

The Psychology of Selling

Welcome to your next lesson in the sales skills course. In this lesson, we will discuss the psychology of selling. This lesson covers buyer motivations, plus what makes them switch from one position to another. The first thing all salespeople need to acknowledge is that in order to sell better, we must understand "Buyer motivations." Selling involves getting buyers to act based on a number of factors, which we will cover later in the lesson. To get customers, or prospects to make commitments. and be committed to change. A buying decision is a change management decision.

To be successful in our sales role, we need to understand.

1. Why do buyers take action?.
2. What causes buying?

All buying decisions (incl.B2B) are emotional. Buyers want salespeople to evoke feelings of trust, reliability, credibility and a sense of partnership. So, "when engaging with people, remember you are not dealing with creatures of logic, but with creatures of emotion."

Numerous studies have proven that the emotional brain, regularly overrules the rational brain. So, in decision-making, high stakes = high emotion. If we say we're going to do something for a logical reason, that means we have more emotion invested in that reason than any other. Whenever a buyer says they would like to think about it, they are saying that you have not aroused their desire to own or enjoy the benefits of your product.

Let's look at three facts about emotion in business-to-business decision making.

1. The emotional brain regularly overrules the rational brain
2. Business value alone doesn't drive B2B decisions
3. High stakes equal high emotion

A recent survey of 2,000 business decision makers globally found that 56% of that final purchase decision is driven by emotion – with feelings like **trust, confidence, optimism, and pride** emerging as the most influential.

The buying process is an emotional experience. Reputations, careers, and finances are at stake. We need to understand that these emotions influence the customer's buying decisions. The customer's previous emotions (expectations, experiences, etc.) are as important as their current emotions. To understand the customer's thinking, we need insight into the present and the past. The emotional side of doing business is why buyers want salespeople to evoke feelings of trust, helpfulness, reliability, credibility, and a sense of partnership.

The basic rule of selling is that people do not buy products; they buy benefits.

- A. Selling involves getting buyers to act.
- B. To make commitments and be committed to change.
- C. In order to sell better, we must understand "Buyer Motivations".

*Selling is about getting customers to **act**. “Teach customers something new and compelling and **provide** reasons for them to act”.*

What do we mean when we talk about selling psychology?

Simply stated, selling psychology is getting a buyer to decide as a result of a learning pathway. Where the customer learns about a product, or service, and then relates it to their specific situation, to make a favorable buying decision. A challenge for all salespeople is that psychology tells us that people don't like making tough decisions. So, as salespeople, we need to make buying easier. In order to make buying easier, we need to understand why people buy.

At the most basic level, it's important to understand that most people buy for one of two reasons.

1. **To move further away from pain.**
2. **They buy to gain or move closer to pleasure.**

So, as selling psychology has lots to do with emotions, we have to make the buyer feel something. As opposed to just knowing some facts or data about our product or service. This is what buyers want to feel. They want to feel confident in your abilities. They want to feel informed and educated. They want to feel like they can trust you. They want to feel optimistic about what you can deliver for them. And they want to feel like they have connected with you on a professional level. So, we have to make an emotional connection with our prospects and customers. This is important in order to be able to position the features and benefits of our product in the rational part of their brain.

Now I want to talk about why people buy what we are selling. Pause. Think of your own buying history. What caused you to buy?. Research has shown that the biggest trigger for buying is change.

Change is what causes Buying.

“Customers are most likely to rethink their current position or reset pre-established buying criteria only when given a reason to change,”. The buying decision is the result of both how well information was transferred from the business to the buyer, that buying has been made easier and the believability of the information. Change means that our selling needs to motivate a buyer to act—to switch from their current position.

At the most basic level, it's important to understand that most people buy for one of two reason — they buy to move closer to pleasure or to move further away from pain.

People buy to move closer to pleasure or further from pain (or in some rare instances both) — so when selling your product or service be very aware of why your customer is buying what you're selling.

To improve selling opportunities, we need to understand the buyer, their pain, what they want to gain and then we need to add value to open the buyer to change.

Selling today is all about recognising the true motivations of buyers and aligning your presentation and solution to match their needs and desires. One study published in the Journal of Personality and Social Psychology shows that getting a person to agree on one issue will boost the likelihood of getting their agreement on another issue. Psychology tells us that people do not like making tough decisions, so we need to make buying easier.

To really effect change, we need to teach them something new and compelling and provide credible reasons for them to buy. Another challenge is that every buyer knows that decisions to change or switch affect the future., be it their career or the impact on the company.

For any buyer to change position, they need to go on a learning pathway, facilitated by us, the salespeople. So, in selling psychology, we need to understand their pain, and what they want to gain. Along with how believable the information being provided is in sales conversations, etc. And critically, does the information address their pain or gain challenges?

Now, let's talk about "the buyers change switches," or the type of things that lead buyers to change. Research into selling psychology shows that most buying decisions are the result of a change switch being triggered. The switch gets triggered when the buyer learns about a product or service and can relate it to their specific situation. They want to move closer to GAIN, or move away from, the PAIN.

Types of Switches

Introducing. the major types of switches that lead to buyer change.

They are as follows:.

- The solution switch.
- The trust switch.
- The connected switch.
- The evidence switches. and,
- The event switch.

Let's start with the solution switch. This is where you show that your product is the answer to their problems. People do not buy products. They buy solutions. if you can convince your customer that your product is the solution to the problems they might be having, you'll spark their interest. So, create genuine connections and sell the true value of your solution. Help the buyer every step of the way. Show them what they can accomplish with your solution. Tap into a sense of excitement. Solution switch activity includes value sales conversations that spark their interest, get them to really listen, and then commit to turning on the switch to start a buyer journey.

The second switch is the trust switch. Where you become an authority figure, to educate, influence, and inform. The customer trusts you to inform them and bring new insights. They view you as an expert in your field, and they value your knowledge. For the trust switch to work, you must provide neutral, relevant, and honest information on the subject at hand. The information should be supported by proof. You are seen as a genuine, trusted source. Someone who is believable and not just looking to secure a quick deal. Someone who puts the customer first.

Next is the connected switch. As buyers make emotional decisions, it means people buy from people. So, the buyer wants to feel valued and understood. The connected switch is where customers want to feel connected to the solution and the salesperson on a personal and emotional level, not just a logical one. They want to feel that you are motivated to help them and that you are actively listening to what they tell you. Your level of interest in them goes beyond any sale. Make that connection. To elevate yourself above the competition, highlight your differences, because you are not just another salesperson.

Now we move to the evidence switch. For the sceptical buyer, who needs proof, not promises. To trigger "the evidence switch", you accept this is a logically driven buyer who is slow to change and prefers the status quo. They are usually risk averse. You provide them with logical reasoning, verifiable data, testimonials, etc. that validate your credentials. You may have to provide these

several times during the sales process. Note: evidence switch buyers are time sensitive. So, you should get to the point and answer. Why you. Why should I care? Why listen. And why now?

The last switch is the event switch. The triggers, and events that prompt change, causing a buyer to act now. Trigger events such as compliance, legal, new CEO, supplier issues, growth plans etc, all these, and more events can kick start a sale. Most inbound marketing and inbound sales strategies are based on an event, or a trigger switch. These type of opportunities requires speed of action. So, you need to focus on solutions, and trust, to capture value, quickly. These type of sales opportunities require you to work quickly, without cutting corners, to get the customer to take urgent action, to deal with the situation. and for you to get the sale.

To wrap up this section on buyer switches, remember that customers will buy what you are selling, based on the following. That they are informed with data and information. Have the confidence in the answers supplied to them by you. Optimistic and excited on the end result. They trust based on proof and evidence you supplied. Also, they feel connected to an expert and partner.

Feeling Stages.

Next, we need to understand the customers "Feeling Stages". There are 3 basic feeling stages when you engage a buyer. These stages, what we call readiness to change, dictates how fast or slow, they react to the various switches. The stages determine how your information should be delivered to the buyer to trigger a switch.

The first buyer feeling stage is, Cold.

Cold customers are not aware they have a problem, and probably aren't aware of your company. You will encounter this feeling stage in cold calling, prospecting, or any form of cold outreach. Logically they have a lower readiness to buy.

They require a larger amount of time and education. Using Trust, and then Evidence Switches should ultimately shift the feeling to "Warm". This is the hardest feeling to move, so you need to be patient. A cold buyer requires neutral, relevant, third party, and honest information to educate them about their problem and the options available to resolve them. Your sales conversations must address the, why change buyer question. You need to be prepared with Articles, Whitepapers, Research, Reviews, Case Studies, Videos etc. to move the feeling to warm.

The second buyer feeling stage is, Warm.

Warm customers have become aware they have a problem, but still need to overcome internal objections to buying. They are still in the research phase, so they still require lots of information to support any purchasing decision. They need constructive support, i.e. things that make the solution personally meaningful. They want help to envision a future where the problem has been solved due to their action. Make buying easier, focus on Solution and Connected Switches. As salespeople, we need to help the buyer every step on the way. Show them proof as to what they can accomplish with our solutions. Your sales conversations must address the, why NOW, buyer question. You need to get close to the buyer, plus Network with the buying committee, and influencers. Make yourself available, and valuable. Continue to build trust by providing insights, and information.

The third buyer feeling stage is, Hot.

Hot customers are those who know they have a burning problem and are in a position to act now. Driven by PAIN or GAIN, they now need all the evidence to support a buying decision, or final commitment, - pricing, free trials, roll-out, agreements etc. Note: In the sales process, the closer you get, the better you look. In the hot feeling stage, Continue to build the relationship, via genuine empathy, and connection. At the "Hot Feeling" stage, every interaction must put the buyers needs first. Remove any obstacles. Work to reduce any perceived risk with change or you!! Your sales

conversations must address the, why you, buyer question. Continue to provide data, evidence, proof, testimonials and re-assurance. Now you are in pole position to win the deal.

Getting a customer to move through the sales process doesn't have to be rocket science. In Selling Psychology, it is simply a matter of aligning the right messages, content and actions to the matching SWITCH, and FEELING stages, in order to influence buying behavior.

Customers want more than supplier value

In fact, research shows that conversations that offer customers a new way to think about or improve their business known as “customer improvement” — tend to be more effective at driving both retention and growth. These conversations enable account managers to provide customers with new perspectives on how they might operate their business (i.e., new ways to make money, save money, mitigate risk, manage inventories) that customers have yet to execute themselves. When these types of customer improvement conversations are leveraged, sellers can also reduce the likelihood that buyers will consider a competitor when renewing or purchasing again.

To implement a customer winning approach, salespeople should demonstrate these three behaviors:

- ✓ Provide customers with a unique perspective on their business
- ✓ Offer customers a vision of improvement for their business
- ✓ Explain the potential ROI of acting on an improvement opportunity

Short Term Emotions Drive Long Term Decisions

The buying process is an emotional experience. Reputations, careers and finances are at stake. We need to understand that these emotions influence the customer’s buying decisions.

The customer’s previous emotions (expectations, experiences) are as important as their current emotions. Research shows that many salespeople often falsely attribute a customer’s actions to their current emotional state (not interested, suspicious, reluctant, mixed signals etc). To understand the customer’s thinking, we need insight into the present and the past.

The 3R Method

Recall – Is your personal brand, messaging and interactions easily recalled in context of a choice in its category. Mental availability is key to ensure that one solution is chosen over another.

Recognition – Does your brand/offering have strong collateral that sets it apart from competitors, and makes it easy to buy?

Reaction – does your personal brand and conversations have a positive emotional connection, that reinforces you as a good choice?

The Seven Principles in the Psychology of Selling

- Reciprocity
- Commitment and consistency
- Liking
- Authority
- Social proof
- Scarcity

The Psychology of Selling

Sales Skills 101

THE DIGITAL SALES INSTITUTE

In order to sell better, we must understand "Buyer Motivations"

Selling involves getting buyers to take action

To make commitments and be committed to change

We need to understand

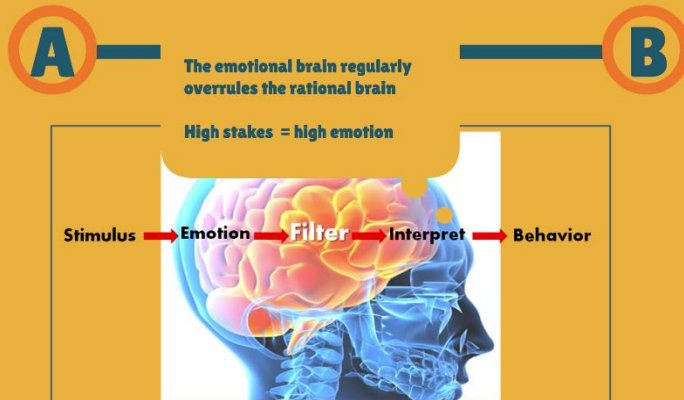
- 1. Why DO buyers take action?**
- 2. What causes buying?**

The infographic is set against a yellow background. At the top right, a man in a purple shirt holds a document. In the middle, a man in a purple shirt gestures towards three orange text boxes. To the right of these boxes, a man and a woman stand with their arms crossed. At the bottom, a network diagram shows a central man's head connected to several other people's heads in circular frames.

All Buying Decisions (incl. B2B) are emotional



"When engaging with customers, remember you are not dealing with creatures of logic, but with creatures of emotion."



If we say we're going to do something for a logical reason, that means we have more emotion invested in that reason than any other.

Whenever a buyer says they would like to think about it, they are saying that you have not aroused their desire to own or enjoy the benefits of your product.

A survey of 2,000 decision makers found that 56% of that final purchase decision is driven by emotion - with feelings like trust, confidence, optimism and pride emerging as the most influential.

The buying process is an emotional experience.



Reputations, careers and finances are at stake. We need to understand that these emotions influence the customer's buying decisions.

The customer's previous emotions (expectations, experiences) are as important as their current emotions.

To understand the customer's thinking, we need insight into the present and the past.



Buyers want salespeople to evoke feelings of trust, helpfulness, reliability, credibility and a sense of partnership.

Selling Psychology



Simply stated, selling psychology is getting a buyer to make a decision, as a result of a learning pathway.

Where the customer learns about a product or service and then relates it to their specific situation to make a favorable buying decision.

A

B

“ Psychology tells us that people don't like making tough decisions ”



So, as salespeople, we need to make buying easier.



To move further away from pain



They buy to Gain or move closer to pleasure

At the most basic level, it's important to understand that most people buy for one of two reasons.

WE HAVE TO MAKE THE BUYER

FEEL SOMETHING
AS OPPOSED TO JUST
KNOWING SOMETHING



What buyers want to feel



CONFIDENT

INFORMED

TRUST

OPTIMISTIC

CONNECTED

So, we have to make an emotional connection with our prospects and customers.

In order to be able to position the features and benefits of our product in the rational part of their brain.





Change is what causes Buying.

Agent of Change



- Buyers will rethink their current position or reset buying criteria only when given reasons to change
- Selling needs to motivate a buyer to take action – to switch
- We need to teach them something new and compelling, plus provide credible reasons for them to buy



Also, every buyer knows
that decisions to change and switch
effects the future



So, we need to understand
their pain, and what they
want to gain

Help buyers to learn



- Buying decisions are based on how well the information has been transferred to them
- How believable the information being provided is!!
- Does the information address their pain or gain challenges



Research into selling psychology shows that most buying decisions are the result of a change switch being triggered.

The switch gets triggered when the buyer learns about a product or service and can relate it to their specific situation.

“ They want to move closer to GAIN or move away from the PAIN ”



Types of Switches that lead to buyer change



The Solution Switch

The Trust Switch

The Connected Switch

The Evidence Switch

The Event Switch



The Solution Switch



Show that your product is the answer to their problems



Evidence Switch

✓ You accept this is a logically driven buyer, slow to change and prefers the status quo.

✓ Provide them with logical reasoning, verifiable data, testimonials etc. that validates your credentials.

✓ You can answer – Why you? Why should I care? Why listen? and Why now?



The Event Switch



Triggers and Events

that prompts a change

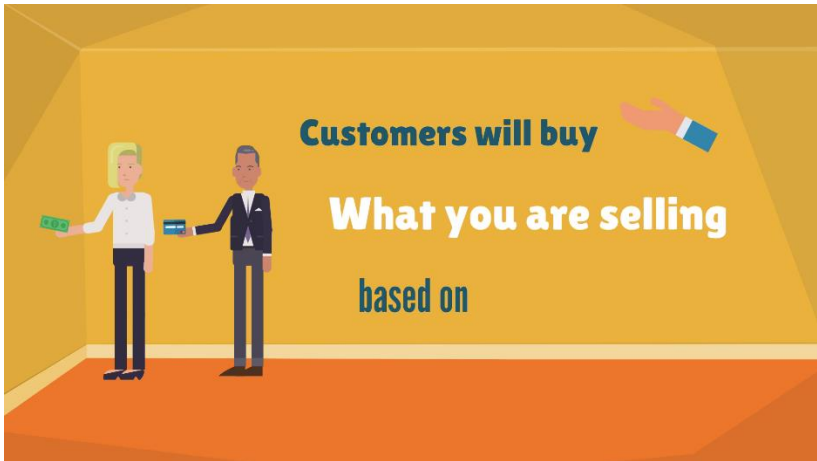


Event Switch

✓ Trigger events such as compliance, legal, new CEO, supplier issues, growth plans etc, can kickstart a sale.

✓ Most inbound marketing/sales are based on the event switch. Focus on solutions and trust to capture value.

✓ Work quickly (no cutting corners), to get the customer to take urgent action to deal with the situation.



Customers will buy
What you are selling
based on





- **Informed with data and information**
- **Confidence in the answers supplied**
- **Optimistic on the end result**
- **Trust based on proof and evidence**
- **Connected to an expert and partner**

3 Basic Feeling Stages



Next, we need to understand the customers "Feeling Stages"



There are 3 basic or core buyer readiness "Feeling Stages" in selling psychology

These stages (readiness to change) dictates how fast or slow they react to Switches

The stages determine how your information should be delivered to trigger a Switch

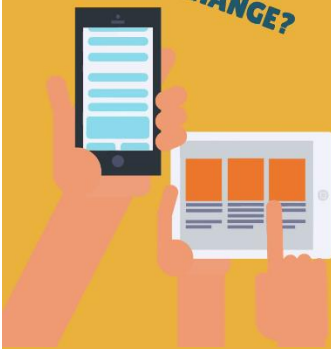


Cold customers are not aware they have a problem, and probably aren't aware of your company.

Logically they have a lower readiness to buy. They require a larger amount of time and education.

Using Trust and then Evidence Switches should ultimately shift the feeling to "Warm"

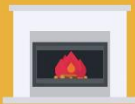
**WHY LISTEN?
WHY CHANGE?**



● **A cold buyer requires neutral, relevant, third party and honest information to educate them about their problem and the options available to resolve**

● **Articles, Whitepapers, Research, Reviews, Case Studies , Videos etc.**





Warm customers have become aware they have a problem but still need to overcome internal objections to buying.

They need constructive support, i.e. things that make the solution personally meaningful.

They want help to envision a future where the problem has been solved due to their action.

Make buying easier, focus on Solution and Connected Switches.

WHY NOW?



- **As salespeople, we need to help the buyer every step on the way, show them proof as to what they can accomplish with our solutions.**

- **Network with the buying committee and influencers. Make yourself available and valuable.**

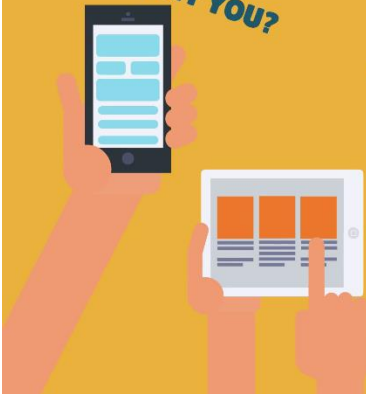


Hot customers are those who know they have a burning problem and are in a position to act now.

Driven by PAIN or GAIN, they now need all the evidence to support a buying decision/final commitment— pricing, free trials, roll-out, agreements etc.

Note: In the sales process, the closer you get, the better you look. Continue to build the relationship via genuine empathy and connection.

WHY YOU?



- At the "Hot Feeling" stage, every interaction must put the buyers needs first. Work to reduce any perceived risk with change or you!!.
- Continue to provide data, evidence, proof, testimonials and re-assurance.

In Selling Psychology, it is critical to align the right messages, content and actions to the matching "SWITCH" and "FEELING" stages in order to influence buying behavior.



“ Getting a customer to move through the sales process doesn't have to be rocket science ”

