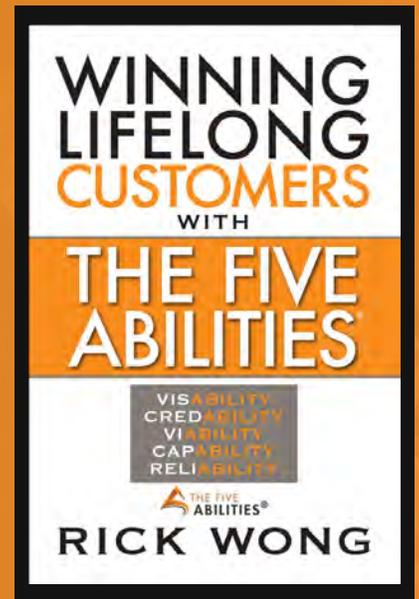




WINNING LIFELONG CUSTOMERS

WITH THE FIVE ABILITIES®



WORKBOOK

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



THE FIVE ABILITIES

BY RICK WONG

VISABILITY

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

CREDABILITY

Showing superior knowledge about your industry and that of your customers.

VIABILITY

Verifying the needs and readiness of both the seller and buyer.

CAPABILITY

Delivering on the personal reasons people make business decisions.

RELIABILITY

Always being accountable when the unexpected happens.

Companies don't make decisions—people do. Most importantly, people make the most important business decisions for very personal reasons. When making purchases, 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 on which decision-makers focus.

No matter what sales methodology we use, we must 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 better relationships, increased revenue, and winning lifelong customers.



THE FIVE ABILITIES OF INCREDIBLY SUCCESSFUL SALESPEOPLE

VISABILITY

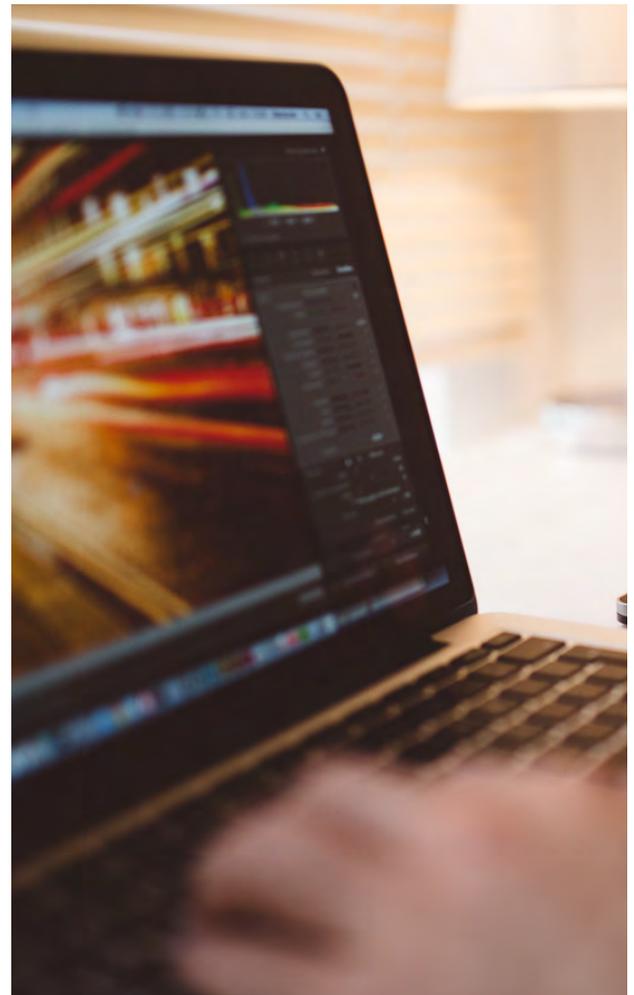
BEING SEEN IN THE RIGHT WAY, BY THE RIGHT PEOPLE, AT THE RIGHT TIME.

Successful salespeople earn **VISABILITY** when presenting a value proposition that creates

Suspicion-of-Value

...in the customer's mind, that makes them crave more from us. Once a customer asks for more information, we've turned a one-way sales pitch into a two-way sales engagement. We've started the process of turning apathy into urgency – the first step to delivering value for which customers and clients choose to buy from us.

The customer/client action that indicates we have the right **VISABILITY** is when 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, the company, and products and/or services.



THE FIVE ABILITIES OF INCREDIBLY SUCCESSFUL SALESPEOPLE

CREDABILITY

SHOWING SUPERIOR KNOWLEDGE ABOUT YOUR INDUSTRY AND THAT OF YOUR CUSTOMERS.



You earn **CREDABILITY** by sharing information that shows how your value proposition can come true for the customer.

You must evolve that suspicion-of-value to an acknowledgment of value. Demonstrate your expertise and experience, including past successes. Educate decision-makers and influencers so that they are better able to assess their problems, their needs, and your ability to help them. Advocate for partners and/or customers who can help your customers solve problems especially in areas that go beyond your capabilities.

The customer/client action that indicates you have earned **CREDABILITY** is when they ask you for advice and opinions on business-related subjects, that don't necessarily involve your products. This says that you've evolved from seller to advisor.

THE FIVE ABILITIES OF INCREDIBLY SUCCESSFUL SALESPEOPLE

VIABILITY

VERIFYING THE NEEDS AND READINESS OF BOTH THE SELLER AND BUYER

The only thing worse than not winning a customer is winning the wrong customer.

The right customer has a real need that you can address, has the experience and expertise to assess your performance, the success that makes them a desirable customer for you and your competitors, and they have the time to be successful. They become your 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 your time and become your loudest critics. The good news is you can turn wrong customers into right customers by identifying their voids during qualification so that you can use the sales process to educate. When you educate a prospect, you are much more likely to celebrate them becoming a customer. Educate to celebrate.

The customer/client action that indicates you 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 your products/services will produce the return-on-investment needed to deem this a successful purchase and project.

THE FIVE ABILITIES OF INCREDIBLY SUCCESSFUL SALESPEOPLE

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 – Decreasing the probability of failure.

Simplicity – Reducing the burdens on the decision-makers and their organization.

Reward – Getting the decision-makers rewarded with bonuses, promotions, kudos, etc.

Recognition – Making decision-makers stronger SMEs and better contributors to other's success.

Revolution – Help the decision-makers change their organization in positive ways.

The customer/client action that indicates you'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 and their coworkers will know. (This is one of the most popular sessions in The Five Abilities® workshop.)



THE FIVE ABILITIES OF INCREDIBLY SUCCESSFUL SALESPEOPLE

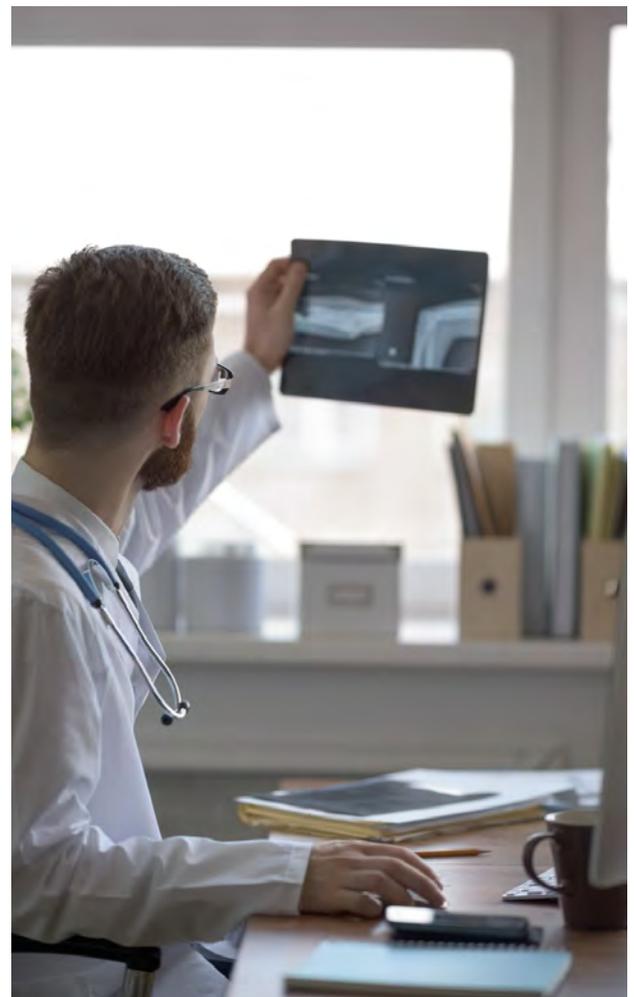
RELIABILITY

ALWAYS BEING ACCOUNTABLE WHEN THE UNEXPECTED HAPPENS

You earn customer loyalty by being accountable no matter what happens. This doesn't mean you're necessarily responsible for the unexpected, but the customer must feel confident that you will help them fix it no matter who caused the problem.

You also earn customer confidence simply by listening and learning when they're angry. Being dressed down can dress you up because you often learn more from angry customers and you earn their respect by being accountable.

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



IDENTIFYING YOUR BEST NEXT ACTIONS

FOR _____

DO YOU HAVE A CLEAR VALUE PROPOSITION THAT YOU CAN STATE IN LESS THAN 30 SECONDS?

If no, use the following 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, such that they crave more information from you.

You do this by showing that you understand their business challenges, that you know of specific problems that are created by the current business environment, and that you have solutions to those problems. Most importantly, since each customer/client is different, our 30-second value proposition must adapt to each customer situation. The standard value propositions displayed on your websites and marketing materials are only generally applicable. Your role, as a salesperson and advisor, is to make them specific to the customer/client.

IDENTIFYING YOUR BEST NEXT ACTIONS

EXERCISE

Step 1: List industry/business changes and challenges 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.

IDENTIFYING YOUR BEST NEXT ACTIONS

EXERCISE

Step 3: Identify solutions you provide that address the 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? How will we design manufacturing tools?

IDENTIFYING YOUR BEST NEXT ACTIONS

EXERCISE

Step 5: Write 1-3 versions of your 30-second value proposition. The purpose of writing multiples is purely to rehearse - you never want to read a value proposition to a customer. Instead, you want to have a repertoire of key points to make so that you 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%. Would this help you be more competitive?

VISABILITY

TO BE SEEN IN THE RIGHT WAY, BY THE RIGHT PEOPLE, AT THE RIGHT TIME

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?

If Yes: Proceed to CREDABILITY If No: Complete Exercise

What do you see, hear, and/or know, that is hindering your VISABILITY?

***Why* do you think this is happening?**

***Document* your best next action for changing NO to YES**

"SUCCESS COMES WHEN YOU HAVE THE RIGHT VISABILITY WITH THE RIGHT PEOPLE, AT THE RIGHT TIME."

VISABILITY

TO BE SEEN IN THE RIGHT WAY, BY THE RIGHT PEOPLE, AT THE RIGHT TIME

Do you understand the decision-making process?

If no, why not?

Document your best next action for changing NO to YES

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

If no, why not?

Document your best next action for changing NO to YES

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

If no, why not?

Document your best next action for changing NO to YES

CREDABILITY

SHOWING SUPERIOR KNOWLEDGE AND SUCCESS REGARDING YOUR OFFERING AND THE BUSINESS OF YOUR CUSTOMER/CLIENT

Are decision-makers and influencers asking you for business advice beyond what your product/service delivers? Have you transitioned from seller to advisor?

If Yes: Proceed to VIABILITY If No: Complete Exercise

What do you see, hear, and/or know that is keeping you from earning CREDABILITY?

Why do you think this is happening?

Document your best next action for changing NO to YES

"NO COMPANY CAN BE ALL THINGS TO ALL CUSTOMERS."

CREDABILITY

SHOWING SUPERIOR KNOWLEDGE AND SUCCESS REGARDING YOUR OFFERING AND THE BUSINESS OF YOUR CUSTOMER/CLIENT

Have you demonstrated your offering to key decision-makers and key influencers?

If no, why not?

Document your best next action for changing NO to YES

Have you educated decision-makers and key influencers to help them see that your value proposition is true and achievable? Do they see you as a subject-matter-expert (SME) on your offering and their business?

If no, why not?

Document your best next action for changing NO to YES

CREDABILITY

SHOWING SUPERIOR KNOWLEDGE AND SUCCESS REGARDING YOUR OFFERING AND THE BUSINESS OF YOUR CUSTOMER/CLIENT

Have existing customers and partners advocated for you?

If no, why not?

Document your best next action for changing NO to YES

Have you advocated for your customer by introducing them to others who can offer help that you cannot?

If no, why not?

Document your best next action for changing NO to YES

VIABILITY

OFFERING A SOLUTION THAT FITS BOTH YOUR CUSTOMER'S NEEDS AND YOUR COLLECTIVE READINESS TO EXECUTE.

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

If Yes: Proceed to CAPABILITY If No: Complete Exercise

What do you see, hear, and/or know, that puts at risk the VIABILITY of this customer and project?

Why do you think this is happening?

Document your best next action for changing NO to YES

"WHEN YOUR PRODUCT ISN'T STRATEGIC AND UNIQUE, BROADEN THE DEFINITION OF "PRODUCT" BY CONSIDERING THE NON-PRODUCT BENEFITS YOUR CUSTOMER GETS."

VIABILITY

OFFERING A SOLUTION THAT FITS BOTH YOUR CUSTOMER'S NEEDS AND YOUR COLLECTIVE READINESS TO EXECUTE.

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

If no, why not?

Document your best next action for changing NO to YES

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

If no, why not?

Document your best next action for changing NO to YES

VIABILITY

OFFERING A SOLUTION THAT FITS BOTH YOUR CUSTOMER'S NEEDS AND YOUR COLLECTIVE READINESS TO EXECUTE.

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

If no, why not?

Document your best next action for changing NO to YES

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

If no, why not?

Document your best next action for changing NO to YES

CAPABILITY

DELIVERING ON THE PERSONAL REASONS PEOPLE MAKE BUSINESS DECISIONS.

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

If Yes: Proceed to RELIABILITY 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?

If yes, name the customer(s) 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 must be deeply involved in day-to-day actions, they'll be unhappy. Their motto, "Just get it done." Do you have customers motivated by simplicity?

If yes, name the customer(s) here.

"WORD-OF-MOUTH IS THE ORIGINAL NUMBERS GAME.
WORD-OF-DIGITAL IS TODAY'S AMPLIFICATION."

CAPABILITY

DELIVERING ON THE PERSONAL REASONS PEOPLE MAKE BUSINESS DECISIONS.

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?

If yes, name the customer(s) 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?

If yes, name the customer(s) here.

CAPABILITY

DELIVERING ON THE PERSONAL REASONS PEOPLE MAKE BUSINESS DECISIONS.

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 people are often referred to as turnaround specialists. Do you have customers motivated by revolution?

If **yes**, name the customer(s) here.

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

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

RELIABILITY

BEING ACCOUNTABLE WHEN THE UNEXPECTED HAPPENS.

Do decision-makers and influencers know how you'll respond if something were to go wrong?

If Yes: Proceed to BEST NEXT ACTION SUMMARY 30-second value proposition

If No: Complete Exercise

What do you see, hear, and/or know that is keeping you from earning RELIABILITY?

Why do you think this is happening?

Document your best next action for changing NO to YES

MANY PEOPLE THINK RELIABILITY IS SOMETHING YOU FOCUS ON ONLY AFTER YOU'VE WON THE BUSINESS. IN ENTERPRISE SELLING YOU MUST EARN RELIABILITY BEFORE YOU CAN WIN ANY BUSINESS.

RELIABILITY

BEING ACCOUNTABLE WHEN THE UNEXPECTED HAPPENS.

Have you reviewed and gotten approval for your escalation plan?

If no, why not?

Document your best next action for changing NO to YES

Have you resolved all current or past failed executions with these decision-makers and/or influencers?

If no, why not?

Document your best next action for changing NO to YES

RELIABILITY

BEING ACCOUNTABLE WHEN THE UNEXPECTED HAPPENS.

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

If no, why not?

Document your best next action for changing NO to YES

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

If no, why not?

Document your best next action for changing NO 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.



Rick Wong is the creator of Winning Lifelong Customers with The Five Abilities® sales methodology and is the CEO/Founder of The Five Abilities LLC. Rick has spent 35 years growing revenue for Fortune 100 companies as well as his own entrepreneurial pursuits. As a successful salesperson, sales manager, sales executive and marketer, Rick learned from his own experiences and by observing incredibly successful salespeople that he's been blessed to work with throughout his career.

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