

Introduction

Selling to Value (S2V) refers to a distinct approach to selling that focuses on aligning your offering to the business value it creates for the customer. This approach requires the sales practitioner to develop an ever-expanding mindset and skill set—and it requires a commitment to a purpose that goes beyond self-interest to include both the interest of the individual customer and the interests of that customer's business organization.

S2V needs to be considered in all aspects of the sales process: prospecting, qualifying, contacting, proposing, and closing a sales opportunity. But Selling to Value has the greatest impact on how a salesperson discovers needs. Discovering needs is at the very heart of the selling to value relationship.

Source: Michael Leimbach

<http://www.wilsonlearning.com/wlw/articles/s/selling-to-value>

Discovery for Selling to Value - S2V

In a recent study of buying executives, 94% indicate that they want salespeople to engage them in a business impact discussion—but those same executives indicate that only 19% of salespeople are effective in this regard.

This gap between what buying executives want and what they get is driven by three critical elements:

1. The Intention of the Salesperson
2. The Science of Creating Value
2. The Art of Asking the Next Question

The Science of Value Creation

The Business Needs Identification approach provides an organizing structure to guide the exploration of how the customer organization produces value. The company's ability to produce value for its customers is influenced by five major elements.

1. Market

Conversations with customers begin with exploring the market in which the customer organization competes. The value produced by the customer organization is always best understood from the perspective of the market, its customers, and its competitors. S2V involves exploring market trends and helping the customer organization to exploit opportunities that arise from a growing market or to minimizing the effects of a contracting market.

2. Strategy

The conversation about market forces flows naturally into an exploration of how the customer organization's strategy addresses their market and produces a competitive advantage. Questions about their source of competitive advantage and their Critical Success Factors (CSFs) dominate S2V discussions to determine their long-term goals and resource allocation.

Business Needs

3. Structure

The customer organization's strategy cannot be implemented unless the organization's structure is aligned to execute that strategy. With a solid picture of market conditions and current strategy in place, the conversation easily flows into a discussion of the customer organization's ability to execute the strategy.

4. People

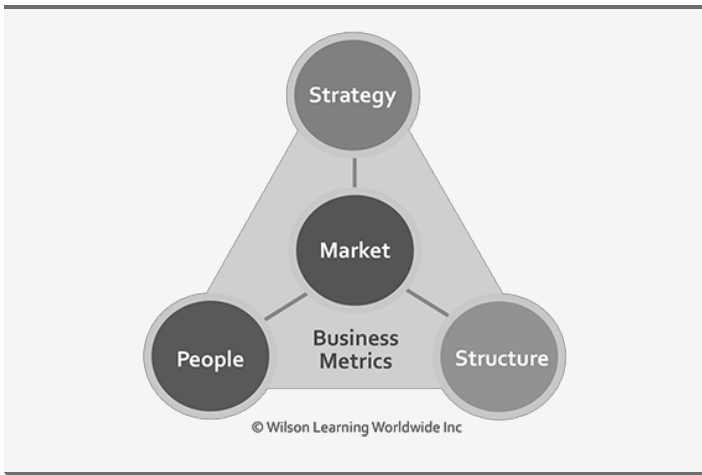
There is a reason payroll is the single largest business expense: people drive the business forward. Efforts to implement a new strategy require the engagement, not just cooperation, of the people in the organization.

5. Business Metrics

Underlying all the other components are the customer's business metrics. Knowing what metrics are most important for the customer organization helps you understand how they measure and track their own value production and how they will track the performance of your solution. S2V requires salespeople to become fluent in the way customers talk about and measure their own success.

Practicing the Art & Science of Discovery

In the past, the customer had limited access to product information, and a simple needs-based approach to selling worked fine for both the salesperson and the customer. Today, the customer has already shopped extensively before agreeing to meet with a salesperson. Customers are looking for something more than an explanation of features; they are looking for a new perspective on how best to move their business forward. They are looking for insight and a new perspective on market trends and competitive positioning..



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