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Building a Winning Sales Presentation

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Delivering an effective sales presentation to a prospective real estate client will impact attaining your desired outcome for most client interactions. Every sales presentation is a compound of



both form and substance. The form is the structure or process of how you plan to offer your presentation. The substance is about the essence of your recommendation in terms of how it will work for the prospective client and enable the client to meet his/her needs, be those needs of a more functional or emotional nature, or both. In other words, the substance is your answer to the client's number one question, "What's in it for me?"

In the business of selling, form is easily as important as substance. It's like answering the question, "Which is more important, the client liking the agent or the client respecting the agent?" Without both, the client-agent relationship will ultimately fail. The real estate agent's challenge in the sales presentation definitely begins with form and ends with substance. That's because your recommendation must satisfy the client's expectations and be value-adding.

The Purpose of a Sales Presentation

Your sales presentation is the engineered bridge for change between the client's "as is" situation, including disappointments and pain with their current real estate situation, and the client's "to be" resolution and new found value. The principal reason for a sales presentation is to show the client in a problem-solving or solution-building fashion your most relevant capabilities, including yourself, your company and your recommended property(ies). The presentation should successfully address all three sets of capabilities, not simply the property, and address the client's perceived challenges or desires.

By successfully matching capabilities to the client's situation and validating the positive impact, real benefits are created. WIIFYs -- *What's in it for you* -- or benefit statements, should be delivered and incremental value must be engendered for the client. Simply stated, the presentation, which, for real estate agents is often a property showing, is the means by which the agent moves a client from interest-to-change to a conviction-to-change, thereby clearing a path to a commitment-to-change and a win-win outcome.

The Recommended Framework of a Sales Presentation

In terms of process management, the typical sales process will have four phases that you might picture as the four bases and related base paths on a baseball diamond. As in baseball, the sequence is important. The sales process commences at home plate and after hitting a ball into the field of play (the introduction), the runner, or in our case, the agent, must run to first base. To successfully score a run or gain an order, the agent must then subsequently run in correct order to second base, third base and finally home without being put out.

1. **Phase 1 (the base path between home plate and first base)** is termed the preliminaries. This phase is highly relationship-driven, and the agent must pass the client's likeability and trust test or the sales process is, for all intents and purposes, over.
2. **Phase 2 (the base path between first base and second base)** is termed the diagnostics or investigative phase. During this phase, active listening is emphasized to determine such key factors as who is involved in the buying decision (i.e., the buying center), what the client wants and why, a budget if available, how the current situation is prompting a change (perhaps the current property – commercial or residential – is underperforming) and the financial and emotional consequences of not making a change.
3. **Phase 3 (the base path between second base and third base)** is termed the presentation or demonstration, and during this phase we desire to build on our progress gained through phases 1 and 2 in order to gain a client's conviction to pursue a change or make a decision.
4. **Phase 4 (the base path between third base and home plate)** is termed gaining commitment or closing. This phase should prove the least challenging if phases 1 -3 were professionally accomplished. In fact, the best close and our goal is to have the client actually close the agent with a statement such as, "This looks good, what do we need to do in order to get it implemented?"

Although the presentation represents only one part in the recommended four-phase selling process, obviously the quality of the presentation is very dependent on the effective development of the preceding phases. Successful presentations don't act independently to the other phases. Quite the contrary, the presentation is formulated as an interdependent piece of the whole. For example, if the relationship factors are not positively developed in phase one or the preliminaries, the presentation will most certainly be difficult due to limited likeability and trust.

Also, if you don't define during the investigative phase who is participating in the purchase process and what the client wants and why, the presentation is directionless, prone to feature dumping, lacks emotional and/or value appeal, and the agent doesn't know how to close. Finally, if you don't have a clear desired end in mind, which is the focus of phase four and largely

defined by the client during phase two, then the agent will tend to commence phase four less assertively and not know when the client is seemingly ready to buy as the client and agent interactively progress through the sales call journey to its logical next step.

At a minimum, the agent should have a clear understanding of four critical pieces of buying decision information before ever commencing the presentation:

- What the client wants and why
- How the agent plans to strategically present (form and substance) the offering to this client
- How the agent will later deliver a value discussion (benefits minus cost) with this client
- How the agent will later close this client

Nothing in an effective presentation format is magical; however, having a standard format works to the agent's advantage because it enables the agent to be more client-focused and less self-focused. Employing a standard format for sales presentations should greatly simplify the process and cause the agent to be more relevant in the presentation's client-driven content or substance. In sales presentations, the devil should be in the details or substance, not in the form of the presentation.

The recommended sales presentation should have three key components:

1. *Tell the client what you are going to show.* This should be very consistent with the agenda which you probably outlined during the preliminaries phase.
2. *Show the client your recommendation(s) and explain how it will work in terms that can be well understood by the client.*
3. *While showing your recommendation, reinforce the benefits of what you are showing in order to achieve relevance for the client. Provide third-party evidence, if possible, to validate key benefits.*



validate key benefits. If you claim that the neighborhood has strong connectivity, show the client the *Next Door* chatter (a social media app) for the neighborhood.

A suggested format for the delivery of a specific “reason to buy” is feature, benefit or WIIFY, evidence and client agreement (FBEA). This sequence is frequently called a “unit of conviction.” The agreement element is vital in order

to be always trial closing so that the agent understands what has or has not been accomplished and buying momentum is being fostered. Through this format, the agent assumes nothing.

The Recommended Substance of an Effective Sales Presentation

Focus on making the substance of the presentation creative and tailored to the client's personality and response mode. If you view the selling process as storytelling, then it's during the presentation that you introduce the protagonist of your story. During the investigative phase, the antagonist to the client's story is introduced, including the challenges, disappointments and pain that the client is suffering, both financially and emotionally, with his/her current real estate situation. It is almost as if the protagonist is being introduced in the presentation to do battle with the antagonist, and the agent's job is to enable or assist the client to prevail and become the hero or heroine as a consequence of overcoming the antagonist.

An effective sales presentation or real estate showing should have many substance ingredients, including:

- Be strongly client-focused in terms of delivery style and content.
- Build a collaborative working relationship to invite client participation in shaping the proposal, and if possible, work physically side-to-side versus across a desk, table or any form of territorial barrier. (Note: Should the client choose to physically lead the presentation or property showing process, then the salesperson must adapt to be a capable facilitator, not the guide.)
- Be a hands-on learning experience for all parties, and have planned opportunities to invite as many questions or objections in order to build "want to buy" momentum (Note: Objections should generally be treated as buying indications or signals and not disagreement or resistance.)
- Be warm and engaging, and demonstrate a wanting to serve and a commitment to helping the client.
- Employ as many human senses as possible (touch, hear, visual, smell and taste) to strengthen realness and the client's ownership.
- Communicate with emphasis on client understanding, and simplify the message of why your real estate recommendation works.
- Tailor matchmaking units of conviction (maximum 3 – you, your company and your recommendation) consistent with previously noted "hot buttons" or buying motivators to minimize feature-dumping waste and maximize value building.
- Impact the client both logically and emotionally, because the ultimate decision is definitely about both (Note: The final decision is largely emotional, and your presentation should be designed to gain clear emotional verbal and non-verbal buying indicators.)

- If possible, get the client actively involved (real or imagined) in owning the solution being co-developed.
- Be win-win minded, and before exiting the presentation summarize what has been learned.

Summary

Being able to design and deliver a quality presentation is a critical component in an agent's success potential. The effective presentation begins with "form" and ends with "substance." The agent who understands and masters this will be more productive. A good structure simplifies the selling process and enables the agent to perform the role of being a guide or facilitator as opposed to being the classical salesperson. Good substance brings the presentation or journey to life for the client. The agent should want to foster the client to take action, and both form and substance should be consistent with that end. Before an agent makes a sales call, one question that should always be asked is, "If I was the client, would I buy from me based on what I plan to present?" If the answer is "no," then you haven't sold yourself, and the meeting should be cancelled until a more compelling recommendation is identified.

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