



The Exact Expertise to
Ignite and Sustain Performance™

LSA Global | White Paper



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Think Like Your Customers:

Help your salespeople stay focused on the customer's reason for buying. It's what drives every buying decision.

Millions of dollars will be spent this year on sales training. Business owners and managers will provide product training, skills training, process training, and any other kind of training they can think of. Then, they'll spend more money motivating their people by offering rewards and incentives of every conceivable kind.

Investing in training and incentives is often essential, but what too many sales managers overlook is the fact that if they change the way their salespeople think, their attitudes and behavior automatically change.

How we behave is governed by how we think and the things we believe to be true. Sometimes when a new idea comes along, or when we suddenly understand things in a different way, our behavior can be immediately and radically altered. You can help your salespeople improve their performance by encouraging them to think less like a salesperson and more like a customer.

Throughout this year, make sure your people remember these four paradigm-busting truths:

1. Nobody wants to buy what you sell.



What they want are the business results they can achieve by utilizing what you sell to pursue their own goals and objectives. Most of the things we sell are not ends unto themselves. More often, they are a means to an end. No company wants to buy equipment, software, or consulting services.

What it wants is to increase revenue (sell more) by bringing new products to market faster and capturing more market share.

Companies want greater profitability, which comes when they can reduce costs by automating processes, streamline operations, or improve forecasting and planning. And they want to better utilize their assets (do more with less) by reducing inventories, eliminating excess infrastructure, and making their workforce as effective and efficient as possible.

The next time one of your salespeople tells you about a "great new deal" in the works, ask, "What is this customer really trying to accomplish? What problem are they trying to solve? What desired outcome will they be better able to attain if they buy our products or services?"

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2. A sales opportunity qualified with anyone other than the person or group making the final decision is not qualified.

Sales professionals tend to find one person within an account who they are comfortable with and spend all of their time selling to that person. Oftentimes, however, this is not the person who makes the ultimate buying decision.

Remind your salespeople that if they meet with the same person every time they see a client—someone who already likes them and wants to buy from them—they are not doing their job. They need to meet the influencers that they haven't met before and earn their trust, especially if these decision makers are interested in doing business with the competition.



Most complex sales come down to one person or a small group of people deciding whether or not to make the purchase. Until your salespeople meet and understand the way that person or that small group thinks, they won't know enough about what it will take to earn the sale—or even if there is a sale to earn. Make sure your salespeople understand that until they get in front of and “qualify” the final decision maker(s), the opportunity they are pursuing isn't really qualified.

3. Your sales process takes a back seat to the customer's buying process.

One way many companies try to increase sales is to adopt a formal sales process. Not all of them get the results they expect. Most of these involve a series of activities that appear to be a natural progression toward a successful sale. What is conspicuously absent from most, however, are the steps and activities that prospective clients need to work through in order to buy something.

A primary reason that sales processes aren't successful is they are not designed around one simple truth: The things you do at any particular stage in a sales process are a waste of time if clients are unable to do what they need to do to progress to the next step in their buying process.

As sales managers, we are quick to ask, “What do we need to do to close this deal?” Unfortunately, that's not the right question. We could do three dozen things and still not make the sale.



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Instead, we should ask, “What does the customer need to do in order to buy?” Only when we have that answer are we ready to ask the follow-up question: “What do we need to do to get them to do those things?”

4. If the opportunities in your sales pipeline aren't moving, they're stopped.



Are the opportunities that your salespeople are currently pursuing moving or stopped? It's easy to tell the difference. Ask them to look at their day planner, personal digital assistant (PDA), or whatever they use to book appointments. Do they have a date and time on their calendar when they will next meet or speak to their customer on the phone? Does the customer have that date and time on their calendar too? If either your salesperson or their customer doesn't, that sales opportunity is not moving.

Sales professionals battle with this constantly. We all have a couple of opportunities in our sales pipeline that are stopped. When we allow any active sales campaign to stop, we are taking a huge risk. It's possible that it will never start up again. Encourage your salespeople to get an appointment scheduled with every good opportunity in their pipeline today! Get them in the habit of booking their next appointment at the end of every meeting or phone call.

These four truths are really just common sense, but every salesperson needs to be reminded of them. As a sales manager, your role is to help your salespeople stay focused on the right things. By imparting and reinforcing these four simple truths, you'll help them be as effective and productive as possible.

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About LSA Global

Since 1995, LSA has helped leading organizations create and maintain competitive advantages through people.

Over 85% of our business comes from repeat clients and our customer satisfaction rating is 97.5%. Our clients tell us that we are different. Our clients tell us that we save them both time and money. Our clients tell us that they appreciate access to experts across many areas.



“LSA is different. They focus on helping clients and they guarantee and deliver results.”

- Our **Sales** clients confirm that they have grown sales by 40%, increased units sold by 42%, increased average pricing by 12%, and closed over 50% of their pipeline.
- Our **Customer Loyalty** clients confirm that their customer revenue per household increased by 18%, repeat calls decreased by 48.4%, single contact resolution increased by 6.1% and their overall customer satisfaction increased by 10%.
- Our **Leadership and Management** clients report that we decrease their costs by up to 50%, while helping increase speed-to-productivity by 60% and decrease unwanted attrition by up to 40%.
- Our **Project Management** clients inform us that, by regularly completing projects that meet or exceed expectations, they have become an anomaly in the world where most projects disappoint or fail.

Our clients succeed in the marketplace through increased revenue, decreased costs, and higher productivity. They maintain that our rigorous assessment, implementation, and measurement capabilities bring them tangible results. As an organization, we are fiercely devoted to supporting their success.

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