Inside Selling Skills

Inside Selling Skills (IS2) equips inside sales reps with the unique skills and processes to sell and manage customers via the phone. The following is a detailed overview of each module and the competencies required to successfully expand opportunities on inbound and outbound calls as well as initiate relationships within dormant or cold accounts/decision-makers.

Module 1: *The Foundation: Trust, Credibility & Rapport*

In this foundational module, participants learn that over the phone, the customer *buys the sales rep before they buy the product*, based on three criteria – trust, credibility and rapport. If we successfully establish trust, credibility, and rapport, we gain a tremendous competitive advantage. Establishing this principle-based relationship creates a scenario where the customer is willing to communicate honest needs and consider alternative solutions.

[Guiding Principle: *Relationship determines influence…and ultimately your success in sales.*]

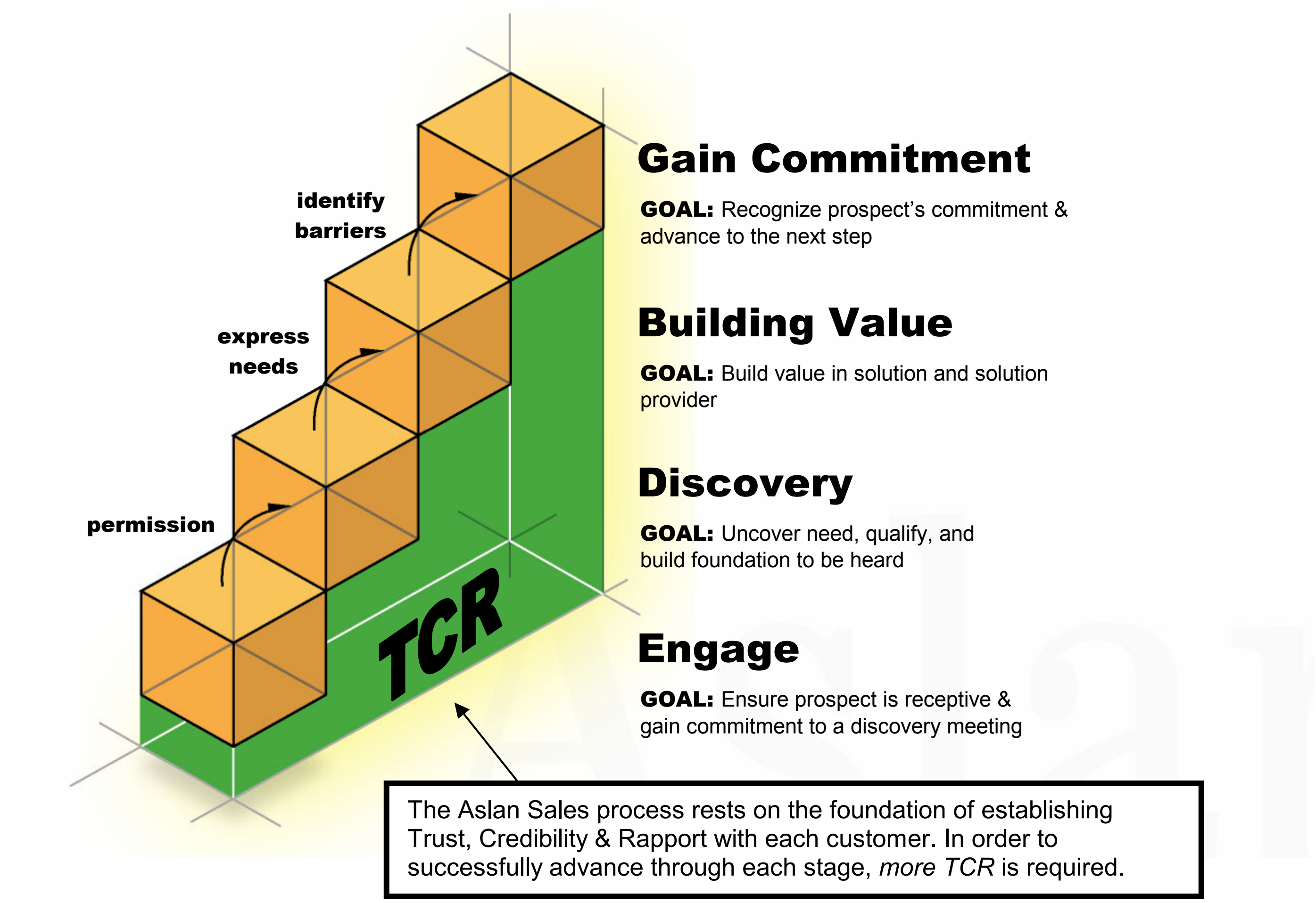
Participants will learn to establish Trust, Credibility and Rapport *over the phone* by:

- Embracing **their role as a trusted advisor**. By fully understanding their role as a trusted advisor, reps will recognize that it is in everyone's best interest and critical to their long-term success to **put the customer's needs first**.
- Demonstrating **thought leadership**. Participants will learn to **establish credibility by understanding the decision drivers, role-specific challenges,** and **key objectives** of the decision-makers and key influencers.
- Meeting the customer's greatest emotional need and recognizing and appropriately adjusting to the ***four unique* communication styles**.

Module 2: *Other-Centered Selling Process*

Participants will learn a proven selling process that increases the probability of their success – regardless of the rep's level of expertise. *Aslan's Sales Process* provides reps with a tangible step-by-step methodology to initiate relationships, uncover needs, persuasively position their solution, and reach agreement on the appropriate next step. This four-step process includes: Engage, Discovery, Build Value, and Gain Commitment.

Inbound & Outbound Sales Process



Module 3: *Engage*

The goal of the introduction is not to create interest, but to simply move the prospect from a non-receptive state to an open state. Once the prospect is receptive, it is the rep's responsibility to lead the buying process.

[Guiding Principle: *We will initially resist any outside pressure to think or act differently, even if it is in our best interest, if we feel that we are being forced and our right to choose is not respected.* (The *Tug of War* principle)]

Participants will learn to Engage prospects *over the phone* by:

- Understanding the **Rules of Engagement**. By understanding the dynamics of human emotions and behavior, sales reps **learn to influence** and resist the temptation to force the prospect to respond.
- Conducting **pre-call planning and research.** Reps will embrace the importance of strategically **planning** for a sales call and conducting the necessary **research** to obtain the information needed to **pre-qualify** a prospect and then **optimally positioning their call and solution**.
- Establishing an **other-centered agenda**. Sales reps will gain an understanding of the key components of an **outbound** and **inbound introduction** that will disarm the prospect and ultimately gain a commitment to the next step in the selling process – the *Discovery Meeting.*
- **Navigating to the decision-maker**. Reps will develop the techniques to **identifying barriers** (e.g., "screens", voice-mail) and connecting to **influencers** and **key decision-makers**.
- Gaining **access through sponsorship**. Reps will be enabled to utilize **four sponsorship strategies** that will give them greater access to **more receptive decision-makers**.
- Gaining **access creatively**. Additionally, reps will be provided **creative strategies** for gaining access to and engaging **influencers and Level II and Level III decision-makers**.
- Appropriately **responding to objections**. Reps will learn how to appropriately respond to the **five most common "false" objections** prospects employ to avoid sales reps.

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Module 4: *Discovery*

Initiating a *Discovery Meeting* with a new prospect is probably the most critical step to successfully growing your account base. This module is designed to ensure that participants develop the capabilities to initiate and engage a manager or executive level decision-maker in a *Discovery Meeting* to the degree that both perceived and unconscious needs are revealed.

[Guiding Principle: *Until we demonstrate that we understand the customer's needs, they will not be receptive to our recommended solution.*]

Participants will learn to uncover perceived and unconscious needs *over the phone* by:

- **Initiating Discovery**. Establishing value for the discovery process in the initial stages of the call
- Gaining **alignment**. Seeing the opportunity from the **prospect's point of view** and understanding their **primary buying motive**, and utilizing the keys to uncovering the prospect's **perceived needs**
- Utilizing a customized ***Discovery Matrix*** that provides the essential components to discovering the prospect's **perceived and unconscious needs**, **decision drivers**, and their **strategic fit** (i.e., "Can you win?" and "Is it worth winning?")
- Identifying the **political structure** in the organization to determine the key influencers and decision-makers
- Recognizing the different **forms of value** (e.g., financial, emotional) in the mind of the decision-maker and identifying their personal and corporate decision drivers
- **Expanding the "comfort zone"**. The importance of creating an environment where honest needs are revealed by developing **LEAD**ership skills (**L**istening, **E**mpathetically **A**cknowledging, and "**D**ropping the Rope")
- Using effective **questioning** strategies. How and when to ask opening, informational, attitudinal, and clarifying questions to ensure obtaining the most accurate information, as well as learning how to **position questions** in a way that ensures that the customer is motivated to answer
- Formulating **GAP2** (**G**et **A**t **P**roblem and **P**ayoff) **Questions** to expose the *hidden needs* and determine **"what's at stake"** – through *self-discovery*
- **Regaining a leadership position** when the customer changes the direction of the *Discovery Meeting* (e.g., initiates price discussion, ask questions about product/solution)

Module 5: *Build Value*

Once you have built a foundation of trust, credibility, and rapport, understood the prospect's needs, and defined the "value gap," it is time to build value in your solution and in "you" as the solution provider.

[Guiding Principle: *Communicating benefits that are not connected to a customer's needs erodes the foundation of Trust, Credibility & Rapport.*]

Participants will learn to Build Value in the solution *over the phone* by:

- Communicating your solution as an **other-centered benefit** by demonstrating the relevancy and payoff of your recommendation
- **Delivering** your presentation persuasively – with passion, authority, professionalism, and appropriate voice inflections
- Ensuring that customers *emotionally experience* the benefit through: **examples/word pictures** that allow the customer to visualize the benefits and be emotionally engaged; and **strong statements** to further build credibility and better position your product/service as "best of class"
- Isolating the customer's **key concerns** and removing **barriers to commitment**
- Analyzing **competitive pressures** and assessing your opportunity to win
- Utilizing **four strategies** that validate your recommendation, establish the value of your solution (over the phone, face-to-face, and in writing), and gain a competitive advantage
- Responding to **honest objections/questions** by learning to distinguish between and appropriately handle the three types of objections by adopting Aslan's recommended five-step objection-response methodology
- Transitioning the prospect from focusing on **price alone** to focusing them on **the overall payoff**
- Understanding the keys to **negotiate a win/win** solution

Module 6: *Gain Commitment*

Often sales reps are either intimidated by the closing process or they place undue emphasis on using a "close technique" to "*close the deal*." In reality, this phase of the sales process is simply reaching agreement on the appropriate next step – a step that aligns with where the customer is in their decision-making process and ensures your solution is perceived as best and unique.

[Guiding principle: *It is much easier to sell your process than your solution.*]

Participants will learn to Gain Commitment *over the phone* to the next step by:

- Developing a pre-determined **objective of the call**
- Developing and **presenting the offer** that minimizes risk and moves the prospect to the next logical event in their buying process
- Understanding the **prospect's buying process** and how to link the appropriate advance strategy with the prospect's commitment level
- Creating an **Opportunity Development Process** that ensures the decision-making team experiences the value of their recommendation and sees them solution as *best* and *unique*
- Once the prospect becomes a customer, creating an **Account Management Strategy**

Reference Tools

- Pre-qualifying matrix
- Strategies to approach decision-makers
- Discovery Matrix
- Discovery questions (e.g., to expose hidden needs, determine decision-makers & influencers)
- Opportunity/Account assessment tool
- Responses to the 5 false objections
- Account development strategies
- Self-Assessment tool