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The IdeaBridge White Paper Series:
Dramatic Revenue
Growth...Without Selling!



DRAMATIC REVENUE GROWTH...WITHOUT SELLING!

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Summary

This article gives a step-by-step action plan to radically re-design your company's sales approach, eliminating the need for pushy salespeople and developing long-term relationships with your customers. A case study is presented in addition to practical steps one can immediately take to improve their overall offering in the market.

To dramatically increase sales and grow a business, one must successfully increase the perception of value that the market has of your product or service. There is really no other way.

The perception of value that a prospect has of your company has absolutely nothing to do with the amount of effort or the cost you incur to provide the service, but rather the prospect's perception of the benefits derived or problems that are solved (or avoided) from using your service.

When people get to the point of a buying decision, there are really just two major types of benefits that most buyers will evaluate:

- The addition of something positive: (better rate, more options, longer warranty, quicker response, etc), or
- The elimination of something negative: (restrictive policies, minimum order size, cost of maintenance, long lead times, continuing headaches, hassles, etc.)

The quickest and easiest improvements come by concentrating on eliminating the negatives. These "negatives" (commonly known by salespeople as "objections") are intimately known to your customers and prospects (you probably know what most of them are already)...one doesn't have to persuade a buyer that they exist...they know that they do. Also, one doesn't have to persuade (or "sell") the prospect that they should eliminate these negatives-he's dying to! Done well, eliminating the negatives (objections) is a path of no resistance to closing new business.

Now here's how you might think about supercharging your company's growth:

While solving a prospect's problems is what everyone else is trying to do, they usually are only addressing the surface-level issues, the "symptoms." Rather than focus on the surface-level issues, try to dig much deeper. Most people will stop asking after two or three issues are uncovered, but you've got to keep digging to find the underlying root causes of those problems.

Spend some time talking to your customers about what really causes those vexing problems that they face. Then, determine what changes you can make – not just in terms or price - but in the offering as a whole, so that you can address the root cause of their problems.

Once you identify the source of your industry's root problems, you can then set out to develop a service offering or "package" that fundamentally addresses these issues in a way no one else has ever done before.

Here's a Case Study example:

One of General Electric's divisions was selling replacement parts and emergency repair services to steam-generation power plants. These steam plant operators were always calling with last minute, emergency requests for parts and repair. Naturally, GE charged a premium for such service because



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they had to maintain extra inventory and staff for every potential contingency. The steam plants were under scrutiny for excessive operating costs due to all the triple time billing for the emergency work. Competitors were being called in to bid on the parts and service business, but GE saw an opportunity to fundamentally redesign their offer.

GE addressed the *core issue*: the steam plants must drive down their operating costs, but they also must stay on-line at all times.

But what was it that GE was fundamentally providing with their services? They determined that their real value was: "the consistent and reliable source of steam power." It was not replacement parts and emergency service! So they changed their entire offering. They now just sell STEAM! That's right. Now, GE runs the steam plants for a fixed fee based on the power output generated by the steam. Now they sell steam, *not* parts and service! Because they are running their own equipment, GE understands it well and maintains it well, reducing their operating costs. It's a win/win.

The buyers, typically mid-west manufacturing firms, are happy because they don't have the hassle of running a steam plant, yet they have stable costs and can rely upon a consistent and reliable source of steam power to run their plants. Problem Solved! They are happy with GE's solution and it's a pretty safe bet that GE will be selling steam for a long time to come.

And here's the important angle to the story: GE never had to "sell" anyone. They came in and solved a problem that their customers were only too happy to pass off to them!

How to Apply This to Your Business

Rather than starting a sales presentation by pushing your or service, start by presenting the prospects with their own problems. Then link their problems to your industry's existing standards, methods and policies.

Go on to explain that your firm became aware of the complaints, and after listening very carefully, you set out to build a company from the "outside-in" to solve the specific industry problems. The fact is that you realized that as long as these policies and standards were creating problems for your customers, that they were also causing problems for your firm by limiting your growth. So you went out and completely redesigned your offering. Essentially, it's an admission that the industry's methods and practices were limiting your growth. (NOTE: Companies can relate to this, because they are aware of similar problems in their industries.)

You'll usually hear them say, "OK so you know your industry's policies and practices have limited your growth and are burdening my business. Now what are you proposing to do about it? How are you different?"

Then you reach out and hand your prospect your "New Policies," your incredibly compelling new offer that fundamentally addresses some of the core problems faced by the industry. (Of course, you have to figure out just what those problems are, and how you will solve them or prevent them from occurring. Call us at IdeaBridge. We can help you find the answers.)

The buyer, of course, facing what he perceives to be your supreme generosity will naturally be cautious and suspicious. So you simply tell him that your objective was to fundamentally redesign the offer to



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solve your customer's problems. That way, you could dramatically increase your growth as an industry leader.

The next step is to present the prospect with a list of all the well-worn objections and obstacles that a prospect will typically throw out to dissuade you from closing the sale. That's right! You hand him a list of the industry's most common reasons and excuses for not buying. They can't come back at you with the objections that used to put you in a position of weakness where you had to defend yourself. This is a total role reversal and he won't know what to do! You prospect has never seen anything like this before!

He knows you've presented him with a dream offer, but now you're giving him all the reasons why he shouldn't buy. But, structured correctly, the offer will be so compelling that he simply won't pass it up. Now the roles become reversed and he takes the position that all the objections can be overcome or dismissed. The prospect tries to close himself! Generally he'll play down the objections, laugh at a few of the zingers he's used in the past on pushy salespeople, and then he'll tell you how to overcome the rest...he wants the deal and he's going to show you exactly how to close him.

Understanding Buyer Behavior

Buyers see their job as pretending that they don't want to buy or that they are currently satisfied. This is a negotiating ploy that's as old as the ages, yet salespeople still fall for it. They sweeten the pot and enhance the offer, thereby allowing the buyer to extract the maximum possible concessions from the salesperson.

Buyers don't usually have full trust of the salesperson or the exaggerated claims they make. Buyers have learned to be suspicious and cautious of salespeople singing the praises of their services. Therefore, to protect themselves and their companies, buyers have created a hard protective shell of caution and doubt; they simply don't trust salespeople.

Presenting a prospect with a list of objections of why he should not buy goes a long way toward distancing yourself from the untrustworthy salesman. The prospect will open up and be less guarded with you, often giving you ("off the record") inside information on how to close him that he would never have given to a "pushy salesperson."

A Growth Solution

An offer that relieves a prospect's problems brings great business and emotional benefits, especially the relief of pain, hassles and headaches. The more problems that your offer eliminates, the greater the benefits to your prospect.

For this to work, you must discover what your prospects really want, and find a way to fix it, build it or create it. Sometimes this takes outside-the-box thinking and breakthrough ideas. Then do it. The results will be spectacular.