



**SLEEPING LION
SOPHISTICATED SALES**

"There is nothing in a caterpillar to suggest a butterfly."

Superhero Bucky, Marvel Comics



SLEEPING LION

SOPHISTICATED SALES

These days, sales often gets a bad rap. And sales people are seen as pushy and/or formulaic. But all products need to be sold and, even in our digital age, customers need additional human persuasion. Often the more upmarket (or complex) the product, the greater the need is for a strong sales person to represent it and sell with flair and sophistication.

1. UNDERSTAND WHO YOU ARE DEALING WITH

Customer Profiling

6. ACTIVELY LISTEN

Active Listening

2. KNOW YOUR MARKET PLACE AND COMPETITION

Market Mapping

7. ESTABLISH THE NEEDS OF YOUR POTENTIAL CUSTOMERS

Needs Analysis

3. MANAGE YOUR TIME EFFECTIVELY

Essentialism / Circle of Concern / Bar Code Day /
Small Habits

8. ANTICIPATE OBJECTIONS

Barriers to Purchase

4. REFLECT YOUR COMPANY STYLE

Brand Principles

9. COMMUNICATE CLEARLY AND KNOWLEDGEABLY

Sales Hammock

5. UNDERSTAND WHAT MAKES A GOOD SALES PROFESSIONAL

Sales Types

10. KNOW WHEN AND HOW TO 'CLOSE THE SALE'



UNDERSTAND WHO YOU ARE DEALING WITH

Understand your target customers better

EXERCISE: First identify your different customer profiles (or target audiences), then use this tool to help you get into the mindset of each target group – matching them with the right product, understanding how best to reach them, and establishing what messaging will work best.

ATTRIBUTES	MOTIVATION/ ATTITUDES	BRAND ASSOCIATIONS	ATTITUDINAL PHRASES
What am I like?	What do I want/need?	What do I read, wear, watch, eat? What brands do I associate with?	How do I express my needs?

**PRODUCT
DEVELOPMENT**

What products/services are we offering to meet these needs?

**KEY
DIFFERENTIATORS**

What makes us so special?

**CUSTOMER
RELATIONSHIP**

What relationship do we have with this customer?

**MARKETING
CHANNELS**

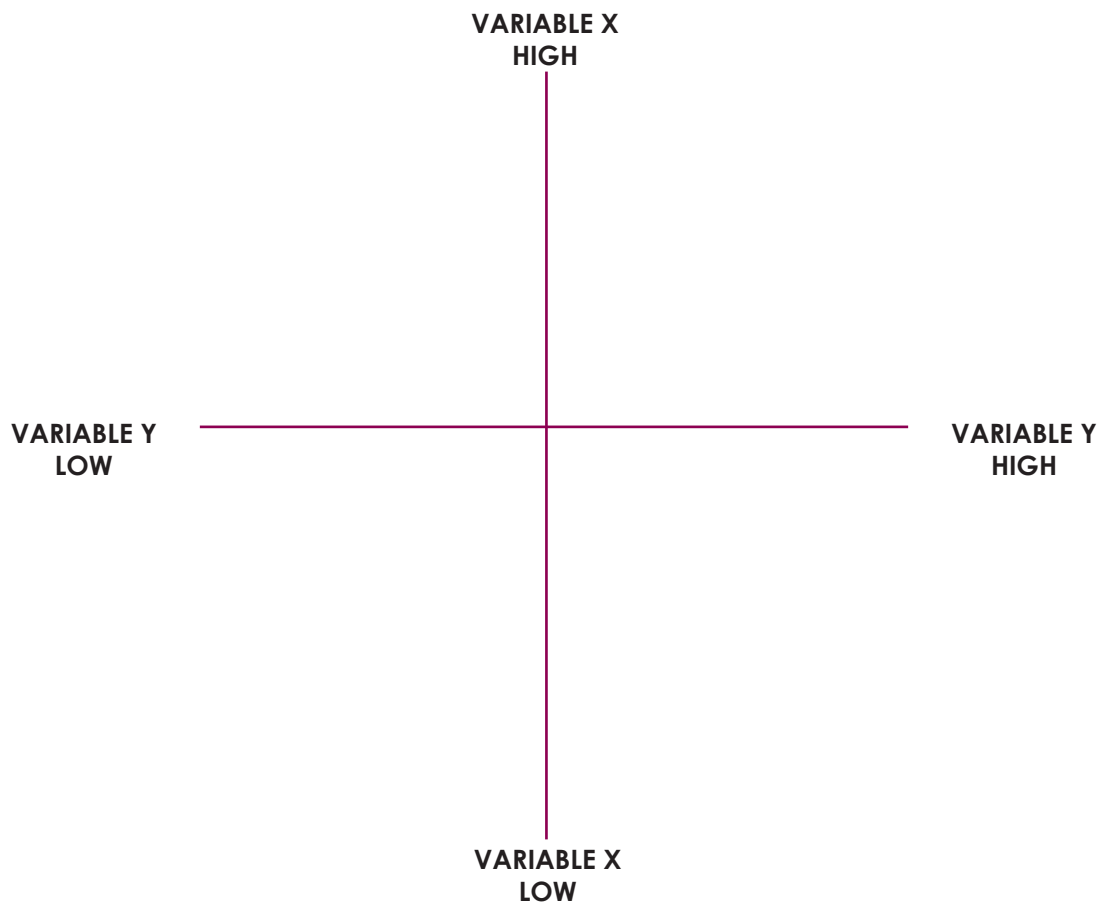
How can we best reach/communicate with them?

KNOW YOUR MARKET PLACE AND COMPETITION

Establish your current and future brand positioning

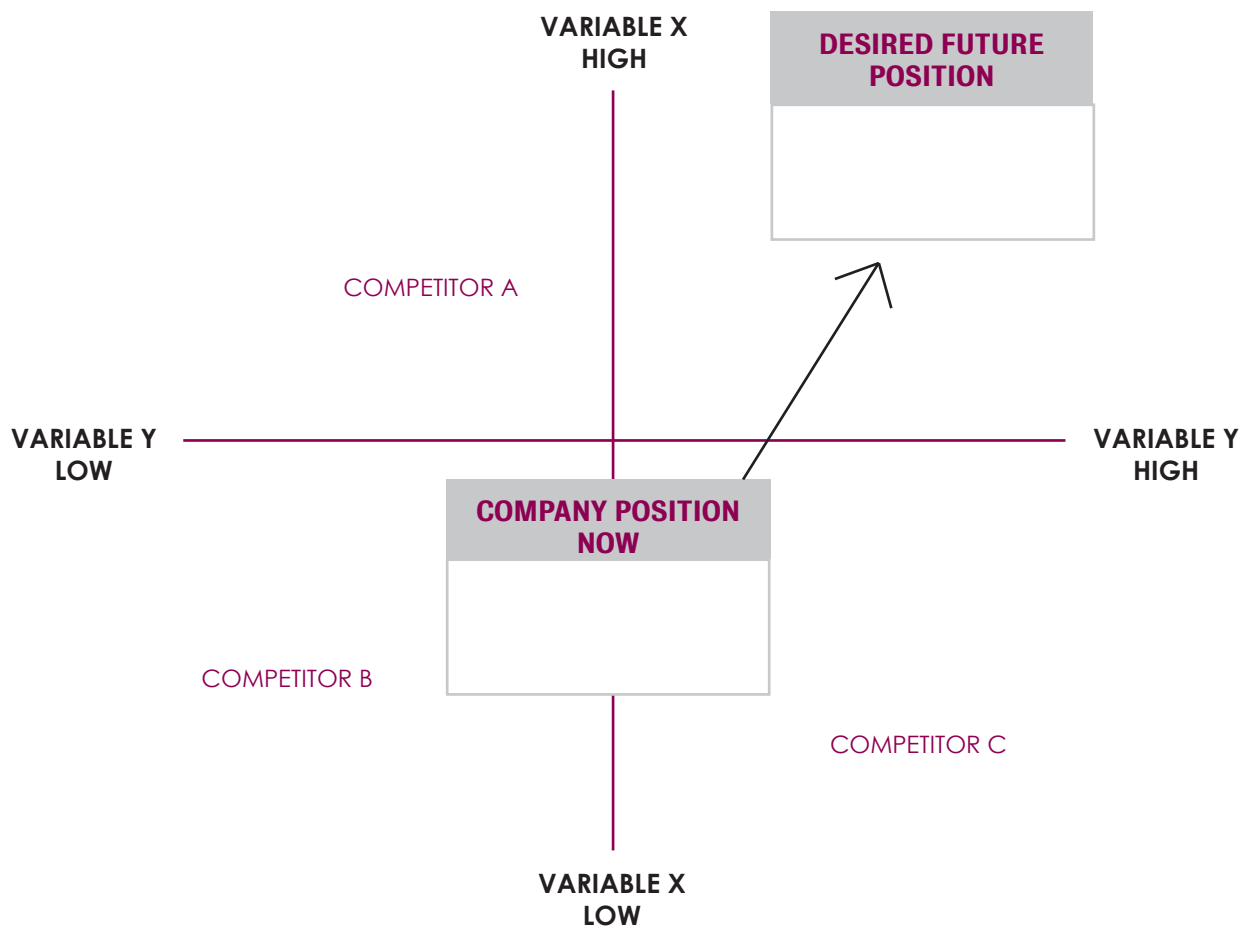
The Market Mapping tool is a highly effective and very flexible way to establish clarity and strategic authority when looking at any market.

EXERCISE 1: Start by selecting two important factors in your market. For example, for restaurants this might be Price and Menu Complexity. Plot two overlapping axes and place **your company** plus **your competitors** on the grid. Use the results to identify gaps in the market, or significant overlaps. Being out on your own could be good, as it makes you distinctive in the market place. However, it could be what is known as 'fool's gold, white space', meaning there's no one else there because it's not a good place to be!



EXERCISE 2: This is particularly effective if you are looking to shift your brand positioning, as per this diagram.

Plot where you are now and, more importantly, where you want to reposition your brand.



MANAGE YOUR TIME

Small habits can make big changes

There are many books on improving your productivity. This section features just a few of my favourite exercises. But first, here are a couple of little gems that can make a big initial difference.

THE 20 MILE MARCH

Polar explorer Roald Amundsen beat Captain Scott to the South Pole by consistently marching 20 miles a day. He had worked out in advance that 20 miles was the optimum amount for a team with their equipment. In bad weather the team did it anyway, and in good weather they stopped at 20 to save energy for the next day.

Scott's team either stayed in their tents on bad days or overshot on good ones and wore themselves out.

The moral is that companies, teams and individuals should aim for similar consistency in order to be truly productive.

PING PONG RING

Making decent decisions is really hard if you can't concentrate properly. You need to remove yourself from distractions to work out what to do. These days, most of these distractions come from technology - often too many emails.

In his book *Too Fast To Think*, Chris Lewis references Vanessa Brady, a multi-award winning interior designer. If two emails have failed to solve a problem, her approach is: 'PING PONG RING'. The moral is that when an email conversation is getting long and out of control, break the deadlock with a call (and avoid further distraction).

BIG ROCKS

A Stephen Covey classic. This is featured in his *7 Habits of Highly Effective People* (more exercises from this to follow). Imagine your time like a glass or vase. If you put sand and small pebbles in first, you will never fit in the big rocks. But if you put the big rocks in first, then there will still be room for the small pebbles and sand to fit in around. The moral is to get the big stuff done first.

MANAGE YOUR TIME

Try the Bar Code Day

The bar code provides a visual depiction of a day filled with hundreds of short, bitty tasks. This is not always the choice of the person doing the work, it's because they keep being interrupted.

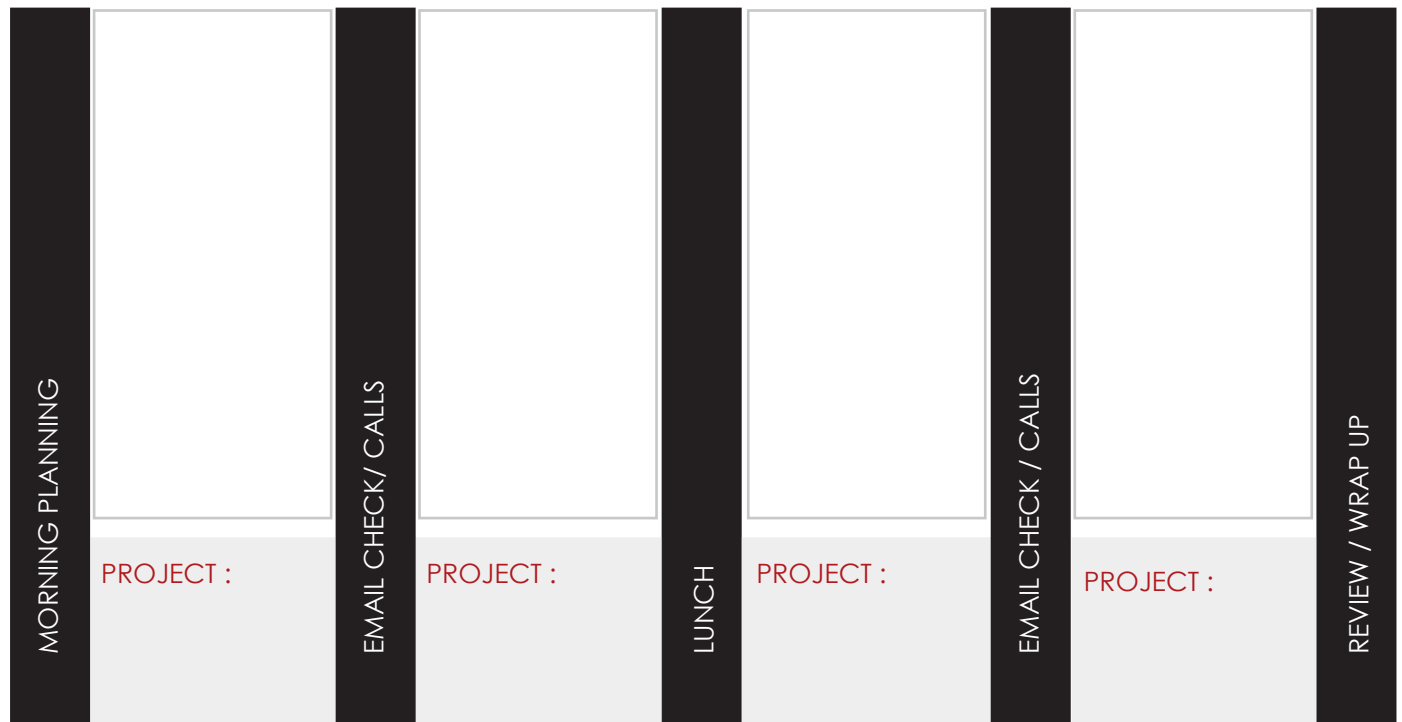
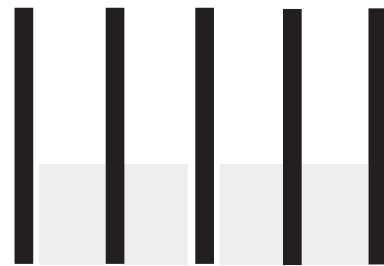
When that happens it takes the average person 12 to 15 minutes to get back to doing what they were doing. So if they are disturbed more than four times an hour, they have lost their whole career.

Studies show that multitasking doesn't work. If you want to produce proper high quality work, you need to allocate a decent run of time for each task or project, without interruption.

EXERCISE: Use the chart to properly plan your day (and turn off easy distractions like email alerts and your mobile phone).



9am ----- 1pm ----- 6pm



9am ----- 1pm ----- 6pm

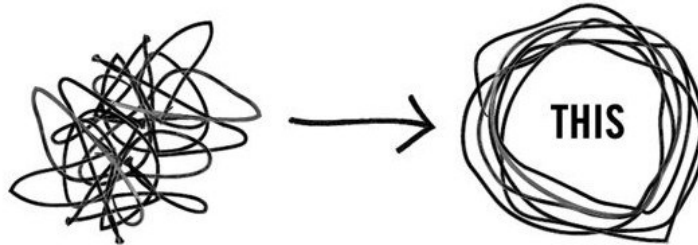
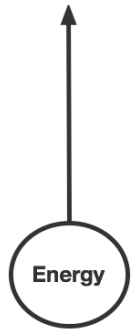
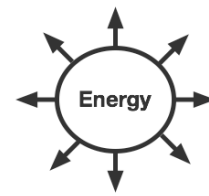
MANAGE YOUR TIME

Channel your energy

In his book *Essentialism*, Greg McKeown brilliantly identifies the differences between essentialists and non-essentialists.

The non-essentialist is all things to all people and pursues everything in an undisciplined way. The non-essentialist thinks that almost everything is essential. The essentialist, however, does less but better.

When it comes to energy, instead of doing many things half-heartedly, do one or two things properly. In both cases, the same amount of energy is exerted. It's the difference between a millimetre of progress in a million directions and significant progress in what matters most.



NON-ESSENTIALIST

ESSENTIALIST

THINKS

ALL THINGS TO ALL PEOPLE

"I have to"
"It's all important"
"How can I fit it all in?"

LESS BUT BETTER

"I choose to"
"Only a few things really matter"
"What are the trade-offs?"

DOES

THE UNDISCIPLINED PURSUIT OF MORE

Reacts to what's most pressing
 Says "yes" to people without really thinking
 Tries to force execution at the last moment

THE DISCIPLINED PURSUIT OF LESS

Pauses to discern what really matters
 Says "no" to everything except the essential
 Removes obstacles to make execution easy

GETS

LIVES A LIFE THAT DOES NOT SATISFY

Takes on too much, and work suffers
 Feels out of control
 Is unsure of whether the right things get done
 Feels overwhelmed and exhausted

LIVES A LIFE THAT REALLY MATTERS

Chooses carefully in order to do great work
 Feels in control
 Gets the right things done
 Experiences joy in the journey

EXERCISE: Review your to do list. Identify one or two items to prioritise, and delay or ditch the others.

TO DO LIST	NON-ESSENTIAL (ditch or delay)	ESSENTIAL (do now)

ESTABLISH WHAT YOUR BRAND IS LIKE

Work out what you are and what you are not

EXERCISE: Brand principles help distill the essence of a brand. First decide what your brand is all about and grade each of your brand principles to show a form of hierarchy. Then add what your brand anti-principles are (what your brand should NEVER become) - it is not as important to grade these. Thanks to Saint Design for first introducing me to this technique.

BRAND X IS

I.e. Customer focused (5) Friendly (5)
Straightforward (3)
Funny (1) Authentic (4)

BRAND X IS NOT

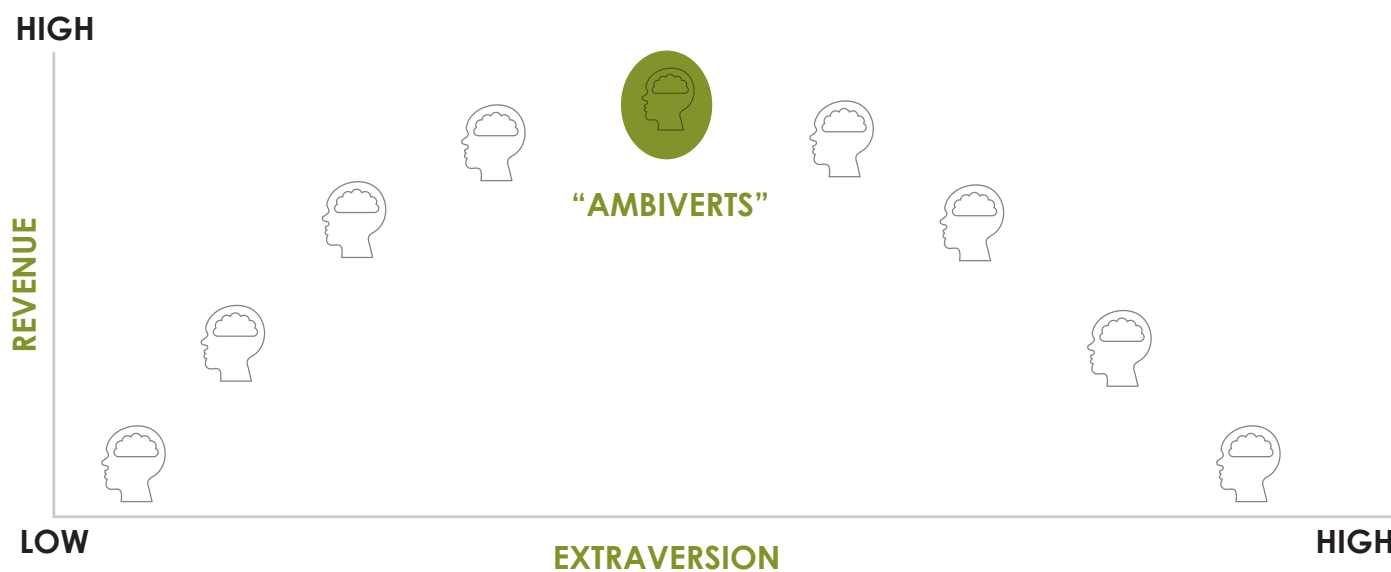
I.e. Selfish Arrogant Insipid Complicated

UNDERSTAND WHAT MAKES A GOOD SALES PROFESSIONAL

Find the best sales people

We normally associate sales people with being Extraverts, but research acquired by Daniel Pink and published in his book *To Sell Is Human*, tells another story. It shows that the best sales people are neither Introverts or Extraverts, they are Ambiverts - a bit of each.

EXERCISE 1: Where would you plot yourself (or your team) on this chart? Depending on where you sit, consider some behavioural change for better results (see boxes below).



Source: Adam Grant, University of Pennsylvania

**TOO INTROVERT?
CONSIDER WAYS TO TURN IT UP**

**TOO EXTRAVERT?
CONSIDER WAYS TO TONE IT DOWN**

According to The Challenger Sale by Dixon & Adamson, the best sales people don't just build relationships with customers, they challenge them. They tailor their message to each customer, they are assertive (not aggressive), and they push back where necessary to take control of the sale. They are particularly effective in complex sales scenarios.

In fact, the more complex the sale, the more successful challengers are (see histogram below).

EXERCISE 2: Where do you (or your team) currently sit? Should you be looking at adopting more assertive techniques or employing more challengers?



ACTIVELY LISTEN

Listen properly in order to sell effectively

According to The Salesperson's Secret Code (Mills, Ridley, Laker & Chapman), the most successful salespeople listen more than they speak, so that they fully understand what the client/customer is looking for (what their pain points are / where they can add value). Note: the words LISTEN and SILENT share the same letters.

EXERCISE: Start by answering the following questions and giving yourself a score from 1 to 5 (1 = strongly disagree 2 = disagree 3 = neither agree nor disagree 4 = agree 5 = strongly agree). Then consider the 8 Ways to Become a Better Listener and write notes.

Scored less than 20: Good work.

Scored 20 - 30: You're half paying attention, but could do a lot better - review the tips and make note of areas of improvement.

Scored 30 - 40: You're really not listening at all - review the tips and make note of areas of improvement.

8 MISTAKES THAT LIMIT OUR ABILITY TO LISTEN	SCALE 1 - 5
DREAMING. I am often thinking about something else while the client is talking	
ANSWER PREPARING. During conversations with clients, I am often waiting for a pause, so I can spit out an answer that I'm already preparing	
COMPULSIVE/IMPULSIVE. I often say something without thinking first, or to fill a silence	
AMBUSHING. I often fake listen to the client just so I can get in my comments	
JUDGING. I practise selective listening. I hear the things I want to hear based upon my own prejudices	
NOT FULLY PRESENT. I'm often unaware of the message the person is sending through body language and/or vocal intonation	
NOISE INDUCED STRESS. I often embark on a call or meeting when there is background noise in the environment to hinder my ability to listen	
COMPARING. I listen through filters, based on a past experience with another client	
TOTAL SCORE	

8 WAYS TO BECOME A BETTER LISTENER

NOTES

Encourage silence to show you are actively listening. Embrace pauses.

Never interrupt when the client is speaking.

Be present. Put down your electronic equipment.

Make the client feel heard. with such comments as. "What I'm hearing is..." or "Tell me more."

Become a solution-oriented listener. Listen for the intended solution more than for problems.

Listen for what is not being said. Find the meaning behind the words.

Resist the temptation to rebut. Don't argue.

Listen for information you can use.

ESTABLISH THE NEEDS OF YOUR POTENTIAL CUSTOMERS

Correctly identify the needs of your clients/customers

It is essential to establish the need thoroughly and to educate the client to the best buying solution, especially when selling expensive, added value solutions.

There are only two reasons for buying anything:

- to make a gain (opportunity +)
- to avoid a loss (implication -)

EXERCISE: Use this to work through what you've picked up regarding the customer's needs and then summarise as a TRUE NEED.

<p>STATED NEED The customer's perception of their own requirements, often expressed as a commodity to be provided by the cheapest vendor</p>		<p>TRUE NEED The sum of all the others</p>
<p>HIDDEN NEED Unmentioned by the client but quickly evident to the seller</p>		
<p>IMPLIED NEED Vague and underdeveloped ideas often mentioned in conversation, not always thought through</p>		

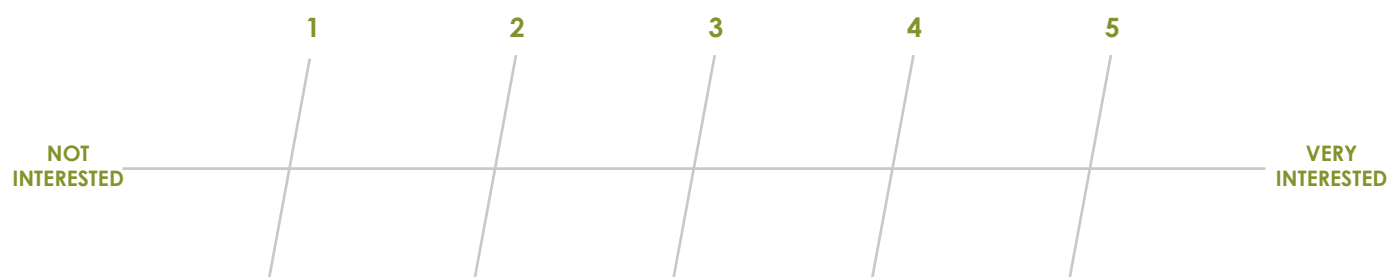
ANTICIPATE OBJECTIONS

Overcome objections

Understanding potential objections or barriers to purchase is an important part of sales preparation. Anticipating these and proactively planning a response will help eliminate them in a live sales environment.

EXERCISE: Use the Barriers to Purchase Axis to prepare for potential objections. Put yourself in the shoes of the customer or colleague you wish to persuade, and map out all their likely objections. This provides the basis for your sales pitch and shows the evidence you may need to provide to effectively make your case.

BARRIER 1:	BARRIER 2:	BARRIER 3:	BARRIER 4:	BARRIER 5:



COMMUNICATE CLEARLY AND KNOWLEDGEABLY

Present clearly and effectively

The book *Conversations That Win The Complex Sale* by Peterson & Riesterer also outlines research that shows that people remember 70% of the words at the beginning of a presentation, 20% in the middle, and 100% at the end.

This is illustrated in *The Sales Hammock*, reminding us to pitch accordingly. Put your best bits first and last, use strong visuals, simplicity and proof, and make it personal. Most importantly, keep it short (especially the bit in the middle).

EXERCISE: Use this hammock system to plan the content of your next sales presentation - focusing on the beginning and end.

BEGINNING

MIDDLE

70% RETENTION

20% RETENTION

100% RETENTION



END

KNOW WHEN AND HOW TO 'CLOSE THE SALE'

NOTES

NOTES

