

CUSTOMER-FOCUSED SELLING

Differentiating products and services from competitors' has never been more critical or more difficult. Sales professionals must have refined inquiry and listening skills in order to understand what customers want and need, and equally strong communications skills to position their offerings in ways that resonate with buyers.

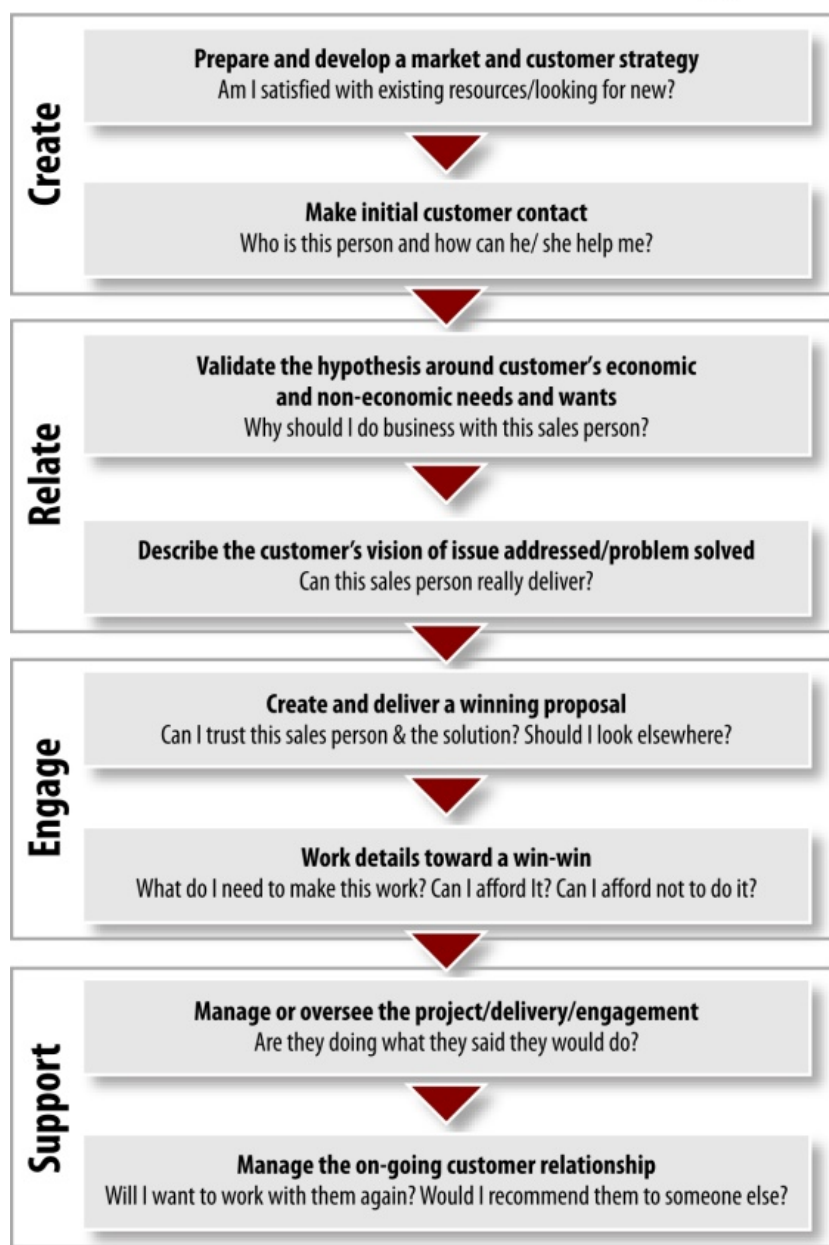
Through IRI's proprietary Customer-Focused Selling training, sales professionals can increase sales by:

- Creating a sales strategy based on market, competitive and customer data
- Achieving sales objectives by setting SMART goals (Specific, Measurable, Agreed-upon, Realistic, Time-bound)
- Understanding and navigating the politics of customer relationships by using the RASIC chart to identify and understand everyone who influences the buying decision
- Influencing customer buying decisions through the knowledge of behavioral and communication preferences
- Better managing time by better managing their own day-to-day behaviors, including territory management
- Understanding their customers' financial and personal needs and business concerns by using interpretive listening
- Addressing common customer objections by using the LREAT model (Listen, Restate, Explore, Answer, Test)
- Making sales presentations and proposals that inspire a "yes" by using the HAT approach (form a Hypothesis, Ask and Listen, Tailor your Solution) to engage customers and influence the buying decision
- Demonstrating an understanding of customers by relating to what their organization values
- Getting customers and those who influence them to say "tell me more" after the introductory conversation
- Making sure every customer call and visit adds value to the customer
- Keeping business flowing by managing the sales pipeline into a usable forecast

Traditional selling emphasizes “pitching” products and services. Solution selling tries to convince customers that a product or service offers the best solution to their need. Generally, both approaches emphasize the product’s features, functions and benefits.

Customer-Focused Selling, in contrast, moves the emphasis away from the product to where it belongs – on the customer and their “buying process,” which corresponds to the sales process described on the top line of each step below.

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COURSE OVERVIEW

Customer-Focused Selling is divided into three modules of learning that focus on the areas of greatest challenge for many sales professionals:

- **Module 1 – Create a Customer Strategy:** This module focuses on building a customer-focused sales strategy. It includes tools to understand the market, any factors that influence the sales environment, and collecting competitive and customer data and information. The course also focuses on the value of including both objective data and subjective information in understanding customer tangible and intangible wants and needs. Module 1 includes templates for setting goals, managing projects and developing the customer relationship. It also helps participants understand the factors that influence a buyer’s decision, including financial considerations and personal style, as well as the ability to identify potential deal-makers and deal-breakers and how best to manage each.
- **Module 2 – Enhance Your Communication Skills:** This module provides an electronic behavioral assessment tool that teaches sales professionals to “speak the language” of each individual customer, recognizing that each customer thinks and speaks with different intentions. This module also helps participants understand their own personal style and habits and how that style affects their time management abilities. It also provides strategies, tips and exercises to increase listening skills, questioning skills, and shows how to identify and address three common types of customer problems and issues. By teaching a practical alternative to the traditional sales focus on “features, functions and benefits,” the course also helps sales professionals get to the root-cause of customer objections and make successful proposals and presentations.
- **Module 3 – Manage Your Business:** This module concludes with tools and tips to help participants manage the business of selling. It includes templates and practice activities focused on creating a real value proposition, cold calling, the “elevator speech,” pre-call planning and managing gatekeepers. It provides strategies for effectively managing sales territories and concludes with a pipeline status and management worksheet to help advance the customer relationship and accurately forecast revenue potential.



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