



WRITTEN BY  
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# SELLING WITH INSIGHTS:

## HOW YOU CAN DIFFERENTIATE YOUR COMPANY FROM THE COMPETITION

In this article, we'll share some tips on how to avoid market place commoditization.



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## HOW TO APPROACH INFORMED BUYERS

Buyers are doing their research, and traditional sellers are getting left behind. It is tempting to throw your hands up in defeat and simply respond reactively to the opportunities your customers give you. This approach puts too much of your fate in the hands of your marketing team and can drive intense price competition. Sellers need to engage informed buyers differently. To avoid commoditization, rather than simply respond, sellers must create and shape opportunities.

### SHAPE OPPORTUNITIES

Shaping opportunities requires the seller to **change the way the customer thinks about their needs or a solution to the seller's advantage**. It is most applicable when the customer is far along in their buying cycle and has already formed a concept for what they want or need. Shaping the opportunity requires the sales rep to disrupt the customer's thinking so that they take a few steps back and reconsider the need or solution. Through building trust and credibility, and through sharing relevant insight based on credible research or experience, the seller **challenges the buyer to think through what's wrong or what's missing in their prescribed approach**. Shaping opportunities creates a win-win because it helps mitigate competition and price sensitivity for the seller while resulting in a better solution for your customer.

### CREATE OPPORTUNITIES

Creating opportunities requires the seller to make the customer **aware of a new issue or opportunity or raise the sense of urgency of an issue to act sooner**. This is most applicable when the customer is very early in — or not even in — their buying process. The sales rep that engages the customer at this level is trying to provoke a need rather than responding to a request. As in the shape mode, sales reps must build trust and credibility and share relevant insight based on credible research or experience. By doing this, the seller **challenges** the buyer to think through the risks of not prioritizing and accelerating an initiative. Creating opportunities creates a win-win because it reduces competition while helping the customer move forward on an initiative to help them make money, save money, or manage risk.

# EFFECTIVE UTILIZATION OF INSIGHTS

As mentioned previously, creating and shaping opportunities requires the sales rep to **leverage insight to challenge the customer's mindset**. Insight is information or ideas that are based on credible research, authoritative content, or relevant experiences and are tailored to a buyer's challenges and opportunities. When shared, it encourages the buyer to think about his needs in a new way, showing him a path to solve a challenge or capitalize on an opportunity by leveraging the capabilities and differentiators offered by the seller.

Selling with insight is not about inundating buyers with data and facts. If sellers do not understand how to deliver insights effectively — collaborating with customers rather than dictating to them — the approach can backfire. It requires more advanced preparation skills and dialogue skills. From our experience, these skills can be learned if the organization has the will and commitment to reinforce a new way of thinking about sales.

## SELLING WITH INSIGHTS: TECHNIQUES TO MODERNIZE YOUR SALES FORCE

Twenty years ago, a sales rep met with customers to tell them about his products, and all he needed was polished marketing materials and an enthusiastic sales pitch. In most cases, buyers didn't have access to other information unless it came from other sales reps with a similar approach. If they were impressed or persuaded, there was a good chance that they could buy from you with little additional input or process.

Times have now changed. Remember, buyers may be as far as 60% through their buying process\* before they contact a sales rep. To overcome the four challenges driven by changing buyer behavior, you must approach informed buyers with insight that adds value to the conversation. Sales reps need to transform their approach by anticipating buyer problems, offering compelling insights, and tailoring solutions to specific customer needs. Training sales reps to respond to changes in buyer behaviors is the best way to guarantee that you don't end up in a race to the bottom.

\* CEB.



## Differentiate From the Competition with Richardson Selling with Insights Sales Training Solutions

To help differentiate your company from the competition, and to open a buyer's mind to new ideas or shift the way they think about their challenge or opportunity, your sellers need a compelling insight about a client's issue that is important to them, fits your capabilities, and is personalized to their world ... An insight that delivers an "Aha Moment" and creates an openness to talk with you.

### Don't Let The Status Quo Be Your Biggest Competitor!

**Richardson's Selling with Insights® is a customized sales training solution... that teaches your sales reps advanced preparation techniques and dialogue skills to:**

- 1) *Add more value*
- 2) *Differentiate your solution*
- 3) *Build credibility as a trusted business partner*

Depending on how it is customized, Richardson's Selling with Insights® is a one- to two-day program that includes pre- and post-work, learning sessions, planners, coaching, and a post-learning reinforcement tool: Richardson QuickCheck™. Richardson's Selling with Insights™ incorporates Richardson's Insight Blueprint™ so that sales reps can systematically create, personalize, and communicate compelling insights to your clients.

**With Richardson's Selling with Insights® sales training solution, your sellers learn how to:**

- Engage buyers early, create demand, and shape needs to your advantage
- Personalize your insights and deliver them for maximum impact to increase your sales effectiveness and differentiate your solution
- Earn credibility and trust as a thoughtful go-to business partner and thought leader who brings value to discussions and helps solve problems

**Contact Richardson at 215-940-9255 or email us at [info@richardson.com](mailto:info@richardson.com) to learn more.**



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