# SalesSmarts™ for Sales Professionals



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Participant Materials

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# Pre- and Post-Assessment

*SalesSmarts™ for Sales Professionals* is designed to teach you about the knowledge, skills and behaviors of successful salespeople. Review the statements below to assess your current level of knowledge and skills. For each statement, circle the number in the Pre-Assessment column that reflects your comfort level. At the conclusion of the workshop, you will complete the Post-Assessment column and compare your ratings.

| | **Pre-Assessment** | | | | **Post-Assessment** | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Absolutely/ Yes | I think so/Yes | Not sure | No | Absolutely/ Yes | I think so/Yes | Not Sure | No |
| 1. I can articulate the knowledge, skills and behaviors of successful salespeople. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 2. I can identify positive factors that influence buyers. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 3. I am confident in my abilities to manage the common fears of salespeople. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 4. I understand the steps necessary in planning effectively for sales calls. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 5. I know how to establish rapport, trust and credibility with prospects and customers. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 6. I am able to ask effective questions to analyze the organizational needs of prospects and customers. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 7. I can link organizational needs with appropriate solutions, based on benefits for prospects and customers. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |





 

# Introduction

The time you spend in this workshop will be rewarded with a comprehensive introduction to a basic sales process and each person's role in the process. Special attention is devoted to the competency areas of selling, communication and presentation. Learning activities include a variety of opportunities to explore and practice skills and strategies for responding to common sales situations.

This workshop is especially relevant because buyers in organizations today are highly sophisticated. They prefer to collaborate with salespeople who are equally sophisticated and professional. They expect sales professionals to be knowledgeable, skilled and trusted advisors, providing solutions for the needs of their organizations.

A goal for you, therefore, is to surpass the competition. This workshop helps you reach that goal by providing you with a basic formula to build rapport and manage the sales process with prospects and customers. The formula is the *SalesSmarts™* S.A.L.E. Process:

**S** – Set the stage

**A** – Analyze needs

**L** – Link to solutions

**E** – Establish commitment

Recurring themes in the workshop are that (1) every interaction with a customer is an opportunity for you to build trust and loyalty, move a sale forward and demonstrate a genuine interest in the buyer's needs, and (2) the S.A.L.E. Process is a powerful formula to follow.



 

# Learning Objectives

During the program, you will learn the *SalesSmarts™* S.A.L.E. Process, which will guide you in navigating various sales situations. After completing the program, you will be able to:

- Explain the elements of each step of the S.A.L.E. Process and how each step builds trust and credibility with prospects and customers in order to move a sale forward
- Navigate through a sales call using the S.A.L.E. Process to help prospects and customers feel safe and comfortable
- Respond professionally to common customer questions and objections in order to move a sale forward
- Identify buying signals and skillfully manage appropriate actions in order to move a sale forward

# Activity 1:
# Drafting Your Sales DNA

(**D**istinguishing **N**ucleus of **A**ttributes)

**Purpose:**

To draft your Sales DNA—that is, the Distinguishing Nucleus of Attributes that will serve as your blueprint of sales professionalism

**Directions:**

1. Refer to the table on the next page. It lists attributes of successful salespeople and categorizes them as knowledge, skills and behaviors. Attributes under each category are not in any particular order, nor are they an exhaustive list.
2. Draft your Sales DNA by selecting five attributes from each category. The 15 attributes you select will serve as the nucleus/core that you believe will distinguish you as a sales professional. Keep in mind that, while you cannot change your biological DNA, you can change your Sales DNA again and again as you gain additional knowledge, develop new skills and enhance professional behaviors.
3. Discuss your respective DNA and share reasons for your selection of attributes with a small group of fellow participants. You can amend your Sales DNA, based on discussion/feedback from participants in your group.

**Time for the Activity:**

- Drafting your Sales DNA – five minutes
- Small group discussion – ten minutes

| **Knowledge**<br>*You know . . .* | **Skills**<br>*You are able to . . .* | **Behaviors**<br>*You . . .* |
|---|---|---|
| ❑ The features and benefits of your organization's products and services<br>❑ The products and services of your chief competitors<br>❑ The advantages and benefits of your products and services over those of your competitors<br>❑ Factors that influence buyers positively<br>❑ The features and benefits of the S.A.L.E. Process<br>❑ Common questions and objections of customers<br>❑ Your own strengths, limitations and areas for improvement<br>❑ As much about the customers as you can before calling or meeting with them | ❑ Set specific and realistic goals<br>❑ Establish rapport quickly with customers<br>❑ Make customers feel safe and comfortable with you and your organization<br>❑ Ask quality questions<br>❑ Uncover customer needs<br>❑ Listen, clarify and confirm what customers say<br>❑ Give exciting presentations<br>❑ Negotiate systematically and successfully<br>❑ Clarify the value of solutions<br>❑ Present solutions that appropriately fit customer needs<br>❑ Close sales<br>❑ Manage and organize your time | ❑ Prepare thoroughly for sales calls<br>❑ Have a sense of humor appreciated by customers<br>❑ Are persistent in meeting your sales goals<br>❑ Exhibit pride in your organization<br>❑ Are a positive thinker<br>❑ Take responsibility for your results—good or bad<br>❑ Are dependable and reliable<br>❑ Are uncompromising in your personal values and ethics<br>❑ Admit mistakes<br>❑ Work well with others<br>❑ Are trustworthy and credible<br>❑ Demonstrate an obvious enthusiasm for helping customers find solutions for their business needs |

# Types of Buyers

| Purchasing Agents* | Advocates* | Decision Makers* |
|---|---|---|
| • Typically are not decision makers<br>• Make buying decisions that are generally budgeted and pre-approved by their organizations<br>• Sales professionals may have authority to make buying decisions for purchasing consumable products that are needed to replenish inventory<br>• For new products or services of significant value, buyers are more likely to be decision makers and sometimes advocates | • Have credibility and trust, which persuades decision makers<br>• May also be those known as “gatekeepers”—thus they should be treated with respect<br>• May have authority to make buying decisions for purchasing items of mid-level value<br>• Sales professionals need to “sell” to advocates as well as to decision makers | • Have the power and budgetary authority to make major purchases<br>• Should be the primary and most important contacts of sales professionals<br>• Typically are CEOs, CFOs or others at the executive levels in organizations<br>• Senior managers and directors may be decision makers for significant sales that relate to their specific functional areas |

*Purchasing agents, advocates and decision makers are functions, not job titles.

# Techniques for Overcoming Common Fears

- Ask your sales manager to brief you on available resources that will afford you the information you need to know about your prospects and customers before making sales calls.
- Study the features and benefits of your organization's products and services—know how they differ from products and services of your competitors.
- Observe your sales manager and peers who seem to be fearless and effortless in saying the right things at the right times to get prospects and customers interested in your products and services. Ask if you can join them when they make cold calls, meet with prospects and customers and make sales presentations. Make note of their actions and words. Adapt and adopt their style and techniques.
- Don't take rejection or "no" personally. "No" sometimes means that prospects and customers need more information about your products and services. Sometimes it means they don't really need your products or services at the moment, you contacted them at the wrong time in their buying cycles or they're preoccupied with significant issues.
- Practice, practice, practice. Practice a sales presentation with people that make you feel comfortable and confident. Ask for their feedback. Practice cold calls with peers—actually call them on the telephone. Ask for feedback and techniques you can use to improve the calls.
- Set realistic expectations. Keep in mind that not even the best of salespeople close every sale and that not every prospect is a qualified buyer. Focus more attentively on identifying prospects and customers that would benefit most from your products and services. Keep a record of how many qualified prospects you need to contact before closing a deal. A very general rule of thumb is that you need to contact at least twice as many prospects and customers as the number of sales you want to close.

# Details of the S.A.L.E. Process

**Set the Stage:**

1. Plan:

   - The purpose of your call
   - Your knowledge about their business issues
   - The key decision makers
   - The customer's scope of operation
   - The customer's primary product or service
   - The customer's competitors
   - Your competitors
   - Your ability/the resources of your organization to win the business

2. Secure the initial meeting or appointment:

   - Background – about yourself and your organization, and to build rapport and credibility
   - Objectives – state your objectives in a way that positions you as someone whose solutions, products and services are worth considering
   - Alternatives – ask for alternatives the customer might be looking at
   - Time – set up a time to meet

3. Open the sales call/meeting:

   - Establish rapport – hellos, small talk, introductions, etc.; check on time available for the meeting
   - State the reason for your call – to learn roles/responsibilities of those at the meeting; to better understand the issues you believe they are facing
   - State the benefit/value to the customer – how you can help solve their issue
   - Check for acceptance – is there anything else to address during the meeting?



 

# Video Observation Form:
# Vignette #1: Set the stage

**Characters:**

Gary, a salesperson working with Kiana and Berto

Trish, a salesperson working with Neal



**Directions – Discussion Questions:**
As you watch the video, make note of any questions or thoughts you have concerning the following discussion questions:

1. What insights does the narrator provide about "Set the stage"?

2. What impressed you about Gary's applications of "Set the stage"?

3. What impressed you about Trish's applications of "Set the stage"?



**Key Points:**

- ✓ Plan thoroughly for sales calls.
- ✓ Secure the initial meeting or appointment through a professionally delivered call.
- ✓ Open the sales call/meeting by establishing rapport, stating the reason for your call, stating the benefit/value of your products and services to the customer and checking for acceptance.

**Bottom Line:**

The actions you take in this part of the S.A.L.E. Process will have a major impact on your ability to win business.

# Elevator Speeches

An *elevator speech* is an introduction of yourself, what you do and how it benefits others. Your speech should grab attention in a few words—presumably in the 15–30 seconds it takes an elevator to go from the first floor to the top floor in an office building.

Elevator speech is a generic term for a concept that has many uses; for example, you can use the content of an elevator speech to:

- Leave a voicemail message
- Write an email message
- Network during conversations at conventions, conferences, social gatherings and other meetings where you are asked who you are and what you do
- Design a "leave-behind message" for a gatekeeper to pass on to the person you wanted to meet

Your elevator speech will be effective when you:

- Open with a sentence that grabs attention and leaves the listener wanting more information (e.g., "I'm (your name), and I partner with organizations to increase productivity and profitability by improving work processes."). Do not give your job title and/or a detailed litany of your company's products.
- Summarize what you can do for prospects and customers that will solve their organizational needs.
- Deliver your speech with professional confidence, ease and command of language.
- Are sincere, engaging and enthusiastic.
- End by offering a business card, a referral or a meeting request to talk further.

# Activity 3:
# Preparing and Delivering Your Elevator Speech

**Purpose:**

To practice what you will say when calling or emailing prospects and customers or networking at business and social gatherings

**Directions:**

1. Refer back to *Elevator Speeches* on the previous page.
2. Prepare an elevator speech:
    - *Write* the speech so you will remember the words
    - Be able to deliver your speech in no more than 30 seconds
3. Form small groups in which you will:
    - Take turns with others in your group delivering your speeches. Because you may not have had sufficient time to memorize your speeches, you may read them.
    - Give and receive feedback on (1) what was effective about the speeches, and (2) how they might be improved.

**Time for the Activity:**

- Individual preparations – five minutes
- Individual presentations and small group feedback – 15 minutes
- Debriefing with the large group – ten minutes

# Common Questions and Objections of Prospects and Customers

1. Your products/services are too expensive.
2. How will your products/services help improve my bottom line?
3. What's unique about you, your organization and your organization's products and services? What sets you apart from the competition?
4. My friend in another organization didn't have a good experience with your organization.
5. I don't have a budget for your products and services.
6. How do I know that I'll get a significant return on my investment in your products and services?
7. Your products and services are far too basic for our needs.
8. The time it would take to implement your solution is too long. We can't wait that long for a solution.
9. Your solution requires more of our internal resources than we have available.
10. I like your product, but what if I have a problem with it later? What kind of service and support can I expect?