



Stuart Young

# Sales Life

from SolutionsforSales

**Stuart Young, UK Sales Manager, Amor Group.**

Amor Real Time is the UK's leading independent provider of business technology solutions to the energy, transport and public sectors, and is part of the Amor Group.

**What is your job title and what do you do?**

UK Sales Manager Amor Group – I am responsible for driving sales revenues and increasing profitable EBIT within the Energy sector, in accordance with our aggressive sales plan up to and beyond 2012. I have been in the role for 5 months.

**What is the top sales challenge you and your team are currently facing?**

Our top challenge is identifying our customers' "must haves". We have lots of "nice to have" solutions, but securing business in this current economic environment requires the customer to have a mandatory obligation to secure funding and to progress the project.

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

You make your own luck, and people buy from people.

**Describe a memorable deal**

Taking a major Floating Production Storage and Offloading (FPSO) project, valued at several million GBP from a key competitor, after a letter of intent had been placed with them. Our pursuit team identified key weaknesses in the competitor's bid and understood there were significant cost implications to the client and end user as the project was already behind schedule. We were able to formulate a counter strategy to overcome all of these problems and provide the client with a more favourable alternative.

**Who in your industry do you most admire?**

I would have to say two of my ex-colleagues from Invensys – David Carew (Sales Director EMEA) and Ian Govan (Sales Director Triconex EURA). I admire them for their professional, pursuit-focused enthusiasm in empowering their team members and for their personal support.

**What is the most significant recent development in your industry?**

It has to be directional drilling. In the old days you simply drilled vertically. Now drilling is directional, which means being able to control the drill bit direction and hit the exact location where the oil and gas resides. The analogy is having a piece of spaghetti which can be controlled to run down through the streets of a city for a couple of miles and be accurate enough to poke through the letterbox of a particular home.

**What got you into sales – how did you start?**

Purely by luck. I was a Consultant Engineer with Carl Bro working on the Scottish Water Telemetry scheme as the resident Project Manager. The main contractor for the Water Management Telemetry system (WMS) was Foxboro (now part of Invensys). I was approached after 3 years working with Foxboro to join them directly as their Scottish Account Manager when the incumbent (Victor Lough) moved on internally.

**Where is the best location for a sales meeting: your office, their office, neutral ground?**

The venue doesn't bother me; it's the attitude and contribution from the attendees that's the critical factor. It's nice to be in Milan or Dubai, but the truth is I've had some of our finest meetings sitting in a portacabin in Glasgow or in a Travel Lodge foyer.

***"There is no substitute for face-to-face time"***

**Do you find that today's communications media reduce your need for face-to-face meetings with the customer?**

**Which sales activities are best suited to the new communications media?**

Yes, they can increase your workload if not controlled and can ultimately reduce face time. The best suited new technologies to assist selling, in my opinion, are web conferencing and online product videos. However, there is no substitute for face-to-face time. Email and excessive CRM data entry are a real threat to achieving your productive sales objectives.

**How can Marketing best serve salespeople?**

By communicating with different departments Marketing can understand the product, understand the logistics of delivery and understand the client's needs. Then formulate the marketing campaigns around these simple facts.

Big Marketing spectacles can have great impact, but if the audience doesn't understand what you are selling it's a wasted effort.

**Which sales activity do you enjoy most: "hunting" or "farming"?**

Either. The real enjoyment is when your strategy pays off and you secure the order. Achieving repeatable business demonstrates you've got it right again and that gives you such a buzz.