



Bringing Technology Entrepreneurs Together™

Five Keys to Building a Competitive Sales Force

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Carl Binder *Five Keys to Building a Competitive Sales Force*

<http://www.techcoire.com>



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Background

- ◆ Research-based Methods
- ◆ *Fluent* Performance
- ◆ Sales Knowledge Management
- ◆ Sales & Marketing Process Improvement
- ◆ Fortune 1000 and Fast Growth Companies

Accelerating Ramp-up of Sales and Service Performance

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What's At Stake - *Competitive Advantage*

- ◆ Sales Productivity - revenues per person
- ◆ Time to Full Quota – for new sales people
- ◆ Time to Market Penetration – for new products
- ◆ Sales and Marketing Agility
- ◆ Cost of Sales
- ◆ Return on Performance Investment

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The Five Keys

1. Define Your Sales Process (*not just sales behavior*).
2. Value Sales Accomplishments and Milestones
(*not just \$\$ results*).
3. Link Your Solutions to Customer Needs
(*not just features and benefits*).
4. Develop Competitive Analysis and Strategy based on
Customer Needs (*not just feature comparisons*).
5. Build Sales Knowledge to Support Performance
(*not just "death by PowerPoint"*).

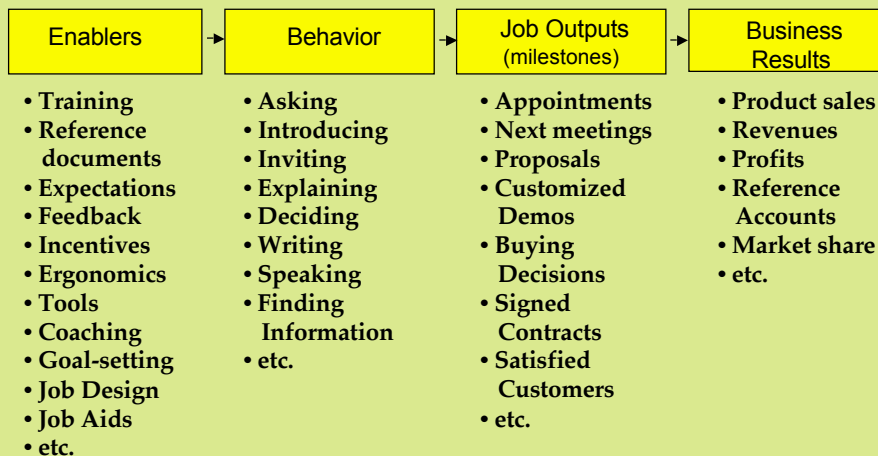
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1. Define Your Sales Process

- ◆ Typical Mistakes
 - Hire the best and leave them alone.
 - Everyone does it their own way.
 - “We’re too small for sales training.”
- ◆ A Better Approach
 - Create or adopt a standard sales process.
 - Use standard language to describe the process.
 - Document and continuously improve the process based on best practices.

How Performance Produces Business Results





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The Six Boxes™ of Behavior Influence (Enablers of Sales Performance)

ENVIRONMENT	Expectations & Feedback (1)	Tools & Resources (2)	Consequences & Incentives (3)
	Skills & Knowledge (4)	Selection & Assignment (5) (Capacity)	Motives & Preferences (6) ("Attitude")
EMPLOYEE			

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2. Value Sales Outputs/Milestones

- ◆ Typical Mistakes
 - Place primary value on activity and \$\$ results.
 - Focus training, management, and coaching on behavior and "competencies."
- ◆ A Better Approach
 - Identify key outputs and milestones that represent progress toward \$\$ results.
 - Discover and support best practices (behavior) and enablers that produce outputs/milestones.

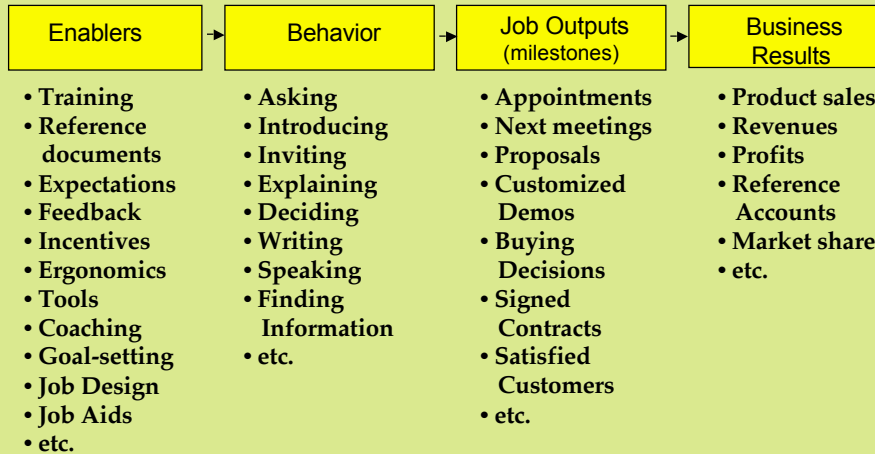
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Behavior is Valuable ONLY When it Produces the Right Outputs!



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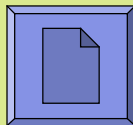


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A Best Practices Sales Process

For each Major Accomplishment in the sales process...

Milestones	Behavior (Tasks/Tactics)	Enablers
Each critical intermediate job output that represents an advance in the process.	What things does the sales person have to DO to produce the milestone?	Focus on Tools and Resources, Skills and Knowledge



* Example is a *Best Practices Sales Process* from a Medical Devices manufacturer chosen to avoid disclosure of proprietary information to potential competitors in the high tech industry.

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Manage The Process

- ◆ Monitor and coach progress toward milestones (not just activity).
- ◆ Focus sales training, tools, and support on accomplishing milestones.
- ◆ Manage territory resource allocation and activity in relation to milestones.
- ◆ Embed the language of milestones in your sales culture - including channels.



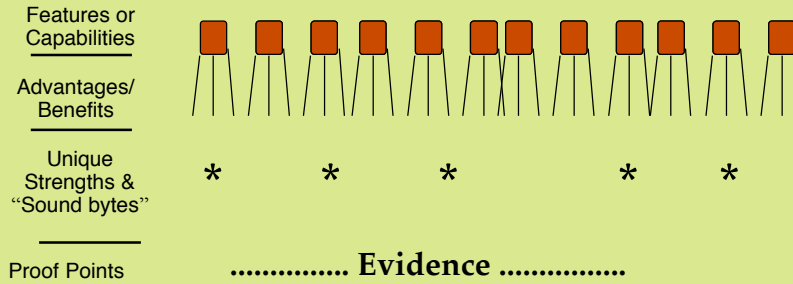
3. Link Solutions to Customer Needs

- ◆ Typical Mistakes
 - Train needs-based selling but then provide features-oriented product knowledge.
 - Turn sales people into “walking ads” who push “messages” of unique features and benefits.
- ◆ A Better Approach
 - Develop a framework that links the features of your offerings to potential customer needs.
 - Build sales training and documentation around potential needs-solutions.



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A Marketing Knowledge Architecture



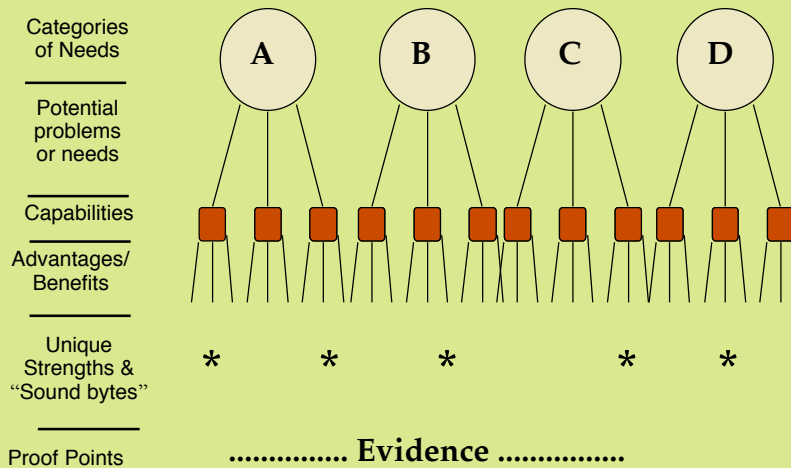
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A Sales Knowledge Architecture



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Example: Software Needs Categories

Business Needs

User Needs

Investment Protection	Reliability	Ease of Learning & Use	Quality of Output
Technical Support	Business Support	Customization and Programmability	Product-specific Functional Needs



Structure of a Customer Needs Model

Problem/Need	Product/Solution	How It Works	Payoff
...organized by categories of customers' needs	Your capability – product / service features	...to solve customer's problem/need.	- Increase - Decrease - Avoid

Example

<i>Consistent results</i>	<i>Automated sampling</i>	<i>Eliminates user-to-user variability</i>	<i>Decreases cost of re-testing</i>
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4. Develop Competitive Analysis & Strategy based on Customer Needs

- ◆ Typical Mistakes
 - Create comparative feature/technology lists as a basis for competitive analysis
 - Build competitive strategy on features where “we’re bigger, faster, cheaper, better.”
- ◆ A Better Approach
 - Compare offerings based on how well they address customer needs/problems.
 - Build competitive strategy on “whole offering” comparisons and by shifting buying criteria.



Needs-based Competitive Analysis

Problem/Need	Our Solution	Competitive Solution	How We Compete
...organized by categories of customers' needs	Our capability – product / service features	Competitor's capability - strengths and weaknesses	Sales tactics for winning

Example

<i>Investment Protection (Data)</i>	<i>Data Import Tool</i>	<i>Only reads native files</i>	<i>Stress integrity of retrospective data</i>
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5. Build Sales Knowledge to Support Performance

- ◆ Typical Mistakes
 - Start with “What do Sales Reps need to **KNOW?**”
 - Rely on “subject matter experts” to define sales knowledge requirements.
 - Use “Death by PowerPoint” (or by web page).
- ◆ A Better Approach
 - Start with “What Sales Reps need to **DO?**”
 - Build knowledge around markets & customers.
 - Organize knowledge for learning & look-up.

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Analyzing Knowledge Requirements

- ◆ What must sales people **PRODUCE** and **DO?**
- ◆ What must they **KNOW** fluently?
- ◆ What must they be able to **LOOK UP** fluently?

Avoid information overload!

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Knowledge for *Performance* (Topics & Sequence)

1. Performance Expectations
2. Market Environment and Our Strategic Response
3. Potential Customer Problems/Needs/Opportunities
4. Products and Services as Solutions
5. Competitive Information and Strategy
6. Sales Process, Strategy, Tactics, and Tools
7. Customer Materials
8. Fulfillment and Implementation
9. Post-sale Support and Problem-solving



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Some Typical Results

- ◆ Productivity increases 20- 60%.
- ◆ Sales executes market strategy more consistently and effectively.
- ◆ Sales Reps (including channel partners) are more confident and knowledgeable.
- ◆ Product Managers spend 5-20 hours less per week responding to emails and voice mails.
- ◆ Market penetration is 30 - 50% faster.

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Key Take-Aways

- ◆ There is a huge potential for improving results based on how the organization enables sales performance.
- ◆ Competitive success demands a relentless focus on *linking solutions to customer needs*.
- ◆ Smaller organizations can do it right from the start – without having to undo mistakes.
- ◆ Research-based methods work better!

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Thank You!

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