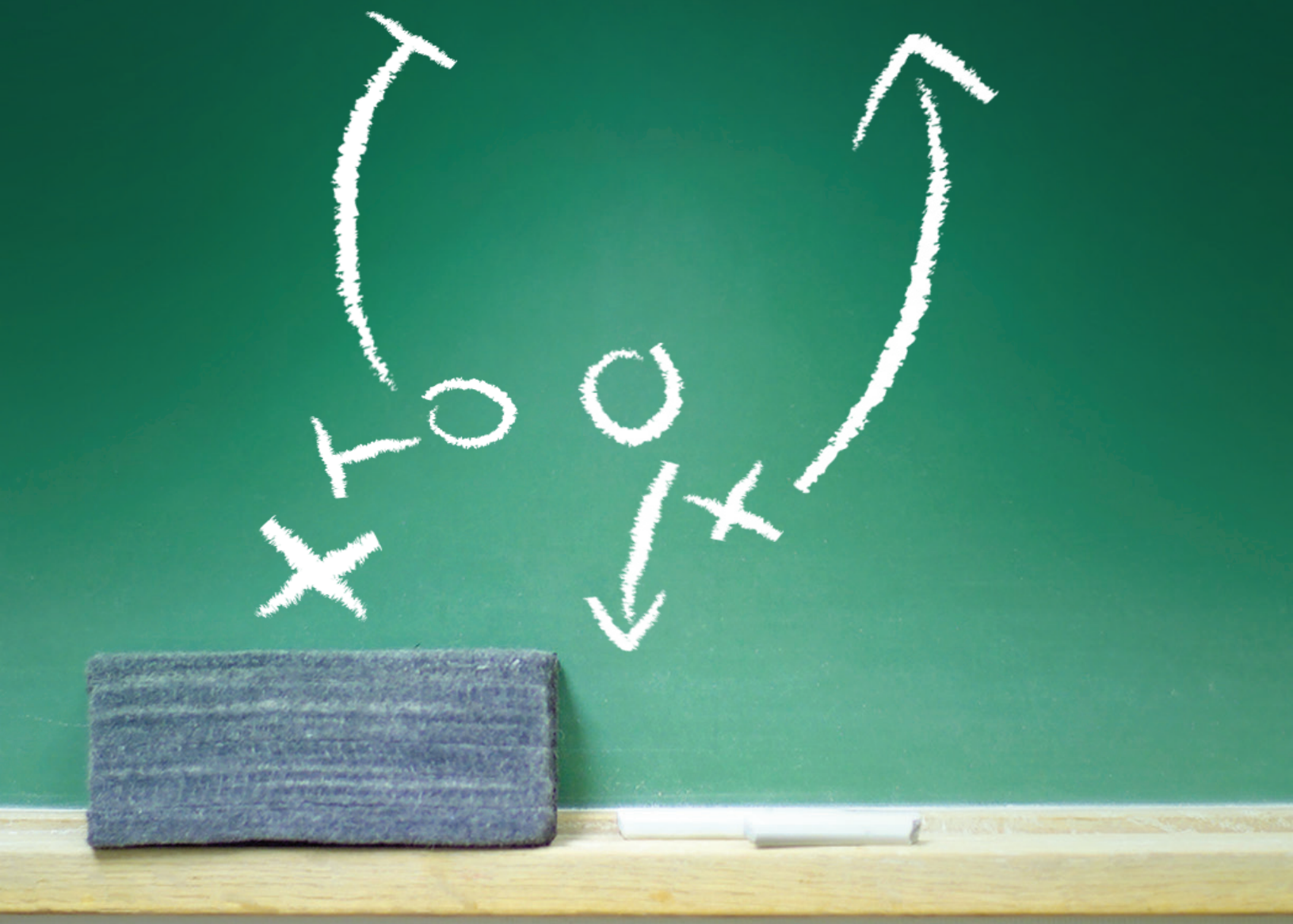
31 SALES STRATEGIES

TO

Dominate Your Market



MARC WAYSHAK

Praise for Marc's Best-Selling Book, *Game Plan Selling*

"Marc has written a powerful, practical book that can transform your sales results and give you a real edge in today's market."

—Brian Tracy, best-selling author of ***The Psychology of Selling***

"When I read a sales book, I look for a couple of nuggets that will give me a competitive edge. I found a bucket of gold in ***Game Plan Selling***."

—Bill Gates, author of ***Get More Referrals Now***

"If you have ever played sports and need to master selling, then you will love this book. ***Game Plan Selling*** shows us how to be a champion in the sport of sales."

—Jim Tunney, former NFL referee, "The Dean of NFL Refs"

"In the old days, salespeople were in power because they had information buyers needed. Today, buyers are in charge because everything they need to research products, services, and companies is freely available on the web. New selling models are required. Are you playing by the new rules? Marc Wayshak shows you how."

—David Meerman Scott, best-selling author of ***The New Rules of Marketing and PR***

"If you are looking to close more sales then this book is a must-read. Marc Wayshak provides a great new perspective on and a lot of usable solutions to one of the oldest challenges in selling—closing the deal."

—Suzanne Bates, best-selling author of ***Speak Like a CEO***

"These strategies work. Selling has never been a gentle sport, but these times require a flawless system. Wayshak provides us with just that. Loved it, so relevant today!"

—Robert Goodwin, former CEO of Insta-Care Pharmacy Services

"Most entrepreneurs don't succeed because they don't know how to effectively sell, this book lays out a sales system that is easy to follow, that will help you close more deals ethically without ever seeming salesy and that will help you build deeper relationships. If you need a new approach that will work, read this book."

—Arel Moodie, best-selling author & ***Inc. Magazine*** "30 Under 30" honoree

"Marc Wayshak has worked with my team for years and his systematic and disciplined approach has been a critical component to our success. If you want to increase your sales, don't just read this book, apply everything that's in it."

—Paul Marsan, president of Carpenter & Costin Landscape Management

"***Game Plan Selling*** shows us, in a very fun-to-read style, exactly how to close the sale in a time when the rules of selling have changed."

—John Chapin, author of the Gold Medal-winning ***SALES ENCYCLOPEDIA***

"If you want to learn how to close business deals in today's market, this comprehensive sales guide will put you ahead of the curve."

—Dan Schawbel, founder of Millennial Branding & author of ***Me 2.0***

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While the cases presented herein are based on true events, many of the names and details have been changed for privacy.

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WHY THE GAME HAS CHANGED...

Sales isn't what it was 10 years ago. Whether you're a salesperson, a sales manager, an entrepreneur or a CEO, it's more important than ever to understand how you can adapt to today's increasingly competitive industry. If your sales strategies don't change with the times, you will be left in the dust.

It starts with a recognition that we need to sell differently today than we have in the past. Prospects are busier, savvier, and armed with more information than ever before.

Data now shows that prospects will conduct an Internet search of a potential new vendor 95% of the time before making a buying decision. And right now, the typical executive—your prospect—has 40 hours of work just to catch up on. In addition to this, you're no longer just competing against other local contractors and vendors. You're now competing against companies from all over the world.

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As you might imagine, all this has huge implications for your sales strategy.

That's why I've written this e-book to improve your approach to sales. I've spent the past decade teaching salespeople and entrepreneurs how to dramatically increase sales, so I'm no stranger to the challenges you face. You might be reading this e-book because you've seen my articles in ***Forbes, Entrepreneur, Fast Company, Huffington Post, Selling Power***, or hundreds of other industry publications. Or maybe you've watched me speak at one of over 200 major trade associations in the past few years.

Regardless of how you got here, you're in the right place. I know exactly why the top 1% of salespeople dominate their markets—and I'm here to teach you the same strategies that keep them at the top.

But first, let me explain why I know so much about the massive shift currently underway in sales.

Many years before I wrote the best-selling book ***Game Plan Selling***, I was a student at Harvard who had just lost all his money in the dot-com collapse. Faced with looming private tuition expenses and no financial safety net, I had to figure out how to pay for college—and fast. Instead of simply getting a job, I decided to take the road less traveled. My younger brother and I started a business.

Ours was a little business called The Promotion Company. We created grand opening and customer appreciation events for retail chains. My initial plan for success was simple: Deliver a good product and treat my customers right.

It wasn't long before I realized I was missing another key ingredient to success: I had to sell. And I had no idea how.

Meeting with retailer after retailer, I was consistently met with rejection. Prospects interrupted me, kicked me out of their stores, and flat-out refused to listen to my pitches. I was exhausted and deflated. I began to think, "Maybe I'm just not the sales type."

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Luckily for me, that's when my father, a lifelong salesman, stepped in. I'll never forget what he said: "Marc, selling is a skill. It's not some innate talent that you either have or don't have. So learn!"

That's exactly what I did. I read every sales book I could get my hands on. I listened to every relevant audio program. But there was one major problem: All the information was outdated. In hindsight, it was information that had been recycled and reused for close to 100 years in the sales industry. While it was packaged to look and sound modern, none of it was relevant to the selling world I faced at the time.

Even so, I took the information I was given and mastered it. I became "the king of pitch." I would walk into an office with an air of extreme enthusiasm and expertly pitch my products. I was met with great feedback from my prospects. "You're a great sales guy!" they'd tell me. One even said, "Marc, you could sell ice to an Eskimo."

But the reality was that I didn't sell much at all. Despite the accolades from my prospects, very few of them actually bought from me. The old-school techniques I had mastered simply weren't effective with prospects anymore.

I knew I had to change my approach to sales. I began to search for different approaches and eventually came across some amazing sales mentors. They taught me completely new ways to sell, and it totally transformed my business.

Within just a few months of using my new approach to sales, The Promotion Company's revenue skyrocketed. Soon after, I successfully sold my business and began to focus my energy on teaching other salespeople a fresh approach to selling.

That's how I became the sales strategist I am today. I've used my personal experience with the changing world of sales to help thousands of entrepreneurs and salespeople dominate their markets and totally transform their selling power. The cold hard fact is that the old-school sales approaches still used by most organizations no longer work. Most companies are still trying to convey their value by talking about

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how great they are. Prospects simply aren't buying it anymore.

Within these pages, I'll teach you exactly how to adapt your sales approach to reflect the new realities of the business world. You'll learn 31 proven sales strategies to dominate your market, no matter the industry. Ultimately, the tactics in this e-book will help you stand out from the competition, systematically create value when you sell, and develop a Prospecting Playbook for sales success. Whether you're a CEO, an entrepreneur, or an inside salesperson, these cutting-edge ideas will take your sales strategy to the next level.

I want to thank you for joining my community, and if you haven't already, be sure to register for the free sales training videos that accompany this e-book at www.SalesStrategyAcademy.com.

Seriously, register right now at www.SalesStrategyAcademy.com to find training videos that are the perfect supplement to this e-book.

Here's to dominating your market!

Marc Wayshak

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DISTINCTION FROM THE COMPETITION

1 **Stop being like the competition.** Being distinct is everything in sales. Prospects put up walls because they're accustomed to the same old sales tactics that have been used for decades.

The biggest myth in sales is that a pitch, a smile, and a fancy suit will win over any prospect. In reality, taking this old-school approach will only earn you distrust from your prospects. You have to be distinct these days so that your prospects open up to you.

After all, 90% of today's sales advice is outdated, meaning that the vast majority of salespeople are using old-school techniques that only worked 70 years ago. Set yourself apart from the competition by using a totally unexpected selling strategy. Don't put pressure on prospects to do business with you. Be authentic. Disqualify prospects who aren't a good fit for your products or services.

And, above all, go out of your way to do the opposite of what the prospect expects of you.

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2 **Challenge your prospects.** The vast majority of salespeople have been taught to compliment, coddle, and appease prospects—even when the prospect is clearly wrong. This is an outdated sales approach that doesn't benefit your prospects. In fact, it hurts their chances of actually solving their problems.

To set yourself apart from other salespeople, you must challenge your prospects instead. Don't be afraid to tell them when they're wrong. Let them know if they're making a bad decision, and make sure you hold them accountable to their actions.

In reality, most prospects don't even know what they really need—it's your job to tell them. Question their assumptions and lead them to where they really need to go. Once you're willing to challenge your prospects, you'll be amazed at how much you'll stand out from the competition.

3 **Create client case studies.** One of the most effective ways to stand out from the competition is to use client case studies during sales meetings. There's nothing—and I mean ***nothing***—more compelling to a prospect than an example of your past success. The key is to develop detailed yet straightforward case studies that accurately illustrate the value you bring to your clients.

These case studies should focus on three key items: your clients, their major challenges, and the solutions you created for them. Don't emphasize deliverables too much—remember, your prospects are ultimately interested in hearing about what you actually accomplished.

With that in mind, create as many client case studies as you can to showcase your accomplishments to prospects.

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4 **Be completely honest.** When we first learn about sales, one of the first concepts we're taught is to tell prospects what they want to hear. This old-school approach to selling is so popular that salespeople are widely regarded as dishonest, willing as they are to withhold the truth to close a deal.

Being completely honest is an approach that goes against what so many of us are accustomed to doing in a selling situation. But it's essential if you want to be distinct from the competition. While your instinct might tell you to keep saying what prospects want to hear, I challenge you to do the opposite. Tell the truth, even when you know it won't be a popular opinion. Be willing to stop the conversation with a prospect and say, "Look, here's what I think you may be doing wrong." When you stop beating around the bush, and start being completely honest, your prospect will trust you more.

As the trust between you grows, the prospect's walls will come down—one by one. In the first training video at www.SalesStrategyAcademy.com, I show you exactly how to accomplish this to stand out as an expert.

5 **Seek to disqualify.** Prospects are used to feeling qualified for every product and service out there. Salespeople are notorious for trying to fit a square peg into a round hole when it comes to selling to anyone and everyone—regardless of whether their needs are a good match for the proposed solution. Today, this is an ineffective way to approach sales.

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Not all of your prospects will be a good fit for your services or products, and so not all of your prospects are qualified to work with you. That's why you must seek to disqualify prospects in order to stand out from the competition. At least 50% of the prospects you encounter are not a fit for your products or services. Why waste your time trying to persuade them to do business with you?

Instead, focus your sales conversations on disqualifying prospects up front, so you can avoid selling to unqualified leads. An added bonus to the disqualification approach: It will establish you as an expert in your prospects' eyes.

6 **Get rid of the enthusiasm.** When you walk into a store, what's your reaction when a salesperson skips right up to you and loudly says, "Hi! How can I help you today?!" with a huge grin? If you're like most people, you feel annoyed, frustrated—and a bit like your personal space has been invaded.

Chances are you also feel like the salesperson is being insincere. That's because salesy enthusiasm isn't genuine at all. You should get rid of it immediately.

Old-school sales trainers have been teaching salespeople to be super-duper enthusiastic for generations. But after 80 years of the same tired routine, prospects are so over it. In fact, too much enthusiasm is one of the biggest turn-offs to prospects in any industry.

Instead of being overly enthusiastic, simply be genuine. You'll be amazed at how much you'll stand out from the competition just by being sincere in your interactions with prospects.

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7

Quit persuading. "Persuasion" is the most widely used term in the past 80 years of sales training literature. It's not hard to understand why. For generations, persuading prospects has been the core of the sales industry.

Even today, nearly every salesperson out there tries their best to persuade everyone to work with them. The trouble is that persuasion is incredibly common and overdone. Prospects can sense it from miles away.

When you start actively persuading, prospects see a red flag—and you begin to look and sound like every other salesperson in the marketplace. Instead of trying to use persuasive tactics on your prospects, focus on asking good questions instead. Getting to know your prospects so you can understand their challenges will actually help you "persuade" them to work with you—without doing any persuading at all.

Remember: When you're perceived as similar to all other salespeople, your value plummets. Quit persuading today and you'll automatically set yourself apart.

8

Be provocative. Sales these days is in a bit of a rut. The vast majority of salespeople still use outdated, old-school sales approaches that leave prospects underwhelmed, unconvinced, and unwilling to buy. To break out of the humdrum of commonplace selling, you must be provocative.

What I mean is that you should drop the run-of-the-mill "salesperson persona" and be gutsy in your interactions with prospects. Use tongue-in-cheek statements to spark their interest. Be different from everyone else out there. Don't hesitate to push your prospects' buttons to get a rise out of them.

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In sales today, we need to be provocative to elicit even the slightest response from prospects who are inundated by other salespeople every day. The right provocative comment can snap them out of the trance they're in—and get them talking to you.

9 **Pattern interrupt to start the conversation.** Speaking of being provocative, sales calls are an incredibly effective way to be distinct from the competition. The key is to use something I call "pattern interrupt" to start each phone conversation.

Instead of using the obvious salesy pitch at the beginning of a phone call—where you're overly enthusiastic, cheerful, and just like every other salesperson—it's time to try something new.

Interrupt the usual pattern by using a different opening greeting that the prospect won't expect you to use. Try this: "Hi, George, it's Marc Wayshak calling. Did I catch you in the middle of something?" Use a calm, measured tone and keep the enthusiasm at bay. The prospect won't be expecting such a low-energy, distinct conversation starter from a salesperson. Right away, you'll get them to open up, and they'll be much more likely to stay on the phone with you to hear what you have to say.

10 **Develop your Opening Play.** An Opening Play is like your elevator pitch, but without the "pitch." It's like your 30-second commercial, but without the "commercial." It's an opportunity to engage prospects at the start of a selling situation in a way that sets you apart from the competition. If your Opening Play is successful, it will translate into a higher closing ratio, more sales, and bigger deals.

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To start developing your Opening Play, first explain what you do briefly. Don't focus on the features and benefits of your product or service. Instead, focus on your prospects. What key challenges do you solve? What makes you different from others in the marketplace? Explain why clients come to you, and what you do for them. Be sure to specify what clients you typically work with, what you call yourself, and how you bring value to your customers.

Remember, this Opening Play will help you kick off every selling situation from now on—no more winging it. In the first free sales training video at www.SalesStrategyAcademy.com, I show you exactly how to develop your own Opening Play. Be sure to watch it.

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SYSTEMATIC VALUE CREATION

11 **Identify your value proposition.** When asked to describe their value proposition, far too many salespeople resort to listing off the features and benefits of their products or services. Unfortunately, that makes for an extremely weak value proposition. Real value as a salesperson isn't about features or benefits; it's about tangible outcomes and results.

To identify your value proposition, you must shift your focus to the real value that you offer clients. Think about the results you create for customers, and how you help them solve their biggest challenges. That's your value proposition. Prospects don't buy products and services—they buy outcomes and solutions.

By way of example, here's my value proposition: I serve as a trusted advisor to sales professionals to help them develop strategies to dramatically increase sales.

When you break down my value proposition, you'll see that it doesn't say anything about features or benefits. It's all about the results. This will actually become the first sentence in your Opening Play as well.

12 **Become a trusted advisor to your clients.** Becoming a trusted advisor to your clients requires a huge mindset shift. Stop thinking of yourself as a vendor or supplier. In fact, remove those words entirely from your vocabulary. Instead, start thinking of yourself as an expert, authoritative advisor to your customers.

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Whereas you used to say, "Please, Susan, can I have just three minutes of your time?" now you can say, "Hi Susan, I'd like to share some of the best practices that have helped my clients increase their sales by over 25 percent."

Can you see the difference between these two approaches? The first approach identifies you as a vendor or supplier, and gives the client all the leverage. But the second approach establishes you as an expert—a veritable trusted advisor—in your field.

13 **Stop focusing on price.** When salespeople boast about their low prices, they sound like car commercials on repeat. "Come on down for prices that can't be beat! No one can get you a better deal. Prices so low you won't believe your eyes!" But who's really buying it? Your prospects certainly aren't.

When you focus on your prices, prospects aren't convinced to buy from you—they're actually left wondering why your products or services are priced so low. The value of what you do comes into question.

That's why you must stop focusing on price as the primary determinant for why someone should buy from you. Instead, identify why your current clients are buying from you right now. It might be that you deliver incredible bottom-line results, or that you help your clients create powerful solutions to their problems.

Reflect upon the real value you create in the lives of your existing customers—and convey that value to your prospects without talking about price. Once you start to focus on tangible value rather than dollar value, more prospects will understand what you bring to the table.

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14 **Focus only on the value that you actually bring.** Especially if you sell a commoditized product of service, it can seem impossible to forgo talk about price. But let's face it: Unless you're Wal-Mart, you can give up on the idea of being the lowest-price provider out there.

I've said it before, and I'll say it again: You must stop talking about the benefits, features, and prices of your products and services.

Instead, focus only on the value that you actually bring to your clients. After all, you won't effectively make money as the lowest-price provider, so why bother dropping your prices to extremes? If you emphasize your past accomplishments instead of your benefits, features, and prices, then prospects will be attracted by the tangible results you create for your customers.

15 **Solve your prospects' challenges.** Your prospects have problems. You have the solutions. But unless you dig deep to truly understand the challenges your prospects face, you'll never be able to give them the solutions they value most.

Identifying your prospects' key challenges is absolutely essential. You can start by listing off three very common challenges that companies like them face. Then ask, "Which one of the challenges is affecting you the most?"

Set up conversations with prospects specifically to learn about their problems. Once you have a clear understanding of the issues at hand, you can begin to craft customized solutions to solve the problems. That's what prospects really want.

In the second free sales training video at www.SalesStrategyAcademy.com, I show you exactly how to engage prospects in a conversation around their challenges. Don't miss it.

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16 **Toss out the features and benefits.** We've all heard it before: "Our product is the best! You won't find better features anywhere else. We offer the greatest service in the country." These vague, over-used sales statements have long overstayed their welcome in your repertoire.

It's time to toss out the features and benefits of your products and services. Your prospects are sick and tired of hearing salespeople tout the "best" features and "unmatched" benefits of their offerings.

What they really want to know is this: How are you going to help them solve their problems? From now on, simply focus on telling prospects about the results you achieve for your clients.

Explain how you can help them solve their biggest challenges, and give clear examples of how you've helped your clients in the past. Your prospects don't care about features and benefits—they care about real, tangible outcomes. So give them what they want.

17 **Use a proposal with three options.** I'm a strong believer in the three-option proposal, and here's why: It offers the most value to your prospects—and it works. While this is a controversial topic in most sales circles, ditching the traditional one-option proposal is the key to creating massive value when you sell.

There's a reason why you're getting shopped around on price, limiting the potential size of your sales. It's because your prospects want options!

So give them what they want, all in one place. Create proposals that have three options, ranging from a lower-end, least expensive option, up to a premium option with tremendous added value.

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By doing this, you'll give your prospects the perspective to see different approaches to their challenges. You'll also give them the opportunity to choose the option with the most value—and that means a bigger sale for you.

18 **Give case study presentations.** The vast majority of salespeople are taught to use "feature and benefit" presentations during their sales meetings, where they talk all about their product or service. It's time for you to be distinct on this front.

Ditch the common approach to presentations and start focusing on case studies. At the end of sales meeting give a short, straightforward presentation that directly addresses the prospect's key challenges, using real-life examples of your current and former clients.

It's a best practice to have at least five case studies at your disposal to use at any given sales meeting. Feel free to tell the stories verbally, or type them up if you want the support of having it on paper.

Either way, be sure that the examples you choose reflect specific situations, specific challenges, and specific solutions you brought to the table.

19 **Get feedback from prospects.** One of the best ways to generate value for both you and the prospect during a sales meeting is to create discussion. Instead of talking ***at*** the prospect—like most salespeople do—talk ***with*** the prospect.

In fact, take it a step further and encourage the prospect to interrupt you throughout the meeting.

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The goal is to constantly create opportunities to get feedback from the prospect. You can do this by consistently asking questions after you make statements, such as, "Does this make sense for your situation?" or "Does this work for you?" This dialogue establishes buy-in from the prospect and makes the meeting more valuable for both parties.

20 **Connect with your prospects.** Establishing connections with prospects is an incredibly important part of systematically creating value when you sell. While most salespeople only touch the surface when it comes to connecting with prospects, there are huge benefits to going deeper.

There are two key ways to establish deep connections with prospects: 1) Be perceived as similar to them, and 2) Be authentic by seeking to understand them.

Use the "matching and mirroring" tactic to match yourself to your prospects visually, vocally, and in vibe. This will make them think, "This person is similar to me," and they'll automatically open up to what you have to say. To be more authentic, seek to understand your prospects by asking lots of questions to identify their key challenges.

Stop being overly enthusiastic and ditch the "persuasive salesperson" talk that prospects are so tired of hearing. Just be genuine, and you'll be amazed at how quickly you'll establish deeper connections with your prospects.

21 **Understand the value of solving their challenges.** In order to sell effectively, you must fully understand the value of solving the prospect's challenges. Similarly, the prospect must understand the value that you bring.

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To accomplish both of these, you can ask specific questions to learn more about your prospect's goals and problems. Ask, "What are your biggest challenges with regards to _____?" and "Can you give me specific examples of your challenges?" These questions can help you gain insight into the issues that are most relevant for the prospect. Next, ask, "What would solving these challenges mean to your bottom line?" and "What could you see investing to accomplish that?"

These questions help you understand the dollar value of solving your prospect's challenges, and also establish the prospect's budget. By digging deeper to understand the value of solving prospects' challenges, you'll also push prospects to think about the value you'll bring when you solve their biggest problems.

In the second free training video at www.SalesStrategyAcademy.com, I show you exactly which questions to ask prospects in order to create maximum value. Be sure to watch it.

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YOUR PROSPECTING PLAYBOOK FOR SUCCESS

22

Know your Prospecting Playbook. Your Prospecting Playbook is all about developing accountability and follow-through with your prospecting activities. You need a Prospecting Playbook because you can't expect to sit back, relax, and watch the sales roll in. You must actively and consistently prospect.

Your Prospecting Playbook lays out realistic goals for key prospecting activities, such as making cold calls, asking for introductions, targeted networking, and selling more to existing clients.

By following the goals you set in your Prospecting Playbook, you can focus on hitting your daily and weekly prospecting goals to make more sales in less time. Knowing your Prospecting Playbook means mastering your high-level sales goals—as well as your smaller daily sales goals. It's a game of numbers: The more prospecting activities you complete, the more sales you'll close.

Just like any other skill, selling requires lots of practice. Your Prospecting Playbook will motivate you to practice selling by giving you a day-by-day list of prospecting activities that can help you generate sales, earn commission, and ultimately make more money.

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23 **Host a private client event.** There are few things prospects love more than being invited to attend an exclusive customer event. Hosting private client events should be a fundamental part of your prospecting strategy. It's an effective, easy, and powerful way to bring prospects together with your top clients. In these environments, your existing clients actually become your best advocates.

Host a private customer event at a local hotel or restaurant. Early morning breakfasts or after-work cocktail events work best. Invite all of your best customers and a few of your top prospects.

Make sure the invitation states that you're going to share useful industry insights with an exclusive group of attendees. These events make your clients and prospects feel part of something special, and it's a great way to create a community centered around you and your business.

24 **Stop asking for referrals.** Referrals are confusing! Does getting a referral mean getting a person's name? A phone number? Is it a recommendation from a client? Nobody seems to have the same answer—especially your customers. So stop asking for referrals. It's that simple. Instead, ask for introductions.

Everyone knows what an introduction is. No confusion there. When you ask clients for an introduction, they automatically know that you want to be introduced to someone who might want to do business with you.

When you can harness the power of introductions, great things happen. You have a far greater chance of closing sales with people you meet through strong introductions from clients than you do with people you meet through weak referrals.

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In the third free sales training video at www.SalesStrategyAcademy.com, I walk you through the exact script to use to receive high-quality introductions. Go check it out.

25 **Ask for one introduction per day.** Hold yourself accountable to asking for at least one introduction every single day. I know this might sound like a lot of work, but it will realistically take you no more than 10 minutes each day to accomplish this important prospecting strategy.

Introductions are one of the easiest and most effective ways to grow your sales. Just think about the math: Asking for one introduction per day means asking for five per week. That adds up to 250 introduction requests per year!

In the grand scheme of your prospecting approach, those 250 requests can have a massive impact on your bottom line. Even if only 20% of them turn into leads, that means you'll still get introduced to 50 prospects through introduction each year. And if only half of those introductions turn into sales, that's still over 25 new sales over the course of the year.

So go for it—ask for one introduction per day, and watch your prospecting strategy soar.

26 **Speak to sell.** What if I told you there's a way to have the exclusive attention of a roomful of qualified prospects? Would you want to learn about it? I'm willing to bet your answer is, "Yes, please!" Well, the good news is that I can tell you exactly what it is: speaking.

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When you speak to networking groups, associations, trade groups, and other companies who want to learn about solutions within your area of expertise, you're essentially talking to a roomful of qualified prospects.

Remember, you're an expert on whatever you sell. Even if you don't think of yourself as a public speaker, I challenge you to push through the anxiety and speak to sell. Start out by speaking to small groups at first.

Develop a simple 45-minute speech that focuses on key challenges you see in your field, and how you help customers solve those problems. You'll be setting appointments with people in the audience in no time.

27 **Make cloud calls.** Some people seem to think that the age of telephone prospecting is dead. They couldn't be more wrong. Prospecting by telephone is still an excellent tool for getting in front of prospects. However, it needs to be done well in order to yield big results.

One of the most critical aspects of prospecting by phone is who you're calling. The majority of salespeople spend their time calling lower-level prospects because they believe it's easier to get their foot in the door that way. This simply isn't true.

Higher-level prospects can be just as easy to connect with—and they have far more authority to sign off on a deal. From now on, make "cloud calls," focusing on prospects as high up in the organization as possible.

Calling low-level prospects isn't nearly as effective, and you're far less likely to get a decision maker on the phone. Call as high as you can. Reach for the sky.

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28

Send engaging prospecting emails. Sending emails is a crucial part of every salesperson's prospecting strategy today. But the sheer number of emails the average prospect receives every day is a huge obstacle for actually getting through via email. That said, it's important that your prospecting emails stand out.

The number one way to make sure a prospect responds to your email is to make sure it's engaging. That means never ending an email with a statement—only with a question. The email should literally engage and prompt the prospect to respond to you in a specific way.

Two examples of good closing questions are: "What is the best address to send the package to?" and "Is this an idea that's relevant to your world?" The key is to ask a very simple question that requires a short and easy response.

29

Make your emails short and personal. In addition to being engaging, your prospecting emails must also be short and personal. We all know there's nothing better than receiving an email that makes you feel special. Be sure to address all your contacts by their first names—and never send out an email that looks or sounds boilerplate.

Think carefully about the goal of your emails, and craft them in the most concise way possible. Your email is meant to engage the prospect, not to make a sale. The only thing you want is a response.

For that reason, no prospecting email should ever exceed more than four or five sentences. Keep it short, sweet, personal, and to the point.

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30 **Leave voice mails with impact.** Voice mails don't have to be lost opportunities, as they are for most salespeople. With the right strategy, voice mails can actually help you get responses from prospects.

The first step to leaving voice mails with impact is to always stick to your commitments. Say something like, "If I don't hear back from you by Monday, I'll try you again on Tuesday." Then, be sure to follow up with another phone call on Tuesday—no matter what.

This lets the prospect know you're committed to reaching them. The second step to leaving effective voice mails is to be persistent. Most salespeople give up after just one or two voice mails.

The truth is, it might take seven to ten voice mails before you hear back from an interested prospect. Keep at it! And lastly, be provocative in your voice mails for maximum impact. Have fun with your messages by using tongue-in-cheek humor to elicit a response from the prospect.

31 **Network like a champ.** Targeted networking is one of the easiest prospecting strategies out there. It's also one of the most effective—if done right. Good networking is about spending time with the right people. It can generate both short-term and long-term business.

To help maximize your ROI with networking, follow this simple rule: Never network without a goal. Seek out top-tier decision makers—people who can do business with you. Or, network with people who can connect you to your ideal prospects.

While you're at a networking event, be clear about your goal when talking to people. Use conversation starters like, "What brings you to this event?" and "Who are you looking to meet?" to make the most of each interaction.

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BONUS STRATEGY

Take consistent action each day. The 31 strategies above can—and will—change your business dramatically. But only if you commit to taking action.

There's an old proverb that goes something like this: If you want a 50-foot oak tree in your backyard, when's the best time to plant it? The answer is 50 years ago. But when's the second best time to plant it? Today. You've just learned a lot, and you might feel overwhelmed. You might even feel frustrated that you haven't been using these strategies in the past. But instead of giving in to that frustration, be grateful that you now have the strategies to move toward success.

Take the lessons you've learned in this e-book and plant them—like the seeds to your very own giant oak tree—as soon as you can. If you commit to taking small, consistent actions every day to help those seeds take root in your sales practice, your success will grow right before your eyes. Over the next three, six, and twelve months, your sales strategy will completely transform.

Albert Einstein once said, "Nothing happens until something moves." So go make something move.

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As a first step, if you haven't already, be sure to register for the free sales training videos that accompany this e-book at www.SalesStrategyAcademy.com.

And then as a second step, watch those videos closely. In them, you will learn exactly how this system can be applied to your own selling. Again, if you haven't registered yet, go right now to www.SalesStrategyAcademy.com and begin watching your first video.

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