

Q2 2026 SALES STRATEGY GUIDE

7 Steps to Protect & Grow Your Sales in an Uncertain Economy

A cross-discipline action plan drawn from sales, marketing, and operations experts. Built for small business owners navigating tariffs, rising costs, and shifting buyer behaviour.

Things are hard right now. Tariffs, fuel prices, and economic uncertainty are squeezing businesses from every direction. **The instinct is to act fast. Make more calls, run more ads, push harder.** But the experts agree: before you go wider, you need to go deeper. Here is a step-by-step plan to do exactly that.

1

Audit From the Inside Out First

Before changing anything externally, look inward. Talk to your own team: managers, frontline staff, everyone. Run short surveys or informal interviews. The greatest insights come from the **discrepancies between what leadership thinks is happening and what employees actually experience**. You cannot fix an engine without first running a diagnostic.

2

Talk to Your Top 20 Customers

Schedule real conversations with your 20 best and most consistent clients. Ask them: **Why do they buy from you? What keeps them coming back? How are you different from your competitors?** Their answers will likely surprise you. They will give you language your marketing and sales team can use immediately. What customers say is more valuable than what you think they say.

3

Interview the Deals You Lost

Reach out to 20 prospects your team could not close. Ask them why they chose someone else. **What was missing? What would have made it a 10 out of 10?** Understanding why people say no is just as important as understanding why people say yes. This data often reveals one or two fixable problems. Usually not 20 of them.

4

Let Your CRM Data Tell the Story

If you are not documenting conversations and pulling reports from your CRM, you are flying blind. **Data gives direction.** Dig into your historical data right now. Look for trends in language, objections, timelines, and deal sources. Patterns will emerge and they will tell you exactly where your process is breaking down.

If you are not currently using your CRM this way, start today. It does not have to be perfect. It just has to be consistent.

5

Ruthlessly Define Your Ideal Customer

Most businesses do not need thousands of customers. **They need a small subset of the right customers who love what they do, buy consistently, and grow with the company.** When things slow down, the instinct is to chase everything. That is the wrong move. Narrow your focus. 20% of your customers are driving 80% of your results. Start there.

6

Build Sales-Ready Messaging

Once you know who your ideal customer is and why they buy, **build clear, simple messaging that speaks directly to the problem you solve.** Your sales team needs to be able to articulate in plain language how a customer's life is better after working with you. If your team cannot say it simply, your prospects cannot hear it clearly.

7

Create a Simple, Measurable Sales Process and Show Up Where Buyers Are Looking

A simple plan executed well beats a sophisticated plan executed poorly. Every single time. **Define your process from prospecting to close. Make sure everyone follows it. Measure every stage.** When something breaks down, you will know exactly where. Then show up where your buyers are already searching: Google, LinkedIn, or wherever they verify before they buy. Polish those touchpoints. Do not waste energy where your audience is not.



One Last Thing: Do This Iteratively.

You do not have to do all seven steps at once. Start with step one today. Ask one question. Pull one report. Interview one customer. Small consistent actions add up fast. The goal is not a perfect plan. The goal is a working plan that gets better every week.

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Stop grinding. Start growing.