Workbook 1. Relationship Selling

Introduction

This workbook is designed to be used along with the podcast on relationship selling. It is a self learning tool for people in sales and should take about an hour to complete. (Although you can go at your own pace)

It has been designed for:

- People new to sales wanting to get a brief but focused look at the principles of selling
- Experienced salespeople wanting a refresher of their key skills
- Sales managers wanting to coach or train team members

How it works

First, download the podcast to your mp3 player, or computer. Give yourself an hour or two of uninterrupted time and have a pen and paper handy.

Print off the workbook and read the first few pages that talk about the objectives and content for the session. Write down your own objectives.

Listen to the podcast. You can follow the theory in the workbook as the podcast plays. When you have listened to it you can complete the exercises in the workbook. If there is something you are not sure about refer back to the podcast.

At the end of your session, complete your action plan. Good luck with the session and good luck with your selling.
Relationship Selling
Objectives & Content

Objectives

The purpose of today’s session is to understand how relationship selling works and how to increase your sales by understanding buyer behaviour. As a result of the session you will be able to identify different buyer types and sell to them more effectively.

Content

• What is relationship selling?
• The attributes of salespeople who use this style
• Techniques versus behaviour
• Buyer behaviour; assertive and responsive
• The 4 different buyer types
• How to recognise them and how to sell to them
• The analytical buyer
• The amiable buyer
• The expressive buyer
• The driver
• How to use this knowledge to sell more
My Personal Objective

This is a statement of what you want to achieve as a result of completing this module. The best salespeople have clear objectives. It gives them focus and leads to better results. Write your objective in the box below:

My object for today is:

Having written down your objective you can review it at the end of the session.
Relationship Selling

What is relationship selling?

Relationship selling is a style of selling that helps to build mutually beneficial relationships between salesperson and customer. It encourages customer loyalty by rewarding the customer with excellent service.

Traditionally, salespeople took a more transactional approach to the relationship, focusing on closing the sale and maximising the size of orders. With relationship selling we focus on behaviour and interpersonal skills, building strong, long term relationships. In the long term this is more profitable for both sides.

The attributes of a professional salesperson are empathy, confidence, and hard work. They do not have to rely on manipulative selling techniques, but seek out problems and offer relevant solutions through the use of questioning, listening and problem solving skills.

They are friendly, not soft. In negotiations they are able to be assertive and defend their company pricing structure, while seeking win-win solutions that benefit both parties.

Behaviour influences the outcome of our sales efforts. For example, we will see later on that when a salesperson hears a price objection the most common form of behaviour we observe is the salesperson interrupting and replying with a price justification.

We need to understand why the customer raises price objections and deal with them in a professional way.

We also need to understand buyer behaviour and how people buy. Our role in sales is to make buying easy allowing the buyer to buy in a way that they prefer.

Most salespeople use friendship as their main strategy. We need to understand that, while this works in a lot of situations, we need other strategies to sell to a wider range of people.
Understanding Buyer Behaviour

One feature of modern, relationship selling is that we need to understand about behaviour if we are to sell to a wide range of people. It is a fact that people buy differently.

Some people prefer to buy quickly, others slowly. Some people need a lot of information and detail, for others a sheet of A4 with bullet points is all the information they need.

Some buyers make purchases on impulse, others take their time and try to avoid risk. Some buyers are very loyal, others will automatically choose the cheapest option. Some buyers can be quite intimidating to the point of being rude; others are quite passive and easily manipulated.

This makes selling a real challenge. To sell to all these different buyer types we need to be able to adapt our selling behaviour and make the buying process easy for each type of buyer we come across.

To begin this process we will look at 2 aspects of buyer behaviour; assertiveness and responsiveness.

People who are assertive are confident and know what they want. They are not afraid to put forward opinions and are willing to listen to the opinions of others. They are not afraid of conflict and will be more than happy to argue their case.

People who are highly assertive can be seen as being aggressive while people who lack assertiveness are often passive and get taken advantage of. There are times when it is appropriate to be more or less assertive and we need to recognise when these times are.

Responsiveness means the extent to which people are willing to respond to us and our questions. Some people are highly responsive and will give lots of information about themselves, their problems and needs. Others are unwilling or unable to respond in this way and we see these people often as being negative or difficult.

We are all different and some of us are naturally assertive and some of us are not. Salespeople tend to be quite responsive, but sometimes we lack assertion. An example of this is during negotiations.

When customers put us under pressure to reduce prices or give discounts we find it difficult and uncomfortable and worry about damaging the relationship with the buyer.
There are four basic styles of behaviour and these are determined by the way, in which people relate to one another.

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How To Recognise Them

To deal with the different buyer types we first need to be able to recognise them and then decide how to deal with them. Let’s take them one at a time:

**ANALYTICAL - `The Clinician'**
Not assertive, not responsive.
Precise, orderly and business-like.
Rational and co-operative.
Self-controlled and serious.
Motivated by logic and facts.
Not quick to make decisions.
Distrusts persuasive people.
Like things in writing and detail.
Security conscious.
Critical, aloof, sceptical.

**AMIABLE - `The Supporter'**
Not assertive but responsive.
Dependent on others.
Respectful, willing and agreeable.
Emotionally expressive.
Everyone's friend; supportive; soft-hearted.
Low risk taker, likes security.
Group builder.
Over sensitive.
Not goal orientated.
EXPRESSIVE - 'The Socialiser'
Assertive and responsive.
Reactive, impulsive, decisions spontaneous, intuitive.
Placing more importance on relationships than tasks.
Flexible agenda; short attention span, easily loved.
Enthusiastic.
Strong persuasive skills; talkative and gregarious.
Optimistic; takes risks.
Creative.

DRIVER - 'The Director'
Assertive, but not responsive.
'Task', rather than 'people' oriented.
Decisive and determined.
Controlled emotions.
Set on efficiency and effectiveness.
Likes control, often in a hurry.
Firm, stable relationships.
Stubborn, tough.
Impatient. Inflexible, poor listener.
How To Deal With Behaviour Styles

Some ideas for dealing with the different types

**Analyticals**

- Slow down and take your time
- Stick to specifics - analyticals expect salespeople to overstate.
- Their decisions are based on facts and logic and they avoid risk.
- They can often be very co-operative, but established relationships take time.
- Consider telling them what the product won't do - they will respect you for it, and they will have spotted the deficiencies anyway.

**Amiables**

- Work, jointly, seek common ground.
- Find out about personal interests and family.
- Be patient and avoid going for what looks like an easy pushover.
- Use personal assurance and specific guarantees and avoid options and probabilities.
- Take time to be agreeable.
- Focus discussion on ‘how’.
- Demonstrate low risk solutions.

**Expressives**

- Sell quickly. Let them do the work
- Be enthusiastic and confident
- Discussion should be people as well as fact oriented.
- Try short, fast moving experience stories.
- Make sure to pin them down in a friendly way.
- Remember to discuss the future as well as the present.

**Drivers**

- Be more assertive. Don’t worry about making them happy
- Plan to ask questions about and discuss specifics, actions and results.
- Use facts and logic.
- When necessary, disagree with facts rather than opinions.
- Keep it business-like, efficient and to the point.
- Personal guarantees and testimonials are least effective - better to provide options and facts.
Drivers Exercise

Based on the descriptions above, think of an example of a customer you have met who fits into one of the four categories. Also, think about your preferred style. Where would you put yourself?

Answer these questions:

1. How did you recognise your analytical buyer?

2. What is the best way to sell to him/her?

3. How did you recognise your amiable buyer?

4. What is the best way to sell to him/her?

5. How did you recognise your expressive buyer?
6. What is the best way to sell to him/her?

7. How did you recognise your driver buyer?

8. What is the best way to sell to him/her?

9. What is your preferred style?

10. What are the pluses and minuses of your style?
My Personal Action Plan

Having completed the module set yourself some points you will put into practice. Write your action plan in the box below:

My action plan for today is: