

Winning Lifelong Customers With The Five Abilities®

*BUILDING YOUR BEST NEXT ACTIONS ON THE WAY TO GROWING REVENUE
AND WINNING LIFELONG CUSTOMERS*

WORKSHOP WORKBOOK



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The Five Abilities®

People make business decisions for personal reasons. When choosing who to buy from, key decision-makers look for five things to determine with whom they will do business. The Five Abilities® leads salespeople to their best next actions that win in the five areas decision-makers focus on.

- **VISABILITY** – Being seen in the right way, by the right people, at the right time
- **CREDABILITY** – Sharing superior knowledge about your industry and that of your customer's
- **VIABILITY** – Business that fits the needs and abilities of both the seller and customer
- **CAPABILITY** – Delivering on the personal reasons people make business decisions
- **RELIABILITY** – Being accountable *when* the unexpected happens

No matter what sales methodology we standardize on, we have to earn the kinds of connections that give us the ability to coach, consult and challenge our customers. The Five Abilities are used by great salespeople to develop meaningful connections that lead to increased sales revenue.



The Five Abilities of Incredibly Successful Salespeople

VISABILITY – Being seen in the right way, by the right people, at the right time.

Successful salespeople earn **VISABILITY** when we present a value proposition that creates a *suspicion of value* in the customer's mind, causing them to want to know more. Once a customer asks for more information, we've turned a one-way sales pitch into a two-way sales engagement – the first step to delivering real value to the customer or client.

The customer/client action that indicates we have the right **VISABILITY** is when the decision-makers and the people who influence them are approaching us with questions and comments. They are driving the engagement based on their suspicion of value about us, our company and our products/services.

CREDABILITY – Showing superior knowledge and experience about your customer's needs and how your company's products/services will help.

Successful salespeople earn **CREDABILITY** by sharing results-based information that shows our value proposition is true. We want to evolve that *suspicion of value* to an *acknowledgement of value*. *Demonstrate* our expertise and experience, including past successes. *Educate* decision-makers and influencers so that they are better able to assess their problems and their needs. *Advocate* for partners and/or customers who can help your prospects solve problems and evaluate you better.

The customer/client action that indicates we have earned **CREDABILITY** is when they ask us for advice and opinions on business related subjects that don't necessarily involve our products. This tells us we've evolved from sellers to advisors.

VIABILITY – Products and services that fit the needs and readiness of customers, clients and our company.

Successful salespeople know that having no customer is better than having the wrong customer. The right customer has a real need that we can address, has the experience to assess our performance, the success that makes them a desirable customer for us and our competitors, and the time to be successful. They become our best advocates for both new and repeat business. The wrong customer ends up paying for something that doesn't help them, they demand a lot of our time and become our loudest critics.

The customer/client action that indicates we have earned **VIABILITY** is when the customer's focus is primarily on results and specifically not on costs. Customers who are constantly worried about cost are not yet convinced that our products/services will produce the return-on-investment needed to deem this a successful purchase and project.

CAPABILITY – Delivering on the personal reasons people make business decisions.

People make business decisions for personal reasons. Certainly decision-makers do the analysis to ensure they are doing something good for their company; however, every decision-maker is satisfying personal needs when making a buying decision. What do people really buy?

- Safety – Help to increase the probability of success and decrease the probability of failure.
- Simplicity – Help to reduce the burdens on the decision-makers and their organization.
- Reward – Help to get the decision-makers rewarded with added responsibilities and benefits.
- Recognition – Help decision-makers be seen as SMEs and better contribute other's success.
- Revolution – Help the decision-makers change their organization in positive ways.

The customer/client action that indicates we've earned **CAPABILITY** is when they've shared and/or confirmed their personal motivations for buying. Oftentimes decision-makers won't be conscious of their buying motivation but we can see it in the questions they ask. We'll cover this element as part of the working session.

RELIABILITY – Being there *when* the unexpected happens - it always will.

Salespeople earn customer loyalty by being *accountable* no matter what happens. This doesn't mean we're necessarily *responsible* for the unexpected, but the customer has to feel confident that we'll help them course-correct no matter who caused the problem. We also earn customer confidence simply by listening and learning when they're angry. Being dressed down can dress you up because we often learn more from angry customers and we earn their respect by being accountable.

The customer/client action that indicates we've earned **RELIABILITY** is when the unexpected stops being met with unease. Instead, the customer who deems us reliable learns to treat the unexpected as just another part of the problem we were hired to solve.

IDENTIFYING YOUR BEST NEXT ACTIONS FOR _____

Enter name of customer and/or division

Do you have a clear value proposition that you can state in less than 30 seconds?

Yes No

If no, use the following tool to create your 30-second value proposition specific to this customer/client.

The goal of the 30-second value proposition is to get the customer/client engaged and asking questions so that you advance beyond the sales-pitch to a sales-engagement. You get the customer/client engaged by creating, in their minds, a suspicion of value about you, your company and your product.

We do this by showing that we have a base understanding of their business challenges; that we know of specific problems that are created by the business environment, and that we have potential solutions to those problems. Most importantly, since each customer/client is different, our 30-second value proposition has to adapt to each customer situation. Thus, the standard value propositions displayed on our websites and marketing materials are only generally applicable. The role of salespeople is to make them specific to the customer/client.

Exercise:

- **Step 1: List industry/business changes and issues that you know your customer has.**

Example: Competition is increasing in the commercial airplane industry. New innovations and features are being introduced at an ever accelerating pace making it harder to compete.

- **Step 2: List the problems created for the customer/client based on the changes and issues you listed.**

Example: Airplane manufacturers need to continually reduce time-to-market with innovations and improvements, to motivate commercial airlines to modernize their fleets.

- **Step 3: Identify a solution you provide that addresses customer/client problems.**

Example: Our computer-aided-design software reduces airplane design and test cycles by 50% and eliminates the need for mock-ups.

- **Step 4: Suspicion of value you want to create.** What question(s) do you want the customer to ask?

Examples: How will we do airplane walk-throughs with customers? How will we retrain our design engineers? Wouldn't we have to do mock-ups to design manufacturing tools?

- **Step 5: Write 1-3 versions of your 30-second value proposition.** The purpose of writing multiples is purely to rehearse - we never want to read a value proposition to a customer. Instead, we want to have a repertoire of key points to make so that we can adjust for the customer situation.

Example: The speed of innovation from global competitors is making it harder to win new airline business. Long periods between new product launches reduces competitiveness. Our new CAD software helps by reducing airplane design and test cycles by as much as 50%. A much shorter time-to-market.

VISABILITY – Are decision-makers and their influencers asking to meet with you because they have a suspicion-of-value about you, your company, and your product?

Yes No

If No:

Do you understand the decision making process?

Yes No

Do the decision-makers and the people who influence them understand what your products/services do, what they replace and who they compete with?

Yes No

Do decision-makers and influencers suspect that you, your company and your products/services have value for them? (Suspicion of Value)

Yes No

For each no, document why you think this is happening.

1.

2.

3.

For each reason why the answer is no, document your best next action for changing it to yes.

1.

2.

3.

CREDABILITY – Are decision-makers and influencers asking you for business advice beyond what your product/service delivers? Have you transitioned from seller to advisor? Yes No

If no:

Have you delivered demonstrations, recommendations or education that help them see that your value proposition is true and achievable? Yes No

If appropriate, have you offered education on your product/service and associated benefits to show your value as an advisor? Yes No

Have you advocated for other customers and partners who could help your new customer and have they advocated for you? Yes No

For each no, document why you think this is happening.

1.

2.

3.

For each reason the answer is no, document your best next action for changing it to yes.

1.

2.

3.

VIABILITY – Are discussions with customers/clients primarily focused on results rather than price?

Yes No

If no:

Have decision-makers and influencers identified their **needs** that your product/service addresses?

Yes No

Do they have enough **experience** and **expertise** to properly assess your performance?

Yes No

Are decision-makers and influencers considering other options? Does this customer have enough **success history** that competitors are also pursuing them?

Yes No

Do you both have the **time** and budget necessary for your product/service to show results?

Yes No

For each no, document why you think this is happening.

1.

2.

3.

4.

For each reason why the answer is no, document your best next action for changing it to yes.

1.

2.

3.

4.

CAPABILITY – Do you know the personal motivations for buying of decision-makers and influencers?

Yes No

If no, assess from the following what you believe is motivating each decision-maker and influencer:

- **Safety** - These people ask for guarantees. They ask “what if this goes wrong” questions. They are risk-averse. They fear failure either because it’s their nature or because their position is threatened. Do you have customers motivated by safety?
Yes No (If yes, list them here.)
- **Simplicity** - These people want to see reduced work-load for them and their team. They will be clear on what results are needed but will expect you to determine how the results will be delivered. If they have to be deeply involved they’ll be unhappy. Do you have customers motivated by simplicity?
Yes No (If yes, list them here.)
- **Reward** – These are people who expect something good to happen for them when your products/services deliver successful results. Promotions, bonuses, awards, etc. These people want to be involved in the day to day, want regular formal updates and are milestone driven. They get testy when they feel out of the loop or unclear about progress. Do you have customers motivated by reward?
Yes No (If yes, list them here.)
- **Recognition** – These are people who want to be seen as a person who gets things done. They want to be a great teammate. They enjoy being the one who others come to for help or coaching. These people are typically considered by peers as the subject-matter-expert (SME) on something. Do you have customers motivated by recognition?
Yes No (If yes, list them here.)
- **Revolution** – These people were hired to make changes and they like change. You’ll hear these people talk about innovation or reinventing. These people are bored by incremental improvements and do not consider them true change. These are people who are often referred to as turnaround specialists. Do you have customers motivated by revolution?
Yes No (If yes, list them here.)

List all customers, for which you answered yes along with their motivation and why you classified your customer(s) as such:

For each reason why, document your best next action for addressing the customer's personal motivations for buying.

RELIABILITY – Do decision-makers and influencers know exactly how you'd respond if something were to go wrong? Yes No

If no:

Have you reviewed and gotten approval for your escalation plan?

Yes No

Do you have current or past failed executions with these decision-makers and/or influencers?

Yes No

Do you have current or past execution problems with others in the industry that decision-makers and/or influencers may have heard about?

Yes No

Have decision-makers and/or influencers expressed concern about you or your company's ability to meet commitments?

Yes No

For each no, document why you think this is happening.

For each reason why the answer is no, document your best next action for changing it to yes.

BEST NEXT ACTION SUMMARY 30-second
value proposition:

VISABILITY best next actions along with date to be completed

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

CREDABILITY best next actions along with date to be completed

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

VIABILITY best next actions along with date to be completed

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

CAPABILITY best next actions along with date to be completed

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

RELIABILITY best next actions along with date to be completed

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

Contact Rick Wong to schedule your complimentary
30-minute consultation to grow your revenue by using
The Five Abilities.