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Sales Effectiveness Expert



Smart Strategies for Sales Communication Success



- Slideshare Edition -

Welcome



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 - Deb Brown
 - Practice focus:
 - Sales coaching
 - Sales training
- Clients include:
 - Small businesses
 - Growing companies
 - Fortune 500



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- Sales and customer service training and coaching.
- Rooted in our 4-step methodology.
- Proven results for business owners and sales teams from small companies to the Fortune 500.



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- > Client Results
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Our Services



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- Sell in a way that aligns with your values.
- Dynamic and holistic approach based on the example of Jesus of Nazareth.
- Sales training & coaching integrated with leadership development.



Our Services



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Today's Agenda

- The Role of Sales Communication
- Strategy #1: Asking Questions
- Strategy #2: Active Listening
 - Three steps to active listening success
- Strategy #3: Provide a Template
- Strategy #4: Adjust Marketing
- Strategy #5: Sales as a Process
- Key Takeaways



The Role of Sales Communication



Sales Communication

- Sales is about communication
 - If customers could make purchase decisions without communication, they would not need salespeople
 - Sales professionals exist to communicate effectively, and to facilitate effective communication (both to, and from, the customer)
 - Your ability to communicate and your company's ability to, are both critical



Sales Communication

- Elements of sales communication
 - Your personal communication skills;
 - Speak clearly and effectively;
 - Describe things in a manner that is easily understood
 - Listen to others effectively
 - Observe non-verbal cues
 - Read and write interactively
 - Your prospect's communication skills
 - Your company's communication skills



Sales Communication

- There is a lot to this!
 - Your role is to facilitate and guide:
 - Communication between your company and your prospect
 - Communication between your company and the marketplace
 - Better communication directly leads to:
 - Attracting more highly qualified prospects
 - Educating and engaging prospects
 - More efficient and effective sales cycles



Strategy #1: Ask Questions



Strategy #1: Ask Questions

- Ask questions early...and often
 - When your next sales cycle begins, talk less...
 - Features
 - Benefits
 - Product details and specifications
 - Instead, ask more questions:
 - Background, reasons, drivers, needs/goals, etc.
 - Remember, the sales cycle begins with a question!



Strategy #2: Active Listening



Strategy #2: Active Listening

- Practice active listening
 - Active listening is the process of engaging powerfully and consciously in what the other person is saying
 - Typically, we only listen for what we want to hear, missing subtle queues and deeper meanings
 - In sales, this can lead to high levels of confusion, and a mis-qualified opportunity (a lost prospect)
 - Active listening has three steps...



Strategy #2: Active Listening

- Step One: Eliminate distractions
 - When you ask a question...
 - Look at the person you addressed the question to directly
 - Don't look to the left or to the right
 - Patiently address the question
 - Wait calmly for the answer
 - Things to avoid:
 - Checking your phone
 - Mulling over your next question
 - Letting your mind wander



Strategy #2: Active Listening

- Step Two: Embrace silence
 - We assume that silence means hesitation or signifies that a person is unsure
 - This is incorrect: silence often means the other person is seriously considering what you are asking or preparing a detailed answer
 - Let silence follow from your question
 - Do not put words in the other person's mouth or otherwise answer for them!



Strategy #2: Active Listening

- Step Three: Paraphrase and confirm
 - Ask a question. After the other person answers...
 - Pause for a moment (embrace the silence)
 - Think through what they have said and
 - Acknowledge by paraphrasing to confirm accuracy of understanding
 - Give time for them to clarify nuances and
 - Ask your next question based on their response.
 - Again, pause and reflect
 - Acknowledge by paraphrasing to confirm understanding
 - Give time for them to clarify nuances ...



Strategy #3: Provide a Template



Strategy #3: Provide Template

- Provide the customer with a template for effective communication
 - Chances are, your prospect is just as concerned about becoming confused during the sales process as you are about losing clarity
 - Customers buy from people the like and trust
 - Clear communication increases trust
 - Provide tools and steps to guide them
 - Checklist for the sales decision process
 - Points to consider
 - Worksheet to fill out as they proceed



Strategy #4: Adjust Marketing



Strategy #4: Adjust Marketing

- Evaluate and adjust marketing against the prospect's or customer's feedback
 - Marketing is only valuable if it is effective
 - If customers are not responding to marketing messages or communications, change them
 - Encourage marketing team to pilot-test new concepts or deliverables
 - Ask your prospects for their evaluation of the clarity and value of your company's marketing communications
 - Focus on what prospects need first



Strategy #5:

Sales as a Process



Strategy #5: Sales Process

- Treat the sales cycle itself as a communication process
 - At the beginning:
 - Prospect communicates some level of interest to your company
 - In the middle:
 - Communication is the bridge from the beginning of the sales cycle to its conclusion
 - At the end:
 - Prospect communicates their purchasing decision



Strategy #5: Sales Process

- Key communications in sales cycles:
 - Qualifying questions and their answers
 - Alignment check (does the company's product or service align with prospect needs)
 - Process steps themselves
 - Does the prospect return calls/emails? Is this an indication of interest or just that they are busy?
 - Is the salesperson consistently responding to customer questions and proposing next steps?
 - Do the prospect and salesperson agree on the decision factors and process, and if so, does this increase mutual trust?



Strategy #5: Sales Process

- Why focusing on process helps sales:
 - First, it communicates that you are a professional
 - Second, it communicates that you are willing to adjust the sales process by mutual agreement if warranted by new circumstances
 - Third, it shows that you are willing to put aside deal specifics to ensure that you and the prospect are communicating effectively



Key Takeaways

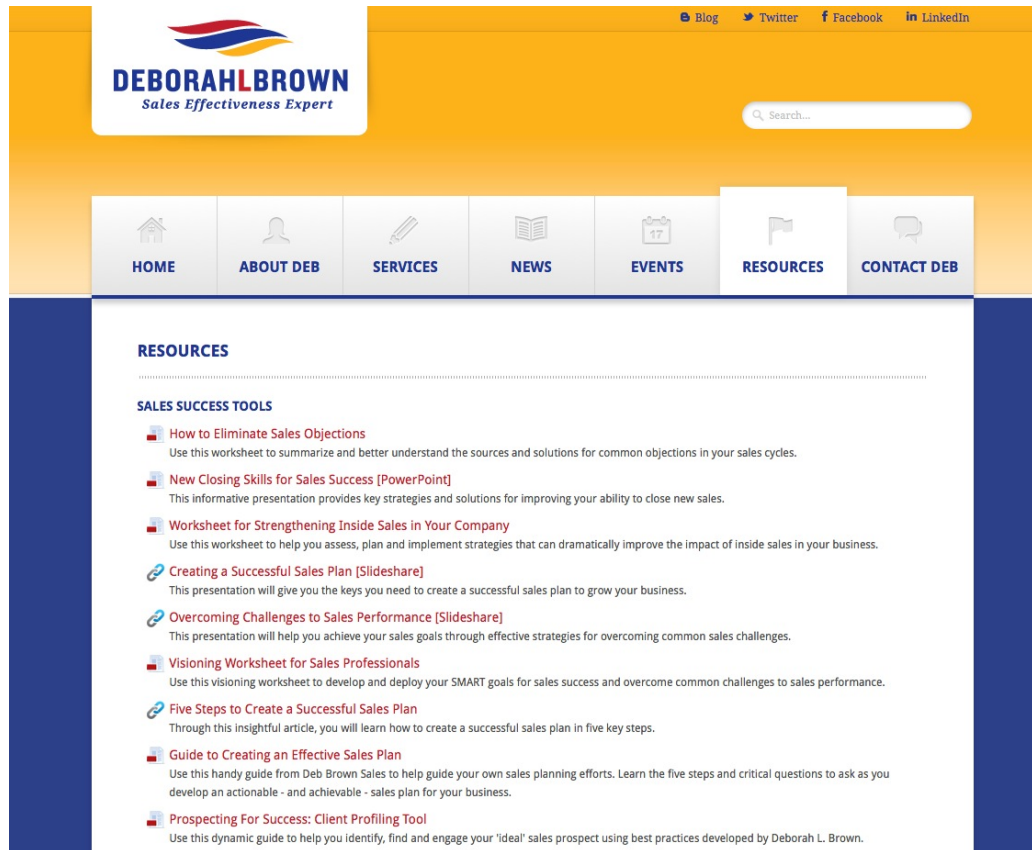


Key Takeaways

- Effective communication is the core purpose and objective for professional salespeople
- Communication is complex and has many moving parts. It is also bi-directional.
- Sales communication should begin with the prospect speaking, not the salesperson.
- Five strategies are available to enhance sales communication success.
- Active listening is a powerful skill. Practice it!
- Use the sales process itself to guide and support effective sales communication.



Companion Worksheet



- Free worksheet
- Available on our website under the **Resources** tab
- Includes key points & ideas



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Thank you!



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