

BREAK-THROUGH SELLING

Customer Building Strategies from the Best in the Business

BARRY FARBER

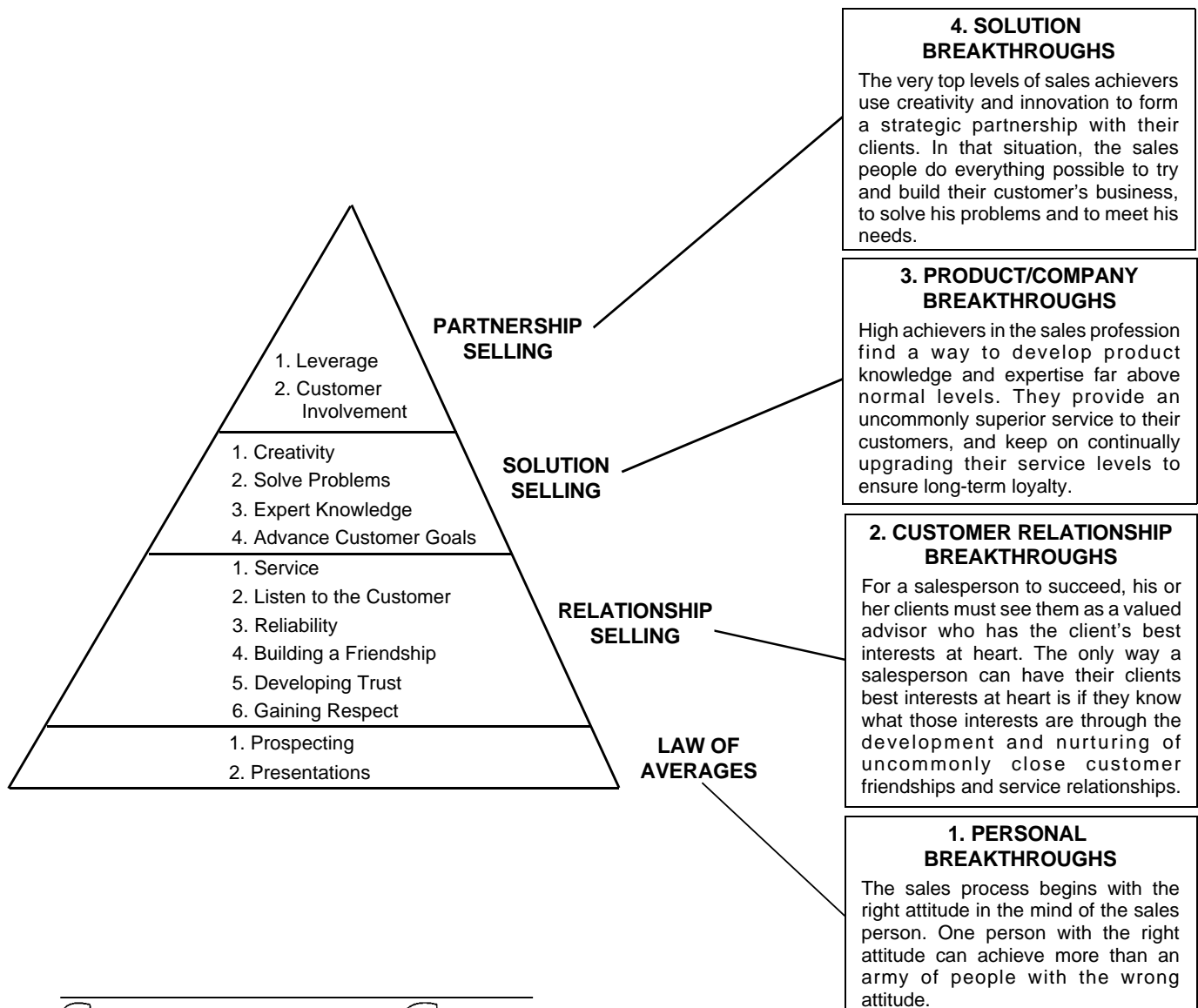
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MAIN IDEA

In the final analysis, everybody sells something...but not everybody sells well.

Breakthrough selling means to develop customer-building sales strategies which are necessary to succeed in today's highly competitive business environment. The concepts of breakthrough selling are actually quite straightforward to comprehend but exceptionally difficult to apply day-in and day-out. Perhaps that's why selling is one of the modern economy's most lucrative professions.

The ideas of breakthrough selling can propel a sales person to great success while allowing them to develop a high quality of life.



1. PERSONAL BREAKTHROUGHS

Main Idea

The sales process begins with the right attitude in the mind of the sales person. One person with the right attitude can achieve more than an army of people with the wrong attitude.

Supporting Ideas

When Harvard Business School conducted a study of the factors that are critical to success in sales, they identified:

1. Attitude
2. Information
3. Intelligence
4. Skill

This study found that attitude contributed to 93% of a person's success while information, intelligence and skill accounted for less than 7% of sales effectiveness.

The 6 keys to a positive attitude in sales are:

1. Professional pride.
The sales profession is the highest paying profession in the world. Sales also forms the basis for the entire economy of the world's most successful consumer economy - the United States of America. Therefore, professional sales personnel should feel considerable pride in their chosen field.
2. Doing what you passionately love.
The top sales people are so caught up in the benefits of their service or product it motivates and energizes them. That passion is contagious.
3. Invest yourself in the process of sales.
The top performers have made a commitment in time, energy, enthusiasm and reputation in a sales career. Only when something significant is at stake will a person exploit every available opportunity and perform at their maximum.
4. Invest in yourself.
Sales professionals consistently increase their product knowledge, sales skills and understanding of their customers.
5. Be positively persistent.
Top achievers find creative ways to be persistent and positive in the face of early rejections. They can gauge when to keep working with a potential client or customer and when to move on.
6. Learn from failures along the way.
Successful and positive sales professionals know that a failure is never a failure if you use it to learn something new or beneficial.

The primary reason some people fail to excel in a sales career is fear. The best ways to break through fear are:

1. Self-confidence
When a person believes something can be done, they just then have to believe they can be the ones to do it to achieve greatness. Confidence grows by setting and meeting challenging goals along the path to the ultimate achievement.
2. Product knowledge
When a person understands the product inside out, they have the confidence to talk to people who are using the product every day and intensively.
3. Relationships
When sales people start to establish a foundation of friendship and shared interests with their prospects, the fear level begins to diminish.

4. Vision

Successful sales people have a mental image of their product or service improving the quality of life for everyone who buys from them. That vision provides additional energy and commitment driving them on to greatness.

In the final analysis, products and services are purchased by people - not by companies, not by computers and not even by housewives or businessmen. Therefore, sales success can be boiled down to one simple concept: the more people you know who are potential customers and with whom you build a personal link through effective networking the more successful you will eventually be in the sales professions.

The essence of networking is to build good friendships. Business is built on the foundation of trust. In a friendship, there is a mutual understanding of what motivates and inspires the other person.

Some ways to build a business friendship:

1. Make your friends feel important. Learn what's important to them on a personal basis.
2. Add a bit of creativity to something standard. For example, print quizzes, mission statements or other quotes on the back of your business card.
3. Send letters of congratulations to people who are accomplishing something significant.
4. Make friends with four new people a month and get to know them well enough they will tell you their problems - therein lies the great opportunities for doing business.
5. Join volunteer non-profit organizations that attract the type of people you want to do business with.
6. Give away an ice-breaker such as a model of your product or a box of cookies with a picture attached or something similar.
7. Develop a business profile of your prospective clients. The more you know about their interests the easier it will be to strike up a conversation with them.

In the final analysis, little things can make a big difference in the sales process. Studies have identified the following critical factors in the sales process:

1. The top sales people in any organization tend to take care of the last 5% of the details that differentiate them from all other sales people. That last 5% means adding some sparkle and creativity to the sales process.
2. Another study showed that about 80% of the deficiencies in sales people were in their activity level rather than their sales skills or product knowledge. That is, the majority of people who fail to produce high sales results did so for the simple reason they failed to do enough canvassing, presentations or demonstrations.
3. Lack of organization is a major barrier to the success of the average sales person. If they can just develop a system which allows them to effectively organize their schedule and keep paperwork to a minimum, they are well on the way to accomplishing their objectives.
4. In the sales process, small details can hold the key to success. Small actions like sending out thank-you notes, follow-up phone calls, being punctual and maintaining close contact are basic but profitable techniques. Top performers go out of their way to find ways to add value to the sales process.
5. Sales people thrive on feedback on how effectively they are reaching their goals. To be motivating, goals must be

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