

## ADVERTISERS' INDEX

Acme Cryogenics <a href="http://www.acmecryo.com">www.acmecryo.com</a> .....	47, 48
Air Products <a href="http://www.airproducts.com">www.airproducts.com</a> .....	48
CCH Equipment <a href="http://www.cchequipment.com">www.cchequipment.com</a> .....	8
Chart Industries <a href="http://www.chart-ind.com">www.chart-ind.com</a> .....	19
CONCOA <a href="http://www.concoa.com">www.concoa.com</a> .....	14
Cosmodyne <a href="http://www.cosmodyne.com">www.cosmodyne.com</a> .....	20
CPC Cryolab <a href="http://www.cpc-cryolab.com">www.cpc-cryolab.com</a> .....	12
CPV Manufacturing <a href="http://www.cpvvmfg.com">www.cpvvmfg.com</a> .....	12, 47
Cryogenic Industries <a href="http://www.cryoind.com">www.cryoind.com</a> .....	29
Cyrocomp <a href="http://www.cyrocomp.com">www.cyrocomp.com</a> .....	7
Enmet <a href="http://www.enment.cvom">www.enment.cvom</a> .....	15
CryoGas International <a href="http://www.cryogas.com">www.cryogas.com</a> .....	13, 17, 44
FIBA Technologies <a href="http://www.fibatech.com">www.fibatech.com</a> .....	2
Flouramics <a href="http://www.tufoil.com">www.tufoil.com</a> .....	6
Gas Equipment Company <a href="http://www.gasequipment.com">www.gasequipment.com</a> .....	18
Generant <a href="http://www.generant.com">www.generant.com</a> .....	10
Genstar, <a href="http://www.genstartech.com">www.genstartech.com</a> .....	27, 47
GOW-MAC <a href="http://www.gow-mac.com">www.gow-mac.com</a> .....	47
Kryopak/Salof Companies <a href="http://www.kryopak.com">www.kryopak.com</a> .....	16
Leaders <a href="http://www.leaders-llc.com">www.leaders-llc.com</a> .....	39
Ranch Cryogenics <a href="http://www.ranchcryogenics.com">www.ranchcryogenics.com</a> .....	34
REGO CryoFlow Products <a href="http://www.regoproducts.com/cryoflow">www.regoproducts.com/cryoflow</a> .....	4, 5, 47
Saf-T-Cart <a href="http://www.saftcart.com">www.saftcart.com</a> .....	47, Inside Back Cover
SGD <a href="http://www.sgd.com">www.sgd.com</a> .....	9
Taylor-Wharton/Harsco GasServ <a href="http://www.taylor-wharton.com">www.taylor-wharton.com</a> .....	Inside Front Cover
Thermco <a href="http://www.thermco.com">www.thermco.com</a> .....	11
Veite Cryogenics <a href="http://www.veitecryogenic.com">www.veitecryogenic.com</a> .....	21
Weldcoa <a href="http://www.weldcoa.com">www.weldcoa.com</a> .....	Back Cover
Weldship <a href="http://www.weldship.com">www.weldship.com</a> .....	13
Western International <a href="http://www.westernintl.com">www.westernintl.com</a> .....	35



## Art of Selling...

By Art Waskey

### THE GATEKEEPER: IT'S NOT ABOUT US ... IT'S ABOUT THEM!

We had lost a large account, so it was time for the responsible rep to fill the void. He was not accustomed to building new business, at least not of this magnitude. In exasperation he complained, "It feels like I am starting all over." It was a day of pure, unadulterated, cold-call prospecting. In his mind this meant one thing, "getting past the gatekeeper."

My goal as his coach was to show him it really wasn't about getting past the gatekeeper, but **learning about** the gatekeeper. How about you? Do you look past the receptionist without giving him/her the value they deserve in your pursuit of business? How do you handle this individual? Do you ever consider that you may actually be looking at the decision-maker?

There was the receptionist at an account that had been one of our best, five years earlier, but was now under new ownership, and we were starting over. This receptionist was very outgoing and friendly and she was the gatekeeper, so we had to begin our relationship-building with her. Since we didn't have a contact, in our pre-call briefing we had talked about the importance of rapidly building trust with the first person we met: before we could get information, our new acquaintance must feel comfortable with us.

In his popular book, *SPIN Selling*, Neil Rackham, talks about using *situation* questions to build trust. I break these questions into three groups: product, company, and person. Most people are quite willing and proud to talk about their product or service, so start there. Then, ask about the company, and finally, ask personal questions. Here are some suggested questions in each group:

- **Product:** What does your company do? What do you manufacture? What services do you render? How do you use the product or service?
- **Company:** How long have you been in business? How many people do you employ? How is the current business environment?
- **Person:** How long have you worked here? Where do you live? How did you end up in [city, town]? If appropriate, ask about his/her family.

We progressed through these questions with the receptionist and learned that, with the ownership transition and her eight years of service, our gatekeeper was a tenured, influential player. She remembered our company when we had their business, how we had lost it, and agreed to help us get it back! She also didn't like the current competitor's sales rep, who was curt and seemed to look past her. We were given appointments and personal introductions to the decision-makers.

The next time you are standing at a prospect's door, consider that the person behind the desk may just be the most important person you will meet today. Start by using his/her name and asking situation questions. You may find that this gatekeeper is the key to a long and successful business relationship.

*Art Waskey is Vice President of Sales and Marketing for General Air Services and Supply Company in Denver, CO, and author of The Art of Sales in One Month. He can be reached via e-mail at [awaskey@generalair.com](mailto:awaskey@generalair.com)* □