



Sales Growth Strategies

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Selling Consultatively

Introduction

“You miss 100% of the shots you never take.” (Wayne Gretzky)

The highest paid and most successful sales professionals are positioned in their customer accounts as friends, advisors and consultants.

The practice of the consultative selling approach will help you move to the very top of your field. It is a valuable tool that is indispensable in dealing with complex sales in accounts where many factors are involved and competition is a key factor.

In this lesson you will learn:

- How top salespeople are described by customers
- How to position yourself as a consultant;
- Positioning yourself as a partner with the customer
- The approach of the true sales professional

What Do You Already Know?

Test your knowledge by attempting to answer the questions below.

1 What factor determines, more than anything else, how the customer reacts and responds to your sales offering?

2 How important is the customer's "perception" of you and your company in making a buying decision?

3 What are the key words customers use to describe the top 10% of sales professionals?

4 How do you position yourself as a consultant rather than as a salesperson?

5

What is the major difference between “vending” and “consulting?”

6

How can you quantify the financial results of your product or service for your customer?

7

What are the key words that customers use to describe “consultants” who provide them with products and services?

Selling Consultatively

1 Consultative selling is the approach of the true sales professional.

- a) How you are **positioned** in the customer's mind determines how the customer reacts to your offering;
- b) The customer's perception is the customer's **reality**;
- c) Your job in the sale is to influence the customer's perception of you and what you sell;
- d) **First** impressions are lasting in positioning yourself in the customer's mind.

2 The top 10% of sales professionals are described in specific ways by their customers.

- a) *"He or she works for me;"*
- b) *"I view him or her as a consultant/advisor;"*
- c) *"He or she really understands my situation;"*
- d) Key: Ask questions, listen attentively, **act like** a consultant;
- e) **Tell** the prospect that you are a consultant rather than a salesperson.

3 Consultative selling requires that you think of yourself *differently* and position yourself differently in the account.

- a) Focus on the **financial results** of your product or service rather than the performance or price relationship;
- b) The focus on financial results is the difference between consulting and **vending**;
- c) Focus on **cost – benefit** decision-making;
- d) Key variable? Your knowledge of the customer's business processes!
 - 1. Do your **homework** – learn everything about the customer's business;
 - 2. Learn how sales, costs, profits are **generated**;
 - 3. Offer specific help to **improve** in each area.
- e) Define the customer's problem/opportunity in **dollar** terms;
- f) How much can be gained or lost by using or not using your solution?

4 The job of the consultant is to *quantify* the profit-improvement solution for the customer.

- a) Show the net, bottom-line results of using your product or service;
- b) Explain the **return on investment** of purchasing your product or service;
- c) Answer the customer's questions, "How much? How soon? How sure?"
- d) Accept complete **responsibility** for implementation of your solution.

5 Position yourself as a *partner* with the customer.

- a) Show that you have **mutual** rather than opposing interests;
- b) Focus on **cooperation** rather than competition;
- c) Focus on **collaboration** rather than confrontation;
- d) Continually use the words, “we, us, our” in discussions.

6 Key words used by customers to describe consultants who work with them.

- a) Expert;
- b) Knowledgeable;
- c) Advisor;
- d) Friend;
- e) Helper;
- f) Problem-solver;
- g) Questioner;
- h) Listener.

7 Positioning yourself as a consultant in the sale is essential to your success.

- a) You must **earn the right**, in advance, by thorough preparation;
- b) Study your prospect's company **in advance** of your first meeting;
- c) Have information, ideas to **trade** with the customer for more information;
- d) Seek a "win-win" relationship with the customer;
- e) Always look for ways to **help** the customer to achieve his or her goals with your product or service;
- f) Key behavior? Ask well-prepared questions and listen intently to the answers.

Consultative selling moves you into an entirely new category of sales professionals. It takes you away from the continual contest and argument over cost, price and performance.

When you focus your attention on showing the customer how he or she can **financially** profit from the use of your product or service, you will achieve sales results above anything you have yet imagined.

Action Exercises

1 What **three** things can you do to position yourself as a consultant in the mind of your prospect or customer?

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

2

How are the top 10% of sales professionals **described** by their customers?

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

3

What must you focus on and talk about to be **perceived** as a consultant by your prospects and customers?

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

4

In what three ways does your product or service **improve** the financial situation of your customer?

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

5 What **three** things can you do to become more knowledgeable about your customer's business processes?

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

6 How can you **quantify** the bottom line results of using your product or service?

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

7 What steps can you take to position yourself as a **partner** with your customer?

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

What **one thing** are you going to do differently in your sales activities as the result of what you have learned in this lesson?
