

PROFESSIONAL SALESMANSHIP

Chapter 9

Making the sales call: creating and communicating values

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LEARNING OUTCOMES

After completing this module, you should be able to:

- Explain the distinction among features, potential benefits, and confirmed benefits, and their significance in the sales process centered around benefits.
- Create comprehensive sales pitches by combining feature descriptions with corresponding benefits.
- Evaluate the benefits of incorporating response-checks during sales presentations.

LEARNING OUTCOMES

After completing this module, you should be able to:

- Enumerate and elaborate on various types of presentation tools and sales aids that can enhance the effectiveness of a presentation.
- Outline the four stages of the SPES method for efficiently leveraging sales aids during presentations.
- Discuss specific factors to consider when delivering sales presentations to audiences.

FACE-TO-FACE WITH THE CUSTOMER: SALESPERSON BEHAVIOR IS KEY TO SUCCESS

EXHIBIT 7.1 Keys to Effective Sales Dialogue and Presentations

1. Sales dialogue and presentations should be guided by at least one major objective that requires customer action as a result of the presentation.
2. Sales dialogue and presentations should have a clear, easy to follow structure. The use of the Sales Dialogue and Presentation Planning Template (see Module 6) provides such a structure.
3. Understand customer needs before making a complete sales presentation.
4. Focus on needs and buying motives that the customer confirms as being important.
5. Present the solution, or value proposition, in terms of benefits that the customer will experience as a result of making a purchase.
6. Seek confirmation from the customer that the benefits offered are important to the customer, and that your proposition can deliver them.
7. Plan for, and encourage, customer interaction. Strive for a productive two-way dialogue, which can be achieved through active listening and questioning.
8. Use audiovisuals and other sales tools to reinforce key points, but do not let technology and sales tools overwhelm the message.
9. Guard against using annoying mannerisms and statements. Be positive and specific.
10. Be prepared for success. Make it easy for the customer to make a purchase.

NEEDS-GAP ANALYSIS: SELECTING APPROPRIATE CUSTOMER OFFERINGS BY ASSESSING NEEDS

- Need alone is not sufficient
- Using a questioning sequence such as SPIN or ADAPT

CREATING VALUE: LINKING SOLUTIONS TO NEEDS

1. How buyer needs will be met or how an opportunity can be realized as a result of a purchase;
2. how the product features translate, in a functional sense, into benefits for the buyer; and
3. why the buyer should purchase from you as opposed to a competitive salesperson.

BENEFIT SELLING: FEATURES, POTENTIAL BENEFITS, AND CONFIRMED BENEFITS

- potential benefits
- confirmed benefits

EXHIBIT 7.2 Features/Potential Benefits/Confirmed Benefits

Salesperson in golf shop selling Titleist golf balls to a weekend golfer.		Confirmed Benefit?	Explanation
Feature:	Solid 1.58" diameter core		
Potential Benefit:	Higher initial velocity and launch angle.	No	The typical weekend golf customer would not immediately see how the benefit of higher velocity and launch angle will benefit him or her.
Feature:	Solid 1.58" diameter core		
Potential Benefit:	Provides more distance on shots for the typical golfer and lowers your score.	Yes	Longer shots and lower scores are a primary interest of the typical weekend golfer. Customers can immediately understand the benefit to themselves.
Selling a new Frito-Lay snack to a regional supermarket chain.		Confirmed Benefit?	Explanation
Feature:	Daily delivery		
Potential Benefit:	Retailer can reduce inventory costs.	No	This prospective buyer considers inventory costs a regular cost of doing business. The potential benefit is not perceived as being important.
Feature:	Daily delivery		
Potential Benefit:	Assures product freshness, which will lead to high customer satisfaction.	Yes	Prospective customer places tremendous emphasis on customer satisfaction. Consequently, this potential benefit is confirmed as being valuable.

BENEFIT SELLING: FEATURES, POTENTIAL BENEFITS, AND CONFIRMED BENEFITS

- Selling points
- Sales support available

ENCOURAGING BUYER FEEDBACK

- check-backs and response-checks
- increased buyer involvement
- buyer's purchase commitment

EXHIBIT 7.3 Illustrative Examples of Response-Checks

- “How does this sound to you?”
- “Does this make sense to you so far?”
- “Would this particular feature be useful to you in your current operations?”
- “What do you think?”
- “So this is something that would be valuable to you?”
- “Isn’t that great?”
- “Do you like this color?”
- “From your comment, it sounds like you would want the upgraded memory. Is that correct?”
- “Does that answer your concern?”
- “Would this be an improvement over what you are doing right now?”
- “Is this what you had in mind?”

source: Ingram, et.al. (2008) Professional Selling A trust-based Approach 4th edition. pp 188

SALES TOOLS FOR MAXIMIZING PRESENTATION EFFECTIVENESS

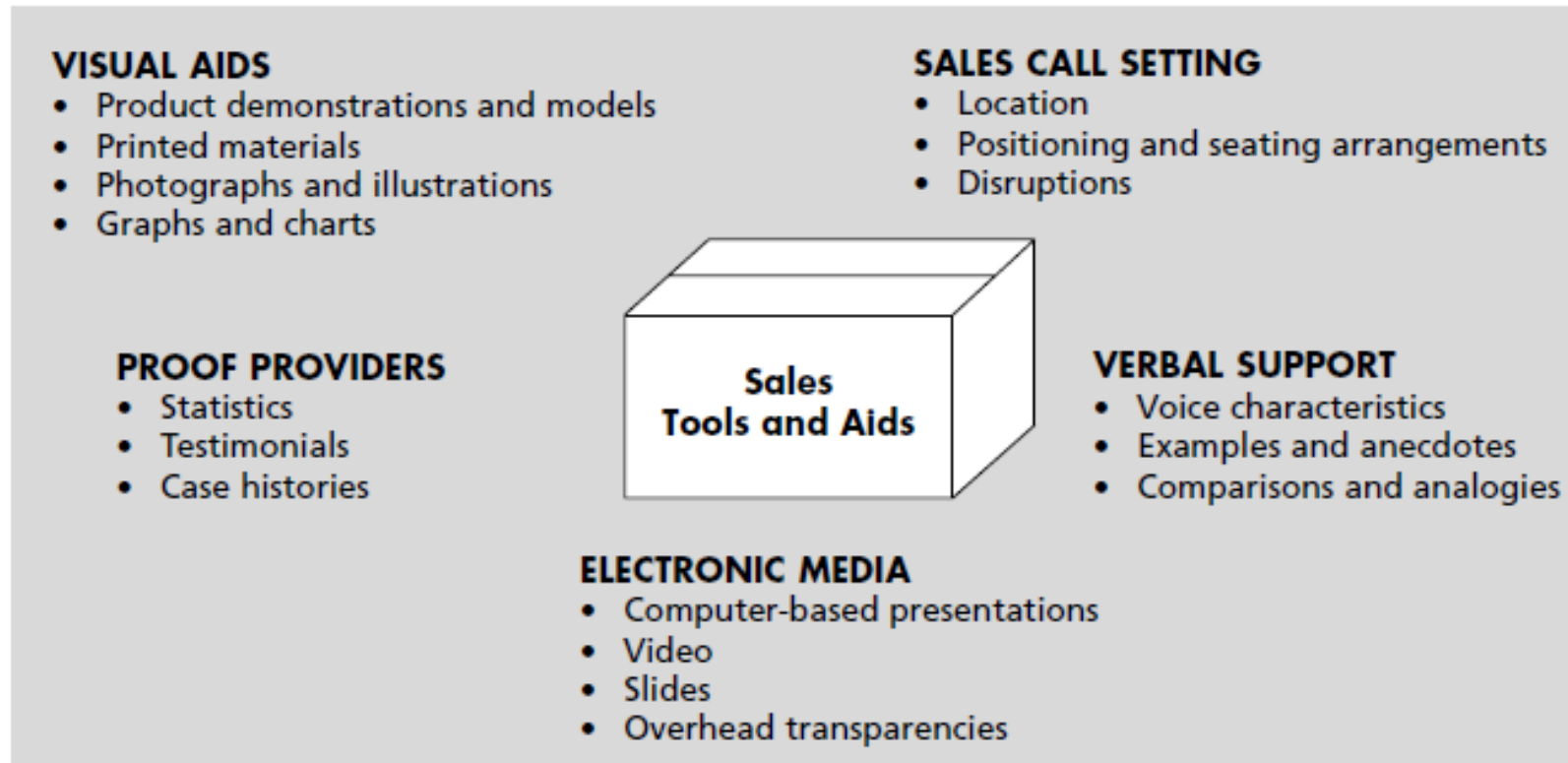
Based on what the salesperson envisions, he or she should consider several questions to arrive at a decision on what tools to incorporate:

- “How might the presentation be made stronger?”
- “What tools would help to capture and hold the buyer’s attention?”
- “What sales aids could aid the buyer’s understanding and retention?”
- “Which sales aids would better evidence and build the buyer’s believability of the benefits and value offered by this solution?”

Verbal Support

FIGURE 7.1

Key Sales Tools and Aids



source: Ingram, et.al. (2008) *Professional Selling A trust-based Approach 4th edition*. pp 190

Voice Characteristics

- Sound of your voice
- Voice quality
- Varying and changing pitch
- Changes in volume

Examples and Anecdotes

- brief description of a specific instance
- story describing a specific incident or occurrence

Comparisons and Analogies

- Similarities between two points
- Comparisons add interest
- Effective in providing proof

Sales Call Setting

- Will the atmosphere be supportive and nonthreatening?
- Where would the prospect feel more open to ideas and willing to listen?
- What location will minimize potential distractions?

Location

Where the sales presentation takes place can have a strong positive or negative influence on its success.

Positioning and Seating Arrangements

- many sales calls are actually made standing up
- aware of interpersonal communication
- buyer's nonverbal cues
- around a small table

Disruptions

- occurrences that distract the buyer's attention
- can be directly controlled or at least influenced
- proactively influence sources of potential disruptions

How to Handle Disruptions EXHIBIT 7.5

- Be patient and observe the situation. Look and listen for verbal and nonverbal cues. Some disruptions are momentary distractions while others demand the prospect's attention and may take some time.

If Disruption Is Momentary in Nature and Controllable

- Redirect the customer's attention pointing out an interesting detail or asking a question.
- Restate the selling points of interest that were being discussed just prior to the disruption.
- Make sure you are covering details that the customer perceives as being important; if not, change to a different selling point that would be of more importance to the buyer.
- Incorporate the use of sales aids to increase the buyer's involvement and participation in the dialogue.

If Disruption Requires More of Buyer's Attention and Is Not Controllable

- Suggest that it might be better to continue at a time more convenient for the buyer.
- Set and confirm a specific day and time to return.
- Be slightly early for the next appointment.
- Briefly summarize where you were in the previous appointment.
- Restate and gain the buyer's reconfirmation of the features and benefits that had already been covered prior to the disruption.
- Continue the dialogue, making sure to cover details the customer perceives as being important; if not, change to a different selling point that would be of more importance to the buyer.

Proof Providers

- Statistics
- Testimonials
- Case Histories

Statistics

- lend believability
- providing evidence for claims
- fairly represent all sides

Testimonials

- form of statements
- the power of testimonials
- fairly represent all sides
- matched according to relevance and recognition

Case Histories

- testimonial in story or anecdotal form
- proof for a given statement
- break the monotony
- be short and to the point lasting

Visual Aids

- Product demonstrations and Models
- Printed materials
- Photographs and illustrations

Product Demonstrations and Models

- hands-on experience
- applicable to all types of products and services

Printed Materials

- well-designed printed materials
- summarize important features
- highlight the selected areas

Photographs and Illustrations

- relatively inexpensive
- Line drawings and diagrams

Charts and Graphs

- relationships in terms of bars, lines, circles, or squares
- effectively supports statements of superiority

Electronic Media

- Computer-Based Presentations
- Video
- Slides
- Overhead Transparencies

Using Tools and Sales Aids in the Presentation

- State the Selling Point and Introduce the Sales Aid
- Present the Sales Aid
- Explain the Sales Aid
- Summarize

GROUP SALES PRESENTATIONS

- presents special challenges and opportunities
- expect tough questions
- presell

Sales Tactics for Selling to Groups

- Arrival Tactics
- Eye Contact
- Communications Tips

Handling Questions in Group Presentations

- questions fill information gaps
- listen carefully and maintain eye contact
- avoid getting locked into a question-and-answer dialogue
- build on their experience

SUMMARY

- Difference between features, potential benefits, and confirmed benefits and the role that they play in benefits selling
- Complete selling points using feature and benefit statements
- Advantages of using response-checks in the selling presentation

SUMMARY

- Different forms of presentation tools and sales aids that can increase the impact of a presentation
- Four steps of the SPES process for effectively utilizing sales aids in presentations
- Special considerations in making sales presentations to groups

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