



SALES TRAINING

The following pages are filled with good sales tips, samples, and advice.
Use them to help keep yourself on track.



1

Sales as Service

Bringing value to customers

There are many approaches to selling and most, if not all, *can* be effective. But after many decades of telephone selling, a couple of truths have emerged. One is that people everywhere are predisposed to dread calls from telephone sales reps. The other is that it doesn't *have* to be this way.



Customers all have unique desires, needs, and problems.*

**By customers we mean both real customers (those who have already given you a lot of money) and prospective customers (those you hope will be giving you a lot of money in the near future).*

Service-oriented selling aims to achieve one or more of the following three objectives:

- *Fulfill a customer's desire*
- *Meet a customer's need*
- *Solve a customer's problem*

That's it. *What distinguishes service-oriented selling from other approaches is that the primary aim is to be of service.* If there's no desire, need, or problem on the part of the customer, there really is no customer.

Your job is to uncover each customer's desire, need, or problem, match it to a product or service of your organization, and persuade the customer to make the purchase. In this way, you serve by selling.

When done right, telephone selling is a lot of fun.

Service-oriented selling is an intrinsically rewarding profession. Simply put, there is something in the human psyche that derives satisfaction from serving the needs of others. It doesn't matter if that need is as colossal as a new data storage system for an organization of 7000 people or as minute as a lower monthly phone bill for a household of one. *It feels good to be of service!*



During The Great Depression, the price of Cadillacs was lowered to make them more affordable so more people would buy. The result? Sales dropped even further. The reason? To many people, the value of a Cadillac was prestige. When the price was lowered, the perceived value was gone.

Value added

If you take the approach that selling is about discovering desires, needs, and problems—and then offering solutions—you'll find that you feel pretty good at the end of the day, end of the week, and end of the year. Why? Because ***you've spent your time and energy adding value to people's lives.***

This value can take many forms—material, emotional, intellectual, etc. On the next page are some universal values that inspire people to buy various products and services.

value (val' yoo), n.
worth, merit, or
usefulness; any
one of a number of
things you want
more of in your life.

The ultimate purpose of business is not, or should not be, simply to make money. Nor is it merely a system of making and selling things. The promise of business is to increase the general well-being of humankind through service, a creative invention, and ethical philosophy.

—Paul Hawken
The Ecology of Commerce



2

Know Your Stuff



To be a successful salesperson, you need to have a deep understanding of the products and services you sell.

Matching features and benefits to customer needs

One of the surest ways to achieve success in selling is to know what you have and to know what it does. ***Good selling practices require deep product knowledge and the ability to quickly and accurately match products to customer needs.***

In this unit, you'll learn about features, benefits, and customer needs.

These concepts are closely related to one another. Here's one way to keep them straight:

Every product has **features**—characteristics or parts that ultimately lead to . . .

Benefits—ways in which the product brings value to the customer. Benefits serve . . .

Customer needs—problems that need to be solved, desires that can be fulfilled, or needs that can be met.

How do you know what the desires, needs, and problems of your customers are? There are a few different ways to find out:

- Your organization may have market research data that highlights what's important to your potential customers.
- Some needs are pretty universal: almost everyone wants to save time, save money, look better, etc. Keep in mind, however, that even among these universal needs, some will be more important than others to each individual customer.



Different strokes for different folks! Be sure to ask your prospects what's important to them, rather than assume. We don't all see things in the same light!

- Asking your customers what's important to them is one of the essential steps of the sales process.

What, so what, and that's what

Once you've determined what your customer's desires, needs, or problems are, the next step is to decide how they can be met by the product or service you represent.

As you learned earlier, **features** are characteristics or parts of a product that ultimately lead to **benefits** for customers. For example, a compact disc player (product) might have a continuous play function (feature) that allows the listener to hear music continually (benefit).

Customers buy *benefits* not *features*.

Often a feature doesn't mean anything to a potential buyer until the salesperson points out the benefit associated with the feature.

The ability to easily translate features into benefits and to match these benefits to customer needs is one of the most important skills there is in the field of sales. Following are some further examples of features and benefits:

Product:	Hair gel
Feature:	Dehumidifying ingredient
Benefit:	Smooths frizzy hair in humid weather so you look great
Product:	Direct deposit
Feature:	Paycheck deposited electronically
Benefit:	Saves you from having to go to the bank in person
Product:	Cellular phone service
Feature:	Automatic voice mail when phone is in use
Benefit:	Keeps you from missing important calls



12 gigabytes?
So what!

A somewhat inelegant but effective way to translate features into benefits is to ask, "So what?" after describing a feature.

12 gigabytes!

Q: So what?

A: So you can keep thousands of documents without slowing down the computer.

Five cents a minute for long distance!

Q: So what?

A: So you can call friends and family without going broke!

Sun-protection factor of 30!

Q: So what?

A: So you can stay out in the sun longer without getting burned!

Get the picture? Good.

Now, here's a tip: When pointing out benefits to your customers, don't say "so what?" Instead, use a phrase such as:

What this means to you is . . .

This allows you to . . .

Remember:

If you sound confident about your product, your customer will have confidence in you.



Wrapping It Up

Opening a call



FUN ON THE
PHONE WILL
TRANSLATE
INTO MONEY
IN YOUR
POCKET.

As you've already learned, the aim of service-oriented selling is to fulfill a desire, meet a need, or solve a problem. It's simple. Make friends and you will make sales.

Opening a Call to a Current Customer

1. Greet the customer
2. State the purpose of the call
3. Present a compelling reason to buy
4. Ask the first question

If you have fun talking to the customer, the customer will have fun talking with you!

Closing the call

Once you've secured commitment to your call objective, you're ready to close the call. Finally!

In service-oriented sales, closing is a four-step process:

Closing

1. Tell the customer what to expect, and when
2. Tell the customer what he or she needs to do
3. Thank the customer
4. End on a positive note

Closing is a simple and basic skill, but the importance of each step should not be underestimated.