

Rank the Most Damaging Sales Mistakes

Do you have bad habits that might be hurting your sales?

Test yourself to see if you know which sales mistakes are the worst. Rank these common sales rep mistakes from 1-7, with 1 being the worst.

Hint—the mistakes which frustrate the buyer the most and can thus cost future business for the rep—and for the company—are the most damaging. While they are all mistakes, some may be forgivable and can even be endearing in a twisted way.

- A) Poor product knowledge _____
- B) Bad breath or body odor _____
- C) Not listening _____
- D) Embellishing value of a product _____
- E) Poor follow-up _____
- F) Not keeping promises _____
- G) Being arrogant or condescending _____



Answers in descending order:

7. G) **Being arrogant is annoying, but it is actually pretty common in top salespeople.** This isn't to say you shouldn't watch your attitude, but a little arrogance will probably be forgiven.
6. B) **Having bad breath or body odor may cause clients to talk about you behind your back,** but they will not hate you for stinking up the place. It might even make them feel sorry for you.
5. D) **Please try not to embellish the value of a product.** However fellow salespeople all over the world have set the bar pretty low on the concept of being trustworthy, so embellishing the truth is bad—but not the worst.
4. E) **Poor follow-up is common among salespeople.** Because so few are great at follow-up, not doing it is not a deal killer—but doing it will put you at the top of the heap.
3. F) **The habit of not keeping promises is a bad one.** Now we are getting into frustration territory because your promise to do something has set a sales timer in the mind of the buyer—so not doing it can kill your future deals, referrals, etc.
2. A) **A salesperson with poor product knowledge is fairly unforgivable for today's consumer—especially in B2B sales.** They are under pressure and stretched for time, and they need you to know your stuff.
1. C) **Having poor listening skills is the worst thing you can do.** Talking too much and listening too little can kill current and future deals faster than any other mistake. If you want to make more sales, ask great questions and then be a lot more quiet. Really listen to the answers. The secondary benefit to developing listening skills is that it actually makes selling easier.