



# HIGH PERFORMANCE SELLING

## MODULE 14

### Influencing Customer Behavior



# INTRODUCTION

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Why is it that people buy or refuse to buy? Why do some people buy quickly, and other people take forever to buy, or never buy at all?

Many years of research in motivational psychology have been devoted to uncovering some of the key reasons why people behave the way they do, especially in sales situations.

All successful salespeople and all successful sales organizations have found ways to tap into these underlying motivations that cause people to act and react to commercial messages and sales proposals.

The more you know about how and why people do the things they do, the faster and easier it will be for you to turn prospects into customers and then to get the referrals and resales that will make you a top producer in your field.

In this lesson, you will learn some of the most powerful influence strategies and techniques ever discovered in professional selling.

“The inner thought

coming from the

heart represents

the real motives

and desires.

These are the

causes of action.”

~ *Raymond Holliwell*

# INFLUENCING CUSTOMER BEHAVIOR

1. Key question: Why do some customers buy faster or slower than others?
  - a. Each customer has deep subconscious needs that need to be satisfied before a purchase decision is made;
  - b. Buying influences are like triggers that bring about rapid buying decisions;
  - c. The use of these triggers short-circuits the decision-making process.
  
2. The first and most powerful buying influence is **reciprocity**:
  - a. We like to repay others when they do something for us;
  - b. We want to reciprocate for the kindnesses or favors of others;
  - c. **Emotional** reciprocity: “If you make me feel good, I’ll make you feel good;”
  - d. **Physical** reciprocity: “If you do something nice for me, I’ll do something nice for you;”
  - e. When you do something for someone else, you put him or her under a sense of **obligation**;
  - f. Always look for ways to do **favors** or kindnesses for your prospects;

- g. Send “**thank-you**” cards on every occasion to build goodwill with your prospects.

**2. Commitment and Consistency** are key buying influences and emotional triggers:

- a. The **Law of Incremental Commitment** applies to all customers in sales activities;
- b. People strive to remain consistent with what they have done and said in the past;
- c. Uncover the prospect’s “buying strategy” if you want to sell your product or service. Ask him how he has gone about buying something like this in the past; what steps did he take?

**4. Social proof** is one of the most powerful of all buying influences:

- a. People are inordinately influenced by other people **similar** to them who have bought your product or service;
- b. The customer wants to know, “Who **else** that I know and respect has bought this product?”
- c. The customer feels that, if other people similar to him have bought the product, it must be okay;
- d. Testimonial **letters, lists and photos** prove to the customer that it is a safe buying decision.

**5. Liking:** how much the customer likes you is a major buying influence in any buying transaction:

- a. Emotions — positive or negative — **distort** valuations;
    - 1) **Positive** emotions cause your product or service to be seen in a better light;
    - 2) **Negative** feelings cause the product or service to be seen in a negative light.
  - b. Salespeople with high self-esteem are much more likeable to their customers;
  - c. **The Friendship Factor**, based on time, caring and respect, is a key buying influence;
  - d. The more the person likes you, the more he or she will want to buy from you.
- 6. Authority** is a major buying influence:
- a. We are strongly influenced by people who are known and respected for their expertise;
  - b. Buyer behavior is influenced by **third-party** endorsements in the form of publications, radio and television;
  - c. Buying behaviors are influenced by **symbols** of success such as cars, clothes and accessories.
- 7.** The relative **Scarcity** of a product or service has a powerful influence on the customer's decision to take action:
- a. Scarcity implies value, **desirability**;

- b. Scarcity increases the **urgency** to make a buying decision;
- c. Always suggest or imply that the **quantity** of your product or service is limited.
- d. If possible, point out that your product will only be available at this **price** for a short time, after which the price will go up.

**8.** The **Contrast Principle** is a key factor influencing buying decisions:

- a. People contrast or compare the prices of items against other items;
- b. Present the **higher-priced** item first, then the lower-priced item;
- c. The second item presented seems much **less** expensive, by contrast.

**9.** These buying influences are used in every sales effort, even when you go to the supermarket. For example:

- a. As you are shopping, someone gives you a sample of a product to taste. You eat the sample and enjoy it. This automatically triggers within you a desire to reciprocate and a feeling of **obligation**;
- b. When you eat the sample, you begin the process of incremental **commitment** toward the product;
- c. You see others around you tasting or buying the product. This triggers the influence of **social proof**;
- d. The person offering the product is pleasant and friendly. This triggers the emotion of **liking**;

- e. The product is offered in a store that you patronize. This lends the product the **authority** and prestige necessary to get you to buy it;
- f. There is a special offer on the product at this price. This triggers the buying influence of **scarcity**;
- g. You **contrast** and compare it with other products and conclude it is a good deal.

**10.** A powerful word in the buying conversation is the word “**because**”:

- a. Any reason following the word “because” seems logical, persuasive;
- b. “You will like this **because**...”

**11.** The word “**recommend**” is very persuasive in the sales conversation:

- a. Instead of asking people to buy, make recommendations;
- b. “What I recommend for you...”

Small changes in the way you present ideas and information can have extraordinary effects on the way your customer reacts to your product or service.

You must be continually looking for better ways to present product or service offerings, using the buying influences and decision triggers that have been discovered over the years.

You will soon be able to take a negative prospect and turn him or her into a customer with a few simple questions, statements and actions.

Now, here are some questions you can ask and answer:

1. What are **three** subconscious needs that must be satisfied before a customer can make a buying decision?
2. What **three** things could you do to trigger a feeling of **reciprocity** and obligation in your potential customer?
3. What **three** things happen in the customer's mind when you do something nice for him or her?
4. Give **three** ways that you can use the power of "**social proof**" to accelerate a buying decision.
5. What **three** things can you do in a customer meeting to get the prospect to like and trust you more?
6. What **three** things can you say to a customer to trigger the buying influence of scarcity?
7. Give **three** examples of how the buying influences of reciprocity, incremental commitment or scarcity are used to advertise and sell products in your city.

What one action are you going to take immediately as a result of what you have learned in this lesson?

**Now, stop the lesson at this point and answer these questions:**

1. What are **three** subconscious needs that must be satisfied before a customer can make a buying decision?

1) \_\_\_\_\_

2) \_\_\_\_\_

3) \_\_\_\_\_

2. What **three** things could you do to trigger a feeling of **reciprocity** and obligation in your potential customer?

1) \_\_\_\_\_

2) \_\_\_\_\_

3) \_\_\_\_\_

3. What **three** things happen in the customer's mind when you do something nice for him or her?

1) \_\_\_\_\_

2) \_\_\_\_\_

3) \_\_\_\_\_

4. Give **three** ways that you can use the power of “social proof” to accelerate a buying decision:

1) \_\_\_\_\_

2) \_\_\_\_\_

3) \_\_\_\_\_

5. What **three** things can you do in a customer meeting to get the prospect to like and trust you more?

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6. What **three** things can you say to a customer to trigger the buying influence of scarcity?

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7. Give **three** examples of how the buying influences of reciprocity, incremental commitment or scarcity are used to advertise and sell products in your city:

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What one action are you going to take immediately as a result of what you have learned in this lesson?

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