

eBook

**VALUE based
selling**

VALUE based selling

Posture and argumentation of successful sellers

ADVANCE Consulting
ADVANCE Marketing Ltda.
R. Afonso Bras 473 - 1 floor
04511-011 Vila Nova Conceição
São Paulo / SP - Brazil

Phone: +55-11-3044-0867
Email: advance@advanceconsulting.com.br
Website: www.advanceconsulting.com.br QR Code ADVANCE

© 2002-2022, **ADVANCE Marketing Ltda.**

All rights reserved and protected by Law 9.610 of 02/19/98.

No part of this book, without advance marketing's prior written permission, may be reproduced or transmitted whatever the means used: electronic, mechanical, photographic, recording or any other means.

20220403

Introduction

In 2013 we started to teach the workshop "VALUE based selling" elaborated from the knowledge and experience of several years of advance consulting professionals.

The results in increased sales were surprising. Even my sales training consultants and instructors were surprised at the speed and volume of the results.

In this workshop we present the main sales methodologies such as Solution Selling, SPIN Selling, Sandler Selling, Challenger Selling and Value Based Selling. We show the advantages and adherence of each of them to the market.

We use various reference sources, books and materials from the Internet, including the book "The Challenger Sale" by Matthew Dixon and Brent Adamson - to which we give our interpretation and vision of applicability to the market.

In one of the workshops I saw a participant taking a lot, I mean a lot, of notes. I was touched...

So, I decided to turn the content of the workshop into a series of articles that now constitute this ebook, and that happens to be distributed, also, to the workshop participants.

I hope the content will be useful to you and your company and as helpful as it has been to workshop participants.

Dagoberto Hajjar - CEO
ADVANCE Consulting

With more than 2,500 clients, 500 consulting projects and 20,000 trained professionals, ADVANCE is a sales consulting and training company. We are proud to have in our client list some of the largest companies in Brazil like AWS, Benner, Cisco, Cogra, Consinco, DELL, DIMEP, Ellevo, FWC, Google, IBM, IDTrust, Intelidata, IUGU, Lenovo, Linx, Lumen (CenturyLink), Mega Sistemas, Neogrid, Neoway, Panasonic, Praxio, Propay, Quality, SalesForce, SAP, Sebrae, Semantix, Senior, Siagri, SkyOne, Softex, Synnex, Techne, Thomson, Reuters, Totvs, Vivo, Vivo, WDG (IBM), WK Systems, Zebra and Zendesk.

Chapters presented:

1 - A revolution in sales	3
<i>Understanding the 5 profiles of sellers</i>	
2 - The psychology of selling	4
<i>Understanding the behavioral profile of the seller and the customer</i>	
3 - The new seller	5
<i>How the new seller makes a value-based sale</i>	
4 - Tell me something I still do not know!	6
<i>Understanding changes in the purchasing process</i>	
5 - The new purchasing and sales process	7
<i>Four steps to increase sales efficiency</i>	
6 - Articulating VALUE to your customer	8
<i>How to structure your new sales pitch</i>	
7 - Involving decision-makers and influencers	9
<i>How to create a network of positive influencers for your solution</i>	
8 - Shortening the sales cycle	10
<i>How to press your customer to make the purchase</i>	

1 - A revolution in sales

Understanding the 5 profiles of sellers

I got a call from Figueira, a former client, saying "The company signed me up for a sales training. I think it's a waste of time. I'll be away from my clients for two days, which is where sales do take place. I've been in sales for over 20 years and I think life has taught me everything I needed to know about selling."

I took a deep breath and thought about the countless times I started to give training with the participants thinking just like Figueira. After an hour of training, they understand that life teaches only old tricks. Today, to sell it takes a lot of study, good tools, processes and methodology. A salesperson is not born a good salesperson. If that were the case, then we'd hire salespeople at the maternity ward. A good salesperson must study and practice as much as a good surgeon or engineer.

Between 1988 and 1990 the main sales methodologies came to market including Solution Selling, SPIN Selling, Target Account Selling, and many others. Between 2002 and 2004 they were updated to contemplate the various cultures and particularities around the globe. In 2008, the 4W methodology for sales of products and services in the cloud was published.

Also, in 2008 the Challenger Selling methodology was published, the result of a survey of approximately 6,000 sellers. Forty-four attributes and behavioral aspects were analyzed in order to identify the skills and abilities of a high-performance salesperson. The research identified 5 groups of sellers: Hard Worker, Relationship Builder, Lone Wolf, Problem Solver and Challenger. The Challenger profile represented the group of high-performing salespeople.

The Hard Worker is the one who arrives early, leaves late, is always squealed and unheaded, running from one side to another, answers all emails, returns all calls and never arrives late. The Relationship Builder is the one who loves to have coffee with everyone, talks about football, family, is always accessible to customers, does everything the customer asks and fights, within the company, defending the interests of the client. The Lone Wolf works alone, trusts his instincts, does not like to follow methodology and processes, hates report, spreadsheets and sales meetings, performs well, but erratic and unpredictable. The Problem Solver does very well the post-sales monitoring, ensuring implementation and execution, is thorough, loves details, and he will always prioritize solving customer problems, even leaving sales aside.

The Challenger knows very well the business of his client and the market where the client operates, then can discuss and show alternative paths to the client. He's not afraid to share his opinions or polemize. He has a convincing and assertive speech putting a little "pressure" on the client, making him think differently. It constantly calls into question strategies and actions, promoting reviews and improvements.

The research was done in the USA in the midst of the economic crisis, so at first they found that the Challenger profile had high sales performance through a difficult environment. After the crisis, it was noticed that the Challenger profile continued to present the best results. A more detailed analysis showed that the crisis accelerated the change in market buying behavior. A change that has no turning back. The consumer is buying differently and the Challenger profile is the one with the best skills and skills to meet these new demands.

This explains, too, why the Relationship Builder profile was the one that performed best in the past, when the buying process was based largely on relationship building, and is currently the profile that presented the worst results.

The new buyer wants a seller who adds value. The new buyer wants a seller who knows his company and his market and who takes information, visions and perspectives that he does not have and would not easily find on the Internet. The new buyer wants a seller who makes him think and offers creative and innovative solutions to improve his business.

The customer is buying differently, so you will have to learn to SELL differently.

2 - The psychology of selling

Understanding the behavioral profile of the seller and the customer

Hippocrates, born in 460 a.C. and called "the father of medicine", established the theory of four body moods (choleric, blood, phlegmatic and melancholic) to determine groups of individuals with similar personalities. Carl Jung significantly deepened the concepts of analysis and personality patterns. At the beginning of this century we had the great contribution of William Marston creating the DISC model as an evolution of part of Jung's work. Today these theories are fundamental for the management of employees and SALES.

And that's how I started of the trainings for young salespeople. And one of them asks "are you talking about Marston who created the polygraph and the Wonder Woman character?" I couldn't help laughing. Today the teacher is up front talking, and students are seeking additional information on the Internet.

Challenger Selling, launched in 2008, establishes 5 profiles of sellers: Hard Worker, Relationship Builder, Lone Wolf, Problema Solver and Challenger. Obviously the five profiles are adherent to Marston and Jung's theories. Therefore, you can map the Challenger profile using the behavioral profile tests already available on the market.

Challenger Selling is not a discriminatory methodology, i.e., it was not made to point out who has chances of better sales results. The methodology was developed in order to provide knowledge and instruments so that all sellers can articulate and "act" as if they were "challenger" and, with this, obtain better results.

The group that Hippocrates called "choleric" is now named Dominance(D) or Executor and has as characteristics to be: controller, director, dominant, self-confident, energetic, competitive, audacious, fearless and courageous. Typically we have here the executive director and the commercial director. Here are the Lone Wolf and Hard Worker. They are motivated by Power and Fortune.

The "blood" group is now named Influence(I) or Communicator. They are extroverted, spontaneous, communicative, persuasive and optimistic. Typically we have here the Founder of the company, Executive Director, Commercial Director, Marketing Director and sales team. Here we find the "Challenger" profile. They are motivated by Fame and Fortune.

The group of "phlegmatics" is now named Stability(S) or Planned. They are supportive, friendly, stable, calm and patient, cooperative, diplomatic, loyal and conservative. Typically we have here the Director of Strategy and Planning, Director of Governance, Director of Alliances and Partnerships and the Marketing Team. Here is the Relationship Builder. They are motivated by the participation and approval of the group.

The group of "melancholics" is now named Conformity(C) or Analyst. They are analytical, thorough, logical, prudent, precise, dedicated, applied, zealous, organized and very conservative. Typically we have here the Director of Operations, Technical Director, Director of Consulting and the pre-sales team. Here's the Problem Solver. They are motivated by Peace and Stability, that is, the desire that nothing changes.

In sales training we teach to the participants how to analyze the work environment, ask a few questions, and identify the behavioral profile of the customer or buyer. If you know your customer's profile, then it is much easier to negotiate.

For customers with the Executor profile, we recommend to the seller: incorporate the "businessman" style, ensure that their time will be well used, focus on goals, be very clear and objective, explore "time saving" or "money saving", and be prepared to negotiate price and trading conditions at any time.

For clients with the Communicator profile: invest in the relationship, show enthusiasm, do not rush the discussion, adopt a macro approach, explore innovation, exclusivity, ease and speed, and think about the projects and proposals "step-by-step".

For customers with the Planner profile: create a climate of interaction, avoid conflict, explore teamwork and be accepted by the group, provide security and support, and show that the risks are small.

For clients with the Analyst profile: offer lots of data, details, proofs of success (cases), do not rush decision making, do not exaggerate the benefits, explore data and comparations, show that the risks are minimal, and that it has enough information to make the decision.

And here's the homework "what to do to perform better in sales"?

3 - The new seller

How the new seller makes a value-based sale

Figueira sent me an e-mail "I need help, my boss said I have to learn to be a champion seller". Figueira was a salesperson with many years of practice, but he needs to have his knowledge recycled. Today customers buy differently, demanding a seller with updated skills for the new market reality.

Challenger Selling points out the superior results of the "challenger" seller, showing the characteristics of this professional and how other professionals can adopt his successful posture.

We observe, in the market, that this new seller has six attributes that make him have a higher performance: he shows to the client new and different perspectives, he has great ease understanding the environment and involve people in synergistic positions and stakeholders in the opportunity, he understands the motivators of VALUE of his interlocutors, he identifies the economic drivers of his client's business, he is always comfortable discussing commercial conditions (financial aspects and prices), and finally, he gets to shorten the sales cycle (or purchase).

I think I could sum up in 3 great attitudes that determine the success of the champion seller.

Articulate VALUE for the client - he uses his communication skills, understanding of the client's business and ability to create new perspectives, as a differential, to teach the client in all interactions they have. He shows knowledge and ideas causing the customer to rethink their business and their needs.

Involve decision makers and influencers - he can use his sensitivity to know the financial and VALUE motivators of the client, to sew a network of relationships with decision makers, influencers, and other stakeholders in the solution, delivering the correct message, of interest and VALUE, for these multiple relationships. He communicates different sales messages according to the customer context and makes the various "actors" communicate by creating a positive image of the solution he is presenting.

Shorten the sales cycle - he is always ready and comfortable to discuss the business conditions he manages, when necessary, to put a little pressure on the customer to speed up the decision process. In fact, he creates a constructive tension throughout the process to create urgency, reduce the sales cycle and have advantages in all dimensions of the sales process.

Back in the old days we had product-oriented sales, which was evolving and gaining new packaging and increasing complexity. We evolved from product-oriented to product-package-oriented sales, then packages of services and consulting, then customization of products according to the customer's need, and then moved to understand and improve the customer process. Today we talk about and offer a fully integrated supplier-customer partnership for the purpose of mutual gains.

Sales got more complex and riskier for both parties. The new seller seeks to minimize the risks perceived by the customer, in a direct but not aggressive way, again accelerating the sales process.

Managers can help their teams with training, tools, coaching, and incentive and compensation systems. It will also be up to managers to monitor the performance and transition of sellers from the traditional model to this new value-based selling model. Unfortunately not all sellers will be able to make this transition.

Marketing will also play a different and fundamental role, creating tools to support the seller in this new process of articulating VALUE to the customer, strongly grounded in use cases and success cases.

This new world will then be a new challenge for the seller, for the manager and for marketing. A challenge with the promise of great results.

4 - Tell me something I still do not know!

Understanding changes in the purchasing process

This is how the customer received the seller Figueira. "You salespeople come here to talk about topics and subjects that I'm bald to know, or that I can quickly find on the Internet. Can you surprise me with something I don't know or can't quickly find out?" said the customer.

If Figueira went to the customer to talk about products and features, then he would probably say "more of the same". But Figueira, in recent years, had developed new skills in sales. Now, before the meeting, he studied a lot about the client, the market where the client is playing, trends and, mainly, the success cases from companies similar to that of their client. Success stories were true sources of inspiration to know what could be proposed in your client to improve the results of his company.

The client could have access to success stories, but it would be a little harder to get. And Figueira, who knew well how to apply the solutions to business, could read the cases "between the lines" identifying the exaggerations and possible problems faced.

Figueira was in the same company for a little over 10 years. He had participated in the installation and implementation of solutions in more than 100 customers. He had seen everything that worked and what didn't work out so well (we call it learning). He knew what his customers had gained from using the solution and, mainly, how to make a new project perform as well as possible. This valuable knowledge was something the client would never find on the Internet. Here was one of the "news" to tell the client.

Figueira had a very unique way of conducting the meeting with his clients. At the very beginning of the meeting, he would start telling "stories". "Last month we delivered a project to a customer who has a profile similar to his company. They wanted to increase sales by 5%, but the result was well beyond what was expected and we delivered 9%" said Figueira, keeping an eye out to see the customer's reaction.

If the client expressed interest, "game was on" and Figueira would dig in showing details about the story and, at the same time, ask the questions of qualification of the opportunity. If the client did not "take the bait", then Figueira would tell another "story", and another, until he would see the client interested. As Figueira had done his homework, then he hardly had to make use of the third story.

Here is one of the fundamental differences between challenger selling methodology and traditional consultative sales methodologies. At Challenger Selling we present a menu, and the customer picks the dish that interests him the most, so we set out for the specifics. It's like going into McDonald's and asking for the number - it simplifies the process a lot. In the traditional methodologies we started from a "blank sheet of paper" trying to discover the pains and problems of the client, and then we make the confirmation, re-confirmation, deepen and finally arrive with a possibility of solution that would interest the client.

Nowadays the purchase is much more dynamic and fast. The seller has to use a more agile methodology where the customer quickly identifies with the solution offered.

The seller today offers unique perspectives and value in the market, helps the customer to navigate the alternatives, constantly provides advice and recommendations, helps the customer avoid potential problems, educates the customer with new concepts and ideas, makes the purchasing process flow easily and quickly.

Figueira had realized that the world had changed, the customer was buying differently, so he had to sell differently.

And did you notice the changes?

5 - The new purchasing and sales process

Four steps to increase sales efficiency

Figueira was a salesperson with a high success rate and had realized in recent years that the purchasing and sales process had changed. He knew that customer time was precious and that to gain customer attention, he had to bring information that the customer did not have or would not easily be able to get on the Internet. But how to sell more and better?

I taught Figueira a four-step process to sell more and better nowadays.

Step 1 - Target to your strengths. We have to take information and teach customers things that they don't already know or don't have access to easily on the Internet, but we're there to sell, meaning it's not to teach anything. We should teach things that arouse customer interest in the products and services that the seller has to offer. So the seller has to show how he can help the customer better than any other supplier in the market.

Knowing our strengths and differentials is not a trivial activity. I asked 10 sellers from the same company to write on paper their company's biggest competitive differential. The result was 10 totally different responses. It was not clear to any of them the company's strengths in relation to the market and competitors. And here there is a huge risk because the seller can teach something new to the customer, that is, show the customer that he has a need or desire that he had not yet realized. The customer then begins to look for alternatives and discovers a company, competitor to the seller, with a better offer.

I did another exercise, now with 10 salespeople from different companies. Each wrote his competitive differential. As is the case most of the time, 8 of the sellers write the word "quality". Whoa... if 8 companies out of 10 have quality as a competitive differential, then is quality really a differential? Of course, it is not. "Quality" becomes a "must" and not a differential.

Step 2 - Check impacts and benefits. The seller has to tell the "story", but making the proper "translations" and pointing out why the story matters for the client. It is not enough just to tell the story and let the client read between the lines. The seller has to show how the solution would be implemented for this particular client and check what the impacts and benefits would be, and whether the solution is really what the client needs and wants.

Step 3 - Speed up the decision process. Figueira had learned that it is not enough just to tell a "story" to know if the client identified himself or not with the problem. Sometimes the client do identify with the story but it does not mean that the client is ready to react or do anything. The seller has to tell the "story" framing the customer IN THE story told, taking him out of the comfort zone, or even causing some discomfort. I remember an interesting phrase that Figueira used "if this story makes sense to you, then I would like to think that you could increase 10% sales just like the customer in the story I told you. If you take 5 months to decide, then we could easily say you missed 50% of annual revenue. That's a lot of money!!! Does your boss know about this?" The URGENCY effect this had on customers was impressive.

Step 4 - Leverage to other customers. This is the step I like the most. Here the seller discovers that his speech was excellent and gave good results. Then, the seller should do a list of clients where the speech could be REPLICATED. The key point here is to seek customers with similar needs and situations. And believe me... customers are much more alike than we think. Most customers in the same economic sector react to the same market stimuli, so they are almost always in the same need.

There is one more component that has proven key throughout the sales process: passion.

In the old days we used to say that sales were all about methodologies and processes. Today we know that the successful seller is "passionate" for what he does and passes this passion on to the customer. A passion that makes all the difference!!!

6 - Articulating VALUE to your customer

How to structure your new sales pitch

The traditional consultative sale today has new components of posture and argumentation. The main thing is to show the customer something that they don't know or can't easily find on the Internet. We now have a 6-step process to show how the seller should sell today more and better.

Step 1 - warm up. It comes right after the initial formalities such as introductions, checking the available time for the meeting and setting the agenda. This is where you start telling your customer what you know about the market and trends, also seeking to arouse customer's interest at some point. Instead of asking open and generic questions you will "direct" the customer to what you have to offer and to your strengths. Figueira used something like "We have worked with several companies in the same segment as yours and we realize that all currently have 3 common needs (cite the needs here). Have you seen the same thing or have you seen different situations?" The main goal here is to create CREDIBILITY, showing that you know the market and that the customer's time will be well used.

Step 2 - reframing. You should start from the points identified in Step 1 and connect them with a much larger problem or opportunity than the customer had thought or heard about. This is not the time yet to talk about the solution. Let's talk only about the problem and show the customer that you have the knowledge to discuss the subject. The goal here is to get the customer out of their comfort zone, surprise him, arousing curiosity and making him want to know more. You don't want him to agree, but to be bothered. If he enthusiastically agrees with what you said, then you didn't teach him anything and he already knows everything... you might even be able to teach something "marginal", but this is not a good place to be.

Step 3 - rational immersion. This is where you will show why you're reframing the customer and the taking him out of the comfort zone, and why the customer's time will be well used. It's time to show data, charts, and information to quantify the cost or risk of the problem, or size of the opportunity. It's time to show why the customer should think differently about his business or his challenges. The seller should talk about the cost of "missing the opportunity", the cost of "doing it in a less appropriate way" or "doing worse than the competition". Some consultants call this step FUD (Fear, Uncertainty and Doubt). At the end you'll want to hear from the customer "Wow, I had no idea how big this was..."

Step 4 - emotional impact. The goal here is to make sure that the customer recognizes himself in the story you are telling. You did everything right... step 1, step 2, step3... and then the customer says "I understand everything, but I don't think this is for us... we're a little different here..." And now, what to do? Keep explaining with more data? Go back to step1 and seek new opportunity? The new seller abandons the data and seeks to establish an emotional connection. The difference here is the narrative with something like "yes, you're different, but I'll give you an example of how it would work in your company". The salesperson keeps poking until he gets a "Uhhmm... This is for us" Or... abandons after a few more attempts.

Step 5 - value proposition. Until this moment you convinced the customer about the PROBLEM, now is the time to talk about the SOLUTION. It's time to talk about how the customer's life would be better if he acted DIFFERENTLY. It is not yet the time to talk about the SUPPLIER'S OFFER - before the customer has to "buy" the idea that they need the solution (or act differently). Explain the benefits and value of the SOLUTION, what it gets by implementing, what it ceases to spend, competitive advantages, risks, etc.

Step 6 - solution map. Here you will show that you can deliver the SOLUTION better than any other company (its strengths and differentials). If you performed everything right, from step 1 to 6, then you have TAUGHT and CREATED ENOUGH VALUE for the customer to have great preference for you and your company.

You must establish 3 levels of CREDIBILITY with your customer. From step 1 to 4 you have to establish customer's credibility in you (the seller). In step 5, credibility in the solution. And in step 6, the credibility in the company you represent. Most inexperienced sellers start by talking about the wonder that is their company, breaking the natural order and expected by the customer, that is, the seller talks about something when the customer still does not want to hear about it.

Well, if I had to shorten all of this in just 3 steps I would say: give customers transformative ideas, specify and customize the potential impact of these transformative ideas, and show your skills as the best way to execute transformative ideas.

It all seems so easy, doesn't it?

You will meet the customer and show new perspectives for the problems he was very familiar with. You're going to get him out of his comfort zone and you think he's going to be happy with you???

First he's going to get scared, then he's going to challenge you and ask for data and proof.

And this is where we will see if the seller is ready to meet the new demands of the market. The old-school seller will not be comfortable with the customer's reaction, he will try to apologize and return to the old speech of "I have here a lot of products for you". The new seller will see that his speech has taken effect and will know how to respond and take the client throughout the negotiation process, reaching an excellent agreement between the parties.

Don't think it's going to be easy. but there is no other alternative. The old way of selling doesn't work anymore.

7 - Involving decision-makers and influencers

How to create a network of positive influencers for your solution

In the old days when I gave consultative sales training there was always a salesperson who would say "put me in front of a director for 30 minutes and the sale will be closed".

Gone is the time when a senior executive of a company decided all by himself. Today, no senior executive wants to take responsibility for the decision to hire a supplier or a solution on his own. It would take a very high and unjustifiable risk.

I remember a lecture I attended from George W. Bush after several years he left the presidency. He spoke to an audience of about 10,000 businessmen something like "looking back I see today that the invasion of Iraq was a mistake. We made the decision at that time with the best we had of data and information. A president doesn't make a decision on his own, but he takes responsibility for what's been decided."

The seller needs to understand the buying process has changed. If he wants to be successful, he will have to build a network of allies **INSIDE THE CUSTOMER**. Allies who will vote in favor of his proposal when the decision comes. It is intense work to speak and orchestrate information, relationships, and processes, in such a way that everyone is comfortable with the decision.

The new seller knows that he will not succeed if he has only **ONE** contact within his customer. And that he will have little chance of success if he has contacts within only **ONE** area at a huge corporation. The new salesperson creates a network of relationships. Not just any network, but a well-assembled network with professionals who interact and contribute, who influence, choose, decide and approve.

The new seller will map, for each of the necessary contacts: the behavioral profile, the risk profile (innovative, visionary, conservative), personal and professional motivators, who earns what with the purchase, and who loses what with the purchase. Then, this seller will adjust his speech to each of the interlocutors making clear the benefits of the solution for HIM and for the HIS area.

Each interlocutor has a set of different objectives, goals and concerns, so the seller will have to address each of these points to each interlocutor.

If the speech is coherent, then it will begin to echo within the customer and it will increase the chances of a successful selling. This "resonance" effect is like that little wind that was hitting the bridge rhythmically and caused the bridge to fall.

Most sellers want to use the same speech with all their interlocutors. Quite often they want to use the same 128-slide PPT, with dozens of acronyms and technical terms. The new seller studies his interlocutor and chooses the best content and way to talk to him, including: What is the purpose of this interlocutor in the company? What are his goals? How will he earn his bonus? What's his profile, which are his motivators? How can I help HIM? How to add VALUE?

Figueira, who is a great salesperson, collects impressions and testimonials from the interlocutors he talks to. By the time Figueira reaches the senior executive then he talks about everyone he has talked to, their impressions and testimonials.

With this, Figueira creates the necessary and satisfactory conditions for the senior executive to make the final decision, knowing that he will have the support of his team.

During a sales training, a participant asked me if this "building the network" technique would make the sales cycle longer and more complex. I replied that "it might take longer but it will increase your chance of success". For those who want to sell, you must sell it the way the customer buys it. And the buying process has changed.

8 - Shortening the sales cycle

How to press your customer to make the purchase

I open one of my sales trainings with the question "can the seller have control over the purchasing process?". A sort of discomfort arises in the room and there is always a salesperson who answers "this is impossible. The customer is the one who controls the buying process, and so, the selling process"

The seller will never OWN the customer's buying process or control it. The new seller has control of the parts of the sales process where he operates. He can have greater assertiveness in the process and predictability of the transaction, that is, when the transaction would be concluded and the final amount. The new seller also knows where the transaction is in the sales cycle and how to accelerate it.

Most traditional sellers have a "passive" stance. They do everything the customer wants and how the customer wants it. We call them "Yes Sir" salesmen. These sellers think that the customer is the one who has the power. They are afraid of the customer, afraid of losing the sales, afraid of losing the customer, scared TO DEATH of the negotiation.

I also provide training for the buyers and 75% of "purchasing professional" are scared to death of sellers. In fact, we see that 75% of sellers and buyers are not properly prepared to face a negotiation table, but this is a matter for another article.

Some companies define an "ANNUAL vendor portfolio" when they pick the vendors for the entire year and set the prices and terms. Sellers are so afraid to lose the "annual contract" that they take most of the conditions as "Yes Sir".

The new seller puts some "pressure" on the customer's decision cycle by making him decide faster and avoiding the "inertia of the decision". Some customers take so long to decide that the translation is "lost in time". If the seller does not put some pressure and transaction will never happen.

One of the best practices is to remove all obstacles that the customer sees, helping the customer to talk to the stakeholders involved in the decision-making and approval process. The new seller must provide references and success cases to make the customer more comfortable with the decision and show that the risk is under control. Figueira loves to use the cost of not having, or the cost of the delay in deciding, to pressure the customer to make a decision faster. I remember him speaking at a meeting "every day you don't decide, this company loses USD 200,000. Your boss must be really upset by this daily loss."

The new seller knows the right time to negotiate prices and trading conditions. He doesn't give discount right away, but rather uses various tactics to avoid the discount. He goes back to discussing the solution by emphasizing value and not price. The new seller speaks of return on investment, scope and quality. When he has tried almost everything... the new seller speaks of cost/benefit. And lastly, he try to get some other project or benefit, before going into discounting.

The new seller uses 4 steps to increase his success in the negotiation.

Step 1 - he understands the objections and postpone all the concessions. You need to have the whole scenario. We usually tell the customer to list all the objections before we dig into them. Sometimes we tell the customer "let's pursue a little further so that I have more information to decide the best alternatives". Figueira uses something like "I understand your concern with discount, but I would like to understand a little more about your needs to be able to make the best offer for you, can we proceed?"

Step 2 - deepen the knowledge of the objection. The goal here is to split the objections from the excuses. We need to discover the REAL value for the customer. We need to understand what elements of the proposal are core to the customer and what he perceives as "accessories" (nice to have)?

Step 3 - explore alternatives. The goal here is to find out the list of criteria that the customer will use to make the decision. Will price be the most important item on this list? What is the order of importance and priority for product quality, support and technical assistance, warranty and delivery of the product?

Step 4 - give in according to your plan. Steps 2 and 3 will bring important information about what the customer understands to be fundamental and accessory in the offer, and the selection criteria. So it's time to re-examine the customer's objection or request by offering something that is really important to the customer and being able to ask for something in return... If you planned before the negotiation meeting, then you know exactly what you can offer.

These techniques will give the new seller greater control over the sales process, greater predictability and higher success rate. The seller has to change because the market has changed the way they buy. There is no place of old-school sellers any longer.