



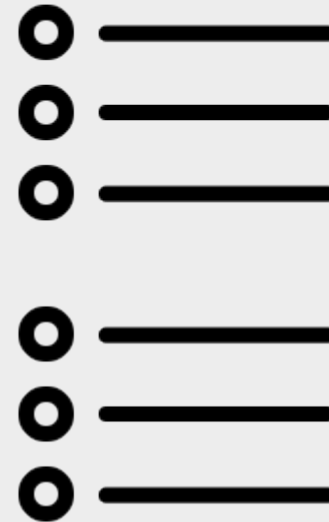
Building Scalable Inside Sales

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Starwind

Scope of deck

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Do your homework

You will never have a second chance to make the first impression. You can easily lose the battle in the very beginning if you call without doing the basic due diligence on the prospect company.

Do your homework! Prepare for the call. Create a special form which you would be filling before calling to your prospects:

- § Company name?
- § Company business?
- § CEO (CFO/COO/CMO/CIO depending on who your ideal decision maker is) name?
- § The business problem they have (to your best knowledge)?
- § How can you be of help (the reason for the call)?
- § Where have you got their phone number?

It means you are going to be doing a short research before the call. Where would you normally find the information you need? **There are three sources:**

- § Their corporate website
- § Google
- § LinkedIn

The form you would fill can be stored in the Salesforce later together with the other lead's details. But avoid call reluctance.



Calls classification

There are two groups of the calls you can make:

§ Outbound

§ Inbound

Inbound calls are “warm”. You can be reasonably sure your prospect is interested in what you are offering because they left their data while doing the search on something you are offering. Most likely they have downloaded something from your site. It doesn't make them your best friends, but at least you know where to start.

Outbound calls are “cold calls.” They didn't voluntarily give you their phone number, to begin with (so make sure you obtained the phone from public or legitimate source).

There are two types of the calls you can make within each group:

§ First-time call

§ Follow-up call

The first phone call. For both inbound and outbound, you are doing the qualification of the lead. Essentially you need to understand if the lead is good for your business and if your offering is of interest for the lead. The differences for outbound calls are:

§ They never heard about your business

§ They never confirmed they have any interest in what you are offering

For the follow-up calls, you need to make sure you are moving within the funnel. It means every time you are doing the follow-up call ideally you are making progress on the sales process time line.

Smaller and larger sale

While smaller deals can be completed over the one phone call, the larger ones may require tens of the calls in a row. Hence different aspects are playing role in these two categories.

- § Smaller sales are more about the product. Larger are more about the relationship.
- § For the one call deals only what happens during the call matters. With the larger deals most processes happen in between the calls.
- § Larger deals should be perceived as a project and traditional project management approach should be carried out with the larger deals
- § the traditional sales and closing techniques that work well with small deals may be counter productive with the larger ones



Who am I talking to?

Nevertheless let's get to the practice. So you have dialed the number and in a second they picked up the phone.

There are two “negative” scenarios you may find yourself in. Negative means you are not able to start working on the deal right away.

§ A gatekeeper

§ A voicemail

Prepare yourself for these scenarios, and you are golden. How are you preparing yourself? By having right scripts, by roleplaying and by practicing.



How to get past gatekeepers?

You will be surprised, but the assignment of the gatekeeper is pretty much the same as that of yours.

Gatekeepers are dis/qualifying you! To get past them, you need to have them realize that you are a good match for their company. Would the gatekeeper be willing to be that very guy who brought to the attention of their COO something that resulted in cutting costs on electricity by **30%**?

Or you need the gatekeeper to understand that making the decision about you is above his competencies.

As soon as they understand that they don't have enough reasons to disqualify you they will let you through.



How to deal with a voice machine?

in more than 75% of all the calls you will be reaching a voice machine. Furthermore if you are hearing a voice machine it doesn't necessarily mean that there is no human being on the other side.

A voice machine is not a challenge and not a relief, it's just one of three most common scenarios.

You can consider a voice machine as some type of a gatekeeper, your goals would be obviously:

- § to make a person pick up the phone if there is a person there
- § to make a person return your call as soon as possible

Talk to a voicemail as if you were talking to the live person. Remember your message will be listened to.

DO NOT HANGUP RIGHT AWAY!



How to start a call?

This time you are given a chance to talk to the real person and advance in the deal making. The advices for starting and having the meaningful conversation include:

- Start with the intro. Tell them your name, name of the company are you with and the reason for the call.
- For the inbound calls let them know that you are returning the call as somebody from their organization was looking for your solution specifically.
- Don't make false statements. in fact don't make any statements - ask instead.
- No product pitches! Don't push the sale. Avoid the "used cars dealer" behavior but lean the call.

It helps to get the counter-party agree with several points in the beginning. That creates both rational and emotional bounding. Remember that you shouldn't make more than three points (having more than three objectives) within the same call.



Getting the prospect to open

Types of questions and questioning.

1. Closed questions. Are short focused questions requiring concrete answer. Often “yes” or “no”.
2. Open questions. Presume longer response.
3. Leading questions. Define direction of the question.
4. Probing questions. Follow-up or suggestive questions.
5. Rhetorical questions. Do not require an answer but building a bond.
6. Funneling. Structure supposed to narrow-down the topic of discussion.

The active listening.

1. Pay attention. As far as make the notes.
2. Confirm listening. Confirm you are with the speaker with confirming sounds and words.
3. Provide feedback. Be ready to ask the question or summarize.
4. Answer timely. Support the discussion with precise and concrete answers.



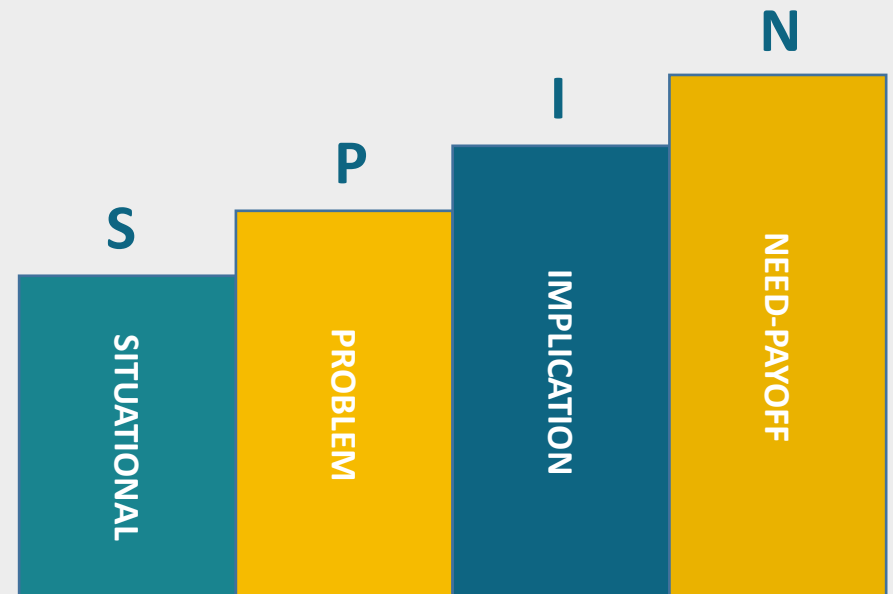
SPIN Selling

One great example of the leading and funneling specifically tailored towards the larger sales would be SPIN selling technique.

It was noted that most successful sales representatives have built their funnel when talking to the customer structuring it in the following manner:

- § Situation questions provide the information on the background and overall prospect's setup
- § Problem questions identify the concrete pain points
- § Implication questions allow to understand the consequences of not addressing the problems
- § Need-payoff questions suggest what will happen if we do address the problems

These questions when asked during the investigation stage of the call can very effectively drive the conversation and get the customer progress in the discussion. This is not a rigid sequence nor there is a formal split between the stages but overall it is a logical framework for the discussion.



Getting close to a deal

When you are well advanced in the sales process, you may want to help the prospect make the decision faster. You can do it easily if you know the real buying motive and know when they are ready. Just let them understand what they are losing by delaying the decision.

And of course, you can use approved techniques:

- § Create the sense of urgency
- § Use promotions and actions
- § Utilize cross-sales and discounts
- § Offer money back guarantee
- § Try relaxed NET terms

On the other hand preliminary aggressive selling will do no good and may actually delay the deal and ruin the trust. On the other hand the deal is what brought you on the call. Go for it the soonest appropriate!

THE TIME IS NOW



Finishing the call

What's most important when you are finishing the conversation? The most important thing would be agreeing upon the next steps. So-called "call-to-action." Or obtaining the commitment stage of the call. . .

You should always summarize the call and propose the next step whether it will be a follow-up call or a live demo or placing the order.

Always send the follow-up email after the conversation. Having the paper trail is always a huge benefit.

Basically each call should get you closer to the deal. Not farer from it.

We should remember though that large deals won't happen over the one call. Each call should have its particular goal and achieving this goal would be enough even if it is not a deal itself.



Was it a success?

It is important to analyze and review the call after you are done with it. Not only it is a way to learn from the errors but it is also vital for understanding where in the sale you are now, after the call. All your calls fall into one of the four categories. I will put it from top to down:

- § Sale. you got the deal. Obviously happens later in a cycle for the larger deals.
- § Advance. you fulfilled your objectives and obtained the commitment from the prospect.
- § Continuation. They neither turned you down nor gave you some particular commitment.
- § No sale. you've lost the customer.

Obviously you want advances all the way till sale. What's important though is not tricking yourself into accepting the continuation for advance. Ideally you should find yourself closer to the deal after the call. If not do the analysis and fix whatever should be fixed in your sales techniques.



Takeaways



Do your homework, prepare yourself for the call



One call won't make it all



Ask and listen



Have and execute your strategy



Make a progress not a regress



Finish thoughtfully

About lecturer

Art Berman, MBA

Art Berman is a successful serial entrepreneur who has founded a number of companies in the technology industry. Mr. Berman brings more than a decade of entrepreneurial experience building and advising successful software companies. Art has managed worldwide online sales and operations since 2003. Mr. Berman earned his Bachelor degree in Economics from Moscow International Business Institute in 1997 and Executive MBA in Edinburgh Business School - Heriott-Watt University in 2014.





Thank you!



Questions
