

COMPETE SELLING

Secrets of Top
Sales Performers



Compete Selling by SalesGym, LLC

41 East 400 North #138, Logan, UT 84321

© 2018 – SalesGym, LLC

All rights reserved. No portion of this book may be reproduced in any form without permission from the publisher, except as permitted by U.S. copyright law. For permissions contact:

Mark@salesgym.com

Editing: Glenn McMahan

Cover design: Andy Meaden and Ross Robinson

Text design: Andy Meaden

Print ISBN: 978-1-7320895-0-1

Ebook ISBN: 978-1-7320895-1-8

COMPETE SELLING

The definitive quick handbook on HOW to be more assertive on sales calls.

What readers are saying about *Compete Selling* ...

How to be more assertive, and build relationships and trust at the same time.

What every sales professional needs to know to sell in our modern, internet-driven world.

Finally, a book on practical ideas and how to apply them immediately to increase sales.

One of the clearest presentations of exactly what top performing salespeople do differently and how to apply their approaches to generate better results.

I read this amazing book in one sitting. It's packed with great ideas and, more importantly, how to make those ideas work selling my services.

Opening Thoughts from the Authors ...

Getting better at sales is a lot like getting better at a sport. In sales, knowledge is not power until it is turned into skill, which we call verbal sales fluency. It takes the right ideas, practiced the right way, ideally with a strong practice coach to steadily improve. Top performing sales professionals are simply better at building trust, explaining their products and services in a compelling way, and being assertive in a way that opens up opportunity and doesn't come off as pushy or obnoxious.

Compete Selling is the first book we're aware of that actually shows sales professionals how to be more assertive in the right way, to blend the popular insight-challenger selling approaches with the more traditional consultative selling model that builds trust and credibility. Everyone says they want to be more assertive, but no one wants to be a jerk in the process. *Compete Selling* is a thorough guide to the best way to challenge, lead with insights, ask better, more provocative questions, and literally change the buying criteria of prospects and customers in a favorable way.

We (the authors of *Compete Selling*) have been working with sales teams for a combined one hundred years, having met and trained thousands of sales professionals from most of the Fortune 500 companies over the years. We've also worked with small and mid-sized companies, and one thing we've learned, for certain, when it comes to helping salespeople improve sales, there are several bad habits that get in the way their success:

- Talking too much on sales calls and not listening enough
- Not asking the right questions to open up the right sales conversation
- Talking about their products/services in a way that doesn't have maximum impact
- Not talking to enough prospects and customers that have the authority to make big purchasing decisions
- Lacking the ability to be assertive in the right way that opens up new thinking and opportunity on sales calls
- Poor verbal skills when it comes to communicating their value proposition and, competitive advantages and an inability to use that information throughout the sales process

We started the SalesGym in 2016 to test and refine a much more effective way to break those bad habits and build the skills and habits of top performers. Day after day, we listen to our clients' top performers, paying close attention to how they interact with prospects and customers. Then, we teach the rest

of the team to learn and apply those approaches. *Compete Selling* is a direct outcome of all those thousands of hours over the years spent studying the gap between top performers and everyone else.

Compete Selling contains a simple and distilled version of everything we've learned along the way. It all starts with MASTERING the sales messaging that will give you the ingredients to build more sales with. This book will show you why top performers communicate differently and how you can use their approaches. You'll learn how to ask better questions, when and how to be more assertive, and how to close for bigger outcomes.

We have also built a companion learning system on competeselling.com for you to use to go deeper into the practice system to get better at selling.

Thank you for your interest in *Compete Selling* and we look forward to hearing from you!

Contents

1	Compete Selling Overview	7
2	The Compete Selling Sales Process	17
3	Sales Messaging	28
4	Pre-Call Planning	42
5	Opening the Call	45
6	Discovery 2.0	53
7	The Discovery Summary	73
8	Paradigm Busting Solutions	79
9	Responding to Concerns / Gaining Commitment	92
10	The Compete Selling Amplifiers	101

One

Compete Selling Overview



Effective selling is an art and a science. Numbers matter in terms of seeing enough of the right people who lead to more sales. This includes closing ratios, market share, and a gazillion other data points that are tracked in complex pipeline reporting systems all adding up to the numbers game. There are many good books about the science and technology components of selling, and we want to say right up front . . . THAT STUFF IS IMPORTANT.

But that's *not* what this book is about. This book is about what assertive, top performing sales professionals say and do when speaking to a prospect, customer, client, or referral source to generate maximum impact and results. *Compete Selling* is about HOW to be more assertive in sales calls while building trust and influence at a deeper, more impactful level. The book is also about HOW to develop these skills with all the resources you need and a system of practice that will enable you to improve.

Although there are many factors that influence sales results, most sales professionals agree that it comes down to six standout elements:

1. Seeing the right people who can buy a lot of what you sell (activity level)
2. Verbal command of sales messaging including: competitive advantages, differentiating factors, and the value proposition; ability to deliver a powerful message under pressure with confidence and credibility
3. Being skillful at an effective and (when necessary) assertive sales process that works for your business
4. Learning and improving through steady, rigorous practice
5. Utilizing technology, social platforms, communications, and presentation tools to positively amplify your results
6. Discipline, self motivation, and drive to succeed

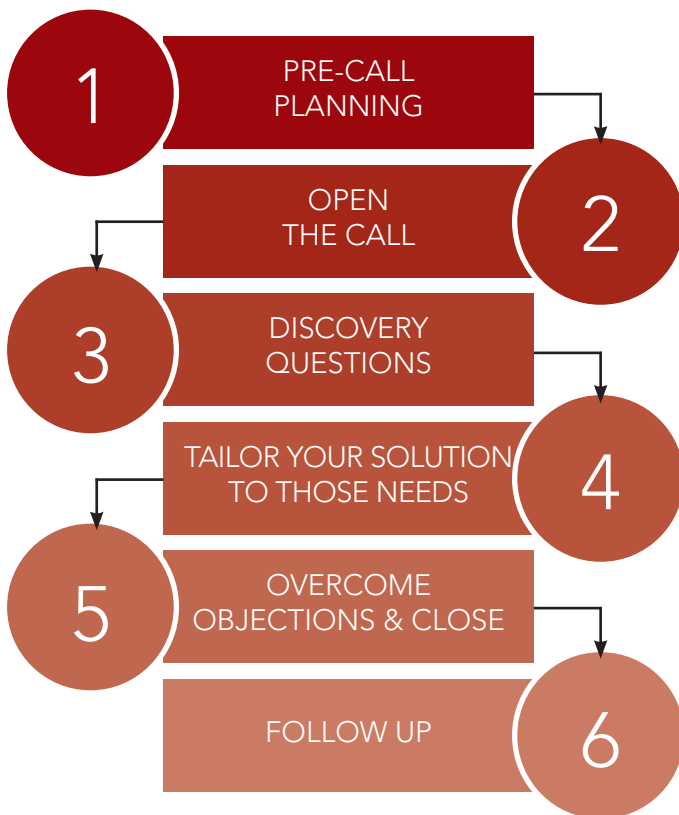
Compete Selling is a real-world improvement system designed to help you develop a more assertive and effective approach to sales calls so that you can generate better, faster sales results. *Compete Selling* is based on the remarkably effective way that highly skilled athletes improve. So, hopefully this book will give you a motivational burst as well.

Better techniques + better practice + better coaching = better results

Professional athletes train and practice every week to get better. The difference between the top golfer on the PGA Tour and all the rest is usually less than one stroke per round, but it takes a lot of practice to get that one stroke

advantage. The fastest sprinter on the planet is a fraction of a second faster than the next ten behind him. The same is true in sales; a small advantage over your competitors will give you a huge boost in results. *Compete Selling* provides a powerful way for you to get better results by becoming more confident and assertive when it's needed, and more effective at all aspects of the sales process.

Prior to the economic crisis in 2008-2009, virtually all professional sales teams were trained in one version or another of consultative selling. There were many names for it, with different authors and training groups proclaiming a new and better version; but, for the most part, they boiled down to the same underlying components:



Some of these approaches emphasized complex, multi-influencer strategies, focusing on long-cycle, enterprise selling, and some emphasized a transactional or short-term focus. The general idea was to plan your call, build trust and rapport, ask a lot of good discovery questions, and then tailor a solution that felt “just right” based on what you learned from the prospect. Doing this was seen as a way of minimizing resistance and objections. (From this point forward, we will refer to prospects, clients, customers, referral sources, and influencers as “PCCRs,” to cover all the bases.)

After the 2008-2009 economic shock, a game changing book called *The Challenger Sale* was published. It presented research on why certain types of salespeople generate consistently better results. Extensive research indicated that relationship-focused salespeople using consultative selling were not getting the best results . . . not even close. The salespeople who were leading the way used an assertive and provocative approach called “challenger selling.” We prefer the term “Highly Assertive Sales Professionals” or “HASPs.” (We’ll use that acronym from this point forward when referring to these assertive, more successful sales professionals.) That book had a significant impact on the thinking of sales executives and managers all over the world. Every year since it was published, more and more sales managers started looking for ways to get their salespeople to be more assertive and challenging during sales calls.

The premise underlying this assertive selling style is that, in many cases, the PCCRs simply don’t know what they don’t know. They often use buying criteria that are likely to cause a poor buying decision. HASP selling is less product focused and more focused on changing the thinking or buying criteria first. Those criteria will line-up better with the products and services thereby giving salespeople a significant competitive advantage. It’s not just about who has the best products and services; it’s about the right way to *evaluate and choose* the best products and services. In consultative selling, we assume that PCCRs understand all that. In HASP selling, we assume they don’t, and it makes a big difference.

An example of this would be a financial advisor meeting with a high-networth PCCR who is reasonably happy with his or her current advisor. A consultative approach would ask a lot of questions about needs, financial goals, retirement plans, college savings for kids, etc., and then come up with a plan to help the PCCR achieve those goals better than a current advisor. However, it’s likely that the “new” plan or solution will be similar to the PCCR’s current plan. That’s because the PCCR has probably given the same information to the consultative seller, including the exact same needs and concerns he gave the current advisor.

The HASP approach would be different. Instead of asking questions only about the investor's financial needs and goals, this salesperson would look for the thinking behind the financial plan and the investor's unwitting mistakes. The HASP might make the investor aware of the unnecessary risks of the current investment approach, such as the big mistake of not using a more creative approach to trusts and tax strategies. Once the HASP gets the PCCR to doubt the current advisor's advice and plan, he has created a big advantage. He has essentially CHANGED THE THINKING and decision-making criteria of the investor in his favor before presenting a product or solution.

Another example is a salesperson who sells digital advertising services. He is meeting with an owner of seven high-end restaurants who has decided to take a look at several advertising agencies for her upcoming year's marketing strategy. A consultative seller would come in and find out she wants to spend the bulk of her budget on radio, TV, and print, just as she's done for the last twenty years. The restaurant owner just wants better results. So the consultative seller listens to her strategy and then comes up with similar plans on how to execute her objectives, focusing on her long-held beliefs that TV and radio advertising is the best strategy.

The HASP would spend more time understanding why the restaurant owner wants to spend 90 percent of her budget on radio, TV, and print, and then challenge the validity of that marketing approach. Instead, he offers insight into the explosive results, measurements, and flexibility that is possible if the restaurant owner would allocate more of her budget to digital media and, in particular, mobile, which is barely on her radar. He shows the owner how mobile can reach big-spending tourists and business travelers in a way that traditional advertising can't. More importantly, he explains why changing her thinking about her advertising budget will help her reach her goal of opening three more restaurants. The owner's decision-making criteria are rocked by this interaction. She rethinks her basic assumptions and realizes that her strategy is not keeping up with the trends. Just as important, she becomes annoyed that her current agency has not made her aware of these trends. Our HASP now has an advantage over his competitors because he has provided a proposal that expands the restaurant owner's digital advertising allocation with a bigger emphasis on mobile to bring in new customers that can't be reached with her old marketing strategy.

A third example would be Food Dimensions, a company that manages food and cafeteria services for large corporate clients. The HASP gets an appointment with the person in a large bank that makes the decisions about which company manages the food services on the bank's corporate campus for six thousand employees. Instead of asking questions about cost

and efficiency (the current provider's forte), he asks questions about how the bank is recruiting and attracting top tech talent. He shows the decision-maker how critical food services can be in the strategy to attract this talent. He describes how the cafeteria and coffee stations around the buildings are an essential strategic recruiting and employee retention investment. This gives the decision-maker a whole new vision of how food services could be more strategically positioned at the bank.

The HASP also compares the budget of the bank to leading tech companies, and he makes the case that it is woefully inadequate in the ultra-competitive war to attract top tech talent. Using videos, he shows the decision-maker how Food Dimensions has served high-profile companies with a food service strategy that brings employees together and encourages more collaboration and innovation. After arranging for the decision-maker to visit a Food Dimensions client, a tech company, the HASP points out how ordinary and uninteresting the bank's current menu and overall cafeteria design is, and how this problem is hurting the bank's recruiting strategy. The HASP criticizes the bank's current food strategy, but he does it in a helpful way. It turns out to be a game changing insight for the buyer who then makes a decision to change the bank's strategy in a way that lines up better with Food Dimension's competitive advantages and weakens the position of Food Dimension's competitor. This allows his proposal, which comes in at a whopping 28 percent HIGHER than the current supplier's fees, to be more desirable because cost is no longer the main issue.

The consultative selling approach would have been to focus on what was important to the decision-maker. That approach would make a sale nearly impossible, because the bank's current provider was the well established low cost and efficiency leader. As long as the decision-maker's focus was on cost and efficiency, the Food Dimensions salesperson was at a severe disadvantage.

A final example would be of a small upstart CRM company going up against the industry standard behemoths that have most of the market share. Instead of asking questions about needs, features, reporting, and other capabilities that the salesperson knows she doesn't have an advantage in, the HASP instead asks questions about how well the company utilizes its current CRM system. She surveys the sales and customer service teams to determine their attitudes and adoption of the current system and its capabilities. She presents survey after survey of employees in the industry who utilize less than 20 percent of the features they're paying for. She also demonstrates the yearly cost of all that underutilization. Then, she presents clear information and research on how personalized training and support is more important than a ridiculously complex set of features that no one uses. This helps the decision-

maker to realize how poorly the company utilizes its current system. As the HASP emphasizes ease of use, customized training, and a long-term adoption strategy, she demonstrates the strength and competitive advantage of her much smaller upstart company. She has changed the thinking of the decision-maker in her favor.

The HASP method is about challenging the thinking of PCCRs with more assertive questions, ideas, and insights that are contrary to conventional thinking. This approach involves an interaction style that shakes the PCCR out of typical decision-making models or paradigms in a positive way. It's more assertive, provocative, and risky because it can fracture trust if not done skillfully.

It's important to understand that *The Challenger Sale* did not invent a new sales process; the authors simply observed and documented a selling approach that top performers have been using for years. Likewise, the founders of the SalesGym have worked with hundreds of sales teams from top companies and we have identified some surprising misconceptions when it comes to consultative selling and insight-led, assertive selling. We've met many HASPs that are far bolder and assertive during sales calls. Some have produced better results and some haven't.

What *The Challenger Sale* didn't really report was that the same assertive approaches that top HASP performers use can also alienate PCCRs if the approach is not done skillfully. In other words, there are many poor performers that use assertive HASP methods with less skill and get terrible results. Top performers are better when it comes to interpersonal skills, consultative selling skills, and communicating the essential sales messaging of their value propositions, competitive advantages, and differentiating factors. Without these critical skills, HASP methods can feel aggressive and pushy. This is critical to understand. More often than not, the highly assertive salespeople that generate the best results are also FANTASTIC at consultative selling. So, in the challenger model, the "challenger" type of top performer is also a relationship builder. Assertive selling approaches require better interpersonal, sales messaging, and consultative skills.

Compete Selling is about developing a success accelerating set of skills that is built and reinforced with steady practice.

COMPETE SELLING



This graphic illustrates that the foundation of effective selling is the mastery of persuasive and concise verbal sales messaging around your value proposition, competitive advantages, and differentiating factors. Then you need to be good at consultative selling skills that build relationships. These skills will allow you to learn and use the more assertive selling approaches that the best HASPs use. Finally, you need a practice system for steady, weekly practice, just like top athletes.

Compete Selling is about the integration of consultative selling and the more assertive HASP approaches, and the book shows you exactly how to do it. It is the complete package of what you need to master to become a top performer.

- Mastery of sales messaging
- Mastery of consultative selling
- Mastery of more assertive, HASP approaches that challenge and change the thinking of PCCRs
- HOW to practice, improve, and gain a big advantage on your competitors the same way elite athletes do it

We're going to go deeper into all four of these areas so you can learn what top performers are doing, and more importantly, learn step-by-step how to

do it yourself. Given the size and scope of this topic, this book could easily stretch to more than five hundred pages, but we're not going to ask you to go through that kind of torture. We're going to keep it short, concise, and easy to get through quickly. This book is your ticket to more information and details available at our website, competeselling.com. The book and website were developed together to give you the absolute best learning experience possible. We have audio and video examples and demonstrations of these approaches in an interactive format that will help you develop skills that a book simply can't give you. Competeselling.com will have training guides, practice tools, and worksheets, and the SalesGym has the highly trained practice coaches that can give you the same training advantage elite athletes have.

If you'd like more information on the team that put this book together, our backgrounds are on competeselling.com. We're all lifelong salespeople who have started and built sales training consulting companies. We train and coach sales teams everyday in the SalesGym and have been doing this for over twenty-five years with small and medium-size companies. We also work with many of the largest, most recognizable companies in the world, such as Google, American Funds, Electronic Arts, Capital Group, BlackRock, Facebook, Anthem, and PIMCO.

This book is written in my (Michael St. Lawrence) voice to give it a coherent narrative, but the ideas come from all of us. You'll find helpful "pro-tips" throughout the book from our founding team at the SalesGym.

We founded the SalesGym in 2016 as a place where sales teams can practice with highly skilled practice coaches (similar to personal trainers in a gym, for instance) that help them break bad habits and learn how to use consultative selling along with more assertive *Compete Selling* approaches to generate maximum results. Our team has, collectively, more than one hundred years of experience working with thousands of salespeople from all over the world. We've created a better, more effective way to sell, and more importantly, a better way to practice and train the same way elite athletes do.

We see a massive gap between salespeople who understand the concepts (most do) and salespeople who communicate their message with fluency, confidence, and conviction every time, when the money is on the line (most don't). The SalesGym was created to close that gap and help more salespeople win more often. Top athletes don't practice for two or three days a couple times a year and expect to perform well in competition. Amazingly, a lot of salespeople go to occasional sales seminars, maybe once or twice a year and then spend little time practicing to get better. Athletes go to the gym and the practice field frequently, and so do top salespeople.

Because we practice with sales teams every day in the SalesGym, our experience is very practical and not academic. We're in the trenches with real salespeople and sales managers preparing for sales calls happening today and tomorrow. We know your challenges, the reality of how competitive it is and how important it is to master the fundamentals in this book. We bring them to you with enthusiasm and the assurance that they can be a springboard for you to become a top performer in every possible definition of the word!

Two

The Compete Selling Sales Process



The Compete Sales Process integrates consultative selling with more assertive HASP elements needed to challenge the thinking of PCCRs that often don't realize their thinking is causing poor decisions. *Compete Selling* reduces the risks of overly aggressive and pushy sales approaches that can fracture trust and rapport.

Although there are a number of different consultative models out there, let's take another quick look at the most fundamental stripped-down version:



There are more processes within each of these steps, but these are the essentials. Pre-call planning and follow-up occur before and after the call, and the four steps in the middle happen in the sales call itself. Even short prospecting calls to generate interest and an appointment for a longer interaction follow a similar process. Although this book is not geared toward prospecting (that's a big topic), the short, effective sales messaging that we'll cover in the next chapter is a major piece of prospecting for new business. Let's take a quick look at each of the six steps of the consultative sales process.

Pre-Call Planning

This is the planning needed to get ready for the call, including identifying the goals and desired outcomes, developing the agenda, and establishing the questions and possible key points to emphasize. This step also includes researching the company and the PCCR, and rehearsing to get ready for the call. We often need to review the notes from the last meeting in order to summarize where we are. It's also helpful to review personal information, such as names of kids, where the PCCR went to college, etc., to have details fresh in our mind for rapport building purposes.

Opening the Call

Opening the call has to do with the preliminary pleasantries, transitioning to an effective agenda, gaining agreement on the agenda, and anything we do before we start asking questions or presenting a solution. This can mean introductions of people in the meeting, a recap of our last meeting, and a brief company overview, if needed.

Discovery / Questions

Generally, after we open the call, we either ask discovery questions or, if we've already finished that step and are returning with a solution presentation, we'll do a quick recap of needs to get into the flow of our last meeting. Ideally, discovery includes asking interesting and relevant questions that increase understanding of the PCCR's needs, thinking, and decision-making influences while building rapport and lowering resistance.

Solution Presentation

After we've completed the discovery step and confirmed our understanding of the PCCR's needs, we must respond with a product/service presentation or solution. This is where we tailor our proposed ideas in a way that is hopefully appealing. Consultative selling is designed to reduce concerns and objections by tailoring the solution so well that the PCCR is excited about it. In many cases, however, it doesn't work out that way; the PCCR often has questions and/or concerns, which is when the friction in the interaction generally increases.

Responding to Concerns / Gaining Commitment

In this step, we identify what concerns the PCCR may have and then respond to them. This step is similar to the entire sales process. We typically ask more questions, continue to tailor a solution, and then recommend an action step to test for commitment. Depending on the product and length of the sales cycle, the commitment we seek might be an actual order or a step toward an order. Either way, we need something for the PCCR to say yes to at this stage. We need to move the ball forward.

Follow-Up

This is everything that happens after the call to keep commitments or promises, and to provide additional information and decision influencing evidence to keep the process moving. In longer sales cycles, follow-up, including summaries and recaps, is a key part of making sure action steps and recommendations get done.

That was roughly five hundred words to describe a very complex interaction that literally thousands of pages have been written about. There is much more to it, obviously, and we're going to go into more depth in this book, too; but from an overview perspective, that's how consultative selling works. Virtually every consultative selling model out there is built on this simple interactive approach.

This process is diagnostic in nature, similar to what we hopefully experience when we go to a physician to seek a cure for an illness. Ideally, the doctors we see spend a moment helping us get comfortable and relaxed. Then they preview what they're going to do, then they ask questions and do tests to diagnose the problem, then they propose a way to cure or fix the problem. Finally, they get us to commit to their recommendation and we decide together what the next step is. That is exactly what the consultative process is all about.

Consultative selling works very well . . . until it doesn't. There are some specific reasons why consultative selling doesn't always work as effectively as it used to.

- Often, the PCCR is very comfortable with the current supplier or provider, and the hassle and risk of switching for what they may see as minimal benefit isn't worth it to them.
- Sometimes, the PCCR is stuck in a way of thinking that prevents them from seeing the value of a new service. This is often the case when a

product or service is new and innovative. The explosion of options and innovations is one of the reasons why consultative sellers aren't generating the good results they used to produce.

- Since 2009, there has been a sharp decrease in trust of institutions. The Internet has made us increasingly skeptical of claims, facts, and evidence. Simultaneously, it is much easier for PCCRs to research the companies they do business with, and they are a lot less patient in the buying process. They expect salespeople to get to the point quicker with less time wasted in the often lengthy discovery step of consultative selling.
- Consultative selling works better when the PCCR is honest. Because everyone is bombarded with advertising and sales calls, a lot of PCCRs are skillful at hiding their needs if they feel it is in their best interest to do so.
- PCCRs will often hide their most important objection because they are uncomfortable bringing it up. Or they hold back as part of a negotiating tactic.
- Consultative selling works best when the PCCR knows what they need and no one else is filling that need. In these cases, it's a perfect fit. When the PCCR doesn't know his or her needs, however, consultative selling is a mismatch.
- Consultative selling is, to a large extent, about building trust and rapport, and lowering resistance. When the PCCR puts out an objection or says something like, "I need some time to think about it," it's often too late to save the sale. PCCRs often make their decisions early in the sales process. Typically, sales pressure comes at the end of the process and PCCRs know how to avoid it.

Our insights from years of studying and working with HASPs, reveal that being more assertive in the discovery/questioning step and presenting more contrarian ideas and insights earlier in the process, well before the solution, will have a better impact on the buyer's decision-making criteria. The sales messaging of HASPs is much more dynamic and persuasive. HASPs know when and how to use messaging that is more provocative and, at times, edgy. There are lots of suggestions in the books that present research about how HASPs operate, but in terms of how to apply and adapt the HASP approach to specific products and services, the books don't offer much.

That's Where **Compete Selling** Comes In!

Compete Selling demonstrates how to BLEND consultative and more assertive HASP selling to get better results.

Now we'll take a look at the strengths of consultative and assertive HASP selling, then at the risks and weaknesses of each approach, and finally at the approach that takes the best of both—*Compete Selling*.

Strengths of Consultative and "HASP" Approaches

Consultative Selling Strengths	Assertive HASP Selling Strengths
<p>The focus is always on building the relationship, strengthening trust, and understanding the customer to tailor a solution based on what they want.</p>	<p>EXTREME verbal mastery of sales messaging, including the value proposition, competitive advantages, and differentiating factors. It all starts here.</p>
<p>The agenda is usually focused on what's most important to the PCCR and, in some cases, the PCCR actually sets the agenda.</p>	<p>In pre-call planning, HASPs determine bold (stretch) and fallback outcomes, and they commit to going after them, regardless of the risk.</p>
<p>A primary objective of consultative selling is to reduce resistance and increase receptivity through a comfortable and rapport building interaction.</p>	<p>The agenda is far more assertive and focused on PCCR biases or beliefs to challenge and change the thinking of the PCCR.</p>
<p>When asked effectively, questions identify exactly what the customer wants, why they want it, and what the solution should be to make the sale.</p>	<p>HASPs intentionally bring up uncomfortable topics that expose erroneous thinking and buying criteria that might cause a bad buying decision.</p>
<p>Trust is built by listening to what matters most to the PCCR and showing that we are focused on those needs.</p>	<p>More provocative questions are carefully thought out and prepared so they can be asked in a way to shake the PCCR out of current thinking.</p>
<p>The solution is built around the prospect's interests, and we use the PCCR's language to explain how our products/services and solutions will solve the PCCR'S problems.</p>	<p>Extreme attention is given to bring in the thinking of other customers that value a different set of buying criteria that generates better results. This is done through skillful use of customer-oriented phrasing.</p>

<p>Ideally, objections and concerns are minimized because the proposed solution is such a good fit.</p>	<p>Likely objections are moved up in the sales process and identified as early as possible so they are addressed before closing or next-step recommendations are made.</p>
<p>Objections are identified, usually after the solution, with questions, listening, and more tailored solutions to overcome them.</p>	<p>Powerful insights and evidence are presented to amplify the risks of a poor decision based on the buying criteria used by the PCCR.</p>
<p>Commitments and next steps are identified and followed-up consistently to continue to build trust.</p>	<p>Recommendations that are easy for a PCCR to accept are prepared in hopes of moving the sales process forward. Every sales call ends with an assertive ask or recommendation.</p>

Each of these approaches have serious weaknesses or risks. Consultative selling is most effective when you have strong rapport and the PCCR trusts you enough to provide honest answers to your questions. This, however, is often NOT the case. Salespeople who give higher priority to building relationships are often uncomfortable asking assertive questions because they don't want to risk damaging rapport. As a result, they often don't discover the resistance factors until it's too late. Finally, if the PCCR only provides limited information, then the salesperson has a reduced ability to talk about big-picture solutions. This locks the salesperson into a more transactional, product-and-service focus, which leaves the bigger opportunity on the table for the competitors. Finally, consultative salespeople who emphasize relationship building are often hesitant to ask for the order when they feel significant resistance is likely from the PCCR.

On the other hand, when a salesperson attempts to use assertive approaches without the skill and experience needed to do it the right way, he or she could run even bigger risks, including:

- The PCCR could become frustrated and reject the salesperson, regardless of how good the ideas, products, or services might be.
- Assertive questions can backfire if they're not set up the right way. The PCCR can shut down and/or give dishonest answers to end the dialogue as quickly as possible.

- If the salesperson does not have strong sales messaging and ability with the consultative sales process, he or she will fail when using more assertive sales approaches.
- HASPs must have objective and credible high-impact insights and evidence to back up new ideas about buying criteria. And if that evidence is too self-serving, the whole process will backfire.
- Assertiveness, if it's not used skillfully, can easily be experienced by the PCCR as deal-killing obnoxious pressure.
- Once salespeople lose rapport and trust with a client, it's nearly impossible to rebuild it, especially with someone we're not yet doing business with.

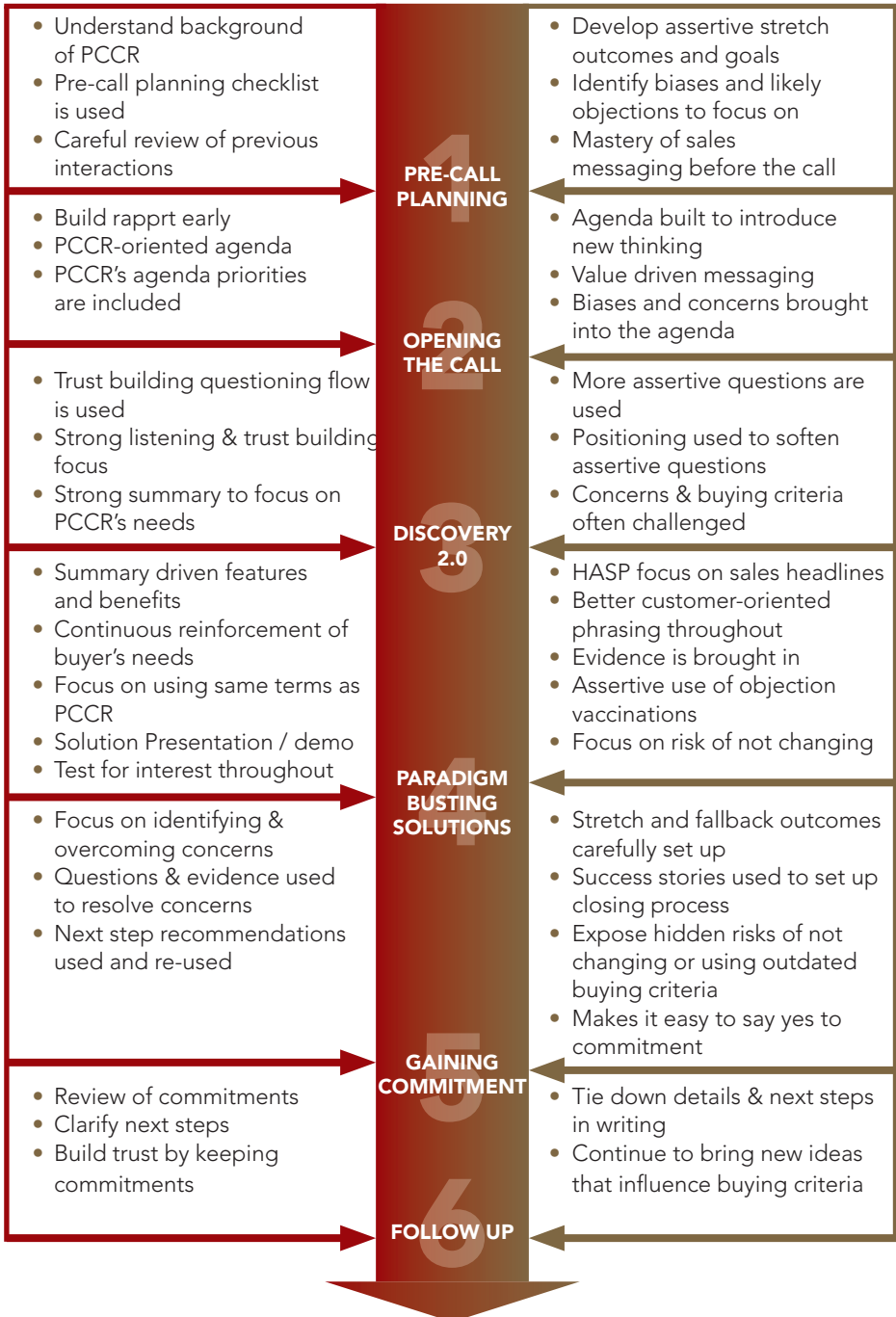
PRO TIP from Emily Knott:

What really distinguishes Compete Selling is the fluency, or mastery, of sales messaging as a high priority along with learning how and when to apply assertive techniques to the consultative model. Most salespeople are fairly effective at following a process, especially when one has been outlined for them and most likely sits on their desk in some form of a laminated job aid. What is more difficult to master is the skill of actually verbalizing each step of a sales process with real confidence under pressure. Compete Selling teaches you how to effectively communicate in each step of the process, starting with mastering your competitive advantages and learning how to be appropriately assertive. Compete Selling guides you in winning more sales.

By the time you finish this book, you'll understand how to blend both consultative and assertive selling approaches to generate the best possible results. At the risk of being repetitive, we need to be great at both consultative and assertive selling approaches. *Compete Selling* demonstrates how to do this. This graphic gives some detail about how consultative and HASP selling approaches are blended to create the *Compete Selling* approach.

Consultative Selling Elements

Assertive Selling Elements



Compete Selling is the way to be more assertive on sales calls without fracturing rapport and trust. It's great to say, "Hey, you need to be more assertive and aggressive on sales calls," until you make a PCCR angry because you didn't do it in an effective way. *Compete Selling* is the "how to win friends and influence people" approach to assertive selling. We'll show you exactly where in the consultative process the assertive elements can be added, and how to apply them in a way that improves rapport and trust, which is the secret of the top-performers. These approaches will challenge thinking and build greater trust, simultaneously.

The Elements of Compete Selling

Consultative selling continues to be the framework or basic flow of interaction. That's because it's the best process for influence. Here are some adjustments we make when we want to be more pleasantly assertive.

- Our sales messaging about our value proposition, competitive advantages, and differentiating factors has a stronger impact on sales interaction.
- We use a better approach to setting up provocative questions in a way that doesn't destroy rapport.
- We introduce the thinking of other people that contrasts with the PCCR's thinking or buying criteria in a way that is helpful to the PCCR.
- We use customer-oriented phrasing in a way that makes it much easier for the PCCR to see better ways of thinking and better buying criteria that will produce better outcomes.
- We understand how the process fits together to generate bolder outcomes, which we plan for in advance and which leads the sales interaction forward.

It's not just what we do, but HOW we do it. This is especially true when it comes to assertive and provocative selling approaches. We need to remember that HASPs can create better or worse results depending on how they apply their assertiveness.

We're going to look at each step of the consultative process more closely, and at how we can use the *Compete Selling* elements in a skillful way that will move the ball forward quicker, especially with resistant PCCRs. We'll give you all the tools and practice exercises to get better fast. One of our SalesGym founders, Mark Woodland, explains how balancing emotional and logical needs is so important.

PRO TIP from Mark Woodland

Have you ever heard a prospect say, "I understand exactly what you're saying....It makes total sense, but I think we're going to hold off for now." Or worse yet, they smile and nod and give you the impression they are onboard...but you never hear from them again. Chances are you logically made your point, but emotionally they never "bought into" your product/service. There is an old adage that I love: logic drives conclusion, emotion drives action. If you want your prospects to say yes, you have to move beyond logic (data, charts, features) and help them feel and imagine success (benefits, opportunity, possibilities, problems solved, etc.). That's what Compete Selling is all about..

As Mark points out, we need to be good at both the logical and emotional elements of the sales process. *Compete Selling* is the best process to blend the two for better results.

Three

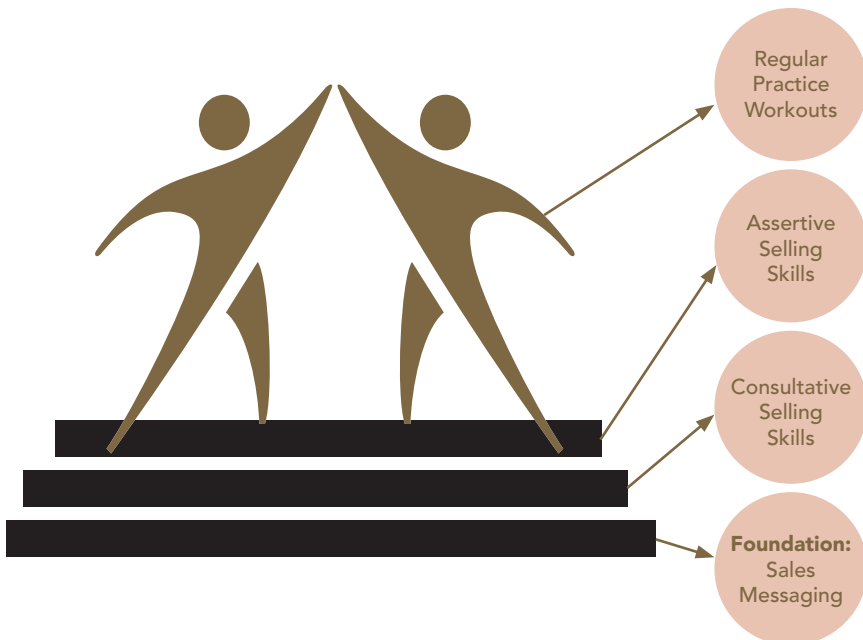
Sales Messaging



You will not reach your potential as a sales professional if you do not master your sales messaging. Please re-read that first sentence at least three times until it really sinks in. It doesn't matter if you are a master of consultative selling and assertive HASP approaches if you can't answer these six questions in a *knock it out of the park* kinda way:

- Who are you? What do you do? Why does it matter?
- What makes your products and services better or different than your competitors?
- Why should I meet with you when I'm happy with my current supplier/provider?
- What can you give me that I'm not already getting?
- What is your company's value proposition in ninety seconds or less?
- What big, game changing, and disruptive ideas can you introduce to the conversation?

"Sales messaging" is what we use to answer these important questions, which nearly every PCCR has before they'll do business with you. The best sales messaging is concise and interesting. It creates an immediate "tell me more" response because it generates curiosity and lowers resistance. As you can see, the foundation of our *Compete Selling* model and logo is sales messaging; it's that important.



We have spent thousands of hours working with salespeople, experienced and inexperienced, over the last twenty-five years. It is shocking how many experienced and assertive salespeople cannot quickly and persuasively explain their value proposition. Some call this the sixty-second elevator pitch, but it's much more than that. To master sales messaging you must know:

- Your company's value proposition
- Your competitive advantages and differentiating factors that make your products, services, and solutions different and better
- How to say, in sixty seconds or less, why a PCCR should meet with or speak with you for the first time
- How to introduce yourself in a meeting the right way
- The extremely powerful three-by-three presentation method to cement your competitive advantages in the minds of the people you meet with
- Disruptive insights that impact buying criteria and underlying buying assumptions
- Several success stories of customers who are benefitting in important ways from your products, services, and solutions
- The critical factors with which you can "vaccinate" your competition

Think of sales messaging as the INGREDIENTS you have to work with. A master chef may have the most effective cooking techniques on the planet, but if she doesn't have the best ingredients, it really doesn't matter. If she starts a marinara sauce with poor quality tomatoes, the sauce is going to suffer no matter how she tries to improve it. If the shrimp in her scampi dish are not fresh, the end product will not be as good. Your sales messaging is, essentially, your selling ingredients. If you don't have great messaging, your sales process is not going to work even if you can communicate with confidence under pressure. We first need to get the basics of our messaging down in a simple way, then we need to learn how to tailor it to specific selling situations.

Before we begin most training projects, we test our new clients' sales teams on their sales messaging skill level. We do this even in the largest companies that spend a significant amount on sales training. Here are the mistakes we find most often:

- Too much inside jargon and use of terms that don't mean much to a decision-maker
- Filled with meaningless buzzwords
- Rushed with nothing notable or memorable
- Too generic, sounding too similar to the competitor(s)

- Slow moving and repetitive
- No emotional punch

To illustrate, compare the following hypothetical answer to a simple question: “What sets you apart from your competitors?”

We are the industry’s leading provider of digital advertising solutions and insights. We help our customers reach more of their target markets more efficiently than they’ve ever done before. We combine state of the art, cutting edge digital analytics with our ability to understand our customer’s needs and strategy. It’s our ability to put together a more cost-effective strategy to reach more of our clients’ target markets that distinguishes us from our competitors. Our integrated approach of combining a comprehensive digital and traditional advertising strategy is what sets us apart.

Compare that example to this more customer friendly one:

That’s a great question. It’s on the mind of nearly everyone we talk to these days. What our customers prefer about our approach is that we work closely with them to get a deeper understanding of their target market and what makes those customers tick. We use our digital analytics to study consumer buying habits. Working together with our clients, we learn the best way to interact with those consumers to drive more of the right traffic, which results in more profitable sales. Our customers tell us they like how we don’t just focus on hitting a huge market with expensive repeated impressions, but that we get to their target customers with engaging messaging and content that draws them into a richer, more enjoyable, relevant buying experience. Our customers tell us we’ve helped them transform their marketing strategy because we focus on conversion of leads into sales and not just clicks and views. One of my customers summed it up well when he told me that while other agencies focus on marketing strategy, allocation, and spend, we focus on engaging our clients’ consumers and prospective consumers in a way that helps them buy more, when they’re looking. So, I’m curious, how are you integrating your value proposition message and content to draw your customers into an engaging buying experience?

There are more examples to review on competeselling.com.

If you’re like most PCCRs, you’ll respond much better to the second example. Let’s examine why:

1. We use lots of customer-oriented phrasing.
2. We focus on what's important to a customer, not on what's important to us
3. We communicate outcomes and benefits from the customer's perspective which is more interesting for the customer.
4. We reduce the internal buzzwords and jargon and use language that is more relevant to the customer's interests.

We're going to talk a lot in this book about customer-oriented thinking, phrasing, and communication. It's a core fundamental of the *Compete Selling* approach. If you are going to be more assertive, you have to learn how to say things in a way that doesn't bore or alienate the listener. That's what customer-oriented phrasing can do for you.

To achieve mastery at sales messaging, a good place to start is to learn and practice the CPET technique to answering questions. Nearly every sales interaction is going to involve questions from the PCCR, so this is a very practical technique. Here's what the acronym CPET stands for:

C = Cushion

P = Prompters into customer-oriented phrasing

E = Explain the details

T = Transition to an open-ended question

A cushion is a simple phrase to begin responding to a question. For instance, if a custom home builder was asked, "Can you tell me a little about how you handle changes and upgrades from the original estimate?" a cushion would be, "That's a great question and I'm glad you asked."

We use cushions to show the PCCR we WELCOME questions and concerns. We assure them that we aren't defensive or annoyed by them. This helps lower resistance and takes some of the friction and pressure out of the interaction. Cushions should not be formulaic; they should be conversational. Here's several examples (there are many more on competeselling.com).

- That's an interesting question that's on the mind of a lot of customers we work with.
- I really appreciate you asking me that; it shows me you're focused on the right things.
- That's a question I've been getting a lot recently and I appreciate you're asking it.
- I'm really glad you asked that because it's a critical concern that we

should talk about.

In summary, vary your cushions, make them conversational, and use them to transition into your answer in a natural way.

Prompters into customer-oriented phrasing are critically important to sales messaging. When we use them, we immediately become more effective and interesting communicators. It is amazing to watch how quickly, in practice coaching sessions, salespeople improve their sales messaging with this simple technique. Examples of customer-oriented prompter phrases would be:

- What our customers like about our approach is ...
- What we hear from customers all the time with respect to your question is ...
- I was speaking to a customer the other day who told me something that relates directly to your question. What she said was ...
- If you were to call some of our customers and ask them that same question, here's what they would tell you ...

When we use these phrases RIGHT AFTER THE CUSHION, it immediately gets us into a more interesting communication mode. We're not just sharing our opinion or the opinion of our company; we are talking about what customers think, and that makes a big difference.

In the explain the details step, we get to the heart of our answer. This is where we need to work at understanding our value proposition, competitive advantages, and differentiating factors. We need to weave these factors into a customer-friendly message using customer-oriented phrasing continuously. We'll spend more time on this later in this chapter.

The "T" in CPET = Transition to open ended question, and it's not an exaggeration to say that the entire CPET process is a setup for a great question. *Compete Selling* is about asking better, more provocative questions that PCCRs will engage with. In order to do this, we need a good command of the questions we want to ask. Far too many salespeople make up their questions as the sales interaction develops. This leads to awkward questions or, even worse, to too much talking by the salesperson. After we have explained the details, we need a relevant, open-ended question that ties directly into the message we've just communicated.

The CPET technique is a remarkably simple hack you can use to unlock the magic of your value proposition. It's a better way to weave your competitive advantages and differentiating factors into any answer you give in the sales interaction. Most importantly, it always ends with a good open-ended

question, which is critical to controlling the sales process.

While projects with different companies, we've learned that many companies simply don't know their sales messaging, so they can't really teach it to their sales teams. You're not going to be good at the CPET technique, consultative selling or *Compete Selling* until you get your sales messaging down. So, let's look at how you can master it.

Start with headlines. Figure out five to ten short, punchy, and memorable headlines that capture your competitive advantages, the factors that make your company's products and services DIFFERENT from your competitors. For instance, a financial advisor might use:

- Outcomes-based financial planning
- Extreme expertise with trusts and tax reduction strategies
- Relentless focus on protecting capital with safer strategies
- Investments with proven track records
- Continuous review and fine tuning to achieve goals
- Proper balance of growth, wealth protection, and income
- Using money managers with real skin in the game
- (disruptive) We don't follow the herd off the cliff with your money
- (disruptive) Our clients don't believe in the roller coaster approach to investing

The competitive advantages for the digital ad agency example could be:

- Extreme focus on the retail vertical
- Digital analytics that go way beyond market analysis
- Strategies to engage customers into a fantastic buying experience
- Combining digital and traditional approaches to engage a target audience
- More focused advertising where target customers are likely to be
- Ahead of the curve at integrating mobile into your strategy
- (disruptive) Focus on conversion and profitability, not just clicks
- (disruptive) We help our customers sell the way customers want to buy

If you are going to master your sales messaging, you **MUST** figure out five to ten headlines that convey what makes you, your company, and your products, services, and solutions unique and better than your competitors'. Think of these headlines as the ingredients you're going to "cook" with when communicating that value of your products and services. Some ideas on how to do this would be:

- Organize a conference call with other good communicators in your company and challenge everyone to write down and share a competitive advantage in ten words or less.
- Ask your senior executive(s) to share his or her view of the short headlines about your company's competitive advantages, and what makes your company different from your competitors.
- Read your company's brochures carefully to see what marketing messages might be helpful.
- Talk to the top-performing salespeople in your company and ask them what you asked the senior executive.
- Go to this link on the *Compete Selling* website and go through the sales messaging building exercise. It will help you make progress fast.
- Our consultants and coaches in the SalesGym can help you figure these out if you need help. We do this every day with our clients.

Gather the input and chisel these options down into five to ten short headlines and you'll be in first gear and starting to roll. We kid you not, these headlines are solid gold. You'll use them in a variety of ways throughout the *Compete Selling* sales process. They will give you a significant communication boost in terms of making your message more memorable and persuasive. Without these headlines, you're winging it. *Compete Selling* isn't about making it up as we go along.

The next step is to start working on your CPET responses to some key questions you're likely to get. You need to identify three questions to start out with. The questions we presented earlier in the chapter were:

- Who are you? What do you do? Why does it matter?
- What makes your products and services better or different than your competitors?
- Why should I meet with you when I'm happy with my current supplier/provider?
- What can you give me that I'm not already getting?
- What is your company's value proposition in ninety seconds or less?
- What big, game changing, and disruptive ideas can you introduce to the conversation?

You can probably adapt these to at least get started. It's often a good idea to select your transition question (the fourth step in CPET) FIRST and then make sure everything you say in the first three steps leads naturally into that question. Often, when people try this technique, they just kinda throw an

improvised question in there just to end it and it comes off feeling awkward or disjointed and would be hard for a PCCR to respond to. The question is extremely important and needs to tie directly into your message.

Next, we suggest that you use our simple worksheet on competeselling.com to organize your message. Some key reminders to help you craft a better message:

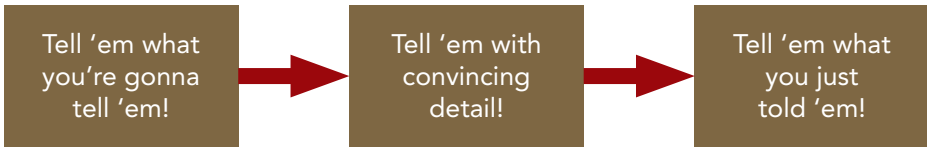
- Think carefully about the question you'll use at the end. Craft the rest of your CPET response to lead naturally into that question.
- Make the cushion as conversational and non-formulaic as possible.
- Use a good customer-oriented prompter phrase right after the cushion.
- Select two or three headlines around which to build your "explain the details" step.
- Use the headlines to introduce the idea, then fill in with more details.
- Be sure to weave customer-oriented phrasing throughout the "explain the details" step.
- Try to focus the "explain the details" step to set up a relevant transition question. The question needs to make sense and to flow naturally from your response.
- Ideally, communicate all of this in less than sixty seconds and never over ninety seconds
- Practice your answers with a good practice partner. Ask your boss, significant other, a friend, or another person on your sales team for help.
- Competeselling.com has more examples that might be helpful for you.
- The practice coaches in the SalesGym are experts at practicing this vital skill.

The Ultra Powerful Three-by-Three Communication Technique

In addition to the CPET technique, another skill you need to master is the three-by-three approach, which you've probably heard countless times. When I learned it, I was told it was first documented by the Greeks over 2,500 years ago as a powerful way to present an argument. There seems to be something about presenting information with three points that just works. Without going into some serious metaphysical woo-woo analysis, it's just an approach that feels right to most people. And, when you tell a person you've got three reasons or three points to make, they'll typically relax and patiently listen to your three points. If you tell them you have ten points to make, you

can bet you'll raise their agitation and impatience index. It's even worse when you start an explanation without telegraphing up front how long it will take. That can cause PCCRs to get impatient and tune out or interrupt.

The three-by-three technique is a way to communicate three key points three times, as in:



Now, here's where the work you've done to create your competitive advantages headlines will pay off. Your headlines give you the structure for your three points. Let's see how taking three headlines from the financial advisor example can be used to build a powerful three-by-three value proposition. The three headlines we'll use are:

- Outcomes-based financial planning
- Relentless attention to protecting capital
- Using money managers with real skin in the game

Let's assume we want to communicate our value proposition, and we make a transition with something like:

“What a lot of my clients tell me that makes our approach at Incline Investing so unique really boils down to three key things. First, we use an approach we call outcomes-based financial planning. Second, we are relentless at protecting your capital, and third, we only use money managers with proven track records and real skin in the game.

“What I mean by outcomes-based financial planning is that our clients really like how we start with a complete analysis of their financial goals. We find out what financial independence means to them: how much money they need for retirement, how they hope to fund their children's education, and other objectives they would like to achieve that are going to require capital. Our clients tell us it's much easier to stick to the plan because it's designed to help them get to where they want to go, and to have the money there when they need it for their most important goals. It's your plan, not ours; our role is to help you get there.

“Secondly, I also mentioned our relentless attention to protecting capital. We only recommend investments—regardless of whether these involve stocks, bonds, mutual funds, or other products—that have a very low volatility rating,

which means that they perform better when markets are going down. This is critical for your peace of mind, because we've found, over the long haul, these investments perform much better than the high-profile investments that get all the headlines when they're outperforming the market but that get crushed when the markets correct, as they always do.

"Finally, we only select money managers that have a proven track record with real skin in the game. Morningstar's director of research, Russell Kinnell, identifies each year the absolute best of the best in terms of funds. He reveals one of the most powerful indicators of future performance, which is when fund managers have over \$1 million of their own money in the fund they manage. This keeps the managers' focus on results. They tend to make better decisions and, remarkably, perform better over time. Our clients really like knowing that the fund managers have their own money invested in their fund.

"To sum up, we first use an approach we call outcomes-based financial planning. Second, we pay extreme attention to protecting capital. And third, we only use money managers with real skin in the game. So, I'm curious about your financial situation. Could you share with me, given how high market prices are right now, what you've done recently to protect your capital in the event of a sharp market downturn?"

Let's analyze what we did here and break it down:

- We started with a quick overview using our three headlines.
- We gave a deeper explanation of each of the headlines one-by-one.
- We used customer-oriented phrasing in each of the deeper explanations.
- After the third point, we summarized with a quick recap of all three headlines.
- We ended with a good open-ended question relevant to one of the headlines.

This three-by-three technique is a fantastic way to make key points that need a little more time and detail to explain. This approach helps make your points in an organized, customer-friendly way that will be much easier to remember.

All of us at the SalesGym believe that practice is the key to becoming a fantastic salesperson who generates top-performer results. To practice, it is helpful to use an organizing worksheet to get started. You can download the three-by-three worksheets at competeselling.com.

Steps to organizing and practicing this technique

- Check out the examples on our website.
- Select three headlines you are going to use.
- Make your introduction of the three ideas with a quick preview.
- Introduce each point you're making in greater detail with customer-oriented phrasing.
- Go through each point one-by-one with more detail using about thirty seconds for each point and utilizing customer-oriented phrasing.
- Summarize at the end with short headlines only (this needs to be quick).
- Have a great question ready at the end that clearly ties into at least one of your headlines.
- Find a practice partner and go through it several times until you can do it without the practice form in a conversational and persuasive way.

The Personal Introduction

A personal introduction is a technique you can use to introduce yourself, when a longer more thorough introduction is called for. It utilizes customer-oriented phrasing and value proposition headlines. This technique is a four-step process:

- Your name and position
- What you specialize in doing
- How your customers benefit
- Transition question

Here's an example of a digital advertising agency salesperson's credibility building personal introduction:

[name and position] My name is Alan Williams and I'm an account manager for Ultra Matrix Digital Strategies. [what we specialize in doing] We specialize in helping large and small retail companies drive more of the right traffic to their stores and restaurants. Our customers tell us our results are more immediate than typical campaigns they've tried in the past and that our simple measurement tools make decision-making easier. We do this with a deep understanding of how customers use their phones, tablets, and laptops to make quick decisions on where to eat, shop, and seek entertainment. [how our customers benefit] With our strategies, our

customers can get immediate lift in highly profitable impulse traffic and sales, and they can track marketing results and efficiencies in ways that enable them to generate more business with less cost and waste. [transition question] It might be helpful if you could give me a brief introduction of your role at Affluent Restaurant Group as it relates to marketing to generate more traffic ...

Remember, we only use this longer introduction process when we have time for it and it feels like a good fit. Here are a few keys to making it work:

- Tailor it to the person you're meeting with. Make sure you communicate what you specialize at doing in a way that is relevant to the PCCR.
- Use customer-oriented phrasing to bring your introduction to life.
- Have a good question at the end of your credibility statement to transition out of it.
- Try to keep your entire introduction to sixty seconds or less.
- Go to competeselling.com for more examples and worksheets on how to practice your credibility statement.

Every sales professional should be able to deliver an informative, interesting, and memorable quick introduction of themselves when it's needed. The four-step credibility statement is a perfect way to do it.

PRO TIP from Adam Shaivitz

Most of us introduce ourselves many times every day, formally and informally. And we do a fine job. But why be fine? Be extraordinary. Be memorable. A little extra intentional prep goes a long way with intros.

"For example: 'My name is Adam Shaivitz. One of the reasons I'm really looking forward to working with you all is I saw on your website your deep commitment to giving back to your community with your Holiday Helpers program – it really demonstrated a strong team culture. My role will be project manager, so I'll be your main point of contact for regular communication and updates. By way of background, I've lived in LA for seventeen years and originally moved here for business school, where I was a classmate of your colleague Kwame. I also have a twenty-month-old son named Max, so I have lots of project management work at home too.'

"Who am I introducing? Myself, of course. But who do I talk about after mentioning my name ... my audience. That's the counter-intuitive part. Intentionally compliment your audience early in YOUR intro. Be

specific and genuine. It often starts with something like: ‘One thing I noticed about your team that was really impressive was ...’ Or, ‘I’m particularly excited to work with this group because ...’ Most of us feel like we need to build credibility by sharing what we’ve done. Top performers build credibility by demonstrating how much they know about their audience.

“Other notes from strong intros:

- *When you say your role, explain why they should care about your role and what it means to them. Do you know how many ‘account managers’ there are out there?*
- *When you share your background, share relevant professional AND personal info (briefly). Does it matter to the project that I have a twenty-month-old son? Not at all. After the meeting, what’s the first thing clients usually comment on or ask about? Max. We have something to connect on personally, and we start to build a faster connection, which helps us relate and work together.”*

There’s more to sales messaging ...

There’s more to sales messaging covered in upcoming chapters, but if you’ve gotten your key headlines down, you are well on your way. That’s the most important step. When you’ve got your value proposition key headlines, which are essentially your competitive advantages and differentiating factors, you’ve got the foundational ingredients you need for the *Compete Selling* process. Don’t get too hung up on whether a headline is a differentiating factor or a competitive advantage because it really doesn’t matter. The important thing is to have five to ten GREAT headlines that can be crafted into a value proposition, a three-by-three presentation, a credibility building personal introduction or an answer to virtually any question, and, when we get there, insight-led statements that drive the more assertive elements of *Compete Selling*.

You MUST first craft your headlines and then excel at communicating them to master *Compete Selling*. This is one of the most important things that top performers do better than all the rest.