

How to Sell by Building Relationships

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About SCORE

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Providing free
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Webinar Objectives

- Learn to sell to customers who expect to meet and interact with you before buying
- Learn how to approach the sale - process vs personality
- Learn the step-by-step sales process
- When you leave today's webinar, you'll be prepared to sell to your first and subsequent customers

POLL

Agenda

1. Introduction (10 min)
2. Sales Approach (10 min)
3. Sales Process (50 min)
4. Practice the Skill (10 min)
5. Closing (10 min)

Sales Approach

- What is sales:
 - Providing solutions to a problem
 - A transaction where money or value is exchanged
- What it is not:
 - A personality type
 - A way of deceiving someone into an unneeded transaction



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What is Relationship Selling

- An approach to selling to customers who expect to meet and interact with you
 - Make their buying decisions based on personal knowledge
- Common among business and government buyers
 - May require multiple steps and meetings
- Also used for large personal services where a buyer may get multiple solutions/quotes
- The sales process builds trust

POLL

Why It's Important for Entrepreneurs

- Most entrepreneurs start businesses based on their skills and experience
 - Often that skill isn't sales
- Customers who expect to meet first often feel they are “taking a chance” with a new business
 - Meeting and feeling comfortable with the founder goes a long way
 - Bringing in an outside salesperson too early can be risky

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Sales Process

- Prospecting/Lead Generation (Marketing, not Sales)
- Lead Qualification
- Meeting
- Proposal
- Negotiation
- Closing (win/loss)



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Lead Qualification

- Marketing will create many leads, not all of them are good prospects
- Does this lead match your likely buyer?
 - Company Size/Personal Income, Geography, Industry, Needs, Timeline, Job Title
- Relationship selling is long term, sometimes a prospect isn't good now, but will be in the future
- Art not science

Meeting Prep – Do Your Homework

- Research
 - Know their website
 - Look for press releases, product announcements, media mentions, job postings
 - Understand their company structure
 - Research the people you are meeting, find commonalities
- Know your value proposition and how to articulate it to this audience
- Know your goal – another meeting, proposal, introduction
- Anticipate potential unique needs
- Anticipate potential objections
- If you plan to use slides, keep it to a minimum (<5 for an hour)

Opening the Meeting

- Cordial, casual, warm social exchanges
- Thank them for taking time to meet
- State the purpose of meeting
 - ...then request confirmation and permission to proceed
 - Be prepared to adapt if customer has a different understanding



Meeting - Needs Exploration

- Demonstrate that you have done your homework
 - Ask questions and frame your discussion in context of their situation
- Move into Needs Exploration Phase
 - Use open ended questions to probe for needs
 - Questions starting with “What, when, how or why?”
 - A great initial meeting will be mainly your client talking (*75/25 Rule*)
 - Use close ended questions to confirm what you understand
 - Weave in examples of past experiences to show expertise

Meeting - Needs Exploration

- Seek to identify 3 or so needs
- Probe to clarify each specific need before moving on
- As each need is identified as follow on questions:
 - Impact to the company?
 - Actions already in place to satisfy need?
 - Thoughts on how to solve?
- What are some other concerns facing your business?

Meeting - Needs Confirmation

- Restate each need and ask if you “have it right”
- Ask for the priority and timeline of each
 - Must have soon
 - Like to have in time
 - Nice to have
- Try to get a sense of their budget and buying process

Offering Solutions: Fit

- Where you cannot satisfy a need with a solution:
 - Confirm the priority of needs
 - Probe to determine the priority of the solutions you can solve
 - Reframe the discussion. Acknowledge what you cannot provide and restate what needs you can satisfy
- Seek agreement that your basket of solutions will benefit their company

Offering Solutions: Handling Objections

Anticipate what may arise

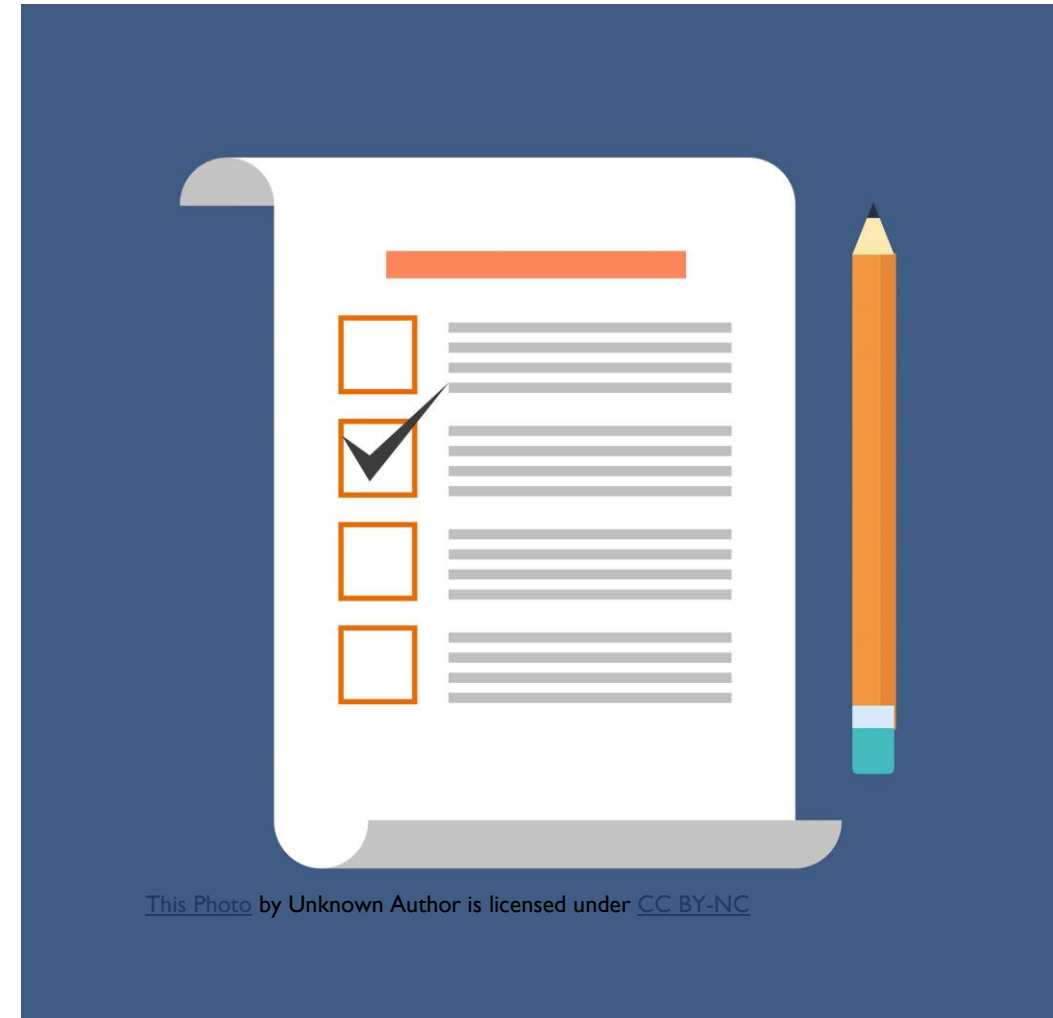
Prepare tentative responses

<p>“We already deal with _____.”</p>	<p>“I understand you have had a relationship with _____. What we offer is different and will benefit you by _____.”</p>
<p>“I like what I hear but not sure you can provide it”</p>	<p>“We can provide references from clients where we have provided our solutions.”</p>
<p>“We want to do business with someone more experienced”</p>	<p>“We are a newer business, but our team has years of proven experience working with clients like you.”</p>
<p>“How are you different from _____”</p>	<p>Know your likely competitors and be ready to articulate your value proposition vs. their solutions</p>

QUESTIONS?

Closing the Meeting

- Establish next steps
- Thank each participant for their time and attention
- Conclude the meeting
- Resist the urge to either linger or revisit any solution
 - There is an old saying: “once you have made the sale, shut up!”



Post Meeting

Now that you know more, are they still a good prospect?

- Need/Fit – do your solutions meet their needs as good or better than your competitors?
- Budget – do they have the ability/willingness to afford the solution?
- Authority – are you talking to the right people?
- Timeline – can you meet their timeline? Are they ready to buy or just learning?
- If they aren't a good prospect now, they might be later

Offering Solutions/Proposal



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- Restate each need and show how you can solve it
- Discuss your solution
 - Time to implement
 - Requirements to implement
- Defer pricing to the end
- Be prepared with proof statements
- Be prepared to offer references
- If possible present your proposal vs. submitting/emailing

Negotiations

- Many sales include negotiations – often related to scope, timeline, budget
- Seeing a proposal can sharpen a client's understanding of their needs, be ready to update your solution
- Know what's negotiable and what isn't
- Be weary of reducing cost without justification
- Consider being more flexible with early clients

Closing the Sale

- Many sales get stuck in the closing stage
- Stuck before selection
 - Communicate often and be helpful in clarifying/updating your proposal without being pushy
 - Clarify the selection process.
 - Create urgency – timeline, seasonality, team availability, discount
 - Don't be afraid to ask – are you looking at other options, are there concerns, etc.

Closing the Sale

- Stuck during contracting
 - Have your contracts ready to go
 - Know what your key clauses are and have “st
 - Clarify the contracting process process. Will
 - Continue to create urgency



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Practicing the Skill

- Write out your plan
 - Key steps in sequence
 - Prepare for contingencies
- Role Play
- Solo Practice
- Visualize the meeting in advance



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Sales Recap



- Selling is a skill, not a personality type
- Do your homework
- Run the meeting – open, identify needs, offer solutions, handle objections, close
- Follow up with proposal and negotiations
- Close the Sale

QUESTIONS?

Helpful Links

- Find SCORE resources for small businesses at www.score.org/templates-resources
- Find more SCORE live and recorded workshops and courses at www.score.org/get-business-training
- Book an appointment with a SCORE mentor at www.score.org/find-mentor



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