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Selling Science: Can Scientists Learn How To Sell Their Services?

Albuquerque, NM – Obtaining money for research and buyers for new technologies developed in laboratories is key to many scientists' and engineers' success. The challenge is learning the specific skills to successfully sell scientific or technical research and development services, according to Lenann McGookey Gardner, who works with national and independent laboratories to improve their sales and marketing efforts.

“So many scientists essentially say ‘I didn’t go to all those years of grad school so I could be a peddler,’ and yet getting funding for the work you would most like to be doing or getting buyers for the technologies you have developed is crucial,” says Gardner, the author of *Got Sales? The Complete Guide to Today’s Proven Methods for Selling Services*.

In her work with Sandia National Laboratories, the American Council of Independent Laboratories, and technology commercialization offices such as TechLink at Montana State University, Gardner provides data from recent sales research on what’s working in selling today and teaches technical professionals how to develop and nurture the relationships that lead to “money coming in.”

“The data tells us that time spent face-to-face and on the phone with prospective funders results in more sales,” says Gardner. “While the majority of scientists I work with would prefer to spend their time doing research and lab work, once they’ve learned effective relationship building skills, they become the best spokespeople for their professional abilities.”

A top concern of many scientists is bringing more money into their labs for specific projects. Even labs that are flush with cash may be challenged when the money that’s

come in is earmarked for work that's less interesting. Learning how to structure a successful sales conversation and recognizing when a sales meeting is going well or poorly – and knowing what to do in either case – are among the skills technical people especially need to know.

“The human factor is a huge part of the sales conversation, and many times it's a whole new world for technical people,” says Gardner. “Learning to observe and respond to body language, to exhibit behavior that will cause new acquaintances to like you immediately, the optimal questions to ask when you're selling, how to listen well, and the skills for building trust are essential. Once they learn the keys, technically-oriented people can be phenomenally successful.”

In the words of her client, Dr. David Sandison at Sandia National Laboratories, “We've captured an additional \$1 million per quarter this year. Lenann successfully addressed a problem that plagued us for years.”

Lenann McGookey Gardner, a Harvard MBA and a past #1 worldwide sales rep at Xerox, has been chosen Professional Services “Marketer of the Year” by her state's chapter of the American Marketing Association. She is the author of *Got Sales? The Complete Guide to Today's Proven Methods for Selling Services*, which was nominated for the Axiom Business Book Award as the best sales book of the last year. She offers keynote speeches on state-of-the-art selling and closing skills for scientific and technical professionals, executive and sales coaching for business success, and workshops to help technical people refine their message to be more effective in reaching out for funding. More information is available at www.YouCanSell.com.