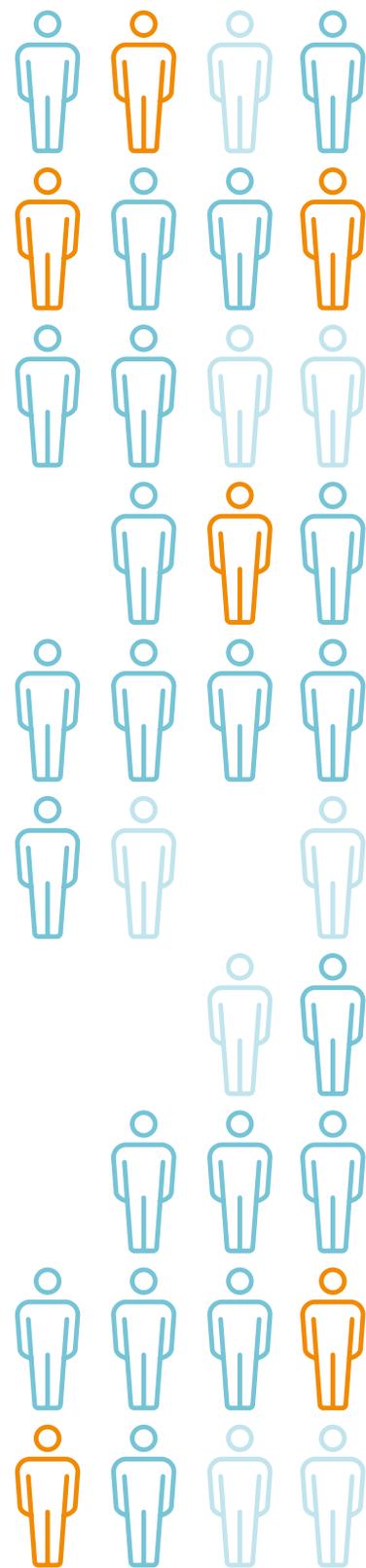




# YOU CAN'T TEACH PEOPLE TO SELL BY TEACHING PEOPLE TO SELL

Exploding the Myths of Why  
Salespeople Succeed or Fail



## The Hard Question.

Are you comfortable taking your present salespeople — with their current level of performance and skills — into an increasingly competitive marketplace?

## The Hard Reality.

If your sales force is somewhat normal, just 20% are high performers.



# Why Are So Few Salespeople Highly Successful?

In most organizations we see approximately:

- 20% of all salespeople reach high sales levels
- 60% sell at different degrees of acceptable performance
- 20% produce unacceptable sales volumes

Why aren't all salespeople selling at high levels?

What's holding 80% of them back?

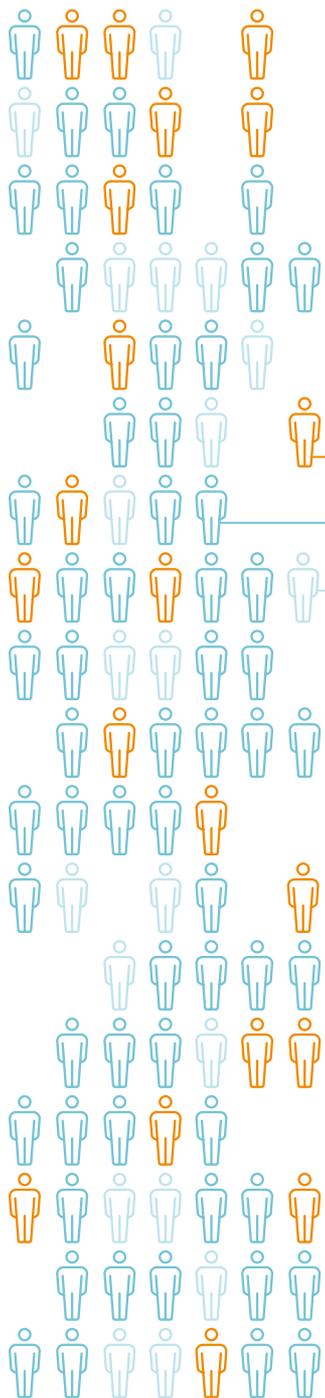
What does this cost your organization?

How does it affect you personally as a manager?

If you watched some videos online or attended a seminar entitled *How to Fly an Airplane*, would that make you a proficient pilot? Would your flight instructor say, "Okay, you're ready, there's a plane, go fly it?"

Of course not. It doesn't work with other complex pursuits, just like it doesn't work as a way to develop salespeople.

**When salespeople view selling as creating value for people, view themselves being able to do it and feel good about their product or service, they want to do the necessary activities.**





# Why You Can't Teach Your People To Sell By Teaching Them To Sell

Just about every organization has them.

They're loyal, honest, conscientious, good people. They know your products or services as well as anyone. Maybe even better than most. They've read all the product literature, watched videos on selling and can answer most of the customers' questions that come up.

They faithfully attend all of your sales meetings and diligently learn everything you attempt to teach them.

So, what's the problem?

The problem is...they don't sell much! Their days are filled with unkept plans, call reluctance or contact avoidance.

If only they'd do what you teach them to do, they'd be successful.

But they don't do what you taught them to do.

Just teaching them product knowledge, sales skills and activity-management processes, although necessary, doesn't cause them to sell well.

## Simply knowing how to sell, although necessary, doesn't in and of itself create sales winners.

Just reading books, attending seminars, watching videos or listening to speakers sharing sales skills doesn't prepare people to sell well. If it did, wouldn't it be easy to get people selling on higher and higher levels?

The reason it doesn't work is simple: *People don't always do what they know to do!* They usually do what they feel like doing and what they think is possible for them to do! Salespeople are largely driven by emotion. In fact, achievement drive is composed of roughly 85% feelings, attitudes and emotions and 15% logic, knowledge, and discipline.

Most salespeople know how to gain knowledge, but struggle with identifying and handling their emotions.

Because we can't answer questions about the emotional aspects of selling in a logical, quantifiable way, we ignore them. But we can't continue to do so if we want to help our salespeople grow.

We must search for deeper reasons for their sales success — real reasons why they sell or fail to sell.



# What Actually Causes Your People's Sales Success

If the ability to sell isn't an issue of your people just learning sales skills (and it's not), then what has to happen to get your people selling more?

To understand the true nature of this challenge, we must drill deeper than surface skills. We must look at the emotional factors that control 85% of your people's ability to sell.

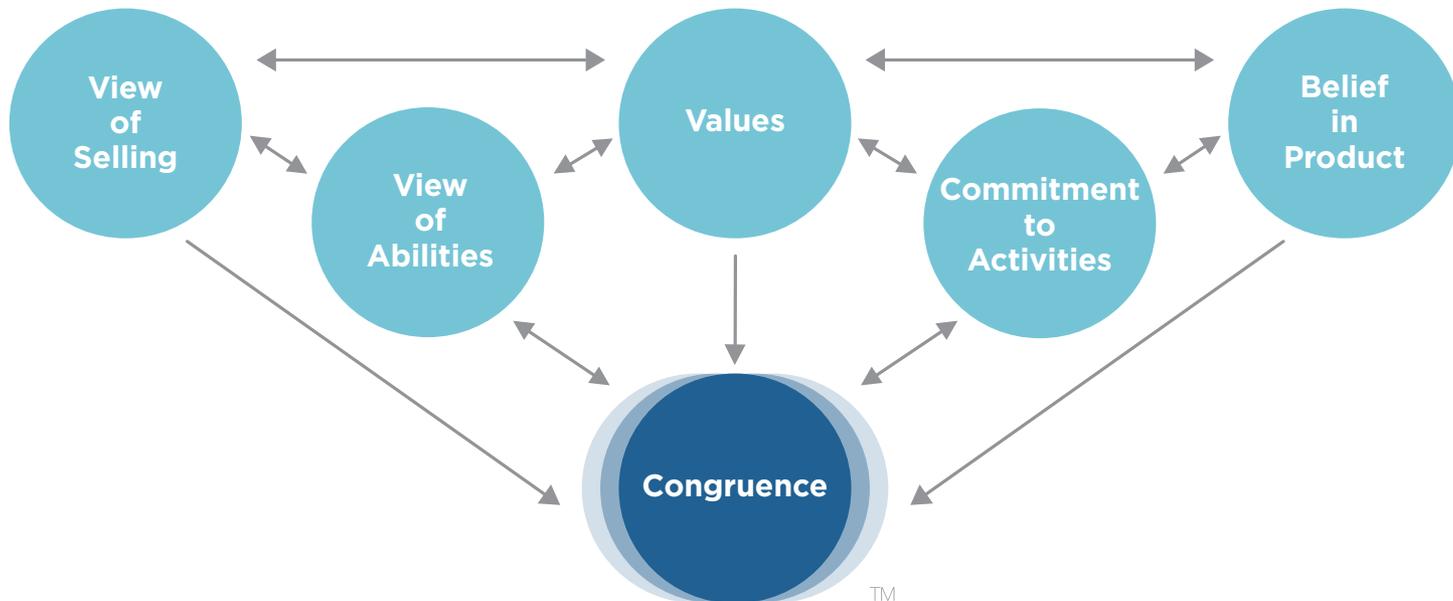
Here's what it's taken us many years to discover: Your people's ability to sell is largely due to an internal congruence of the following key factors:

- 1. View of Selling**
- 2. View of Abilities**
- 3. Values**
- 4. Commitment to Activities**
- 5. Belief in Product**

We'll take a closer look at each of these, but first, let's understand what must happen to your people before they can sell well.

Notice the following congruence model.

## SALES CONGRUENCE MODEL



*What are these dimensions and how do they come into congruence?*

As you look at the model, consider the following points:

- **Conflicts or low levels** of sales result wherever gaps occur between the dimensions.
- **The wider the gap**, the more salespeople experience internal stress, and the likelihood of failure.
- **Conflicts or stress** cause mental and emotional blocks which inhibit sales success.
- **As conflicts are reduced**, sales, personal confidence and activities increase.
- **Bringing dimensions into congruence** is a behavioral issue, not an intellectual learning process.
- **The dimensions only come together** when positive actions, attitudes and values are practiced in your everyday selling activities.

As these dimensions come into congruence, salespeople want to do result-producing activities. They develop an internal zest, confidence and a deep feeling that what they're doing is right and good.

And they are unconsciously freed up to sell on higher levels. In section 3, we'll explore these dimensions in practice.

# 3

## Why Most “Sales Training” Causes Your People to Shut Down

### What does most so-called “sales training” attempt to do?

Teach people to sell, right? Teach them how to get more customers to buy. Teach them words to use to get people to say “Yes.”

What customer wants to be sold things simply because salespeople need to sell them things? Don’t most people want to buy things that fill their own wants or needs, rather than fill salespeople’s wants or needs?

Before you answer these questions, put yourself in the shoes of your customers and think about it through their eyes.

Still, today many salespeople are being taught:



All are designed to persuade people to buy things.

Here are just a few of the concepts you might hear about in a typical sales training program:



## How would you like for salespeople to use these ploys on you?

What's more, when salespeople are taught to think this way or to use this ploy on customers, most will either consciously or unconsciously say, "I could never do that!" or "This doesn't feel good!" or "Why did the customer get angry and go silent?"

### **So, salespeople shut down.**

Usually, just thinking of these strategies causes a mental and emotional conflict that paralyzes salespeople. And then they think, "If this is what selling is, I could never do it."

The reality is, when salespeople are asked to do selling activities that conflict with their values, perceived skills or their sense of right and wrong, an internal conflict arises that causes them to mentally and emotionally shut down.

Often, they're worse off after learning these tricky strategies than they were before. Their ability to sell is decreased, rather than increased.

For those of us who are responsible for our organization's sales, this is not a good thing!

# 4

## How Would Your Salespeople Define Selling?

We listed “View of Selling” first in the list of factors that drive sales success, and for good reason. The way your people view selling dramatically impacts their ability to sell.

The words they use often reveal their view of selling. Here are three views of selling that we see in people:



**Transaction Focus** — They view selling as completing a transaction.



**Product Focus** — They view selling as a process of getting people to buy products or services they’re selling.



**Customer Needs Focus** — They view selling as a process of identifying and filling customers’ needs and creating value for them.

In customer-needs-focused selling, salespeople never mention their product or service until potential customers have admitted a need, a desire for a solution, and are willing to talk to them. Your product or service isn’t the central issue. The customer’s needs are. Your products are only solutions. You shouldn’t talk about them until customers discuss a need that you can satisfy.

We know that when people have this customer-needs focus, they have more energy, confidence and stronger self-motivation. Consequently, they sell more. They sell more because selling this way causes them to feel good about themselves.

They feel good about what they're doing, too. And when they feel good about what they're doing, they actually sell more!

We've also found that when salespeople do transaction or product-focused selling, some limiting factors jump in front of them. Customers often feel manipulated. They sense that salespeople are only interested in how much they can sell, not how much value they can create for them.

Trust, customer satisfaction and long-term loyal relationships suffer.

Add this to the fact that most salespeople don't internally feel good about selling this way, and we can understand why low productivity, burnout and turnover occur in transaction- and product-focused selling environments.

**Paradoxically, when a salesperson's objectives are to find out what wants, needs, goals, problems or objections customers have — to see if their solution fits the customer's needs — they sell more.**

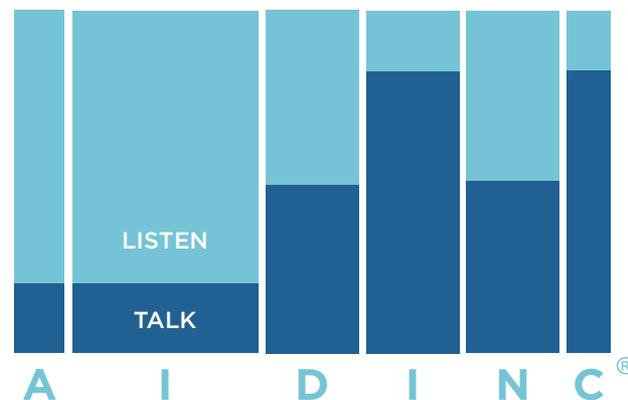
On the other hand, when a salesperson's objective is to sell people whatever they can convince a client to buy, they end up selling less.

## What does a needs-focused process look like?

A good example is our **AID,Inc.**<sup>®</sup> customer communications system:

- **Approach** — to gain rapport with people
- **Interview** — to discover wants, needs, problems or solutions people are seeking
- **Demonstrate** — to show how people's wants or needs can be filled or satisfied
- **Val-I-date** — to prove our claims and develop trust
- **Negotiate** — to work with problems that keep people from buying
- **Close** — to ask for a decision at the right time

In the following model you'll see from left to right the approximate percent of time spent in each step. Then, vertically you'll see what percent of the time you spend talking (bottom portion) and the amount of time your customers spend talking (top portion).



When you combine the following three rules for using the system, your people have a complete needs-focused process.

1. **Find out** where you are with each person and begin at that point.
2. **Always accomplish** each step before going to the next one.
3. **Never jump** to one step without completing the previous ones.

Rookie salespeople can quickly learn and implement this system — it's so simple. Seasoned veterans also profit from using it — it's that profound.

When salespeople understand and practice this customer-focused process, customers feel good about it and want to do business with people who sell this way. And your people feel good — and more motivated — about selling.

This view of selling gives your people confidence, energy and the internal motivation to sell on higher levels. It removes fear of rejection, call reluctance and many common emotional barriers that prevent salespeople from selling up to their real capabilities.

# 5

## How Your People's View of Their Abilities Controls Much of Their Sales

Every one of your salespeople unconsciously asks and silently answers these questions:

- *How do I view myself?*
- *What do I believe I'm capable of achieving?*
- *What's possible for me to sell or earn?*
- *What level of people am I able to call on and sell?*
- *What level of rewards do I think I deserve to enjoy out of life?*
- *What does it take to be successful?*
- *Do I have what it takes to be successful?*

Their silent answers reveal their deep beliefs, which produce actual selling behaviors. Whatever salespeople's unconscious beliefs are, their sales will be consistent. They'll sell what they deeply believe to be possible for them to sell.

There's a term for that.

## The Theory of Sales Consistency

People's sales are always consistent with their internal beliefs about:

- 1. Who they are,**
- 2. What's possible for them to sell and/or earn, and**
- 3. What they deserve to have personally and professionally.**

This explains why different people in the same organization with equal knowledge, selling the same products or services, all perform on different levels.

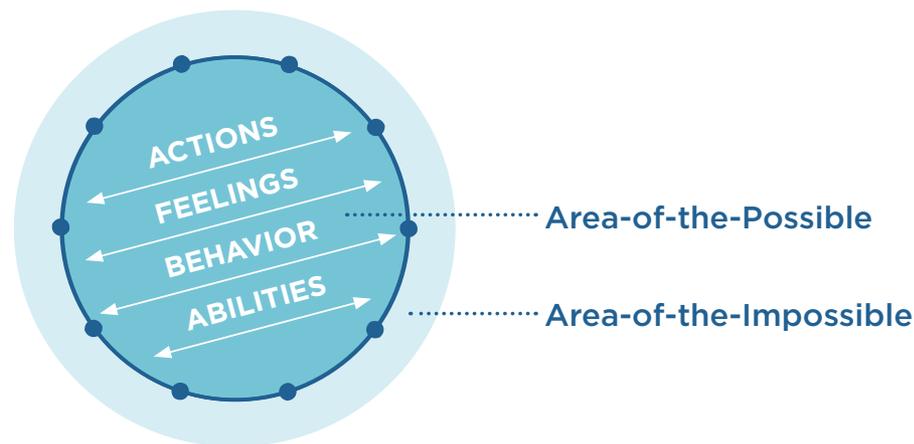
There are other factors, too.

Let's look deeper.

## Salespeople's Area-of-the-Possible

Every salesperson has his or her own unique area-of-the-possible. This is the sum of their internal beliefs about what's possible for them to sell and earn. These belief boundaries operate as a governing force to keep them selling consistently with their view of their possibilities.

People will perform up to the outer limits of their belief boundaries, then shut down. Until their unconscious boundaries change, their sales performance will not change. It will remain consistent with their own accepted self-beliefs — whether they're true or false, right or wrong, weak or strong.



The wall that divides these intellectual and emotional boundaries is so tall and thick that it forms a seemingly impregnable barrier that most salespeople never challenge or move beyond.

Most salespeople haven't a clue that this exists, or how to crash through it. But they can break through it.

# 6

## How Your People's Inner Beliefs and Emotions Are Created

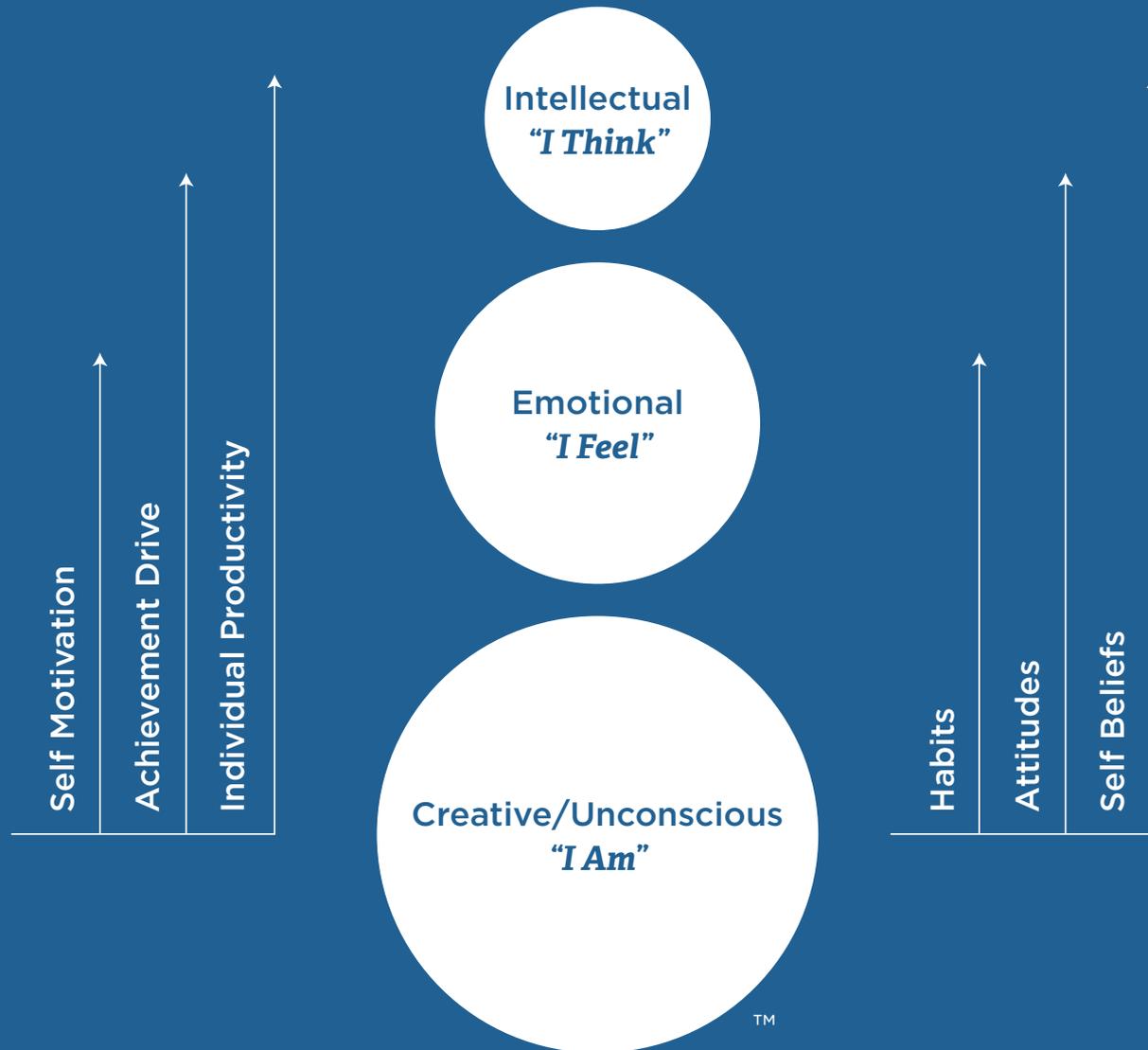
How do we help salespeople resist self-limiting beliefs, step outside of their comfort zones and expand the areas of what's possible?

To understand the complexity of the human mind and the wide variation of motivation, it helps to understand the answers to the following questions:

- *Where do salespeople's inner belief boundaries reside within them?*
- *How are people's emotions created?*
- *Why do emotions play such a huge part in a salesperson's success?*
- *What has to happen to create positive emotions?*

Notice how the following model helps answer the above questions.

# THREE DIMENSIONS OF HUMAN BEHAVIOR



## A closer look at the three dimensions:

The **Intellectual “I Think”** is the logical, rational, thinking part of us — the part that learns information, makes decisions and exercises choices. This dimension decides on and sets goals, but lacks the octane power to reach them.

But there’s more to us than this conscious, surface level.

The **Emotional “I Feel”** is our sensation part that harbors and expresses feelings and emotions. For no reason, we may feel down today, but yesterday we felt on a roll. Someone compliments us and we feel elated. A driver cuts us off at an intersection and we suddenly feel angry. Try as we might, we can’t logically discern the cause and effect of these mood differences.

Where do our feelings come from? What triggers them? Why can’t we consciously change or even control them?

We’re going to answer these questions in a moment.

The **Creative/Unconscious “I Am”** is the spiritual dimension within us — the part that houses our self-image, values, views of our possibilities, feelings of worthiness, physical and emotional set point, and our creative goal-seeking mechanism.

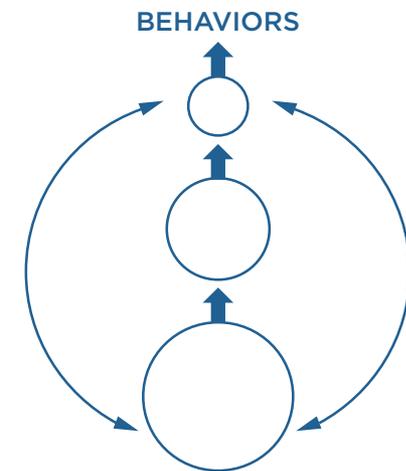
Before we go into detail on each of these dimensions, let’s understand a basic interaction between them.

## The Interaction Between Your “I Think” and Your “I Am”

During our wide-awake hours, our “I Think” is constantly interacting with our “I Am.” These exchanges then trigger the emotions in our “I Feel” that then powerfully influence our external behaviors.

Our emotions are so powerful that they’ll overrule the choices and decisions of our conscious “I Think” most of the time, motivating our external behaviors. Healthy, positive emotions motivate successful behaviors. Fear-driven, negative emotions motivate avoidant behavior.

**Said another way, in a contest, our conscious willpower, or discipline, is no match for our emotions.**



Self-discipline, or willpower, will usually cave in when confronted with strong emotions. For example:

- When your people consciously set sales goals that aren’t congruent with their values or perceived abilities, negative emotions like doubt, fear or anxiety are triggered that overwhelm their conscious will. So their activities decrease — and they may not really understand why.
- Push them to do activities that they don’t unconsciously see themselves doing, and this conflict will trigger negative emotions that stress them out and cause behaviors of avoidance.

## On the positive side, these interactions can happen:

- Get your people to do customer needs-focused selling, which then positively interacts with their internal values, and they'll have extra energy, confidence and self-motivation. You will also see an increase in activity based on the additional level of motivation and drive.
- Coaching them to focus on the value they create will interact with their intuitive sense of right and wrong to produce healthy emotions of hope, optimism and positive expectancy. These positive, expansive emotions cause salespeople to release high energy and do result-producing behaviors.

Remember: 85% of your people's sales success is being driven by their emotions. So when positive emotions of confidence, enthusiasm and commitment are triggered, they automatically drive salespeople to do stronger result-producing activities. As a result, salespeople have more physical, emotional and spiritual energy.

A congruence between their conscious actions, decisions and choices with their unconscious values, view of their possibilities and belief in the value of their product releases them to sell more.

Now, we're digging much deeper into the real reasons why salespeople succeed or fail.

# 7

## Your Salespeople Will Perform Consistently With Their Inner Values

Our inner values define who we really are.

They're our definition of right and wrong. They become boundaries of behavior that we don't go beyond. They're emotional or spiritual guides that control our choices, decisions and behavior.

How many salespeople are asked to sell in a manner that conflicts with their values? Actually, anytime anyone tries to sell something with no concern whether it's right for the customer or not, this act conflicts with healthy values. Yet this is a common way many people attempt to sell.

This explains a lot of their failure or low sales.

Strong, positive values, demonstrated in a selling process, can be described by the following:

- *“I would never sell you anything that isn’t the best solution for you.”*
- *“I’ll only sell you something when it creates value for you above the price you pay me for it.”*
- *“I view selling as doing something for you, not to you.”*
- *“When I focus on you and your needs, I feel good about myself.”*
- *“I’m happy to be paid consistently with the value I create for you.”*
- *“I will be truthful with you in all situations.”*

Any strategy that pits a salesperson against a customer in a battle to see who can win conflicts with most people’s inner values. This can range from the stereotypical “used car” salesman to a person in survival, who desperately needs to make a sale for his benefit rather than the customer’s.

There are many salespeople who are still being trained to be:

- 1. Product-Focused**, or
- 2. Transaction-Focused**

As you will recall, a **Product-Focused** selling strategy is to get people to buy their product or service. Salespeople do little, if any, needs assessment and spend most of their time showing and telling you about their product or service.

Their strategy is to tell people about the features, advantages and benefits of their offering, and then ask them to buy it.

They do plenty of talking and not much listening.

Again, a **Transaction-Focused** strategy is to make as many sales as they can. People who sell commodities based on lowest price often sell this way. Their strategy is to sell people what they have and attempt to close them and move on. Little, if any, needs-assessment is done or even considered. Often, these salespeople are only interested in how many transactions they can complete and show little interest in their potential customer's needs, goals, or reasons for buying.

We've noticed some interesting problems with both product- and transaction-focused salespeople. They often have little interest in their customers as people or in satisfying their needs. Or maintaining an ongoing relationship with them. Their customers often feel cheated, and the salespeople rob themselves of the recognition, respect and loyalty that satisfied customers help them enjoy.

Other problems can come back to damage their long-term sales success. Here are a few:

---

**When salespeople don't value satisfied customers** > **customers don't value salespeople.**

---

**When customers don't value them** > **salespeople can't experience self-value.**

---

**When salespeople don't experience self-value** > **they produce less.**

---

**When they produce less** > **salespeople change jobs more.**

---

**When salespeople change jobs more** > **they never achieve higher levels of success.**

---

When they don't achieve higher levels of success, many unhealthy things can happen to them, such as:

- Financial problems
- Relationship problems
- Substance or alcohol abuse problems

**Bottom line: When salespeople focus on identifying and filling needs customers have and creating the most value for them, they earn customers' respect. And their own self-respect is enhanced in the process.**

But when salespeople focus on selling products or services or completing as many transactions as possible, customers can't value them as much as they otherwise would have. When customers don't value them, salespeople can't have maximum self-value. So a void creeps into their lives. Their careers suffer, and so does your organization's bottom line.

An interesting downward spiral, isn't it?

**To be most successful, salespeople must answer this question: "Is the way I sell consistent with my inner values?" If their conscious or unconscious answer is "no," they'll either perform on a low level or quit and do something else.**

But, if their answer is "Yes, the way I'm asked to sell is consistent with my inner values," they'll be free to perform on higher levels. They'll be happier, more fulfilled and will serve you and your customers better.



# Why Your People Will Do or Avoid Doing Necessary Activities

Do your salespeople suffer from avoidance behaviors, like call reluctance or low activity levels?

In their everyday selling your people must do certain activities, including prospecting, contacting, presenting, following up and problem solving. But they often don't, because the reality is, some of these activities present challenges: potential rejection, facing an unhappy customer or just having to deal with unpleasant situations. Or maybe a salesperson is just "having a bad day" and doesn't feel like working. Or maybe the customer is having a "bad day" and isn't thrilled to see a salesperson.

Human nature being human nature, when given a choice, most people will unconsciously choose the least threatening behaviors.

In their everyday sales roles, your salespeople can either do result-producing or tension-releasing activities. They can welcome and look forward to activities, or they can dread and put them off. There are causes for each of these choices. Let's think about what they are.

Think back to our [Sales Congruence Model](#). Salespeople can experience activity problems when they:

1. View selling as doing something to customers.
2. Don't see themselves having the abilities to do the activities they're asked to do.
3. Think the activities they're asked to do conflict with their internal values.
4. Don't believe that the activities they're asked to do will produce results.
5. Aren't convinced that their products or services create value above the price they charge for it.

When these conflicts occur, your people will experience contact avoidance. Bottom line, these mental and emotional collisions will guarantee weak activity levels.

**When salespeople view selling as helping create value for people, view themselves being able to do it and feel good about their product or service, they want to do the necessary activities. They look forward to and enjoy doing them.**

The way you ask your salespeople to sell largely influences their activity level. Think about these critical questions.

- *Are you managing them only by how many products or transactions they sell or make?*
- *Are you managing them by how much customers are buying because their needs are being met?*

In a world of performance and measurement, the natural tendency is to push salespeople for more sales. But how do we get more sales? By pushing salespeople to close customers harder? Or by focusing on creating more value for more customers and expecting them to give us more of their business?

It's incredibly important sales leaders and their teams embrace how their view of selling and their own abilities, as well as their values and belief in product, strongly influence their activities — and ultimately their results.

These views will cause them to either do:

1. **Tension-relieving** activities, or
2. **Result-producing** activities

**Sales results are largely pre-determined by their choice of activities. Control the cause, and you control the effect.**

# 9

## Your People's Belief in Your Products and Services Are Directly Tied to Their Energy and Confidence

Beliefs are powerful emotions that usually translate themselves into their tangible equivalent.

Our beliefs are silently broadcast to others around us. People intuitively pick up on our inner convictions and passions. When customers interpret them as sincerity and a genuine interest in them and their needs, it helps build trust.

It minimizes skepticism. It sets us apart from other salespeople.

Fortunate indeed are managers whose salespeople have strong, passionate convictions about the efficacy of their products or services. These people will perform on a much higher level than most of their competitors. They'll send out silent, yet powerful, messages that exclaim, "I believe in what I'm doing."

Belief in the efficacy of their product or service impacts your salespeople in some very important ways.

With powerful beliefs they:

1. Expend more **achievement drive**, persistence and determination.
2. Exhibit **more confidence** and less fear of contact resistance and make more calls.
3. Feel more compelled to **create the most value** for the most customers.
4. Feel professional in that they're **creating value for people**, rather than just selling them things.

**Bottom line — they'll make more calls on more customers and sell more.**

What do you do to keep your people's fires of conviction stoked? How do you continue to sell them on the value they give customers? How do you keep the "nobility of your cause" alive?

Savvy managers know to continue to fuel the flames of passion, conviction and enthusiasm by constantly stressing how their products or services create extra value for customers.

As managers do this, they transform their people into higher producers that create superior customer experiences and deeper customer relationships.

# In Summary

Now you can see why teaching people to sell doesn't work. To develop consistently top-performing salespeople, you have to understand the deeper reasons why people succeed and fail and then bring those key dimensions into congruence.

So let's revisit that hard question:

*Are you comfortable taking your present salespeople — with their current level of performance and skills — into an increasingly competitive marketplace?*

Use the assessments on the following two pages to pinpoint potential gaps with your sales team and to gauge the effectiveness of your managers, who play a pivotal role in coaching their people to unlock their full potential.

# Salesperson Effectiveness Survey

Please read each statement and ask yourself, *How descriptive is this statement of the top 20% of our salespeople?* Collectively rate your top-producing people, moderate-producing salespeople and your lower producers using the scale below.

Never — 1    2    3    4    5    6    7    8    9    10 — Always

		TOP Producers	MODERATE Producers	LOW Producers
1	Continually set clear, challenging goals for their sales			
2	Are self-motivated and committed to high sales achievement			
3	Systematically plan their contacts and follow up with action			
4	Excellent at approaching and gaining quick rapport with customers			
5	Focus on establishing customer needs before initiating any selling activity			
6	Ask customers for decisions at the right time without reluctance			
7	Plan their time and activities well			
8	Easily take rejection and set backs in stride			
	<b>SCORE</b>			

# Coaching Effectiveness Survey

Please read each statement and ask yourself, *How descriptive is this of our managers' actual behavior?* Collectively rate all managers.

ALL OF OUR MANAGERS...		Never <span style="float: right;">Always</span>									
1	Use a consistent coaching process	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
2	Understand the coaching role	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
3	Have excellent coaching skills	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
4	Lead and build their salespeople rather than push them	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
5	Coach their salespeople on a regular basis	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
6	Know what motivates each individual salesperson	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
7	Coach their salespeople to goals rather than activities	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
8	Place a high priority on coaching rather than allowing less important distractions to steal their time	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
9	Are results-driven rather than process-driven	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
10	Believe in a customer needs-focused, consultative selling process	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10

# Results count.

Increased annual life insurance production by **152%**



Increased loan volume by **26%** and deposit volume by **22%** in two years



**150%** increase in call center sales within 180 days



Increased revenues **16.5%** each year across Delta brands



**29%** increase in market share in Medical Device sector



**94%** increase in quality time with physicians



Increased number of products per customer from an average of

**1.3 to 3** within 24 months



Net Promoter Score increased from low 60s to high 80s within 12 months



Revenue increase of **23%** vs. 9% average growth for the market



**INTEGRITY COACHING®** used as a **strategic tool** for building an **engaged workforce** while achieving **record-setting** revenue.



New call center hires became **productive** at **six weeks** vs. **six months**



Visit [IntegritySolutions.com/success-stories](https://IntegritySolutions.com/success-stories)

## ABOUT INTEGRITY SOLUTIONS

Integrity Solutions, the performance experts, equips sales teams to rise up and lead by building trusted customer relationships with integrity at their core. As the partner of choice for values-driven organizations, the firm specializes in innovative sales, service and coaching training solutions that fuel performance, grow talent, lift up customers and elevate leaders. Our experience spans over 50 years, 130 countries and industries including healthcare, financial services, manufacturing, energy and utilities, agriculture and more. Integrity was most recently recognized with multiple Stevie Awards for sales training excellence in 2019 and 2020. Also in 2019 and 2020, the company was named a Top 20 Sales Training Company by Selling Power and Training Industry.

Visit us online to learn more about our unique approach: [IntegritySolutions.com](https://IntegritySolutions.com)



**For more information, contact:**

Integrity Solutions, LLC  
1801 West End Avenue, Suite 530  
Nashville, TN 37203  
(615) 385 2246 | (800) 646 8347  
[IntegritySolutions.com](https://IntegritySolutions.com)

