

Heavy Hitter Sales Linguistics

101 Advanced Sales Call Strategies for Senior Salespeople

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101. Sales Call Preparation Checklist

The diligence with which you prepare yourself and your colleagues for a sales call will directly influence the success of your meeting. However, it's an imperfect world and you will never have 100 percent of the information you would like to have about the customer you will be meeting with. In this case, you need to theorize about the missing pieces of information based upon your past meetings with customers and summon your sales intuition. Use the following checklist to help you prepare for your next meeting. [source chapters are referenced in brackets.]

What is the customer's ultimate fantasy? [4]

What is our goal and my personal outcome for the meeting? [35]

Do I expect a combative, contentious, unemotional, friendly or synergistic sales call? [78]

What problem is the customer trying to solve, worded in the business operations language? [38]

What is the cause of the customer's problem and our solution to solve the problem, worded in the business operations language? [54]

What is our value to the customer? [39]

Strategic value:

Operational value:

Political value:

Psychological value:

What benefactions are behind his motives? [2]

Pain avoidance:

Well-being:

Self-preservation:

Self-gratification:

What elevator pitch will I use? [79]

What customer stories will I use to explain our value? [48-49]

Is this a renewal, persuasion, or creation sales call? [80]

Who is my coach, and is he a frenemy, well-wisher, weak spy, strong spy, or guide? [59]

Who are the bully with the juice and the emperor, and what are my relationships with these people? [53]

Is the customer a Visual, Auditory, or Kinesthetic? [14-17]

How will I adapt to the customer's word catalog wiring? [20]

What is the customer's source of stress, and how does our solution defuse it? [75-76]

What familial role do I plan to assume during the call? [73]

What intersecting activities do we share with the customer? [72]

Is the customer in survival, success, or significance mode? [92]

Is the customer a domain expert or business expert? [26]

Where do I plan to sit at the meeting? [28]
What pattern interruption and cowcatcher will I employ at the opening stage of the meeting? [43]
What offensive and defensive call statements will I prepare? [46-47]
What persuasion techniques will I use? [91]
What is the customer's Flesch-Kincaid communication level? [70]
How will I convey congruence? [33]
How will I establish dominance? [30, 57, 72]
How will I structure our PowerPoint presentation? [82]
 Pattern interruption:
 Key customer metaphors:
 Differentiating explanations:
 Closing background and foreground suggestions:
 Strategy slide:
 Money slide:
 Learning style: [21]
List the top ten questions I would like to ask the customer and triangulate on (what, how, why, when, who). [44]
List five leading questions I plan to ask. [45]
List the top five questions I should prepare for [50-51]
Has the customer spoken the confidential language with me in the past and what did he confide? [55]
What turning-point and buzz-kill moments should I prepare for? [81]
How will I counteract inertia and no decision? [76]
What is the customer's Informational decision-making role? [95]
What is the customer's character decision-making role? [96]
What is the customer's authority decision-making role? [97]
What is the customer's company decision-making role? [98]
What are our primary closing strategy and fallback positions?

Sales Call Strategy: Unfortunately, we have been trained to think of customers and ourselves as rational decision makers who use logic and reason exclusively. When you sell based solely upon logic, you are destined to be outsold. The successful influencer is the salesperson who understands and appeals to the emotional, political, conscious, and subconscious decision maker. When you take the time to think about all the items on the checklist, you are thinking logically about the psychological reasons the customer buys—something your competition is incapable of doing or won't take the time to think about.