business. This creates a bigger picture, enabling you to

make decisions based on all the business issues and information.

What is the best time of day for a meeting?

For me it is 9.05 a.m. People tend to be more awake in the morning and setting the start time five minutes past the hour means that people are more likely to be on time. If you schedule a meeting on the hour often people will be a bit late, but using specific minutes really focuses people to the official start time and, more often than not, everyone will arrive and be ready to get started on time.

Where do you get your best ideas?

I do my best thinking when I'm in the air. Being on an aeroplane means you are cut off from the usual day-to-day office tasks and it really gives you the time and space to think freely. Other than that, I often get ideas when I'm on site with a customer. When I see the way things are being done in practice it helps me to create realistic, workable solutions for our customers.

Which do you think is most important when winning new business; technical expertise or sales skills?

In today's business environment you need to have a mix of both. You must be credible in front of the customer and no matter how good you are at selling you need the technical knowledge and expertise to back this up. In the reverse, however deep a person's technical understanding, they need to be able to articulate the key business benefits of the technology to the customer to secure the sale.

What is the best piece of sales advice you've ever been given?

The main piece of advice is to never give up; you can't afford to be complacent. It is very important to follow up with your customers and constantly keep the dialogue going. If you aren't, then you can be sure someone else is.