



NEWSLETTER 03/2015

Closing deals with good presentations

Video link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SU9o9HFpSYI&feature=youtu.be>

It's not always the best solution that wins. Often it's the one that is presented most effectively. Even if you are not a natural presenter, if you follow these steps and take note of the hints and tips you will make a customized presentation that will do your solution justice and win the deal.

But first – what customers don't like

Infoteam regularly conducts research into what customers like in solution presentations and what puts them off and I would like to share with you the top 4 dislikes before we go on to talk about how you can improve your own presentations. This is what customers told us they don't like about solution presentations:-

1. Insufficient focus on the customer's own issues
2. Lack of clarity in solution description
3. Little or no differentiation from the competition
4. Lack of quantified benefits



Content that tells a story

No matter who you are presenting to or what the circumstances of the presentation you should follow these 5 steps to create the content.

1. Define a compelling Headline and Passion Statement
2. Set out the need
3. Propose the solution to meet the need
4. Articulate the value of your solution
5. Call to action

A compelling Headline and Passion Statement

You have to grab people's attention from the first moment of your presentation, so say something memorable. Steve Jobs first sentence at the launch of the iPhone was "Today we are going to reinvent the phone". He got the attention of the audience and held it with passion. Your presentation Headline needs to be attention grabbing but make sure it is about the customer and their needs. Then say why you believe that your solution will be effective in meeting your customer's needs. But your passion has to be authentic and sincere.

Describe the customer's need

Everything you say needs to be aligned with what you have learned from your interviews with key stakeholders in the Buying Center. Use their quotes and the customer's terminology to ensure that the audience feels well understood. And don't forget to validate your understanding.

Propose your solution

This is where you bring the solution to life for the customer. In your "dry-run" make sure that the solution description is comprehensible for the target audience and cut out company jargon. Wherever possible use examples to help the customer experience your solution – it's a bit like a test-drive when buying a car. At this point you can consider things like testimonials from existing customers – better still if you can do this by live web conference so your prospect can ask a satisfied customer questions about your company and the solution you delivered to them.

Tailor the Benefits for Each Stakeholder

Then make sure you articulate the relevant benefits to each stakeholder in the audience. For instance, the Individual Value Proposition for Finance could be ROI, ease of use and uptake to Operations people, smooth implementation to Technical people.

Call to action

What do you want people to do at the end of your presentation? Clap? Cheer? No! You want them to move to the next stage in the Buying/Sales Process. If that means to buy, great. But even if there is an interim stage like a test installation ask them to do it.

Delivering the Presentation

Different people take in information in different ways; some have an aural preference, others are visual and many are kinesthetic – they learn by doing. You have to cater for all types. That means getting your words right, using effective visuals and wherever possible letting the audience experience the solution through test-drives or a demonstration.

The words in your presentation should mainly be spoken, assuming you are using a tool like PowerPoint the content of the slides should be visuals that show something like a graph or just prompt you to say something. If you

do put words on the slide never put more than 4 points on one slide. Only use a few words for each point and the point size should be at least half the age of the oldest person in the audience.

There are other presentation tools than PowerPoint, but make sure the presentation is not so slick or fancy that it detracts from the content.

Preparing your presentation

Most people start by creating the slides for a presentation, try this technique instead. Write your presentation in the notes section of PowerPoint. Only when that is complete, go back and put images, graphics or words on the slides where they make the point more effectively, illustrate what you are saying or prompt you to cover a particular point. Never forget that you are not talking about your solution, you are talking about how it meets the customer's needs.

Then, go back through the presentation removing words from the notes section progressively until you are left with just key words to prompt you. You effectively tear up the script at this stage.

Practice

A Professional Sales Person will practice their final presentation until they can't get it wrong. Do your first dry-run in front of colleagues and ask them to ask the questions they think prospects might ask and insist they give you critical feedback about content and presentation style. For instance if you tend to say um, err, or repeat a word like 'anyway' too often you could ask a colleague to just tap a glass every time you do it so you become aware. If you suffer from nerves the best thing you can do is practice your presentation until you are absolutely familiar with the content, then you can concentrate on your presentation style. If you video yourself making the presentation you can make sure you know what you should and should not do.

Presentation techniques

If you know your presentation you won't have to look at your slides so you can concentrate on your audience. Make eye contact with people, especially when you are addressing their particular needs and Individual Value Proposition.

Don't stand behind a podium or desk. Use a remote clicker so you don't have to go back to your PC to change slides. Stand with an open posture, hold your head up and don't be afraid to use hand gestures to make a particular point. Try to speak slowly and breathe properly so you don't run out of breath before you get to the end of a sentence then make pauses so people can take in what you have said. And speak loudly enough to make sure everyone can hear and use variations in your tone of voice, delivery style and physical gestures to maintain the energy in the room.

Good luck! If you have done everything above you will be great. If you haven't – pray the competition haven't read this blog and taken my advice.

A few questions

1. Do you have a lot of content about your company in your presentations?
2. Do any of your slides have more than a few words on them?
3. Have you practiced your presentation until you don't need to look at the slides?

Best regards,



Daniel J. Schwarzenbach

If you don't like to receive any further newsletters please send us a short E-Mail to following address: info@nautilus-nine.com with the remark „please no more newsletter“

Sales Professional GmbH & Daniel Schwarzenbach Consulting GmbH
Im Haldenächer 14 | CH-8907 Wettswil | Schweiz/Switzerland | +41 44 777 82 83
daniel.schwarzenbach@nautilus-nine.com