



Sales & Customer Service Consultative Selling

Summary

Consultative Selling is about relationships, partnering and building long-term associations with prospective and existing customers. The consultative sales professional is a problem-solver, providing knowledge, expertise, advice and value-added service. He or she must be able to:

- *Recognize problems* within the prospective customer's personal life or business organization.
- *Develop needs* with the prospective customer, not simply uncover them.
- *Provide solutions* to their problems, not simply describe benefits of a product or service.
- *Communicate solutions* in a format that the prospective customer understands.

Who Should Attend

This multi-day workshop will provide sales managers, sales professional, and sales support staff with specific information, techniques and strategies they need for identifying and qualifying prospects, increasing sales and developing valued relationships with customers. The workshop will include presentations, discussions, industry-specific role-plays and case studies, and application exercises for hands-on practice and skill building.

Structure

This workshop is divided into nine modules, and is available in both a two-day or three-day format:

1. Challenges of Consultative Selling

Consultative selling is a very customer-oriented approach to selling that explodes the stereotypical hard-sell approach of the "used car salesman." It is, however, not simple to do well and has its own challenges. This module explores the philosophy of consultative selling and looks at the following:

- What is consultative selling?
- Why is it appropriate in the banking environment?
- Challenges of consultative selling

2. Territory Management

Sales people have a variety of goals to meet on a weekly and monthly basis (e.g., a specific number of calls to make, a specific amount of business to close on, etc.). While business leads are generated from marketing and other sources, your challenge is to take that information and organize it, prioritize it, and plan your calls. This section addresses the following:

- Qualifying potential accounts
- Determining expected value (potential yield) for an account in order to prioritize calls
- Developing a call frequency chart
- Probing the "3 M's" (money, method, motivation) to qualify prospects
- Time Management
- Setting goals and priorities
- Getting organized
- Task management

3. Skill Preparation

Communication, relationship building and reading customers are critical skills to successful selling. Through a variety of interactive exercises participants will have an opportunity see what effective and ineffective communication and trust look and sound like, as well as learning how to read and respond to different customer types. This module addresses:

- Effective Communication



- Improving active listening skills, choosing your language carefully
- *Relationship Building*
- Establishing **trust** and **credibility**
- Focusing on key factors: reliability, honesty, follow-through, impartiality, and competency
- The Psychology of Selling
- Reading buyer personality types
- Identifying and addressing customer fears

4. Getting an Appointment and The Cold Call

If you don't get a face-to-face appointment, all your research, planning and selling skills are useless. Your first job is to sell a prospective customer on scheduling an appointment with you or, at least, agreeing to allow you to pop by for a quick visit.

- The basics of contacting prospects
- Strategies for cold calls
- Using the telephone to your advantage
- How to reach the "unreachable" decision-maker

5. Pre-Planning

Selling is most effective when careful thought and preliminary research take place before any actual meeting. This module addresses planning techniques for prospective and existing customers.

Prospective Customers

- Doing research, setting call objectives, preparing questions, etc.
- Completing *Sales Call Planner Form*

Existing Customers

- Updating company information, setting call objectives, preparing questions, etc.
- Updating *Sales Call Planner Form*

6. Opening the Face-to Face Meeting

Opening the consultative sales call involves showing concern for the prospective customer while not seeming too anxious to sell something. At this early stage, channeling your energy towards the prospective customer and away from your product is important. This module looks at:

- Greeting strategies
- Building rapport
- Giving reason for call
- Agreeing to agenda for meeting

7. Probing Strategy: Surfacing Priorities

The employee's goal here is to uncover implied needs and develop them into explicit needs that can be addressed by specific seller products and/or services. This module addresses the development of questions for each step in the strategy and shows how the strategy helps prospective customers discover a new sense of urgency in addressing their needs/concerns and opens them up to supporting the solutions offered. We will also address the differences in applying these steps at an initial, introductory meeting with a customer, and at a follow-up meeting with that customer.

- **Step 1: Fact-Finding**- these are journalistic questions that collect information and background on the client's existing situation (who, what, when, where).
- **Step 2: Focus on Needs/Priorities** - these are questions that uncover customer care-about (e.g. relationship issues, goals), personal concerns (e.g. image, confidentiality), and business needs (e.g. financial, performance).



- **Step 3: Impact Analysis**- these are questions that ask how the identified concerns, needs, care-about, etc. impact the prospective customer's life and/or business, thus creating a sense of urgency to take action.
- **Step 4: What-If's**- these are questions that pose solution possibilities (e.g. "What if I could show you how to save \$... or increase return on... or eliminate?") and open the prospective customer up to making some changes.

8. **Providing Solutions**

The "what-if" step above sets the stage for offering products or services that will solve the customer's problem. The role now is to educate the customer on how the features of a particular product or service will benefit them by addressing the priorities they previously identified. We will also address the differences in talking about solutions at an initial introductory meeting with a customer, and at a follow-up meeting with that customer.

- How and when to use a "canned" power-point presentation at an initial meeting
- Matching products and services to identified priorities
- Detailing product/service features and benefits
- Obtaining feedback (asking for reaction and observing body language)

9. **Closing and Expanding the Sale**

This is the point in the sales process where the employee obtains the prospective customer's commitment to advance to the next step (that might be purchasing a product or service, agree to a next meeting, etc.). There are many ways to obtain this commitment and negotiate an agreement. This module addresses several key styles and strategies.

- A discussion and practice of closing styles
- Negotiation strategies
- Post-call analysis (what worked and what didn't)
- Follow-up (following through on any actions promised)
- Ongoing commitment (checking in with customer periodically to see how product/service is working for them)