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SCIENCE-BASED SALES STRATEGIES



REACTANCE

Reactance is the feelings of pressure that occur when prospects believe that their ability to freely choose is being restricted. Scientific research has verified that when reactance is triggered people instinctively desire to rebel against what is being imposed upon them.

Application: Sales people must minimize reactance when creating urgency. This can be accomplished by adding a phrase such as, "Of course, it is up to you" to the end of a request.



CHOICE ARCHITECTURE

The way a choice is presented shapes how it will be perceived and acted on. Choice architecture focuses on structuring choices in a way that is consistent with how the brain formulates decisions.

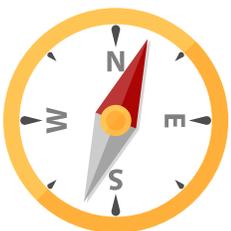
Application: A sales person who sells widgets can ask prospects, "Does it make sense why so many companies choose our widgets for their strength and durability?" After answering positively, prospects are more likely to make a commitment consistent with the value they just affirmed.



RECIPROCITY

Reciprocity is the social norm that one should repay others for what they have done. Many scientific studies have confirmed that reciprocity is a potent motivator that can significantly increase sales.

Application: During an initial interaction with prospects, sales people can utilize reciprocity by offering something of value (white paper, article, insight). This will cause prospects to reciprocate with increased responsiveness.



TAG QUESTIONS

Tag Questions are value building statements that are converted into questions. Numerous scientific studies have shown that these questions guide the brain in comprehending value.

Application: When sales people use tag questions they receive buy-in from prospects regarding the value their product or service will provide. Sales people can create tag questions by adding a concise questioning phrase, such as "wouldn't you agree" to the end of a value building statement.



LABELING

Labeling is when one assigns a label to a prospect and then requests behavior that is consistent with the label. There have been many research studies which have confirmed that labeling increases compliance with persuasive requests.

Application: One way that sales people can use labeling is by stating a compliment and then making a request that is consistent with the compliment. For instance, if before asking a prospect for an important piece of information you say, "You really know a lot about this situation. I appreciate your help," the prospect will be more receptive to your request.



SOCIAL PROOF

Social Proof prompts one to connect the persuasiveness of an idea or behavior with how others are responding to it. It is the reason why people are drawn to blockbuster movies, busy restaurants and businesses that have many customers.

Application: *Social proof reduces the perception of risk associated with purchasing a product or service. Sales people can trigger social proof by using phrases such as, "a lot of people," "most people in your situation" or "our most popular option."*



LOSS AVERSION

One of the most potent motivators of human behavior is loss aversion. Research shows that the human brain is far more motivated to avoid losses than to acquire equal gains.

Application: *Numerous scientific studies have proven that loss aversion boosts buying behavior. The key to applying loss aversion is to clearly reveal what prospects will lose if they do not purchase your product or service and how purchasing will alleviate this fear.*



HEURISTICS

Heuristics are mental shortcuts that the brain instinctively makes when forming judgements. Scientific studies have found when sales messages violate heuristics they will be rejected.

Application: *For example, when prospects are presented with a price, they use the heuristic of contrast to determine if the price is good or bad. This is why, just before revealing price, sales people should anchor the monetary value that the prospect will receive from the product or service.*



INCREMENTAL COMMITMENTS

There is a vast amount of scientific research that has proven that small commitments lead to larger ones. For the brain to make a positive buying decision, it must first commit to a series of small, incremental decisions that are consistent with the larger decision to purchase.

Application: *Sales people must guide prospects in making commitments to the core value propositions of their products or services. This will guide the prospect's brain through a progression of consent and into the final decision to purchase.*



SECOND LEVEL QUESTIONS

Scientists have discovered that certain questions can prompt the brain to disclose vital sales insights. By asking Second-Level Questions based on the conversation so far, sales people can not only discover their prospects' opinions, but also build trust.

Application: *Second-Level Questions such as, "Why did the board decide to go in that direction?" will reveal valuable insights into prospects' situation and motivation. In addition, these questions can prove to the prospects that the sales people are listening and care about them.*

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