

WITH HALF OF B2B SALES PEOPLE DUE TO MISS THEIR 2018 TARGETS, IT'S TIME TO SHIFT PERSPECTIVE

Salespeople love attention grabbing figures. So here's one. In 2018, less than 50% of B2B salespeople are likely to hit their targets. **There's no hiding from it. Sales has got a lot harder.** Today's clients are having to justify their purchasing decision to more stakeholders than ever before. On average, they must convince 6.8 other people why they've chosen your product over another. That's 6.8 people who will hold them responsible if they make the wrong call. That's a lot of pressure.

The way people buy has changed, but the way many people sell hasn't. If you want to smash your sales target, you need to shift your perspective and consider how B2B clients make decisions and then make it easier for them to do so.

SITTING IN THE SHOES OF YOUR CLIENT

Most salespeople who want to increase their volume of sales try to do so by increasing the numbers of potential clients they engage with. When they do, they focus on shouting about their products in the hope of getting the client to 'choose' them over others.

But this approach isn't addressing the root of the problem. Clients want to minimise risk and limit change. It's easier for them to play it safe and stick with what they know than make changes. **You aren't necessarily competing against your business rivals, your competing against your client's status quo, whatever that may be.**

You need to give your potential client a compelling reason to change their approach, before you can truly sell them on choosing.

THE NEW SALES PROCESS

A good sales process should make it easier for clients to buy. But due to the pressure of sales targets, most sales approaches actually make it harder for a client to say 'yes'.

Your sales process should be reimagined to become a client buying process that looks like this:



At present, most salespeople jump straight to step two and don't offer any support for step three. But results will be far better if you focus on the way your client thinks about their situation and the how they can secure better outcomes.

MAKE CHANGE WELCOME, NOT FEARED

People don't like change. That applies as much to clients as it does salespeople.

Mapping your approach to the client's buying process, will have a dramatic impact on your sales revenue. The best way to get potential clients to choose your products – and then to be able to sell their choice internally - is through the **CHANGE – CHOOSE – CHAMPION** model.

The B2B world has changed, are you ready to change with it?

STEP ONE: CHANGE

Help your client understand the challenges they face and why their existing approach (the 'status quo') will not solve matters. In fact, their approach may be creating the challenge in the first place.

Some clients may be fully aware of the problems they need to overcome but aren't sure how to respond. Others may be unaware they could be doing things more efficiently, at lower cost or with better results. You must open their eyes to new options and inspire a 'lightbulb' moment within them. You have to flick the switch that shines a light on an utterly persuasive reason for them to take the risk of changing the way they operate.

The best way to do this is to create a narrative that not only illustrates the reason to change, but gives them the confidence to take what can be a nerve-racking first step to a fresh way of working.

STEP TWO: CHOOSE

Once you've taken the 'Change' step correctly, you will have aligned yourself with your client and given them the motivation to change.

For a salesperson, the 'choose' step is the most natural part of the process. After realising that their approach is part of the challenge they face, this stage should be relatively plain sailing. Your product should clearly be the opportunity that opens up a new and better way of working.

STEP THREE: CHAMPION

Once the client has decided to choose you, their role in the decision-making process hasn't finished, it's just begun. They now have to sell their choice to multiple internal stakeholders - an average of 6.8 people.

Your client isn't a salesperson. They won't have the knowledge of your product or recall of facts and figures you have. You have to help them champion your product by giving them a narrative that communicates across all stakeholders why there is an urgent need to change and why they should choose you.

The challenges faced by a company's sales director are vastly different to that of a CEO. The narrative you create at the 'Choose' stage should help them present the features and benefits of your product to each stakeholder in a way that cuts through and gives them their own individual lightbulb moments.