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Welcome to this month's Trust Triangle Selling newsletter.

This month a reader and veteran sales rep articulated a question which prompted an important reminder. As accomplished as we may be in our profession, circumstances frequently call for an adherence to 'basics'. One such basic practice is proper *Account Qualification*.

Let me know what you think,

Dan

Ask Dan

It's good to have questions - now ask them! The only poor question is the one never asked. I may be able to feature your question in the next newsletter. Just email me at dadams@trusttriangleselling.com.

ACCOUNT QUALIFICATION

Q: Question from Shari in Wakefield, MA:

Dan: I just lost a major deal I had been working on for months. One problem is that I thought I knew who my decision-maker was. As it turned out, someone above him was actually calling the shots behind the scenes and shut me out. What could I have done?

A: Answer:

Recovering psychologically from a loss like that can be challenging. Believe me, I've been there too. You learn to develop a healthy paranoia - a keen awareness at all times of what's going on around you. When I lost a sale, I would internally say to myself, "I was outsold. That is unacceptable, and it won't happen again."

FOR INSPIRATION:

***"The only place
success comes
before work is in
the dictionary."***

Vince Lombardi

***"I'm a great
believer in luck,
and I find that the
harder I work, the
more of it I have."***

Thomas Jefferson

My losses were actually helpful, because they taught me how to prevent future pain for myself, for my workshop participants, and for you. In response to my pain, I developed one of my 'secret weapons', called the **Be My Perfect Cash Cow (B.M.P.C.C.)** account qualification tool. It is a very simple reminder of the 5 key areas you must understand early in your selling process. Understanding these 5 keys will help to insure that you are deploying your company's scarce resources on opportunities you will win. Additionally, knowledge of these 5 keys is essential for the proper selection and deployment of major account strategy (See *Building Trust, Growing Sales* chapter 4). Here is how it works.

***"Change before
you have to."***

Jack Welch

Be My Perfect Cash Cow (B.M.P.C.C.)

When qualifying an opportunity, you need to ask questions which will provide valuable information to you regarding 5 key topic areas:

- ▲ What is the customer's **B**udget?
- ▲ Who is the key decision **M**aker?
- ▲ What is the customer's buying **P**rocess?
- ▲ Who is the **C**ompetition?
- ▲ What are the customer's decision-making **C**riteria?

An easy way to remember these questions is with the acronym BMPCC - "Be My Perfect Cash Cow." You will lose deals if you don't know the answers to these questions early in the buying process. If you discover the answers late rather than early, there's little hope of developing a strategy to compensate.

Let's take a deeper look at each one:

***"A man surprised
is half beaten."***

Proverb

B: What is the customer's Budget?

You must know how the customer will obtain the necessary funds to make this acquisition. Is the project budgeted? If it is not budgeted how can you be of assistance in the budgeting process? If it is already budgeted, is it approved? What is the budget? When does the budget expire? If the customer will purchase "off budget" what is the process that must occur? Will it be financed? Is it important to keep this acquisition off the balance sheet?

M: Who is the key decision Maker?

Who is responsible for making the final decision? If it is a "group" decision, who are the group members and who has the power in the group? How have similar decisions in the past been made? Who will influence this decision? Who are the gatekeepers? Who are the users? Who will evaluate the decision from a technical standpoint? Do I have an internal coach? Who has the final authority to sign off on an investment of this size?

P: What is the customer's buying Process?

You each are aware of your own company's own "selling process". You must know that to keep your job. In order to be a true sales superstar, you must know your customer's buying process! You must know your client's compelling event. That is, exactly why, and by what date she must make this investment. If she does not have a compelling event, you must assist her in creating one.

C: Who are your Competitors?

Who are the vendors under consideration by your customer? You must also discover the solutions they are offering as well as the strategies they are using to compete against you.

C: What are your customer's decision-making Criteria?

You must know what is important to your customer. What are her key buying criteria? Once you have that information you then must determine the "rack and stack", or order of the criteria from most important to least important.

Note: It is always good to "triangulate" the answers to these questions. By triangulate I am referring to getting answers to these questions from multiple sources, then comparing responses for accuracy.

Use this BMPCC account qualification best practice with all of your accounts, Shari, and I bet you won't make the same mistake again.

Good Luck, and Close 'Em!

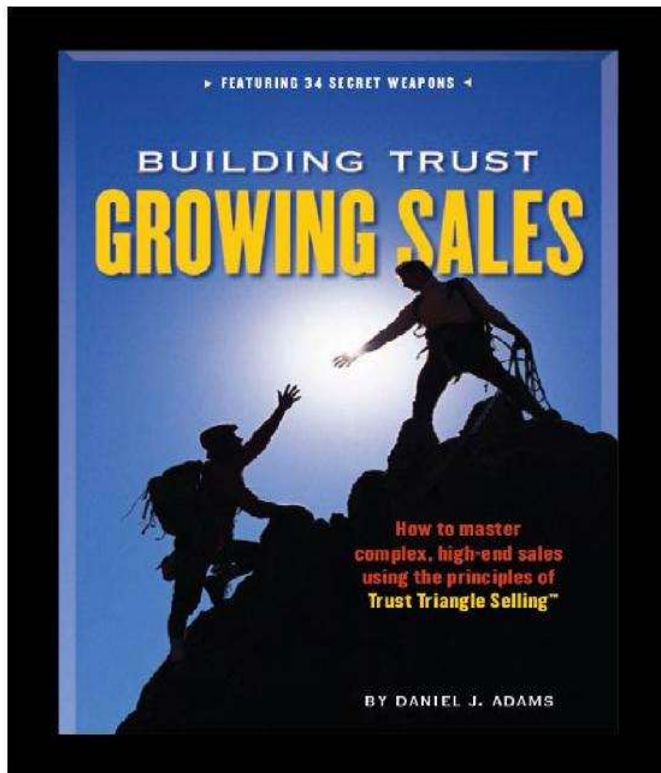


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*How to Master Complex, High End Sales Using
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