

**TOP SECRET**

# 4D SELLING

LEARN HOW TO SELL IN  
7 EFFECTIVE STEPS



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# 4D SELLING

Numerous studies have shown that what buyers require from salespeople are **competence** and **character**.

**Competence** is the ability to do something successfully or efficiently, which makes perfect sense, from a buyer's perspective. The very least they expect from a salesperson is expertise.

**Character**, on the other hand, is more subjective as "one person's wine could be another's poison."

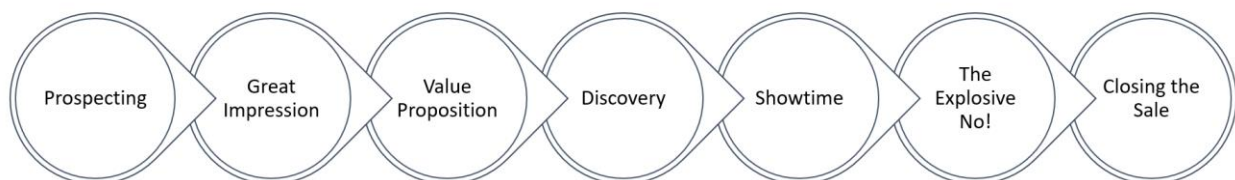
For some of us, character could mean we want to work with a salesperson who is enthusiastic and friendly, while others may see this as off-putting, frivolous, or just being too forward. Whatever character means to your prospect, when you add competence to character, you create trust.

Most importantly, **people are influenced to change by people that they trust**.

In this course, we learn about "4D Selling" and how using specific skills and techniques will allow you to earn our client's trust, and so become a trusted business partner and an influence for change.

Finally, everything that you will discover in this course is wrapped up in a tried and trusted **7-step selling system** that will allow you to take a prospect by the hand and guide them through the sale.

Whether you are an entrepreneur, new to sales, or a sales manager looking to assign an effective sales training course to a new hire, this **Selling Today** course is the ideal product for you.



By

*Paul Ferguson*

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## Introduction

Thanks for purchasing this course and I would like to point out a few things to you that will help you maximize this training.

**Use of bridges** – Salespeople hate script selling and being told what to say and do. I am the same; however, there are six bridges in this selling system that I would like you to use verbatim. Bridges allow us to move from one part of the sale to another, and they are worded in such a way that will enable us to be as effective as possible.

There is no such thing as a natural brain surgeon, which is the same for salespeople. Yes, there might exist, people who have some innate tendencies towards sales but like with any good profession, sales is a learned skill. Over the years, I have hired many salespeople, and my advice was always the same. Your first year is your "learning year," while your second year will be your "earning year." In sales, you need to keep practicing until it becomes second nature. This won't happen overnight, but I guarantee you that the practice is cumulative; the more you put in, the more you'll get out.

They say great salespeople are made from one part magic and one part learned skills.

The **one-part learned skills** is easier to understand as this could be anything from tedious paperwork to product knowledge and selling skills.

However, the one-part magic is harder to define because, for some people, this could mean being enthusiastic and having a positive attitude, or for others, the "gift of the gab" and charisma.

I have had the pleasure of working with some great salespeople over the years. For me, two things set them apart from everybody else.

One is their **grit, drive, and determination**. Not to sound cliché, but it's that first-in, last-out mentality you see every day. Or when they are one and one with a prospect, their only thought is, how am I going to close this deal today?

As we all know, motivation comes from within, and it is so important, especially in sales, that you believe you are doing this for yourself. It doesn't matter if you report directly to somebody; understanding that you are doing this for yourself and being ultimately responsible for your own success will allow you to succeed in sales.

The second trait that sets a great salesperson apart is **belief**, and to have this belief, you must sell yourself on what you are selling. You must make this the most important sale of your life and continue making that sale over and over to yourself.

As Grant Cardone says, "You have to sell yourself completely!"

This may sound like brainwashing, and to a point, it is.

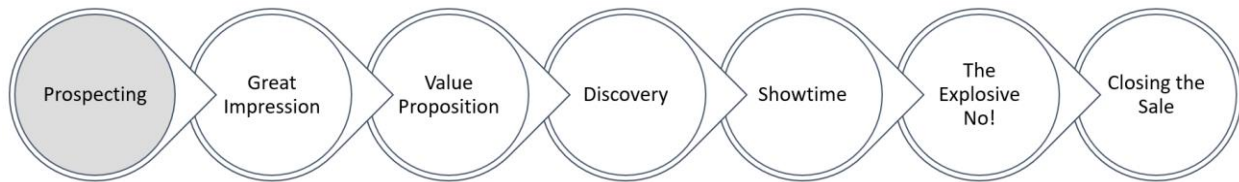
If you are not completely confident and convinced, then that lack of confidence and conviction will quickly become evident to your prospect.

And if you are unable to instantly answer these following questions, then you'll struggle in sales.

1. Why should someone go into debt to buy your product/service?
2. Why should they choose your product/service instead of someone else's?
3. Why should someone do it right now and not wait another second?

When you are fully confident in your product or service and how it benefits your prospects, then this will come across loud and clear as you work each sale.

## Chapter 1: Prospecting



### Section 1

Before we learn about how we can connect better with our prospects by becoming a 4D Salesperson, I would like to welcome you to Prospecting, which is the first step of the selling process. The goal of Prospecting is to develop a database of likely customers and then systematically communicate with them in the hopes of converting them from potential customer to current customer.

So, unless you live in Fantasyland, where you're always spoon-fed quality leads, then you'll need to learn how to prospect.

The first thing you need to know about Prospecting, that it sucked. It is hard to do, and if it weren't, everybody would be doing it.

Why does it suck? It's easy to become disillusioned with Prospecting because, at best, we are dealing with people who have a low-level interest in our product/service, and we are bound to hear a lot of, "I'm not interested" or "send me your proposal by email." Unlike Face-to-Face leads or Inbound Telephone leads, which would typically have a high closing ratio, cold calling, on the other hand, would be much lower, while cold email outreach would be a fraction of this rate again.

In addition to this, lots of salespeople make the mistake of only turning to Prospecting when it's quiet, and the problem with this is, Prospecting is not a quick fix. What you do today will probably not pay off for at least another 90-plus days.

The goal with Prospecting is to keep **your pipeline full**, and the sooner you consistently start doing it, the luckier you get.

The very best salespeople have mastered a balanced approach to Prospecting in the same manner that wealthy people have mastered balance in their investment portfolios.

Balance simply means that to get the best return from your prospecting time investment; there should be a mixture of telephone, in-person, email, social selling, text messaging, referrals, networking, inbound leads, trade shows, and cold calling. The relative distribution of your time investment in each There isn't a one-size-fits-all formula for balanced Prospecting. Every territory, industry, product, service, and prospect base is different.

For example:



Social selling might be a primary driver in a consulting business.

Inbound marketing might carry a heavier weight with specific software products.

Small companies or a start-up will need to balance their Prospecting to build a database with long-term opportunities and fill the pipe with deals that can be closed now.

Look around you. Find out what the top salespeople in your organization are doing to generate qualified prospects. Then do what they do. The sales pros who are bringing home the big commission checks know the formula.

One of the most essential aspects of effective Prospecting is **identifying good-fit customers** for your business. This means finding leads and prospects who genuinely need your product or service to solve their challenges and pain points. Once you have identified your potential prospects, you need to go where they are.

If they are on LinkedIn, connect with them on LinkedIn; if they are on Facebook, Instagram, or TikTok, you will have to connect with them on there as well.

There are lots of different ways you can reach out to potential prospects, by cold outreach emails, LinkedIn InMails, DMs, or by commenting on their posts. And even in this modern world of so-called social selling, one of the most effective ways is still good old-fashioned cold calling.

The thought of calling prospects cold can cause some salespeople to be filled with fear and anxiety. In fact, a recent research study found that 48% of business-to-business salespeople are afraid of making cold calls. Sadly, salespeople who are afraid of making cold calls have trouble hitting their quotas, are more stressed, and are likely making less money than their counterparts who don't share this phobia.

## Section 2: All Sales Begin with a Lead



In the next section ‘Tips to be Effective at Cold Calling,’ I’m going to cover cold calling in more depth but before I do that, I would like to take this opportunity to talk about the ‘sales funnel’.

Most sales processes can be viewed as a funnel and with each stage of the funnel taking the buyer one step closer to making a purchase.

At the top of the funnel, leads are entered. These leads would generally come from different sources; Websites, Google Ads, Facebook, Face to Face, etc., and be a mixture of both your ‘inbound’ and ‘outbound’ activities. You would also expect ‘Inbound’ leads to having a higher level of interest while ‘outbound’ leads would require more effort to move them into the next stage of the funnel.

The next stage of a sales funnel is where a portion of your ‘**Leads**’ will become ‘**Opportunities**’ after some sort of qualification or vetting. Essentially, an opportunity should look like a good fit for what you're selling.

In the next stage of the funnel, ‘Opportunities’ are given some sort of a sales presentation and a fraction of these will turn into ‘Customers’. This is a very simplified example of a funnel and depending on what you sell, there could be many more steps involved in your actual sales process. For example, a typical SAAS model might consist of Leads, Opportunities, Demos, Trials, and then Subscribers.

Regardless of how many steps your funnel might need the big takeaway here, is there are no customers, no revenue, no profit, no business without sales, and all sales begin with a lead.

One of my bosses used to say to me that when a salesperson is underperforming, they either have a traffic problem or a closing problem. Fundamentally, it’s all about ‘**Will**’ and ‘**Skill**’. The ‘Will’ to generate new leads and then the ‘Skill’ to turn them into sales.

Lead generation requires ‘Will’ and it is so easy to get disillusioned with this activity and that’s because you’re dealing with people who at best have a low level of interest.

Therefore, it is so important to adopt a ‘consultative mindset’.

A '**consultative mindset**' is where you are not trying to contact a prospect to sell them something you are contacting them to see if they need your help.

If you believe the product/service that you offer does help your end-user to make their life easier, more profitable, etc.

Then taking that step to reach out to them, is the most natural thing to do.

## Section 3: Tips to be Effective at Cold Calling



The key to being effective at Cold Calling is your ability to turn a cold call into a conversation. The biggest challenge we face is if we come across as too scripted or salsey, we'll run the risk of triggering our prospect's spidey sense, and unfortunately, when this happens, it could be all over before it has even started.

So, here are some tips that will help you be more effective at cold calling.

### Scripts

Nothing sets our "spidey sense" off more than an obviously scripted Cold Call, as they often come across as too unnatural and impersonal. However, scripts are essential, especially when starting out in sales, so a good compromise is to keep practicing and role-playing them until they sound as natural as possible.

### Lose the sales voice

Another surefire way of triggering our prospects' "spidey sense" is by sounding very salesy when you make your calls. Most of us aren't aware that we have a sales voice, so another good tip is to take your phone out, record your side of the conversation, and then afterward listen to it to see whether you need to tone it down or not.

### Pattern interrupt

The good news is we should be at this stage, sounding less robotic and salsey, which is definitely going to help in getting into a conversation. Still, despite this, we also need a technique that will allow us to disrupt those "I'm busy" or "Send me your proposal by email" that we're likely to get as well.

To do this, we need a pattern interrupt.

A pattern interrupt is designed to cause the other person to take a moment and think about their response instead of one of those reflex responses that I just mentioned. To do that, I am going to use a technique called **ADA** - Anchor, Disrupt and Ask.

It goes something like this:

## Paul Ferguson 4D SELLING

Hi Mary, It's Paul Ferguson from Selling Today, did I catch you in the middle of something?

Prospect: "Look, Paul, I'm busy."

"Mary, that's exactly why I called, I figured you would be, so I want to find a time that is more convenient for you. How about we get together next Wednesday at 3:00 PM instead?"

So, let's see that again and see **ADA** at play.

Mary said, "Look, Paul, I'm busy." (Which was her reflex response)

I said, "Mary, that's exactly why I called." (This is my Anchor, enables me to hang on in there)

Then I said, "I figured you would be, so I want to find a time that is more convenient for you."

(This acknowledges that I know she is busy right now, but it also disrupts that pattern by asking her to think about a more convenient time.)

Then I quickly added:

"How about we get together next Wednesday at 3:00 PM instead?" (This is the Ask, which in this case was an assumptive request.)

## Section 4: Reflex Objections



I'm now going to cover some reflex objections that you are bound to get when doing cold calling activities.

I think we can all agree that most people hate to be sold to, and regardless of how beneficial your proposal might be, a natural reaction from most people is to go into **defensive mode** as soon as they detect something salesy going on.

In fact, if you are dealing with somebody who's been around the block a few times, they'll probably have a few ready-made objections designed specifically to throw you off your game.

Any good salesperson worth their salt needs to tactfully deal with these so we can move past them and into that area where we can explain your value.

So here are four common reflex objections you might run into:

### **Thanks, we have a solution already**

At this point, we aren't suggesting you change supplier. We'd just like the opportunity to show you how we are different- and how we have provided additional value to our customers."

### **I'll get back to you**

Sure, let me ask you a couple of questions now to understand better how we might help, then I'll email more information later on.

### **Not interested**

That's understandable so let me briefly explain that I have done my research, and I am calling you because we work with companies very similar to yours who have benefitted from this solution. If you could give me another 5 minutes of your time, I'll be able to show you how they did.

### **No budget**

That's okay. We don't expect you to buy anything right now. We'd just like the opportunity to share what we are doing and see if it's valuable to your company

## Section 5: Define your Objectives



With ‘Scripts’ and ‘Lose the Sales Voice’, the overall lesson there was all about those first 7 seconds after the prospect answers the phone, as this can be a make-or-break moment between you and the prospect, in which your pitch, tonality, and approach must be perfect, otherwise, there is going to be a big chance you are going to lose them straight away.

While ‘Pattern interrupt’ and ‘Reflex Objections’ remind us that nobody likes to be sold to and it’s normal to go into some sort of defensive mode as soon as we detect something salesy is going on. As salespeople, we have to learn how to tactfully deal with these types of objections so we can move past them and into that area where we can better explain our value.

However, I think it is important that you when it comes to Cold Calling that you **‘Define your Objectives’**. Basically, what exactly do you want to get out of your cold calling efforts?

This could be to:

- Arrange a second meeting
- Book a product demonstration
- Understand a prospect’s needs

For me, it is all about booking a demonstration.

Common pain in my world is getting new salespeople up and running and performing sooner. So, a typical call for me would look like this. Hi John, It’s Paul Ferguson from Selling Today do you have a couple of minutes for me?

(If John says ‘No’ I would use ADA and if he says ‘Yes’, I know I have his attention)

John, we offer bespoke sales training that helps in getting new sales hires ramped up and performing sooner. I’m not saying your current onboarding is not effective, but if would just like to compare notes and see what we might be doing differently, I would be more than happy to share our process with you.

Would you be interested in learning more about our onboarding process?

(If John says 'Yes', I will then open up Calendly, and set up a time and date for a demo).

Keeping motivated can also be a challenge when it comes to cold calling so a couple of things you can do to stay motivated are:

**1) Block off a particular part of each day**

It is easy to become distracted or give in to procrastination when it comes to cold calling. A simple way to avoid this is to block off a particular part of each day for the sole reason of making cold calls. This way, come rain, hail, or shine, your task will be just to make calls during the allocated time.

**2) Do the math to get to No**

First figure out how many 'Nos' you must hear to get to 'Yes'. Then set Nos as a milestone.

So, if it takes on average 15 Nos to get a Yes and you are on call number 10 then you know on average a Yes is just around the corner.



## Section 6: Leave a Message?



When you are cold calling and you hear, "Sorry I can't come to the phone right now, please leave a message after the beep" do you leave a voicemail or not?

Some salespeople I know won't leave a message hoping that the person on the other end isn't actually screening their calls and will try their luck again by calling back at a more opportune time.

While others I know will simply leave a well-thought-out voicemail that is designed to give them the highest probability of getting a callback.

I don't want to sound cynical, but I think we've all been there, our phone buzzes with an incoming call. We reach over to pick it up, and we see it's a number we don't recognize.

So, we send it to voicemail. It's nothing personal; we just don't want to take the chance that it will be somebody selling us something or some other unexpected situation.

And it's for this reason; I believe going with option two and leaving a well-thought-out voicemail serves a better purpose overall.

Here are some elements of a well-thought-out voicemail:

### **Identify yourself**

Say who you are and the company you work for upfront. This will make you sound a lot more professional.

### **Say your contact information upfront and then say it again—slowly.**

After they hear your name and company, they may not care about the rest of your message because they can infer what it is about based on their situation.

### **Tell them the reason for your call and what you want**

Transparency is both respectful and professional.

**A reason to call you back**

This is the key to making this strategy work.

For example, curiosity is a powerful driver of behavior. When you have knowledge, insight, information, special pricing, new or improved products, or some sort of solution to a problem, you create a motivating force that compels your prospect to call you back.

Then finally, **repeat your name and say your phone number twice**

Let's hear a message in full:

Hi, Rick, this is Paul Ferguson from Selling Today. My phone number is 087 092 7269, that's 087 092 7269. I am calling because you downloaded our white paper on cold calling, and I want to learn more about your situation and what triggered you to seek out this information. I also have some additional resources on voice mail messages and phone prospecting that I believe will benefit you. Let's get together this week. Give me a call back at 087 092 7269, that's 087 092 7269."

## Section 7: Have a Gameplan for Gatekeepers



In the sales process, the gatekeeper is typically a receptionist or an executive assistant, or a designated person who is trained and responsible for keeping a prospect from being bothered by irrelevant callers and the reality is we are going to have to deal with them at least 50% of our phone prospecting time.

There is just no way to avoid them. Sure, there are hacks out there that we can try and use to get around them, like calling other extension numbers or going around their backs. But if we get caught, we'll end up looking foolish and blow any chances we have of doing business with this organization.

There are no secret techniques that will get you past gatekeepers. However, some strategies will give you an edge when dealing with gatekeepers, and I'm going to share a few of them with you:

### **Be likable**

Project a positive, cheerful, outgoing personality. Be polite and respectful. You are guaranteed to fail with gatekeepers if you are rude, pushy, and ill-mannered. Always leave them with a positive impression of you and your company

### **Use please twice**

For example, when a gatekeeper answers the phone, you might say,

"Hi, this is Paul Ferguson from Selling Today. Would you please connect me to Sean Kelly, please?"

### **Be transparent**

Tell the gatekeeper who you are, your full name, and the name of your company. Full disclosure makes you sound professional and worthy enough to pass through to the boss.

### **Try to connect**

Gatekeepers are people just like you. And like you, they like people who are interested in them. If you speak to a particular gatekeeper often, be sure to ask about how they are doing.

### **Hold the cheese**

Never use cheesy schemes or tricks. They'll harm your credibility, and you'll end up on the gatekeeper's do-not-talk-to list.

**Ask for help**

Sometimes an honest and authentic plea for help will get a gatekeeper on your side. Sprinkling in a little humor can also make a difference as well.

## Section 8: Stop Cold Calling Altogether



Although tips like ‘Asking for Help’ and ‘Being transparent’ will help you in getting a gatekeeper on your side, unfortunately, a lot of your calls answered by them will still end up as ‘leave your name and telephone and I will pass on your details to them’.

With this in mind, there are a couple of other strategies that you could use to get around the gatekeepers altogether, but for these to work they must become your standard procedure as you don’t ever want to be seen as going around a gatekeeper’s back, as this will end you up on a do-not-talk-to list.

### 1) Automated Phone Tree

Simply, try traversing the Gatekeeper altogether by using the Automated Phone Tree

For example, in a lot of organizations, only certain departments are watched over by gatekeepers so let’s just say you would like to speak to Tom Watson in and this department is notorious for gatekeeper coverage. What you could do is call the automated tree, select ‘accounts, and when they answered, ask to be put through to ‘Tom in HR’ or better still ask what his extension number is?

### 2) Call at off-hours

Another strategy would be to call early in the morning or late in the evening as chances are, the gatekeeper would be off duty and if the person you are looking to speak to is more senior it wouldn’t be uncommon for them to be working longer hours.

This means you should try calling before 8:00 am, during lunch hours, or after 5:00 pm.

I get asked all the time what my best advice would be when it comes to cold calling, and I always tell them **‘To stop cold calling altogether’**.

I know what you are thinking, what’s he talking about? I’m not really saying you should stop making prospecting calls, what I am saying is you should stop making those traditional cold calls.

Instead, before attempting any calls, try warming up your prospects beforehand through a **multitouch approach**. This means that by using other outbound methods like email and social media we could in advance create awareness about what we do. Making it more likely that the eventual call that we make, will be ultimately successful.

For example, you could start by connecting with potential clients on **LinkedIn**. But don't be that 'guy' who immediately messages a new connection with 'Hey, I'm so and so and this is what I do'. The best strategy when it comes to LinkedIn connections is to create familiarity and add value, through your posts.

At the same time, you should enter the prospect into an **email drip campaign**. A best practice with any email drip campaign is to make sure your message focuses on the pain you solve, the value you bring, and how you are different from everybody else.

LinkedIn 'InMail' can be another effective way of creating awareness through a multitouch approach. LinkedIn has a huge database of members that you can directly reach out to using their 'InMail' feature. To use 'InMail' you need a paid LinkedIn premium account, and keep in mind you only get a limited amount of '**InMails**' per month.

**Video messaging** is another great way to build familiarity and awareness because the prospect gets to both hear your voice and see your face as well. It's normally good practice to keep your email messaging short and sweet however the data shows that prospects will engage with video for longer periods of time, and this means video emails are also a great way to share more information and communicate more complex ideas with.

As it stands right now, many salespeople haven't caught on to the trend of using video emails but for sure this is going to change. So, before it becomes the norm and the originality starts to wear off, take advantage of the novelty aspect as well.

A well-crafted **Voicemail** is not only an effective calling card, but it can also be used as part of your multi-touch approach as well. The key with voicemail is when to use it because if you deploy it too soon it will be hard to justify why you are calling them back again.

Whatever your approach is, you must plan it out completely. It shouldn't be done randomly. It should be planned out, with lots of steps because prospects rarely don't respond to us because they don't want or need what we have to offer. In most cases, prospects are extremely busy and have a lot on their plate. So, in the end, it's all about getting the appropriate message in front of the right prospect at the right moment and that's why a multitouch approach works.

## Section 9: Helpful Practice Activities



Build your ideal sales scripts for Email, Phone, Voicemail, and Video messaging.

### 1) What does your ideal customer look like?

Size: Revenue, Employees, Sites

Type: Business, Consumer, Individual

Geography: Country, Region, Territory

Industries: Manufacturing, Energy, Retail

Department: Finance, Human Resources, Marketing

Title: CEO, CFO, VP, Director

### 2) Where do they hang out?

LinkedIn, Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, Tradeshows, etc.

### 3) What are the most effective ways to reach out to them?

Email, LinkedIn, Social, Phone, etc.

### 4) Develop your overall messaging:

To do this, create different messaging buckets which can then be used to build your ideal Email, Phone, Voicemail, and Video sales scripts.

- The first bucket you should try, and fill is with what pain you solve?

---

- Fill your next bucket with what value do you add?

- Finally, fill this bucket with how you are different from everybody else?
-

Use each specific bucket to complete the following templates:

**Pain Template**

Subject Line: [Pain Point]

Hello [Contact First Name],

The reason for this [email/phone call/video message] is that we help [Target Buyer Type] with the challenges of:

- Pain Point 1 • Pain Point 2 • Pain Point 3

I don't know if you are concerned about any of those areas and that is why I am reaching out.

Are you available for a brief 15 to 20-minute meeting where I can share some examples of how we have helped other [Target Buyer Type] to [Pain Point]?

Best Regards

**Value - Template**

Subject Line: [Value Point]

Hello [Contact First Name],

The reason for this [email/phone call/video message] is that we help [Target Buyer Type] to:

- [• Value Point 1 • Value Point 2 • Value Point 3]

I don't know if you want to improve those areas and that is why I am reaching out.

Are you available for a brief 15 to 20-minute meeting where I can share some examples of how we have helped other [Target Buyer Type] to [Value Point]?

Best Regards



**Different - Template**

Subject Line: [Product Name]

Hello [Contact First Name],

The reason for this [email/phone call/video message] is that we provide [Product Name] and this includes:

[• Feature 1 • Feature 2 • Feature 3]

Some ways we differ from other options out there are:

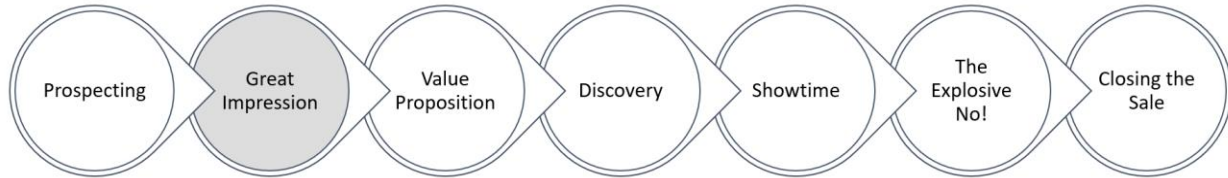
• Differentiation 1 • Differentiation 2 • Differentiation 3

I don't know if you want to improve those areas and that is why I am reaching out.

Are you available for a brief 15 to 20-minute meeting where I can share some examples of how we have helped other [Target Buyer Type] with [Product Name]?

Best Regards

## Chapter 2: Making a Great (First) Impression



### Section One: How to Become an Expert?

**Making a great impression** is arguably the most crucial step of the selling process. The purpose of this stage is to get people to like you, to trust you, and to want to listen to you.

Many other selling systems call this stage "Making a great **first** impression," but this could send a wrong message by making it sound like this is just something you do at the **start** of every sale.

You rock on up with your hand extended and a big smile on your face, and hey presto, you have them eating out of your hands. When in reality, making a great impression is something that needs to be maintained throughout the relationship with the client.

It's not just about being likable - it's about becoming a trusted business partner as well.

#### How do you make a great impression with a prospect?

Let's look at it from a buyer's perspective. Studies have shown that what buyers want from a salesperson are two things - **competence** and **character**.

#### What exactly is competence?

**Competence** is the ability to do something successfully or efficiently, and it makes perfect sense in the sales process, because if I am dealing with a salesperson, they should at least bring some expertise to the table.

#### How do you become an expert?

Unfortunately, depending on the industry you are in, building expertise could take many years - there is no get-rich-quick scheme.

However, there are ways to speed up the process. You could apply yourself and

- Study the history of your business.
- Identify experts inside and outside of your business and then interview them for their perspectives.

- Study your competitors.
- Learn about the outliers.

It's easy to learn about your business's everyday situations and processes, but you will truly become an expert when you take the time to learn about the outliers.

Over time, you will learn plenty of new information, so you need to have a process that will easily store and retrieve all this information. To do this, you could try "**Chunk**" memory. "Chunk" memory is what allows Grand Masters at chess to memorize up to 100,000 different moves.

"**Chunk**" memory helps you build a mental model of how your domain functions as a system. For example, you would break your industry into smaller bite-sized categories such as:

- Procedures,
- Departments,
- Product Knowledge,
- Competitors, etc.

These categories could have subcategories that you could drill down in your mind even further. The mental model you have formed would provide a framework to hang your ever-growing knowledge on.

Having a mental model helps you distinguish relevant information from irrelevant information. This method is no different than working in your inbox, where you decide which emails you should keep and file away and which ones you should delete.

One thing for sure is, that if you adopt this systematic approach, in time, your knowledge advantage over others will become significant.

You will become the go-to person within your organization.

## Section 2: How to Become a 4D Salesperson.



Defining **character** is more subjective than defining competence as "one person's wine could be another's poison."

For some of us, **character** could mean we want to work with a salesperson who is enthusiastic and friendly, while others may see this as off-putting, frivolous, or just being too forward.

In this section, we will look at something called the **DISC** – which will help us learn more about character and how to become a 4D Salesperson.

### What exactly is DISC?

**DISC** is an assessment test that provides insight into an individual's personality and behavioral characteristics – what makes us tick?

Many thousands of businesses and organizations use it to help with more effective teamwork, to improve working relationships, or to help salespeople better connect with their prospects.

**DISC** essentially shows us that there are four different personality styles –

- Dominant
- Influential
- Steady
- Conscientious

While everyone has some of each of the four styles, we usually identify ourselves more strongly with one particular style over another. I will cover each of the four personality styles, but I recommend that you discover what personality style you lean more towards before I do that.

To do this, go on Google, and search for "**Free DISC profile.**"

You will come to a questionnaire that will ask you to pick the adjectives that best apply to you. For example, in **gentle, kindly, original, inventive**, choose the most like you and the least like you. You will repeat this for at least twenty questions. Keep in mind, that there are no right or wrong answers, and you should go with your gut. When you have completed the test, you should have found the style you identify with most.

As I mentioned before, I'm going to cover each style and a great tip to help you learn and retain each style's characteristics is to imagine a person you know who most closely matches each personality style. This could be a boss, a co-worker, a friend, or a client of yours.

Let's start with the "D" in DISC, which stands for **Dominant**.

**Dominant** people are self-starters and thrive on both challenge and competition. They are usually direct, positive, and straightforward. They tell it as it is, sometimes bluntly. Dominant people like to be center stage and to be in charge. They'll fight hard for what they believe in, can also accept momentary defeat, and are not grudge-holders.

Does anybody you know matching these characteristics come to mind?

Let's move on to the "I" DISC, which stands for **Influential**.

**Influential** people are outgoing, persuasive, and gregarious. They strive to make their opinions and beliefs prevail. They are incredibly comfortable in "one-on-one" situations, and their outgoing nature typifies the image we have of the so-called "natural salesperson. They are easily met, name-dropping conversationalists who sell themselves well. They are friendly competitors and optimistic managers.

The "S" in DISC stands for **Steady**.

Steady people strive to keep things the way they are and dislike change. However, once underway, they work steadily and patiently. Most of the time, steady people are even-tempered, low-key, and unobtrusive. They are good at concealing their feelings from others and are apt to be long-term grudge-holders. They can be very possessive and develop strong attachments to their things, their families, and their department.

Just like before, does anybody you know with these characteristics come to mind?

Finally, the "C" in DISC for **Conscientious**.

**Conscientious** people are reserved, conservative, adaptable, open-minded, and diplomatic. They also like to proceed in an orderly way. Their methods are usually predetermined; they are precise and attentive to detail. Conscientious people strive for a neat, orderly existence and follow traditional procedures and established systems.

Because we each have our own personality style that we favor, there is a risk it could make us very one-dimensional regarding our selling style. For instance, if you have a "Dominant" style,

you'll probably be driven, straightforward, and say what you think type of salesperson. This is likely to be effective when dealing with other dominant-style individuals.

However, with a predominantly "Steady" style individual, they may find your "Dominant" approach to be blunt or too fast-paced.

Or maybe you lean more towards an "Influential" style; then, you'll probably focus on getting to know your prospect on a personal level. A prospect who also tends toward the "I" style may appreciate your enthusiasm and friendliness.

However, those who lean toward the "Conscientious" style might find it off-putting, frivolous, or just being too forward. However, if we can identify our prospects' predominant style, we can then adapt our approach to best suit their style. This would effectively make us a four-dimensional salesperson who could be "all things to all people."

There are essentially two things we need to learn to become a 4D Salesperson.

- 1) How to recognize the predominant personality style in our prospect, and
- 2) What exactly do we need to do to adjust our approach?

Let's start with the **Dominant**.

- **How would we recognize a dominant individual?**

**Dominant** people have a very firm handshake; they may not want to sit down and will almost prefer to stand up and hover over you. Because of their straightforward nature, they will want to get straight to the point and may come across as blunt and somewhat abrasive.

Dominant people can be impatient, and frustratingly, they won't give you much time to justify your value. But overall, you will probably get a clear sense that the person you are dealing with wants to be the boss.

- **How do we adjust our approach?**

- 1) Be direct and get straight to the point.
- 2) Be brief and speak up.
- 3) Avoid any long-winded presentations and refrain from repeating yourself.
- 4) Respect their views and requirements but don't be afraid to have a backbone.
- 5) Avoid focusing on them and stick to the facts at hand.
- 6) Dominant people are strongly influenced by other people they perceive as having high status or power, so when possible, use testimonials from well-known people in your industry.

And look at the **Influential**.

- **How would we recognize an Influential prospect?**

**Influential** prospects will generally come across as friendly, social, talkative, and extroverted. They are also not afraid of being the center of attention.

Recognition is a keyword for Influential people, and because of this, they tend to be sharp dressers and very brand orientated and you might see this in what they wear or the car they drive.

- **How do we adjust our approach?**

- 1) Allow them time to ask questions and talk.
- 2) Talk about their ideas and emotions, ask them what they are thinking and feeling.
- 3) Let them vocalize what is working and what is not.
- 4) Don't interrupt them.
- 5) Focus on the positives.
- 6) Avoid overloading them with details. Influential people are not usually good with details, and there is a danger if you introduce too much that you could take everything off on a tangent.

And move on to the **Steady**.

- **How would we recognize a Steady prospect?**

Steady people may come across as somewhat reserved, non-emotional; they tend to have a "poker" face, making them hard to read.

Also, they might make it clear from the get-go that they are just looking. Overall, you will get a clear sense that the person you are dealing with does not want to be rushed.

- **How do we adjust our approach?**

- 1) Be polite, personal, agreeable, and take time to provide any clarification requested.
- 2) Avoid being confrontational or too aggressive.
- 3) A keyword for the Steady is "appreciation", so make them feel appreciated, show them you're interested in who they are as a person and don't let your sales pitch feel too "transactional."
- 4) Also, make it clear from the get-go that you value the relationship above all else.
- 5) Finally, try and avoid using any "Impending Doom" closing techniques.

And finally, the **Conscientious**.

- **How would you recognize a Conscientious prospect?**

Conscientious prospects tend to come across as neat, tidy and organized. They are also open-minded and diplomatic. They might even ask you, "Why should I buy off you as opposed to somebody else?"

Even though they are knowledgeable and well-researched, they will ask you lots of questions to compare and test your subject knowledge. Salespeople who don't measure up will rarely get the sale.

- **How do we adjust our approach?**

- 1) Allow time to get to know each other better so you can avoid any misunderstandings.
- 2) Be patient and diplomatic.
- 3) Make sure you give them as much information as possible.
- 4) Focus on facts and details. Where a "Dominant" personality style only wanted the bullet points, a "Conscientious" person will crave the detail and want to know all the reasons why?
- 5) Give them the information from your verbal pitch in writing.
- 6) Knowing they can review all the documents later and make an informed decision puts Conscientious people at ease.

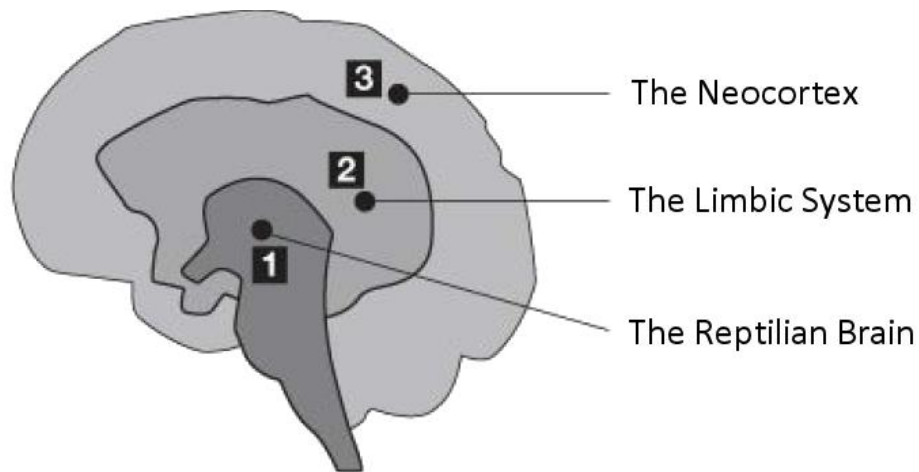


## Section 3: Competence + Character = Trust

In the previous sections, we learned about **Competence** and **Character**, and how when you add these two together, you create trust.

Trust is the most potent weapon in any salesperson's arsenal, and that's because **people are influenced to change by people that they trust**.

**Trust** can be hard to find at the beginning of any business relationship, so where exactly is "Trust" hiding? Of course, it has to be here somewhere! Let's look inside our brain.



The human brain has three distinctive sections:

- the reptilian brain,
- the limbic system,
- the neocortex.

Let's start with the **reptilian brain**, which evolved around 600 million years ago when the first reptiles crawled onto the land. It is connected straight to our central nervous system, and it's responsible for all our unconscious functions –breathing, digestion, heart rate.

It is also a cognitive miser; whose job is to save energy by acting as a filter. So, if it's not dangerous, it is told to ignore it. If it's not new and exciting, ignore it as well. If it is new, summarize it as quickly as possible—and forget about the details.

It also only likes to react when something is fast, novel, visual, concrete, high contrast.

For example, publicists will take full advantage of this with advertisements specifically designed to get the reptilian brain's attention. Just look at any publication; you'll see many examples of "visual" or "high contrast" advertising. But one advertising concept most of us are familiar with is "Sex Sells," which is also a reactive part of the reptilian brain.

The next significant section of our brain is the **limbic system**, which first appeared in mammals around 60 million years ago. This part of the brain is involved in our behavioral and emotional responses, especially regarding behaviors we need for survival: feeding, reproduction, and caring for our young.

A reptile's strategy is to lay as many eggs as possible and hope for the best. A mammal will have fewer offspring, but it will care for its young, hoping that its offspring will have a bigger chance of making it to maturity.

Finally, we'll move to the **neocortex**, which is the part of the mammalian brain involved in higher-order brain functions such as hearing, smell, and sight. It has two parts: a left and right hemisphere.

The **left hemisphere** is the more logical side of our brain, and it is linked to **competence**. It controls speech, comprehension, arithmetic, and writing. It also craves information and is constantly seeking it.

On the other hand, the **right hemisphere** is the emotional side and is linked to **character**. It is responsible for creativity, spatial ability, artistic, and musical skill. It is also part of the brain responsible for trust and decision-making and it does this based on intuition, emotion, and experiences.

Using what we have learned so far about competence and character will help us with some of the criteria that the right brain uses to build trust and make decisions. But we need to do a little more if we really want to earn our prospect's trust and properly connect with the right hemisphere part of the brain.

To do that, let's revisit our reptilian brain which as I mentioned before, is a cognitive miser - and it is pre-programed to be indifferent or to ignore.

It has a basic operating instruction - do not send anything up to the neocortex for problem-solving unless you have an unexpected and out-of-the-ordinary situation. When we first meet somebody, we need to send the right signals to get ourselves classed as something out of the ordinary.

How do we do that?

We start with a smile, and we make sure you smile with your eyes as well. We need to use plenty of eye contact, a "no weapons" hand gestures, and make sure you are descriptive with your hands as well.

Essentially, look at me. I'm something interesting. Hopefully, the reptilian brain has a conversation with the neocortex to say I have something interesting for you. When this happens, we have an opportunity to start connecting with the right-hemisphere part of the brain.

## Section 4: Seven Skills that will Help you Connect



I'm now going to cover some tried and trusted right-brain techniques to help you better connect with your prospect.

Some of these techniques you may already know, while others may be new to you. Regardless, I recommend that you practice each one and consistently use them with everybody you meet. Eventually, they will become second nature to you.

### **Comfortable Conversation**

Of course, this is the art of making small talk, and for some salespeople, talking about the weather or other rather mundane things can be tricky to do.

So, a great way to get into comfortable conversation is by asking questions about your prospect because we all know our favorite subject is "me."

### **Common Ground**

As they say, "birds of a feather flock together," and in most sales situations, a prospect will put an invisible barrier between themselves and the salesperson. Learning something about the prospect that you both have in common will help lower this barrier and make sure you connect better with them. This could be as simple as learning that both of you are parents, you both support the same football team, or are interested in the same hobbies.

The more common ground, the lower the barrier, and the greater you will connect.

### **Empathy**

Being able to put yourself in another person's shoes without getting emotionally involved. For example, you sell cars for a living, and you have a client who has five children and needs seven passenger seating. In addition to this, they also need it to be affordable because supporting a family of 7 is not cheap. You may not have five children yourself, but you can empathize with your client as to why an affordable seven-passenger seating vehicle is essential to them.

By being empathetic with your prospect, you are guaranteed to get better results for both you and your prospect.

### **Humor**

Like making small talk, not everybody is good at humor, but if you have it, it is a great way to break the ice and provide comedic relief when you first meet somebody.

### **Strategic mimicry**

Also known as mirroring, human beings are natural mimickers, and without realizing it, we often mirror back other people's body language, accents and speech patterns, and facial expressions.

We do this at an unconscious level because we have **Mirror Neurons** working inside our brains, whose primary job is to help us fit into our environment. Human beings are social animals, and it is essential for our health and well-being that we fit in and are accepted by other people. To do this, we will unconsciously mimic those around us, just like "monkey sees, monkey does."

Not everyone is comfortable with the thought of mirroring but given time, in any social situation, it will happen naturally. However, it is essential that if you do it, make sure you mimic subtly so the other person doesn't notice what you are doing; otherwise, this technique could ultimately backfire.

Another way of mimicking your prospect is by mirroring your prospect's predominant style as well.

For example, if you are dealing with a "Dominant" personality type, we know their tone is usually loud, fast-paced, and has very domineering body language.

So, if you want to mirror a "High D" prospect, then you are going to have to talk a little faster and louder, be more direct, stand up a straighter, and even puff your chest out.

When mirroring an "Influential" style, your tone should be fun and outgoing; your pace needs to be fast and exciting, while your body language should be expressive with plenty of hand movements.

If you are dealing with a "Steady" style, your tone will be a little softer and more relaxed, your pace will be slower, while your body language should be friendly and relaxed.

Finally, when mirroring a "Conscientious" style, your tone needs to be informative but neither loud nor soft, your pace needs to show patience, and it's OK to take your time. Finally, your body language should be focused on your prospect by looking them in the eye and listening intently.

## **Transparency**

Top salespeople understand there will be an instinctive mistrust on the part of the buyer, and they are prepared to take full responsibility for this by backing up all the claims they make with some sort of proof in writing.

Here are a few tips that will help you put your client's mind at ease and create better transparency.

The first one is to create a binder or a tablet to back up all the claims you make during your presentations. Instead of introducing these only when challenged, you should incorporate them as part of any presentation that you make.

- Never negotiate with words - write your negotiations down on paper.
- Never ask for the close with words - use your offer.
- Never make verbal promises - put all your assurances in writing.

When face to face with a prospect, make sure you turn your monitor around so your prospect can see your screen and what you are working on.

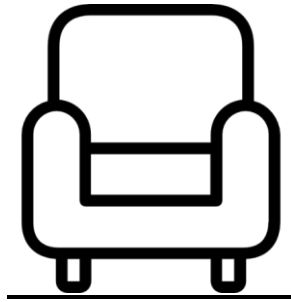
## **Tonality**

Put your customer hat on for a moment and imagine how you would feel dealing with a salesperson who sounded bored, irritated, or disinterested when you needed their help? They could be saying all the right things, but if their voice suggests otherwise, you won't be sold on them and what they're offering.

For example, actors will spend many years perfecting tonality and will learn skills like dialogue delivery, projection, articulation, and phrasing. All of which are essential to communicate the spoken word to their audience effectively.

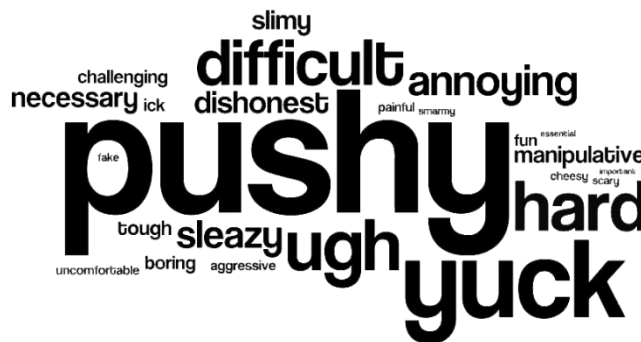
Mastering your tone is an integral part of connecting with others, and once you learn how to control it, you're going to be well underway at making great connections with your clients and prospects.

## Section 5: Sell in the Seat



Whether we like it or not there is always going to be a natural mistrust from the buyer, and that's because we have a vested interest in selling them something.

When surveyed, **Pushy, Dishonest, Sleazy, Slimy,** and **Difficult** are just some of the adjectives that are used to describe salespeople. Let's face it, most people have a fear of being taken advantage of and so from the second we first meet the prospect the chances are we going to be up against it.



My sales career started in automotive and as you can imagine there is not a lot of trust afforded to people who sell cars for a living. It can be a bit of an uphill battle from the moment, they meet you.

One of the things that I learned in automotive was to **'sell in the seat and not on your feet'**.

It's okay to meet and greet on your feet, in fact, walkarounds make your words more entertaining and help capture your prospect's attention but once you get the prospect seated it tells them that it's time to begin the business end of the process.

To do this I was taught how to make a **'favourable approach'** and this would normally involve using comfortable conversation, finding common ground, and asking plenty of open-ended

questions. Then once I felt a certain level of rapport was being achieved, I would invite them into my office.

Although building rapport is massively important, and it definitely helped me with getting a customer comfortable and into my office, but I knew I needed a lot more, if I ever wanted to become a trusted business partner as well. This is where **'Competence and Character'** plays a big role, because ultimately this is what from us. They want expertise, they want somebody who can help them achieve their goals and make the whole process as painless as possible.

As I mentioned beforehand there is no quick fix to becoming an expert, just processes that will help you get there sooner rather than later, like learning about the outliers and using chunk memory to build a mental model of how your domain functions as a system.

I remember when I was a salesperson and at the top of my game, on the odd occasion, I would lose a sale to another salesperson and my reaction wasn't to feel betrayed by the customer or feel sorry for myself for losing out on a commission. My reaction was in fact to feel sorry for that customer.

Sorry that they wouldn't get to deal with me, avail of my expertise, and no matter what might crop up have somebody who has the knowledge and experience to make the whole process as painless as possible.

They weren't just buying a product or a service; they were getting the Paul Ferguson experience as well. This was the confidence I had in my ability, and this came across loud and clear to most people that I dealt with. As we've seen learning how to become a 4D salesperson requires an understanding of the 4 different personality types and most importantly the flexibility to adjust your approach. This has served me well over the years as I remember I use to get aggravated and annoyed when dealing with a **'dominant'** personality type.

With their bossy nature and never giving you a chance to chance to justify your value.

Or taking it personally when an **'Influential'** customer goes from being your best friend one minute to your worst enemy the next minute and all because of an unforeseen delay or setback that was outside of your control.

Becoming a 4D Salesperson not only taught me how to be **flexible and collaborate** with others but mainly that nobody's perfect and we all come with our pluses and minuses.

As top salespeople, it is our job to deliver the level of service that our customers' needs and if this means we have to be all things to all people, then so be it.

Sales is not about trying to make a quick buck it's about collaboration, building trust, and forming meaningful relationships with others.

And if you do this, you will become a trusted business partner and an influence for change.

## Section 6: Helpful Practice Activities



### Becoming an Expert

An exercise that will help you gain expertise is to understand how your domain functions as a system.

- 1) Map out all departments within your organization
- 2) What function do they perform?
- 3) Find a mentor in each department who will give you valuable insight.

Department	Function	Mentor
Customer Service		
Marketing		
Accounting		
Shipping		

### Understanding Yourself and Others

Take a free DISC Test and find out which personality style you lean more towards.

<https://www.123test.com/disc-personality-test/>

Who do you know that most closely matches each personality style?

- Dominant \_\_\_\_\_
- Influential \_\_\_\_\_
- Steady \_\_\_\_\_
- Conscientious \_\_\_\_\_

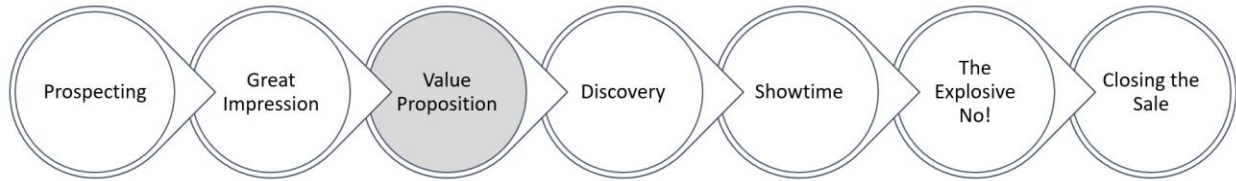


### **Connecting with Others**

Practice connecting better with others by using each of the techniques below.

- Common Ground
- Empathy
- Comfortable Conversation
- Humor
- Strategic mimicry

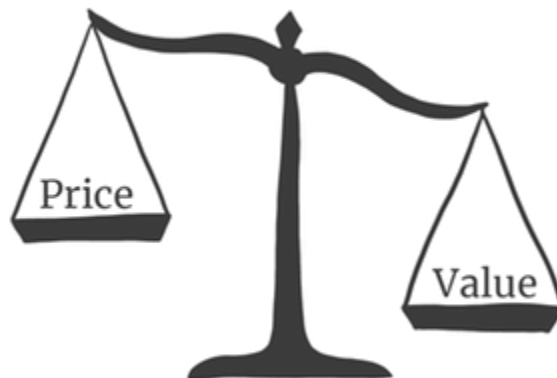
## Chapter 3: Value Proposition



### Section 1: "In the absence of value, price becomes the issue."

Welcome to "Value Proposition," the third step in this selling process. There is a golden rule in sales that states, "in the absence of value, price becomes the issue" so if your client doesn't see the value in you or your proposal, you will always get beaten up on price.

The purpose of this step is to build as much value as possible so you can tip the scale in your favor.



If a prospect asked you, "why should I buy off you instead of one of your competitors?" - how would you answer this?

We have great customer service.

We have been around for a long time.

We have a fair price, and hey, you get me in the bargain.

There are essentially two things wrong with this scenario, firstly, these answers are lame, and from a prospect's perspective, it's a real "so what" moment, and secondly, the prospect had to ask the question in the first instance.

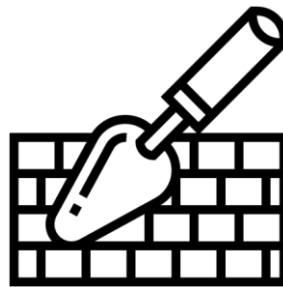
In real life, you can count your lucky stars when this happens because most prospects think it but never actually articulate it.

To be effective with your value proposition story, you must raise it yourself, and of course, it should genuinely resonate with your prospect. It is not easy to make it resonate - otherwise, everybody would be doing it. One thing that I have learned over the years is that what **we** believe is important to a buyer is never the same as what **they** think.

For example, when salespeople are surveyed, they believe price to be the most important factor for buyers. However, when buyers are surveyed, price is a factor, but not the main one. Buyers said they valued, fairness, solid information, flexibility, creativity, options, and trust above cost.

If you take time to peel back that onion, this is remarkably similar to what buyers wanted from salespeople –competence, character, and trust. Don't get me wrong - price might be important to get you on the shortlist or a seat at the table, but having the lowest price is not a be-all and end-all when your client understands your real value.

## Section 2: How to Build as Much Value as Possible



So, how do you build as much value as possible? You can start with how your products or services solves your prospect's problems. How it delivers all the specified benefits - you could emphasize why they should buy from you and not your rivals.

It would help if you could make your value proposition clear and easy to comprehend, and after you have established your value, you need to be able to defend it as well. Most importantly, when possible, try and use some of those factors that we know buyers value - fairness, solid information, flexibility, creativity, options, and trust.

Finally, make sure your value proposition is in written form because as we all know, " people believe what they see and not what they hear."

Another use of a value proposition is to handle any potential objections as well. I recently worked with an eCommerce software company whose salespeople struggled to close a sufficient number of their sales demos.

The managing director thought they had a closing problem and asked me for my help. After some studying and listening, it became clear that most prospects did not see the value in what they were being sold. All too often, prospects would say, "I need to think about it," and that would be the end of that.

Another thing to consider is that they were a relatively small player in the marketplace. Although they had a good solution at a fair price, there were two other better-known competitors in that marketplace.

It was not their closing ability that let them down - I felt they needed a value proposition story centered on how they differed from the two other major players in the marketplace. A story that said we are different from Company X and Y because we do business this way. Using what we learned from what buyers valued most over cost, we created a value proposition story with an "us against them mentality."

Then we went to implement this new step as part of the salespeople's demo –

"Before I give you a price on this, let me tell you how we are different from everybody else."  
There was, at first, some resistance from the salespeople. Some felt it was very scripted selling, while others didn't like the idea of making their prospects aware that there are other competitors out there.

It is entirely naive to believe your prospects aren't shopping around so they can get the best deal possible, and just because they don't mention it doesn't mean they are not checking out other options.

By taking the initiative and giving credit to your prospect's intelligence, you can openly engage them about all aspects of their buying process.

We launched the new approach, the salespeople got used to the new step, and before long, we started to see fewer prospects telling us that they "needed to think about it." After using the value proposition story, prospects saw the value and didn't feel the need to continue shopping around, which led to closing more business.

To this day, their value proposition story continues to be refined, but one thing that remains the same is that the salespeople love using this approach because now they see the value in it.

## Section 3: How Much?



If you put cold calling activities to the side, the Value Proposition step is really our first opportunity to engage with the prospect and if the goal is to become a trusted business partner, then this is where it all begins.

What the Value Proposition step provides is a platform to **showcase our value**, show how we are different from everybody else, and it also help us with lowering that invisible barrier that is between the client and us. To do all of this effectively you really need a Value Proposition story that truly resonates with the client. If it doesn't, the delivery of it will feel rehearsed and scripted and it just won't have the desired effect. This will then discourage you from using it, and in the end, you'll find yourself skipping this step altogether.

As I mentioned before, what we think is important to the client is rarely what they feel is important. To develop a good Value Proposition story, try putting yourself in your client's shoes and imagine what it is like to be them. Seeing it from their perspective might give you the insight that you need to craft a better value story. In the next section Helpful Practice Activities, I will share an exercise that will help you build the foundations for a good value proposition story.

You'll often find a prospect will ask you **"How much?"** or "How much is this going to cost?" first before you even had a chance to justify the value. The reason for this, is they just don't know what else to ask. The problem is if we giveaway the price before we've had a chance to justify the value, then we might as well kiss the sale goodbye because the prospect won't need us anymore. To sidestep this and put yourself in a position to explain your value, you should simply say: **'Before I give you a price on this let me tell you about our program'** or 'Before we talk specifics let me tell you how we are different from everybody else'.

Now, virtually every prospect you speak to has sales objections or reasons they're hesitant to buy your product, because if they didn't have reservations about your solution's price, value, relevance to their situation, or their purchasing ability, they would have already bought it.

Another great thing about the Value Proposition step is you can use it to put yourself in a position to pre-empt common objections that might be raised, because as we say in sales, **‘the best way to overcome an objection is to raise it yourself.’**

I’m going to share with you a good example from when I was in automotive of how we overcame objections by raising them ourselves.

Most consumer report magazines will advise you not to do your financing through the dealer as you will end up paying more in interest comparing to financing through your hometown bank. Based on this it was quite common that a customer would decline the finance application and opt to take the paperwork home so they could make the application to their bank themselves.

The consequence of this was only 66% of these customers would be turned into orders. Compared to a 90% order rate when the customer enabled us to do the credit application for them. For us, getting the finance application completed was not about finding ways to charge the customer more interest, It was really about getting the customer financed approved and remaining in control of the deal. So, as part of our value proposition story, we would cover this during how we were different from your typical stateside dealer.

First, we would talk about the ‘No-Haggle Pricing’, ‘then the Flat Commission’ structure, and then finally we cover our special ‘Finance Assistance’ program where we would help find the best deal possible on financing by applying for credit through various sources, and whoever gave you the best terms should be the one you go with.

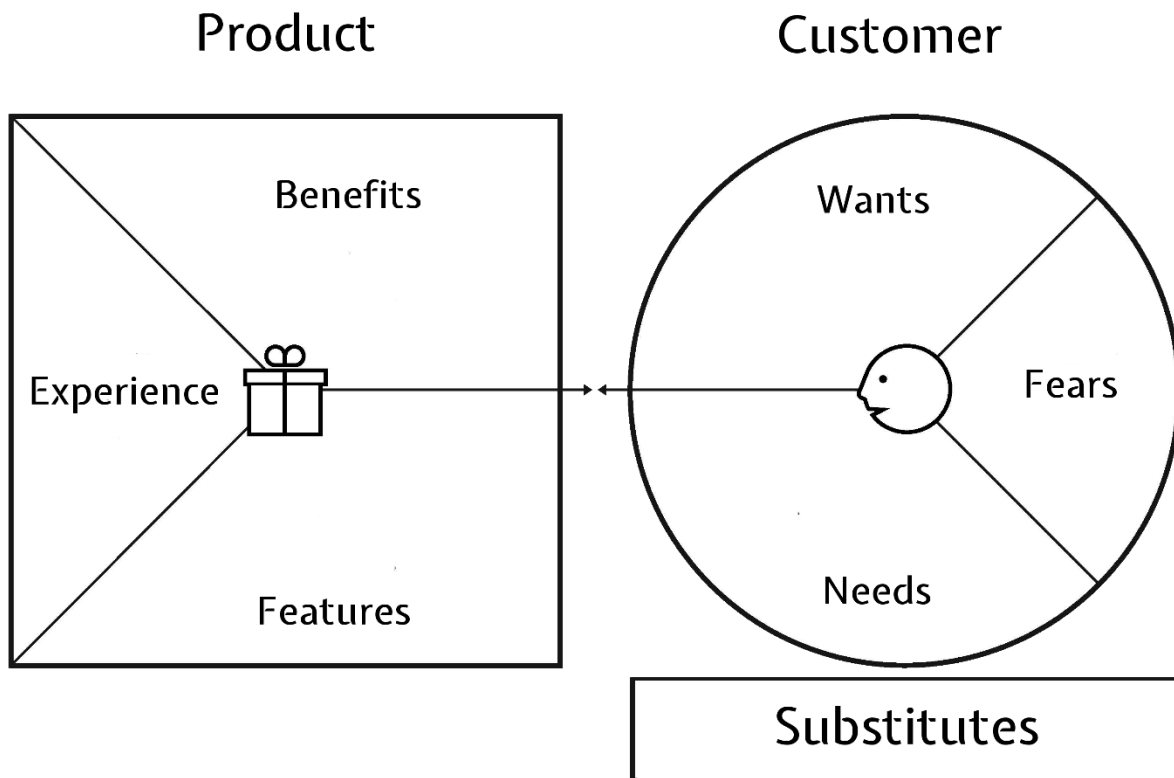
By making it part of our value proposition story the customer understood upfront the purpose behind doing the finance application and were far less likely to object it when it came time to do the obligatory paperwork. Another way to think about it is like any good murder mystery story, where the clues are subtly woven into the plot, and then when the killer is finally revealed it all makes perfect sense.

## Section 4: Helpful Practice Activities



### Value Proposition Canvas

A Value Proposition Canvas will help you create an effective value proposition story by looking at it from the customer's perspective.

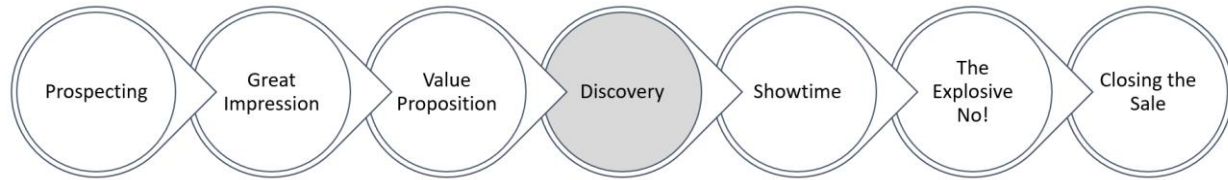


- **Features** – How does your product work?
- **Benefits** – What does your product do?



- **Experience** - What does it feel like to use your product?
- **Wants** - What are the emotional drivers of purchasing?
- **Needs** - What are the rational drivers of purchasing?
- **Fears** - What are the risks to switching to your product?
- **Substitutes** - What do people currently do instead?

## Chapter 4: Discovery



### Section 1: Let's go on a Discovery Together.

Welcome to **discovery**, which is the fourth step of this selling process. Discovery is the process we go through to determine whether we have a solution that will resolve our prospect's issues, difficulties, or goals. This is the foundation of the sale, and what we learn here will show us what our best strategy will be going forward.

When I started in sales, my trainer would sit down with me and review any of the leads I took. He wasn't just checking to see if each lead card was filled out correctly, with names, phone numbers, etc. - what he wanted to know was what the prospect needed and what we could do to provide this.

He had taught me a process of asking a particular series of questions, and the answers to these questions would help determine what the best course of action would be. No different from how a doctor diagnoses a patient. This was one of those lightbulb moments for me.

Sales was not about me trying to sell my goods or services; it was really about listening to my prospect, finding out what they needed and wanted, and then showing them something that most closely matched this. Essentially, it was about letting the customer buy.

As time went on, I became an excellent salesperson, and I was often asked what the strongest part of my game was. Was it my closing, was it my follow-up, or even my prospecting? And the answers I always gave were my ability to discover what my prospect needed and wanted and then using this information as a blueprint for the sale.

Don't get me wrong, some prospects know what they want, and I'm more than happy to take care of them. However, there are plenty of prospects out there, who don't know what they are looking for, and if you have a process that will take them by hand and lead them to it, you are halfway home towards making the sale.

Here are the five categories that I learned to successfully uncover my prospect's buying criteria.

1. The first category was **needs**, and if you can't satisfy your prospect's needs, this generally is a "deal-breaker." For example, if you sold real estate for a living and your client had a family of five, then they will probably need a house with a minimum of four bedrooms. Another excellent example of a need is if one of the family members works

from home and needs a good internet connection, and without this, they can't continue to work from home. Whatever your prospect's needs are, they must be satisfied. Treat them as redlines, don't try and fit a square peg in a round hole. You'll save yourself time and energy, and your prospects won't lose faith in you either.

2. The second category is to find out about is their **wants**. Wants are the "Nice to haves" and could motivate a prospect to buy. For example, the same real estate prospect needs a minimum of four bedrooms but would like a fifth bedroom with an ensuite bathroom for when guests stay over. Having this option could cause them to buy; however, if this meant they went over their budget, they may just take it off their list.
3. The third category is **authority**, and what you are trying to figure out is, are you dealing with a decision-maker? There is nothing more frustrating than spending a lot of your time and energy with a prospect, only to find out they aren't the decision-maker. Once you determine who the decision-maker is, then you can plan accordingly.
4. The fourth category is **cash**, and this essentially means what does your prospect ideally want to pay? This could be a cash price, a monthly payment, or some sort of special terms. There are a couple of things to keep in mind when it comes to cash.  
A prospect can become flexible with their budget if they see the value in your offer.
  - So, unless you know otherwise like this is their maximum loan approval amount, then you should only use their given budget as a guide.
  - Sometimes, prospects will give you an unrealistically low budget number because they believe if they give a higher one, you'll try and take advantage of this.
5. Finally, the fifth category is **DBM**, which stands for **dominant buying motive**; this is defined as the singular most reason that will cause a prospect to buy. It's hard to ascertain this, but if you keep your ears open, you might figure it out. It could be as simple as instant gratification or just having precisely what they want in stock. But whatever it is, it can be extremely powerful at getting a deal over the line.

## Section 2: It's Question Time



The exact questions you need to ask in each category will vary depending on the actual product and service you offer - however, we will cover some generic ones you could use.

But before we do this, I mentioned earlier that there are a few bridges in this selling system that I recommend learning verbatim. Bridges allow us to move from one part of the sale to another. The first bridge we will use enables us to ease into asking discovery questions smoothly. The last thing we want is to antagonize our prospects because we started to ask them a bunch of questions out of the blue.

"My purpose at this time is to help you find the best X possible, so if you don't mind, I am going to ask you some questions that will help me do this."

Now that we have crossed the bridge, we can start asking those **needs** questions.

### Needs

- What is that you need X to do?
- What are the most important things you need X to do?
- What is it that you like and dislike about your current X?

There are many different needs questions, and as long as they help you find your prospect's red line, they will serve you well.

Here are some questions that will help you find your prospect's **wants**.

### Wants

- What would you want from your next new X?
- On a scale of 1 –10, how do you rate your current solution? What would it take to get you to a 10?

- What are your desired outcomes?

Finding out what your prospect wants and what their "nice to haves" are could motivate your client to buy.

Let's look at a good **authority** question.

### **Authority**

Is there anybody or anything else involved in your decision-making?

"Anybody" could be a friend, business partner, trusted advisor, etc., while "anything " could be the sale of a property, an inheritance, or even an end-of-year bonus.

When it comes to authority, not everything is straightforward as the person's loved one.

Now we'll move on to some **cash** questions.

### **Cash**

- What do you want to spend?
- How much down payment, if any, are you intending to invest in your new X?
- What is your monthly payment range?
- What is the maximum you would pay to get what you want?
- What terms do you need?

Then finally, here is a question that will help you determine your prospect's **dominant buying motive**.

### **DBM**

- If you did purchase X, what do you see yourself doing with it six months from now?

Apart from trying to uncover your prospect's buying criteria, one other thing you should try and learn about your prospect is, are they sufficiently disturbed? There is an old adage in selling – "Emotion creates motion" –in other words, where there is an underlying emotion, people will move.

There is a book called **SPIN Selling by Neil Rackham**, and he talks about how you can use so-called "Implication Questions" as part of your discovery process. He believes that if your

product or service solves a problem for your prospect, then using implication questions should create a sense of urgency.

For example, you could also ask.

- Does your current problem ever prevent you from hitting your goals?
- How is this issue impacting your team members?

Now that we have asked all our discovery questions, there is only one thing left to do: **a recap.**

A recap will enable us to double-check all the discovery criteria that have we just learned and allow for additional input from the prospect as well.

"If I understand you correctly, you are looking for (list all the important criteria you learned) is that correct?"

Prospect says, "yes, that's correct", OR "actually, I need this as well".

## Section 3: Mastering Discovery



Now I am going to give you some extra hints and tips that will help you become a **master at discovery**.

Let's have a bit of fun before and start with the capital "E" test. What I need you to do, is draw a capital E on your forehead. Simply use your finger and draw a capital E. Now that you have done this, how did you draw it? Did you draw the E, facing you or facing away from you?

If you drew your capital E facing away from you, effectively making it legible from somebody else's viewpoint, then congratulations. In that case, you are particularly good at attuning yourself to somebody's else point of view.

However, suppose you drew a self-orientated capital E, one that is only legible to you. In that case, unfortunately, you are less able to attune yourself properly to other people's points of view.

Being able to attune yourself to your prospects properly will help you succeed when it comes to discovery.

The next tip I have for you is to **be present**. What is meant by this - it is very easy, especially when you're doing the job for a while, that you get into the bad habit of just firing off your questions to your prospect because guess what? We want to get the answers to move it to the next stage of the selling process, but if you're truly present and truly listening to your prospect, two magical things will happen.

First, your prospect will tell you exactly what they need, which means **you will learn exactly what it will take to sell to them**.

The second thing that will happen is we're going to send a strong message to our prospects that **this relationship is more about them rather than us**.

To become good at listening is a skill set, so I have another tip for you, and it's called **take five**. So, the next time your prospect is speaking, give it five seconds before you answer or interject. This will not only give you enough time to properly mull over what they just said and ensure the correct response, but it will also make sure your prospect has truly finished speaking.

Too often the case is, we think we've heard it before, and we're ready to jump in there and respond to it. However, when we do this, we run the risk of taking everything off on a tangent as our prospect may not have finished talking, and had we given them that five seconds they may answer the question themselves, or they could switch gears and move onto something else.

I'm sure we've all heard the person who speaks next loses, which can apply here.

The final part tip I have for you relates to **how we structure some of our discovery questions**. An excellent way to get the information you need is to ask some of your questions with the word **IF** in front of it. For example, you could ask.

**IF** you were looking for a new vehicle, what type of time frame are you looking at?

OR

**IF** you were looking for a sofa, would you prefer leather or fabric?

By asking questions with the word if in front of the question, subtly tells the prospect that you're not assuming they are buying right now; however, it's OK to give the information so we can move this in the right direction.



## Section 4: The Promised Land



In 'Discovery,' we're introduced to the first bridge of this selling process and as I mentioned, bridges allow us to move smoothly from one part of the sale to another, and in this case, we are giving the prospect the rationale behind the line of questioning that is about to come.

**Bridge 1** -"My purpose at this time is to help you find the best X possible, so if you don't mind, I am going to ask you some questions that will help me do this."

The last thing you want to do is to suddenly antagonize the prospect because you started asking them a bunch of questions out of the blue. You want them to understand from the get-go, that by answering these questions will help them find exactly what they are looking for.

I have always found that getting new salespeople to use the 'Bridges' verbatim, can be a bit of a challenge as most of us don't like the idea of scripted selling and being told exactly what to say and do.

In total, you are going to be introduced to 7 'Bridges' in this selling system and as you'll see, the use and rationale behind each one is sound.

Now if you feel that any of the 'Bridges' feel scripted or don't exactly fit with how you would normally say things. My advice is simple, use them verbatim in your next 20 sales presentations and if you are still uncomfortable after this, then change as necessary. The chances are, after using them 20 times, not only will you see how effective they are with a prospect, but they will be rolling off your tongue as well.

If you look at the **history of sales**, for the longest time it has been pretty much product focused. For example, when the Ford Motor Company started making their first mass-produced vehicle it only came in one model, one color, and did so for twenty-plus years. As a salesperson, your job would have been to just present the product and the benefits that came with it.

Simply put, here are the features and these are benefits to it. Then over the years, product/service offerings have become more and more complex as marketers try to appeal to niche buyers. So, trying to sell using some sort of feature & benefits process is not going to be effective anymore.

What was needed was a selling system that would help navigate the customer through a dizzying array of options so we could help find the right product/service for them.

So, in 1969, the biggest leap in sales methodology was made with the introduction of the 'Need Satisfaction' model. This essentially was about finding out what the prospect needed and then showing them the product/service that was closest to this.

The framework I used to uncover a prospect's buying criteria was **Needs, Wants, Authority, Cash, and DBM**.

However, other frameworks can be used to qualify a prospect like CHAMP which prioritizes their challenges first while BANT goes straight into monetary constraints.

Lots of people I know get hung up on this, and you could debate all day long which is the most effective, but the most important thing is to have a system that helps you find what the prospect needs and wants, so you are halfway home towards making the sale.

The key to making 'Discovery' work is knowing the right questions you have to ask so you can effectively uncover your prospect's buying criteria.

When I was in automotive, we were trained to ask a series of '**sliding scale**' questions that would quickly help us narrow down to the vehicle that was best suited to the customer.

For example, my first 'sliding scale' question would be:

"Are you looking for a Car, SUV, or Truck?"

(Answer: SUV)

Then I would ask, "Do you need 2WD OR 4WD?"

(Answer: 4WD)

"Do you need 5 passenger or 7 passenger seating?"

(Answer: 7 passenger seating)

"What ideally would be the price range or a preferred monthly budget?" (Answer: \$500 per month)

So, after only a few 'sliding scale' questions I have able to narrow down to a type of vehicle that was best suited to them.

Basically, a 4WD SUV with 7 passenger seating which ideally shouldn't cost more than \$500 per month.

The key to discovery is about knowing the right questions that will lead your prospect to the promised land.

## Section 5: Helpful Practice Activities



### Discovery Questions

Make a list of your 'discovery' questions that will help you uncover your customer's buying criteria.

Needs

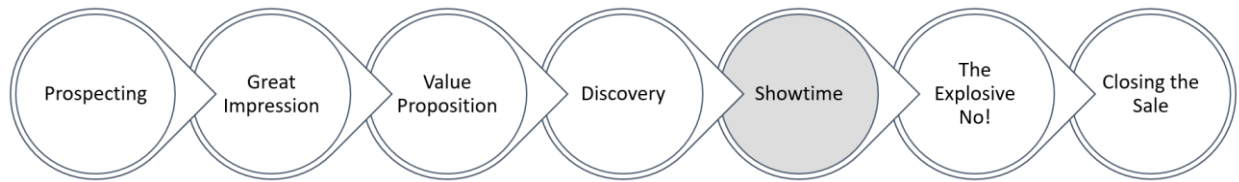
Wants

Authority

Cash

DBM

## Chapter 5: Showtime



### Section 1: Matching your Prospect's Criteria.

Welcome to **showtime**, the fifth step of this selling process. Showtime is where we match what we have learned in **discovery** to the product or service that best suits our prospect.

In the last module, we used a **bridge after we asked all our discovery questions**. "If I understand you correctly, you are looking for (list all the important criteria you learned) is that correct?" Prospect says, yes, that's correct or adds additional input to it.

Then you'll use another bridge to bring you into **showtime**.

"Based on what you are telling me, I believe I have the right product/service for you. The product/service I have in mind is X."

And it is from this point that you show how the product/service matches your prospect's criteria.

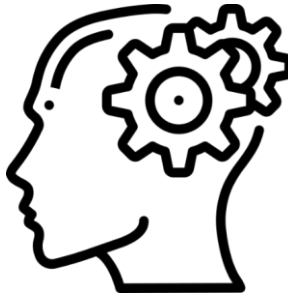
It has everything you need, everything you want, it's the price you want to pay, etc.

When you're done showing how the product/service you had in mind matches all the prospect's criteria, it is almost a logical conclusion that your prospect should buy it off you. However, logic doesn't usually win out as this is a left-brain activity. Let's cast our minds back to what we learned about the **neocortex**.

The left hemisphere is responsible for speech, comprehension, arithmetic, and writing. It craves information and always wants it, while the right hemisphere takes care of creativity, spatial ability, artistic, and musical skill. It is also responsible for decision-making and does this based on intuition, emotion, and experiences.

To be great at **showtime**, we need to understand that people make subjective decisions based on intuition and emotion. If we can somehow tap into that, it will be another potent weapon in our arsenal for change.

## Section 2: Emotion v Logic



A Harley-Davidson, for example, should be sold based on emotion because it certainly is not a logical purchase. As the salesperson, you might touch upon some of the emotional aspects that come with owning a Harley-Davidson.

The exhilaration of speed you get when you roll back the throttle.

The prestige that comes with owning the Rolls Royce of the motorcycle world.

The freedom of the open road and the camaraderie of the millions of other fellow riders just like yourself.

After **showtime**, your Harley-Davidson prospect should be saying:

"I just bought a Harley! I can't wait for the exhilaration, prestige, freedom, and comradery, and o yeah, it has excellent resale value as well."

We make decisions based on emotion, and then we rationalize them with let-brained facts later on. I'm going to share some tips on maximizing Showtime by making it more appealing to the decision-making right-side of the brain.



## Section 3: Seven Tips to Appeal to the Right Brain



### To the right

This is an interview technique developed by the FBI to get a person to look at them more favorably. During interrogations, the FBI would arrange it, so the suspect is looking at them from their left-hand side. Studies have shown that doing this engages the brain's right hemisphere. The suspect would look at them more favorably.

Conversely, if the suspect were looking at them to their right-hand side, they would then be primarily using their left brain, which would make the suspect more analytical of what the interrogator is asking them.

If you want your prospect to look at you more favorably during presentation time, try this technique.

### Intrinsic value

The next one on my list is **intrinsic value** - people love when a product or service has a story to tell and if this story alone makes it valuable. If you ever watch TV programs like Pawn Stars or Storage Wars, you will see the power of intrinsic value first-hand.

Whenever possible, make sure your prospect knows the story behind your product or service, as this could add value to the sale.

### Visual aids

As mentioned before, there is no more surefire way of sending the right hemisphere to sleep than using lots of facts and figures in your presentations. So, make sure you are balancing these by using as many visual aids as possible.

### **Touch and feel**

Another important tool we can use to stimulate the right brain is “touch and feel”. So, if selling a product that someone can touch and feel it, try it on, or even take it for a test drive it, make sure you are taking full advantage of it.

### **Feature & benefit**

There is a golden rule in sales, and **that is never give a feature without explaining the benefit.** Many salespeople fail because they tend to present their products or company features and not emphasize the actual benefits.

Always remember that the benefit is the emotional aspect that tells your prospect, “What’s in it for me?”.

For example, this mobile phone has continuous access to your emails (so what?)

Because this mobile has continuous access to your emails, you can keep in touch with your business on the move.

Our calculator has a solar battery (so what?)

Because it has a solar battery, our calculator can run indefinitely in normal daylight.

### **Story**

Humanity has been telling stories for tens of thousands of years, and no doubt, our brains are hardwired to listen to stories. If you have children, you'll know exactly what I mean because the moment you say, "let me tell you a story," something magical takes place; not only are they listening to it, but they can also smell it, taste it and feel it as well. Not only is "**story**" a great format to use with your prospect, but something else very powerful happens, and that is - when you tell a story, your prospect will connect with you better.

Because as you tell the story, they make that journey from one side of the desk to the other side, and by doing so, they put themselves in your shoes and imagine what it's like to be you.

### **Trial close**

"Trial Close" is used to get small agreements from prospects, and of course, when you add up many small agreements together, they equal one big YES.

Examples of trial closes are.

- Is this making sense?
- Do you see what I'm getting at?
- Do you understand?
- Can you relate?
- Right? OK? Got it?

So, if you want to engage and get buy-in from your prospects, get into the habit of using trial closes as well.



## Section 4: Save Lives with Visual Aids



Like I mentioned previously if you know what the prospect needs and wants and what your closest match is, then you can slide right into 'Showtime' by simply using **'Bridge' 3**

"Based on what you are telling me, I believe I have the right product/service for you. The product/service I have in mind is X."

This signals to the prospect that what you are going to present to them is based on their criteria and not something you have pulled right out of the air.

Then you can show the prospect where you believe everything is a match.

'It has everything you need', highlighting how their needs are met.

'It has everything you want', again highlight where these are a match.

'It's in your budget' – cover how it is their budget.

Essentially, if you show where everything is a match, then the prospects will have a good understanding of how it's a good fit.

Of course, in real life, not every sale is going to be a 100% match and **some compromises will be needed**. But as long as the 'Needs' are being met and you're dealing with a somewhat reasonable person, then this presentation method is going to be fairly effective.

The only thing you need to make sure of is that you are injecting plenty of right-brain activity into 'Showtime', so you are appealing to the decision-making side of the brain.

Imagine this course without any pictures, videos, analogies, stories, or animation and delivered in a monotone voice. How interesting would you find it?

With that being said, let me tell you the story of **Florence Nightingale** and how the use of visual aids went on to save countless lives.

For most of us when we think about Florence Nightingale, we imagine her as the nurse taking care of wounded soldiers during the Crimean War. However, what most of us don't know she

had a deep understanding of hygiene and the relationship between a lack of hygiene and mass infections.

She was also a pioneer in statistics and would have held the title of mathematician had it not been that it was a male-only title, back in this time.

During the Crimean War, the death rate for wounded soldiers was a staggering 42% and Florence recognized that by just making improvements to hygiene standards this could be dramatically reduced to just 2%.

However, her findings fell on deaf ears as the military leaders of the day failed to understand the link between hygiene and infections. For them it was the cost of doing business and what would a woman know anyway.

Not deterred by this, Florence understood that she needed a more effective way of explaining this complex concept to the typical layperson. What she used was a pie chart known as a rose diagram to better explain the data visually.

I know we take this for granted nowadays but back then this was revolutionary. Florence had the foresight to understand that by using visuals she could better explain the correlation between hygiene and infections to the typical layperson.

Narrow-minded military generals were able to see the problem visually and were better able to put away their biases.

Over time handwashing and other hygiene practices were implemented across hospitals worldwide. These small changes saved countless lives and all of this thanks to Florence's insight and her use of visual diagrams.

## Section 5: Helpful Practice Activities



### Hear, See & Discuss

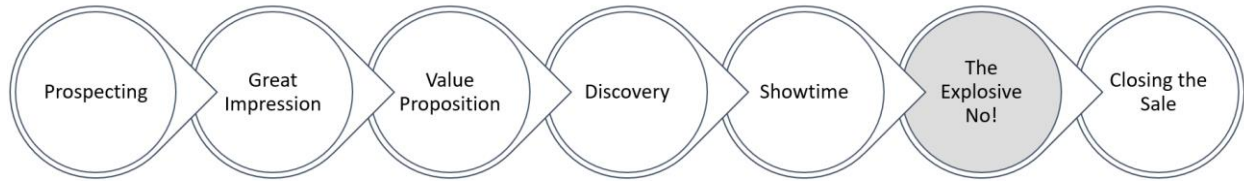
You can improve the impact of ‘Showtime’ by maximizing the retention level of the prospect. One of my favorite communication studies measured retention rates for three different styles of presentations:

<b>Presentation Type</b>	<b>Label</b>	<b>Audience Retention Rate</b>
One-way information flow, no visual aids	Hear	10%
One-way information flow, well designed visual aids	Hear and See	20%
Two-way information flow, well designed visual aids	Hear, See and Discuss	40%

Using ‘Hear, See and Discuss’ retention levels are highest at 40%. The prospect is engaged at a much higher level when the conversation becomes a two-way discussion rather than a one-way presentation. In other words, make ‘Showtime’ interactive.

**Create a sales presentation that incorporates ‘HEAR, SEE & DISCUSS’**

## Chapter 6: The Explosive No!



### Section 1: Avoid Getting Sucked Down Those Rabbit Holes

Welcome to step six of the sale. Before we start this step, let's do a short recap of how we exactly got here.

We made a **great impression** through our competence and character.

We showed **our value** and possibly even removed some objections by raising them ourselves.

We learned about our prospect's **needs and wants**.

We **presented a product/service** that most closely matches these.

On the way, we used some bridges that allowed us to ease into **discovery**, do a **recap** and then move into showtime.

Now it is time to use **bridge number four**, and this will enable us to move from showtime into the fifth step of the sale called "**The explosive No.**"

"Sounds like our X is a great match. Would you like me to start the paperwork?"

Generally faced with this question, your prospect can say either **yes** or **no**.

If they say yes, congratulate yourself on closing another deal.

However, if they say no, what do we do then?

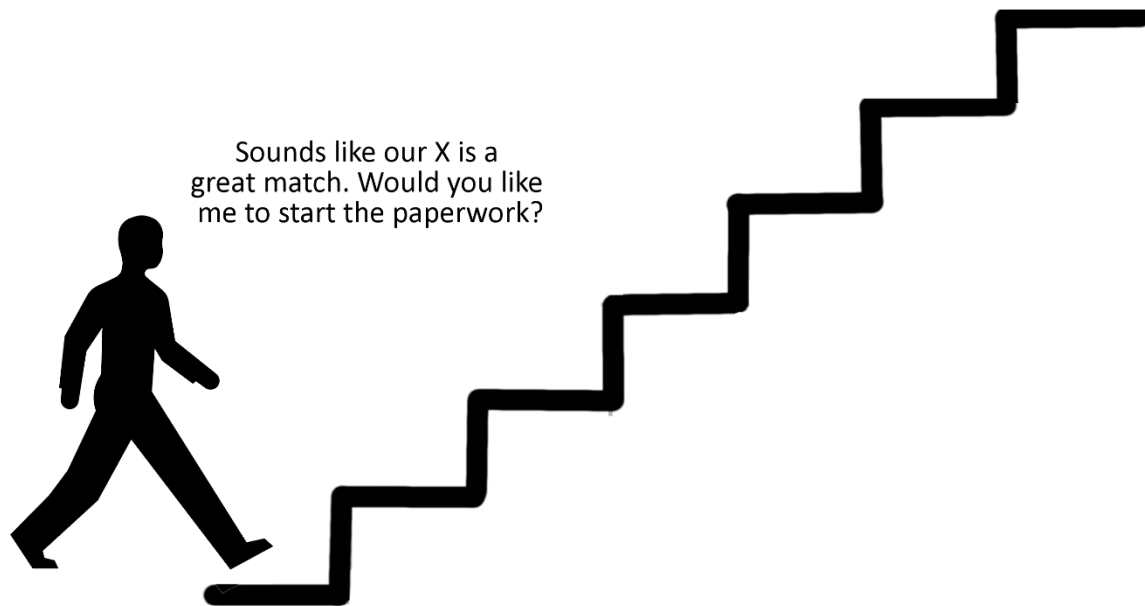
Before I answer this, let's look at the **reasons why most people say no**.

- It wasn't a good fit, or they didn't see the value in what you are selling.
- They have some genuine objections or concerns; however, we might resolve them if revealed.
- It may be a defense mechanism - most people don't like making big decisions, and sometimes we'll put out stalls or white lies to protect ourselves.

Based on this, some of the objections we get are real while others are fake. We need a simple technique that will allow us to "check" if the objection is real, address it, and avoid getting sucked down any "rabbit holes."

Rabbit holes happen when a prospect gives us an objection that we think is real. We then expend a lot of our time and energy to resolve it, only to find out the objection wasn't real but merely a smokescreen designed to stop us from getting to the heart of the matter.

## Section 2: The Objection Staircase



The technique is called the "objection staircase," and we will start at the bottom of the stairs with you, the salesperson, asking for the close.

**"Sounds like our X is a great match. Would you like me to start the paperwork?"**

(Prospect) No, I'm good

(So, instead of WHY or WHY is that? We could ask a non-confrontational question that gives credit to your prospect's intelligence as well)

(Salesperson) **"Obviously, you have a good reason for saying that. Do you mind if I ask what it is?"**

(Prospect) "Sure"

(Salesperson) **"What is it?"**

(Prospect) "We don't have the monies in our budget at the moment."

(Salesperson) **"Just supposing for a moment that monies were not a concern, then in your opinion, do you feel this would be the right service for you?"**

Basically, you are asking the prospects to park their objection to the side and consider the proposal anyway - by doing it this way, two things can happen here.

(Prospect can say)

1) "Yes, this is the right service, but we don't have the monies in our budget at the moment."

2) "Well, it's not just the budget; we need to consider your competitor's offer as well."

Now that we have identified the real objection, we can address the real objection with **an appreciation cushion** - this bridge will make the prospect feel appreciated for sharing their concern and, of course, will enable us to answer it.

(Salesperson) **"Thank you for bringing that up; many of my other clients have shared the same concern until I told them about X, Y, and Z..."**

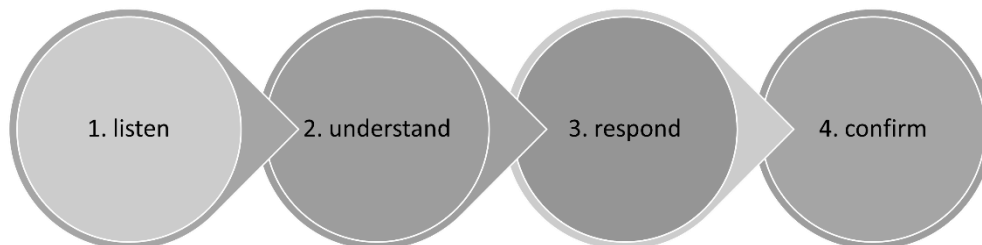
The objection staircase doesn't actually overcome each objection thrown at you; this requires you to have a considerable depth of knowledge and experience. What it does do, is it gives you a framework of how best to handle each objection by being non-confrontational, allowing us to check for the real objection and giving credit to our prospect's intelligence as well.

## Section 3: Understanding the Objection



In the next step of this selling process, I am going to show you how to handle some of the most common stalls and objections that you can expect to hear like “That’s too expensive” or ‘I can get a better deal elsewhere” but before I do that, I am going to cover a framework that you can use to overcome those sales objections that you haven’t come across before.

This is a 4 – step approach that you would use after you have checked if the objection is real.



### 1. Listen Fully to the Objection

When you hear an objection, your first reaction might be to jump right in and respond. Even though you believe you might have heard this before, your best bet is to ‘take five’ and mull it over first before jumping to any assumptions.

Instead:

- Listen to the objection fully
- Don't be defensive
- Ignore any negative emotions that you may be feeling
- Stay focused on the business problem you’re helping to solve
- Fully understand the buyer's concerns
- Allow your body language and verbal confirmations to communicate to the buyer that you're listening intently



## **2. Understand the Objection Completely**

As we have learned in the previous section prospect hits us with the objection, it is very rarely the actual concern that they have.

A way to think about it is the objection they give you is almost like an iceberg, and at the tip of the iceberg is the initial objection that they throw at us. And so, what we want to do is get below the surface to understand what's going on.

The objection staircase helps do this however another way this can be achieved is to get the buyer's consent to understand and investigate the problem.

Then, you would say 'as you understand it and then explain the concern.

When you restate an objection, the customer may perceive the problem more clearly, allowing you to get closer to the underlying cause of the objection.

Even if the buyer agrees that you understand everything, follow up with "What else?" and "Why?" queries to get more information. The toughest barrier you need to overcome to drive the sale ahead is often the answer to that last "What else?"

## **3. Respond Properly**

After you're sure you've uncovered all the objections, start with the most critical one. You'll find other problems may become less important to the buyer once you've overcome the biggest roadblock to moving forward.

If possible, you should try to settle any concerns as soon as possible. The better you are at resolving concerns in real-time, the more likely you are to move the sale forward.

However, don't try and wing it, customers will know when you are winging it, and this is a surefire way of losing the deal.

If you have to do further research to address a specific concern, then be honest about this and give a timeline of when you will get back to them.

## **4. Confirm You've Satisfied the Objection**

Check to see if you've addressed all the buyer's concerns and just because they nodded along during your response, doesn't really mean they agree with everything you said.

Inquire if the buyer is satisfied with your solution and, if necessary, expand on it.

Don't try to compel a commitment from a buyer who isn't ready. However, don't take a lukewarm "yes" for an answer. Many buyers will accept a solution in the moment, but the objection will linger once you're out of sight or off the phone.

## Section 4: Helpful Practice Activities

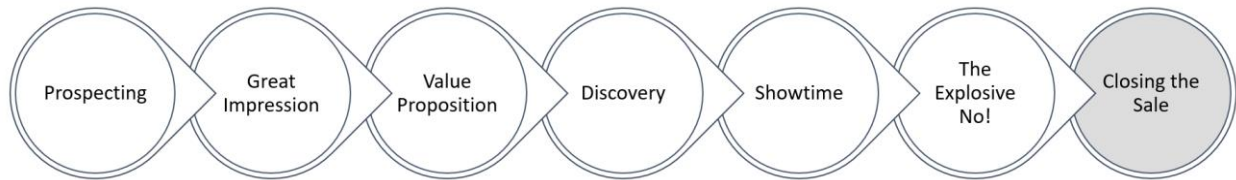


### Overcoming Objections

1. List the most common objections that you are likely to face.
2. Write the best responses to each objection.
3. Develop a series of proof points that you can use to validate your rebuttal.

Objection	Rebuttal	Proof Points

## Chapter 7: Closing the Sale



### Section 1: "I Need to Think About it"



Welcome to the final step of this selling process, "**Closing the Sale**".

In this step, we are going to look at some of the more common stalls and objections that we can expect to meet.

The first one I have for you is "I need to think about it".

There are many different reasons we hear this, but a couple of likely ones are:

- 1) Our prospect is feeling overwhelmed and genuinely needs time to think about it. This especially applies to our prospects who have a predominant "conscientious" style, who at all costs do NOT like to make bad decisions.
- 2) We also could be dealing with one of those generic smokescreen objections that our prospect gives us when they don't want to share the real reasons as to why they don't want to buy from us today.

So, without coming across as too pushy, what is the best way to handle this?

For me, the "**recap close**" is a great way to help your prospect "think about it," and if you are dealing with a smokescreen objection, you might be able to uncover this by using this method as well.

So, here is how it works:

Your prospect says, "I need to think about it."

You say something to the effect of, "Absolutely, no problem whatsoever, a wise person should never rush into anything until they are in a position to make an informed decision. However, before you go, I just want to make 100% sure that everything I presented to you today matches

all your needs and wants. So, if you don't mind, let me just recap everything that I presented to you so far".

At this point, you now have an opportunity to recap everything necessary to your prospect and how you arrived at this junction.

So, you could ask:

- Are you happy with the delivery date?
- Are you satisfied with the features?
- Are you pleased with the payment terms?
- Are you happy it has everything you wanted?

Until, eventually, you have covered everything you've learned during the "**discovery and qualification**" stage. If you have done this correctly, your prospect should have given you plenty of yeses and will feel that maybe this is right for them.

At this point, you could then turn around and say something to the effect of.

"It sounds like we are close, and I know you need time to think about it. So, how about we start the paperwork today, lock everything in, and if you happen to change your mind, you still have X number of days left as a cooling-off period. Does that sound fair to you?"

Alternatively, as you were recapping your prospect's needs and wants, and they said "no" to something, you might be uncovering the real reason behind why they don't want to buy off you today. Worst case scenario, your prospect will appreciate the time you took to recap the sale, and all you have to do is call them in a couple of days to close the deal out then.

## Section 2: "That's too Expensive."



It's frustrating when a prospect says, "That's too expensive."

Even though this is precisely what they told you their budget was during the discovery process. Usually, when faced with this objection, we proceed to show our prospect something even more affordable, but believe it or not, this might not be the way to go.

So, instead of thinking about the price, you need to get your prospect thinking in terms of value. At first, this might sound counter-intuitive, but when faced with "that's too expensive," try moving your prospect up in price rather than down.

Here's an excellent example of it, and it should apply to anybody who sells products and services at different price tiers. So, let's just suppose for a moment that you are in the letting industry, and your prospect gives you their "needs" for a house they would like to rent.

- 1) They don't want to spend more than 1,500 per month.
- 2) It must have a minimum of 3 bedrooms.
- 3) Be near a school and their place of work.

And like any good letting agent, you present a house that closely matches your prospect's criteria. At the end of the presentation, frustratingly, they turn around and say, "that's too expensive."

Based on this, we would generally show our prospect something less expensive like a terraced house with a smaller garden, smaller bedrooms, less centrally located, but at least this house comes in at a more affordable price.

And what do you think your prospect will say? If they didn't fall in love with the place that was initially in their budget, what are the chances they will fall in love with something that is not as nice and even further away?

So, when you hear "that's too expensive" from somebody who can afford it, you could try this instead.

"I understand how you feel, so maybe I need to show you something that will cost a little bit more but at the same time will give you a few more options as well. This house I have in mind

comes fully detached, so you don't have to worry about noisy neighbors. And more significantly, it comes with four bedrooms which is great for guests, or you could turn one into an office or a den. This house also has a superior garden, a bigger kitchen and best of all it is even more centrally located to schools and your work. Would you be interested in learning more about this property?"

With a bit of luck, the answer will be yes, because you now have your prospect thinking in terms of value rather than price.

### Section 3: "I can get a Better Deal Elsewhere"



Another common one you will get is "I can get a better deal elsewhere," and assuming you have checked that this is a real objection and not some sort of stall, what is the best way to handle this?

Only about **20% of salespeople** are prepared for this and know how to overcome it.

Here's what they do:

First, they recognize that if someone says that they can get a better deal elsewhere, it means one of two things:

- 1) They're wrong (in other words, they think they are getting the same thing you're offering, but they're not).
- 2) They really can get a better deal elsewhere.

To find out what your prospect means, offer to help them determine if they are getting a better deal by questioning and comparing every component of it.

So, here's how it goes.

Clients tell me this all the time, that they can get a better deal elsewhere and sometimes they genuinely can, but more often, they can't.

So, here's what I will do, I'll go over each item this other company has quoted you. In other words, we will compare apples to apples, and if everything is equal, we will match the price and I might be able to do something extra special for you as well. **Either way, you'll win.** Now, do you have that other quote in front of you?"

Then simply go over each item to make sure everything is equal. Often, it's not, and you can point this out. However, if it is the same, you still have a chance to win the deal. If they do have a better deal, then you can try and match the price, offer something special or build the value of having you as their sales rep and try to close the sale anyway.

Either way, you'll win.

## Section 4: "Just Looking"

In the previous sections, we looked at a few common objections that you are bound to get, and now we are going to look at some effective closing techniques you can use when dealing with some of the different personality types.

When you **sell high ticket items**, you are sure to come across prospects who want the information, but they make it clear from the get-go that they are "just-looking" as well. From our understanding of the 4 Personality Types, we could say some of these prospects have a predominant "Steady" style, which means they are cautionary by nature and will not want to be rushed.

This section will look at a technique that will enable us to handle a "just-looking" prospect better, and it will help us by making it less transaction as well.

So, here is how it works.

Your prospect makes it clear they are "just looking."

Then you say:

"No problem at all, let me give you all the information you need so when you leave here today, you'll know everything about the product/service that we offer. However, before I do that, let's have a bit of fun by using a **scale between 1 to 10** to see where you are right now regarding making a purchasing decision? One means you will never buy, while ten means you are red hot and ready to put money down. So, where do you rate yourself at the moment?"

Hopefully, your prospect will rate themselves at a four or higher, and if this is the case, turn around to your prospect and say:

"My job is to give you a great presentation, and then after this, we'll check again and see if you have moved further up on the scale."

Of course, you make your presentation and then, in the end, ask your prospect again to rate themselves?

If you have done a great job, they should be at a six or a seven.

Then all you'll need to ask:

"What's it going to take to get you to a ten?"

Now, your prospect should be telling you exactly what it will take to get them to a ten or at the very least; this exercise will have lowered their guard and made them more amenable to your proposal.

Imagine when you initially asked your prospect where they were on the scale and gave you a very low number like a three or a two. Then you should ask your prospect; **why didn't they pick a lower number?**



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If they gave you a three, why didn't they pick a two? You'll find every time they give you a reason for not choosing a lower number, they are unconsciously moving back up the scale.

## Section 5: "I Want What I Want"



Sometimes in sales, you have to deal with young customers, who want what they want, but can't afford it?

And then frustratingly, when you try to present a more affordable alternative, you just can't talk them down off the ledge?

Or, as a friend of mine would say, these prospects have "**Champagne tastes, on a beer budget.**"

Prospects who you will see this often are those that lean towards an "Influential" style. What is essential to an "Influential" person is recognition so, having a nice car, fancy clothes, and a good job title are all ways of proving to others that they are making it in life. The only problem is when you are young, you just haven't had the time on this earth to make it yet.

As a salesperson, don't make the mistake of saying, "You can't have that" or "You can't afford it," as they are bound to rebel against you.

So, how do you talk this person down off the ledge?

It's certainly not easy, as this is a very emotive situation, and if you don't handle it correctly, you will end up dealing with a take it or leave it attitude.

The first thing you need to do is show some empathy; then, you can focus on the needs, and show where these are a match. If there are some similarities to their wants, then you should draw upon them as well. Finally, give them some rationale to justify to themselves why they should go down the affordable route.

Let me give you an example from car sales, and with a bit of creativity, you should be able to apply this approach, to what you do.

### **The Steppingstones close**

"I don't want to be the bad guy who tells you can't get what you want, but, unfortunately, as things stand today, I'm not going to be able to sell you that M3. However, I have an excellent de-badged three series with everything you need, plus this one has a set of alloy wheels, spoiler, double exhaust, that BMW badge, and best of all, it won't break the bank.

The other thing you need to consider is you should see this as a "steppingstone" vehicle, so when you do begin to earn more money, you can always come back, and part exchange this vehicle for the car of your dreams.

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How does this sound to you?"

## Section 6: "The Ben Franklin Close"



Ben Franklin's close is a useful technique when dealing with individuals in positional power or leans towards a "Dominant" personality type.

The "Ben Franklin" close is where the salesperson and the prospect build together a pros-and-cons list of whether to buy the product or service. The salesperson's job is to make sure the pros list is longer than the cons. However, you should try and get the other person to develop the pros and cons themselves. You might have to get the ball rolling but let them do all the talking once you do.

It's important because you might state something that's a pro for you but a con for them. You'll often find that Pros are generally more right-brained emotive reasons while Cons tend towards the brain's logical left side. As we know from earlier on, emotion beats logic, at least most of the time.

## Epilogue/Conclusion

Have you ever seen the movie Glengarry Glen Ross?

How about Boiler Room?

Apart from being highly entertaining movies about sales, they have something else in common. They both glorify something that doesn't work when you sell in the real world.

What is that?

Closing. All. The. Time.

Alec Baldwin's character in Glengarry Glen Ross famously teaches the secret of selling as

"ABC - Always Be Closing."

While in the Boiler Room, Ben Affleck's character says:

"You have to be closing all the time. And be aggressive. Learn how to push."

If you put into practice all that you have just learned in most sales situations, you won't even need to try to close anyone.

Because you now know how to target people who are much more likely to be your customers, you're able to provide value and insight at the beginning (instead of pitching and probing) of the sale. You also know how to solve your prospect's problems (instead of vomiting features, benefits, and PowerPoint slides at them); because of all this, you are going to notice something cool.

### **Your prospects will start closing themselves!**

When someone closes themselves, there's no need for you to do anything to close them.

Can you imagine getting results like that?

The vast majority of your prospects just telling you they want to buy without you having to do anything to close them.

One of my mentors told me something a long time ago that stuck with me.

He said:

"It's what you do at the beginning that determines what happens at the end."

In other words, it's not about closing techniques, "closing all the time," "getting aggressive," and "learning how to push."

It's about giving the prospect what they want and what they value at the beginning of your sales process.

If you do that, prospects will see you as vastly different from every other salesperson they talk to, and they will want to buy from you because you're more valuable to them.

## **About the Author**

Paul Ferguson has been involved in sales for the past 30 years. He has held various roles from Sales Executive, Country Sales Manager, European Sales Director, and most recently, the founder of Selling Today.

Paul's Selling Today philosophy is about stop closing and start doing the right things at the beginning of your sales process. This way of selling will be so much easier.

So much simpler.

So much LESS stressful.

So much MORE effective.

You don't have to end your day feeling slimy, sleazy, pushy, or annoying to other people.

You can sell and have dignity and self-respect.

That's the way it should be.