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# 2B OR NOT

SELLING TOOLS AND TACTICS FOR B2B SELLING

# TO BE A B2B EXPERT

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# **To be or not to be a B2B expert: selling tools and tactics for B2B sales**

A guide to all Sales and Marketing leaders in B2B, who want to grow their revenue faster, be more relevant and break all records!

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# Introduction

## Purpose of the Book and Target Audience

Welcome to a book designed to help B2B entrepreneurs, salespeople, and sales leaders achieve better results in sales. Whether you're a salesperson just starting out in your career, an experienced sales leader, or an entrepreneur looking to grow your business, this book provides practical tools, strategies, and insights.

This book is born out of years of experience and observations in the world of B2B sales. My goal is to bring value to every reader and help build a successful business.

This is not just theory or philosophical musings—this is a practical guide designed to help you focus on what matters in sales and achieve results.

This book will teach you how to identify the key needs of your customers, build a sales strategy step by step, and leverage technology like CRM and marketing automation tools.

## Why Sales Is the Core of Any Business

Sales is the heart of any business. Without sales, there are no customers, and without customers, there is no business. Sales, however, is not just about selling products or services—it's about helping customers solve problems and achieve their goals.

This is even more pronounced in B2B sales. It's not just about transactions; it's about partnerships where the salesperson and the customer work together to achieve mutual goals. This requires a deep understanding of the customer's business, tailored solutions, and delivering genuine value at every stage.

This book will help you understand why sales is so critical and how to build a sales strategy that delivers results. Success in sales is not accidental; it is the result of careful planning, customer understanding, and continuous improvement.

## The Specifics and Opportunities of B2B Sales

In the world of B2B sales, traditional sales techniques alone are no longer sufficient. Customers today expect much more: they want to be well-informed, receive tailored solutions, and feel valued as partners.

B2B sales often involve long sales cycles, complex buying processes, and collaboration among multiple decision-makers. For those who understand the logic of B2B sales and can adapt to the needs of customer organizations, this presents enormous opportunities.

This book teaches you how to identify the key needs of your customers, build a sales strategy step by step, and utilize technologies like CRM and marketing automation tools.

It opens the doors to this world for you. You will learn what it takes to succeed in B2B sales and how to stand out from your competitors. By the end of this book, you will have a clear vision of how to improve your sales and achieve sustainable success.

# Chapter 1: Understanding Value—What Are You Really Selling?

## 1.1 Why Customer Value Is the Foundation of Everything

Every salesperson has probably heard the phrase, "Customers buy benefits, not products." This is true, but let's dig deeper: What does benefit mean to the customer? A benefit is, in reality, the value your customer perceives they are receiving. Without this value, no transaction will occur.

Understanding value is critical because it drives all your sales efforts—how you present your solution, how you communicate, and how you build trust with your customer. If you don't understand the value you bring to your customer, it's impossible to convey it clearly.

Understanding value is not just about sales pitches or marketing—it's an in-depth analysis of how your solution helps the customer solve their problems and achieve their goals. Customers don't buy products or services for their own sake but for what they enable. For example, more efficient equipment can improve production line speed, which in turn increases the profitability of the customer's business.

## 1.2 Defining Value from the Customer's Perspective

Value is not universal—it is always defined from the customer's perspective. The same product or service can provide different benefits to different customers. For example, faster delivery times may be critical to one customer, while another values lower total costs more.

Defining value begins with understanding the customer's business and needs. This doesn't just mean listening to the problems the customer articulates but uncovering the underlying reasons and opportunities behind them. Often, customers don't even know exactly what they need until someone helps them see it.

Ask yourself:

- What goals is my customer trying to achieve?
- What challenges or problems are they facing?
- How does my solution help them overcome these obstacles or achieve their goals?

When you view things from your customer's perspective, you can identify the factors that matter most to them—and make those the focus of your sales efforts.

## 1.3 Value Is More Than Features and Benefits

Too often, salespeople focus on the features of their solution. They talk about technical details, functionalities, or the product's performance. While these are important, they are not enough to convince the customer. Your customer isn't buying the product; they're buying what the product enables.

When speaking to your customer, don't stop at the features. Always take the conversation to what value the features deliver. For example:

- "This automation system reduces errors in production, which means less waste and lower costs."
- "Our software enables you to analyze data faster, allowing for quicker decisions and greater competitiveness."

Remember also that value can be emotional. Customers want to make decisions that feel right. They want to feel confident and trust that their choice will lead to success. If your customer feels secure in choosing your product, they are not just buying technical features but also the assurance that they are making the right decision.

#### Example of Communicating Value

Suppose you are selling an IT solution that reduces system downtime. You could tell your customer:

"Our system has 99.9% uptime, which means fewer interruptions."

This is a good start, but you can take it further:

"With reduced system downtime, your employees will be more productive, your customers will have a better service experience, and your brand's reputation will strengthen."

This way, the value becomes tangible to the customer from the perspective of their own business.

## 1.4 Practical Steps to Define Value

1. Listen deeply to the customer. Don't settle for surface-level answers. Ask why the problem exists and what solving it would mean for the customer.
2. Analyze the customer's business. Understand how their industry and market situation affect their needs and goals.
3. Test your assumptions. Present your view of the value your solution brings and ensure it resonates with them.

## 1.5 Tasks

- Make a list of the three most important values your solution brings to the customer. Remember, these values must be defined from the customer's perspective.
- Practice communicating these values briefly and clearly—so that they resonate with the customer.
- Review your most recent sales presentation or materials. Are you focusing more on features or value? Consider how you can adjust your message to prioritize value.

### Did You Know?

Research shows that 70% of B2B customers make their purchase decisions based on how well they feel the salesperson understands their needs.

**Source:** *CEB (now part of Gartner), The Challenger Customer (2015)*

## Chapter 2: The Customer's Buying Journey

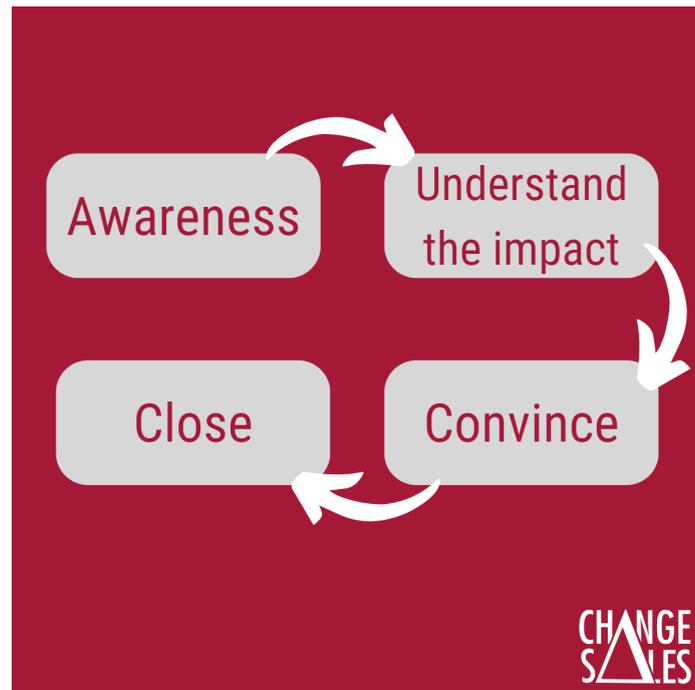
### 2.1 What Does the Customer's Buying Journey Mean?

The customer's buying journey is the process a customer goes through as they recognize their needs, evaluate options, and make a purchase decision. In the B2B world, this journey is often more complex than in consumer markets. Multiple stakeholders, long decision-making periods, and intricate needs make the buying journey challenging to manage—but this is exactly why understanding it is critical for sales success.

The buying process can be divided into four stages:

1. Awareness – The customer identifies a problem or opportunity and begins searching for a solution.
2. Evaluation or Comparison – The customer compares options and justifies why a new approach would be better than the current one.
3. Consideration – The customer assesses providers and narrows down their choices.
4. Decision – The customer makes the final decision and proceeds to purchase.

Understanding these stages helps you tailor your sales and marketing efforts to the customer's situation and needs. This chapter will delve into each stage and explain how you can support the customer in moving forward.



## 2.2 The Stages of the Buying Process

### 1. Awareness

In the first stage, the customer is just starting to recognize a problem or opportunity. They might notice that their current methods are insufficient or that there's a new market trend they need to respond to. Often, this stage is triggered by an external factor, such as a market change, competitor action, or new regulation.

At this stage, the customer's focus is on their own world—not yet on your product or service. Your task is to spark their interest and help them see that there is room for improvement in their current situation.

How to support the customer in the awareness stage:

- Provide general information and insights that provoke thought (blogs, white papers, research).
- Use emotional communication—this stage is an emotional one for the customer.
- Avoid selling your solution directly. Focus on demonstrating that you understand the customer's challenges and goals.

## 2. Evaluation or Comparison

After the awareness stage, the customer begins comparing their current situation with a potential new solution. They weigh the benefits and drawbacks, as well as the risks. This stage is logical and requires concrete facts and figures.

At this stage, you need to justify why a new approach is better than the current one. What can they achieve with change? What do they risk losing if they don't act?

How to support the customer in the evaluation stage:

- Provide concrete examples, comparisons, and calculators.
- Demonstrate numerically the benefits of change (cost savings, speed, efficiency).
- Be cautious about being overly technical—focus on the benefits the customer will gain from your solution.

## 3. Consideration

In the consideration stage, the customer evaluates different providers and tries to make a choice. They want to ensure they are making the right decision and avoiding risks. At this stage, your customer might ask themselves, “Why should I choose this solution?” and “Can I trust this provider?”

This is the first stage where your customer is truly focusing on you and your solution. You need to prove your credibility and stand out from competitors.

How to support the customer in the consideration stage:

- Present references and customer success stories that showcase the value your solution has brought to similar clients.
- Highlight your differentiators—why are you the best choice?
- Demonstrate your expertise and be prepared to thoroughly address the customer's questions.

## 4. Decision

In the final stage, the customer makes their decision. This can be a simple or complex process, depending on the nature of the purchase. At the decision stage, the customer may experience last-minute doubts or “buyer’s remorse.”

Your task is to make the decision-making process as easy and clear as possible for the customer.

How to support the customer in the decision stage:

- Be transparent about pricing—the customer needs to clearly understand what they’re paying for and what’s included.
- Offer alternative ways to proceed with the purchase (e.g., a pilot program that allows the customer to test the solution).
- Ensure the post-purchase process is clear to the customer. Show them what happens immediately after the agreement is signed.

## 2.3 What Information Is Needed at Different Stages of the Buying Journey?

During the buying process, your customer’s needs and questions change significantly from one stage to another. This means you need to provide the right kind of information at each stage to help the customer move forward.

Understanding and responding to this is one of the most important factors in successful sales.

**Awareness Stage: Inspirational and General Information**

In the awareness stage, the customer may not even fully realize their problem or opportunity. At this stage, their needs are related to general information gathering and curiosity. They want to know if there are better ways to operate or new solutions they haven’t yet discovered.

Provide the customer with:

- Inspirational content: Articles, blog posts, and white papers discussing industry trends and major changes.
- General insights: Infographics or reports showing how others have benefited from new approaches.
- Emotional appeal: Videos or stories that spark the customer's interest and create a feeling of, "This could work for us too."

The goal at the awareness stage is not to sell directly but to get the customer interested and thinking that a new approach could bring them value.

## 2.4 Tools and Processes for Supporting the Customer

The buying process involves many moving parts, but with the right tools and processes, you can support your customer at every stage and increase your chances of success. The key is to ensure your tools and workflows are clear, easy to use, and genuinely help the customer.

CRM: The Backbone of Managing the Buying Process A Customer Relationship Management (CRM) system is the central hub for your company's sales, marketing, and customer service. It helps you track the customer's journey at every stage and ensures they receive the right support and content at the right time.

CRM enables you to:

- Monitor the customer's status in real-time: See at a glance which stage of the buying process the customer is in.
- Personalize communication: Tailor your messages and offers based on the customer's current situation.
- Enhance team collaboration: All customer data is centralized, reducing misunderstandings and enabling seamless collaboration between sales, marketing, and customer service.
- Track and analyze: Measure the effectiveness of the customer journey and identify where customers might drop off.