The Key to Closing Sales: Building Customer Self-Confidence

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If you ask the neuroscientists, they'll tell you that people buy with their hearts, but they justify their purchases with their brains. In other words, top sales reps get buyers emotionally engaged, then feed them facts and figures that they can use to rationalize their buying decisions to management.

If you manage B2B salespeople, you may be wondering two things:

- First, while we understand that consumers buy on emotion, does this really work with business buyers?
- And second, in an information era when most buyers begin their buyer's journey on the internet, how do you control an emotional sell?

My answer to the first question is yes, emotion works better than you might expect with B2B buyers. What's distinctive about a B2B sale is that you're appealing to different emotional heartstrings.

And second, while it's true that buyers are most likely to begin the sales cycle researching the internet for data about products and services, sooner or later (especially for big purchases), they'll probably approach your reps for more answers. At this point, your salespeople can apply emotional sales tactics.

Let me explain.

Build Buyer Self-Confidence

Back during the 1960s and 70s, New York City clothier and entrepreneur Sy Syms declared, "An educated consumer is our best customer."

What Syms couldn't have envisioned at the time was the internet and how easy and cost-effective it's become to "educate" the customer. Between marketing and sales, we have managed to inundate buyers with white papers, case studies, blogs, social media posts, podcasts, webinars, videos and more. It's not surprising that many buyers succumb to information overload. What's more, they're not only researching your company's content but also seeking out your competition's information, third-party and industry opinions and word-of-mouth testimonials of customers.

With so much content to sift through, top producers understand their job is less about adding to the glut of information and more about demystifying the buzz. Or, as Gartner calls it, "sense-making." In short, they empower buyers by simplifying information, helping them to understand the basic message and pulling out a few salient facts.

But that's not all. Savvy reps are appealing to buyers' desire for success both in their careers and in the eyes of management. Among top producers, it's less about selling products and services and more about selling success and equipping the buyers to own the buying decision.

Competent reps build the buyers' self-confidence, empowering them emotionally and logically to make an educated buying decision.

The result: buyers are confident about their choice and know that it's right for the

company and their future. They should harbor no resentment that they were coerced or given the hard sell. As Gartner points out, self-confident buyers tend to go big—meaning they may close the deal faster, make a more significant purchase and return to buy more.

Build a Relationship with the Buyer

Perhaps you're thinking, "This sounds good in theory, but can my reps get close enough to their prospects to boost their self-confidence?"

The answer, again, is yes, but it takes work to build a deep connection with buyers. Building buyers' self-confidence isn't a magic formula; it's a matter of establishing a relationship that instills trust and, ultimately, customer loyalty.

Top producers follow a simple formula:

- **Know your Buyer**

Before demystifying the buzz and information overload, you need to have a solid understanding of the prospective customer. What are their expectations? Do they have specific problems, fears, wants and needs? How do they define success?

Do your research, learn from past customer experiences and engage buyers in meaningful conversation. Above all, listen. And remember, you're not selling to a business. You're selling to a human being or a team of people. Make every touchpoint or interaction about the buyers, their priorities, their desires and their need for success.

- **Appeal to Their Values**

Another way customers can feel comfortable about the buyer-seller relationship is when they share some common ground. You want to be a company that reinforces their values, ethics and how they perceive themselves. Buyers have self-confidence when they are going with a company that reflects their beliefs.

- **Reduce Confusion**

Again, you want to make a special effort to demystify their learning process. Give prospects simple talking points they can share with others in their organization. Be available to answer questions. And while the human connection is essential,

technology can help you reinforce buyer self-confidence at scale. Don’t simply send buyers to your website. Instead, direct them to specific content that reinforces and simplifies your message. In short, use your digital tools and content deliberately.

- **Become the Trusted Advisor**

As you build your human connection, keep in mind that you are not building a relationship simply to get the first sale. You want to become a trusted advisor—the buyer’s go-to company—someone they trust and feel they can count on for information and support. When you provide peace of mind, build self-confidence and reinforce success, buyers come back again and again.

- **Be the Safe Choice**

This point sort of wraps up and reinforces the other four. When you understand the buyer, are socially and ethically acceptable, demystify the buying decision and become a trusted advisor, you have engendered buyer self-confidence. And that makes you the safe choice with buyers and their managers.

When your sales reps learn to move beyond selling products and services, focus on the buyers and helping them build the knowledge and self-confidence to make good buying decisions, they close more sales and create customers with an increased lifetime value. These buyers often become allies who tell their colleagues about your company.

Call us at +1 813-320-0500 (US) or +39 06 978446 60 (EMEA) or contact us online for help meeting your sales goals.

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