

10 Secrets To Sales Success

Brett Clay, author of *Selling Change*, provides 101 sales secrets in his new book. Below are 10 such secrets to executing a change-centric sales model:

Secret#2: People Only Buy When Forced

Customers buy because they feel compelled to take action. You can't force them to buy, but there are forces fueling their decision to buy. Acting like a counselor and asking them pointed questions can help you identify which factors will push them to take action.

Secret #4: No One Needs Your Product

People need to stay alive. People need to satisfy their hunger. People need their problems solved. But they don't "need" your product! They do need solutions to issues and they do need help to reach their goals. Find out what they are trying to achieve, show them how to change, and help them get there.

Secret #9: Become a Change Leader

Rather than asking middle managers: "What is your problem?" ask executives: "What are you trying to change? Why? How?" Help the customer identify opportunities. Remember that opportunities are created by making changes. Next, seek to understand the forces influencing the customer's organization and its ability to implement changes. Then, help the customer define what changes she wants to make in response to the forces. Be a change consultant and agent by assisting the customer in achieving the desired changes.

Secret #12: Understand The Four Forces

The Change Leadership Framework® identifies four forces that move people and organizations to take action. See people as a set of forces and develop the habit that every time you look at someone, you ask: "What forces does this person feel right now?" The four forces are: internal psychological needs; innate behavioral tendencies; cognitive strategies, and environmental forces.

Secret #24: Customer Satisfaction Is Impossible

Once you deliver a change to satisfy one need, the customer immediately has another 'need' beyond that. There is nothing irrational or wrong with the customer wanting more; it's just called progress. But to stay in the game and continue to satisfy growing needs, you will have to grow as well. Identify the person's or organization's hierarchy of needs. Forecast what the person will need after the first need has been satisfied. Then, forecast what will be needed after the second, and so on. Develop your capability to satisfy the customer's evolving needs.

Secret #40: Do A Reality Check

Be cognizant of people's differing views of reality. Decide what is more expeditious: a) helping the customer within the view of reality the customer has created, or b) helping the customer see a different view. Each situation is different. Sometimes you will be able to operate easily within the customer's mental framework. In other situations you will have no choice but to show the customer evidence of another reality.

Secret #50: Change Paths To Success

The first step is to ask the customer to play out in his mind where the current path is leading. If he prefers to cope by refusing to acknowledge the current path is leading to an undesirable outcome, you will have to keep checking back with the customer until the inevitable day comes when he confronts reality. The second step is to ask the customer if he had a magic time machine and could magically jump into the ideal future, what would it be? The last step is to ask the customer to walk backward from the ideal situation to the current situation, asking, "What has to change for this to happen?" each step along the way.

Secret #62: Calculate The Formula For Change

The Formula for Change provides straightforward, prescriptive guidance.

- Reinforce dissatisfaction with the status quo.
- Clarify and reinforce the benefits of the change.
- Identify and clarify the specific, concrete steps that will be taken to initiate the change.
- Minimize the effort, cost, and risk of making the change.
- Minimize psychological and emotional factors that hinder change.

Secret #75: Be Willing To Walk

Walking away from a potential opportunity is a hard decision. So, how do you know when to do it? First, determine how much value you want to deliver and make the necessary investments. Next, set criteria and goals for yourself and measure potential clients and changes against those criteria. If you want to be a highly valued change leader, you cannot tie up your resources with low-value changes. So you must be willing to walk away if your criteria are not met. It's definitely scary. But remember: the deal will not close until you are prepared to walk.

Secret #88: There's No Free Lunch

Help your client avoid these common "Where's the free lunch?" mistakes:

- Ignoring hidden costs
- Delaying action, hoping things will improve by themselves
- Underestimating the size of the project
- Under investing resources.
- Expecting a project to be completed with few resources.

Once the client has accepted the principle of "no free lunch," the change leader must help the client decide what configuration of scope, schedule and resources constitutes an appropriate response to the forces of change.