

Is Complexity Holding Back Your Sales?

Understand what motivates customers by “walking in their shoes.” Sell more by looking at things from their perspective. Communicate recommendations that are simple, straightforward and easy to implement.

Lives are complicated, stressful and demanding. Customers expect solutions that are cost-effective and affordable, but also that make things simpler, easier and less stressful for them *personally*. They are overloaded and cannot afford the time to deal with anything that does not work the first time, every time, right out of the box. Many of them also look for instant gratification. They abhor startup issues that add complications and make matters worse. They look for rapid changeovers that avoid maintaining old methods until a smooth transition can be made where everything works perfectly. If their mission is to cut costs and make things simpler, the more obstacles they expect, the more difficult it will be for you to make sales.

Paradigms are shifting. We tend not to think too much about it, but technology is advancing faster than ever before. Artificial intelligence is a leading factor. Soon computers will work independently from their human masters. They will adapt and change faster than we can. Until that time comes, humans will remain limiting factors. People will endorse changes if they expect a high probability of success, but *also* when not likely to be overwhelmed.

Divide and conquer. So, be patient. Big sales are nice, but better to avoid trying to accomplish too much, too fast. Realistically, a more gradual approach will get your customers where you want them to go without unacceptable risk, costs, effort and uncertainty that could kill a deal or result in a bad reputation. A roadmap providing a migration path with incremental benefits will help convince them to take your recommendations.

Value your customer’s time. Everyone can play a role in selling. Sales Effectiveness Training pays dividends even for service and support personnel. An emphasis on advance preparation will start relationships in a positive, organized way. This will be appreciated and expected to be continued when money starts to change hands.

- Be professional. Avoid a shotgun approach or an open-ended fishing expedition. Share concrete expectations and a well thought out plan to accomplish them. Be prepared to recite a script that describes what you do and have to offer. Use it often. Any contact can be a potential sales opportunity.
- When possible, find out specifics about customers before interacting with them. Learn as much as possible about their business and its needs. Use on-line sources, results from customer satisfaction surveys and feedback from others working with the same individuals, firms and industries.
- Prepare introductory remarks, anticipate questions and rehearse responses. Recording videos of your presentation will enable you to see how others will see you and make important adjustments.
- Lead off contacts with what you know. Ask questions to fill in details.
- Propose a problem-solving approach and next steps. Accentuate your value proposition, especially the ease, simplicity and convenience that customers can expect from service-oriented relationships with you.
- Close by summarizing how you will help them and ask for their business.
- Follow through as promised. Being well organized and dependable are differentiators deserving more sales.

Look for cues from your customer. Don’t oversell. Recognize when it is time to close the deal, follow up later or abandon the effort. Any doubt? Ask what the customer prefers.

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Info@OutcomeImprovement.com

973-635-1970

www.OutcomeImprovement.com