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Guidebook for Improving Sales for a Company: a Case Study of Company X

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Laurea University of Applied Sciences **Abstract**
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Guidebook for Improving Sales for a Company: a Case Study of Company X

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Efficient customer management is essential for modern businesses. Companies need to be able to understand the principles of excellent customer service and effective selling. Nurturing competence in both areas will affect the company customer base and cash flow positively.

To be professional in selling and to be able to persuade customers requires specific competences, knowledge, motivation and highly developed interpersonal skills from the salesperson. The seller needs to be able to manage all the steps of sales processes in order to provide the customer with the best possible solution and to make a successful sale.

The purpose of the thesis is to contribute to the know-how and skills set of the salespeople at Company X in the areas of selling and persuasion. The objective of this thesis is to give suggestions and to guide the salespeople in their work and to document different methods of persuading the customer.

The thesis provides the company with a written out plan of sales processes within the company. The theoretical chapter of the thesis is in the form of a guide to the work of the salespeople, and consists of basic information about selling, different sales processes, different personality types, persuasive questioning methods and other critical tools that can increase the company's sales and customer flows.

The study was executed during the spring and summer of 2012 using qualitative research methods. The research data were collected by interviewing the company's employees. The outcome of the research was useful; it met the demands. The theoretical chapter fitted the company's sales culture and it provided the company a written plan of various sales processes.

Keywords salesperson, customer, persuading, sales and customer flow, qualitative, questionnaire

Laurea- Ammattikorkeakoulu **Tiivistelmä**
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Liiketalouden koulutusohjelma

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Opas Parantamaan YrityksenMyyntityötä, Case: Yritys X

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Nykypäivänä tehokas asiakkuuksien hallinta on tullut elintärkeäksi yrityksille. Yritysten tulee ymmärtää olennaiset osat erinomaisesta asiakaspalvelusta ja tehokkaasta myyntityöstä. Vaalien kumpaakin osa-aluetta tulee se vaikuttamaan yrityksen asiakaskantaan ja kassavirtoihin positiivisesti.

Myyntityö on tärkeää kaikille liiketoimille. Ollakseen houkuttelevampi asiakkaalle ja ammattitaitoinen myyntityö vaatiimyyjältä erityisiä myyntitaitoja, tietoa, motivaatioita ja erinomaisia vuorovaikutuskykyjä. Myyjän tulee olla kykeneväinen hallitsemaan kaikkia osa-aluetta myyntityössä ja sen prosesseissa, jotta myyjä pystyy tarjoamaan asiakkaalle parhaat mahdolliset ratkaisut toimiakseen voitokkaasti.

Opinnäytetyön tarkoitus on rikastuttaa yritys X:n myyjien tietämystä myynnin parissa. Rikastuttaen myyjien tietämystä, tulisi se mitä todennäköisimmin vaikuttamaan yrityksen asiakas- ja kassavirtoihin. Tavoite on oheistaa yrityksen myyjiä heidän työssään ja opettaa heille eri tapoja houkuttelemaan asiakas tekemään ostopäätös. Opinnäytetyön aikomus on tarjota yritykselle kirjallinen opas myyntiprosesseista yrityksen sisällä. Opinnäytetyön teoriaosuus on opas myyjien omaan työhön. Teoriaosuus pohjautuu myynninperusteisiin, myyntiprosesseihin, persoonallisuustyyppeihin, suostutteleviin kysymysmetodeihin ja muihin kriittisiin osa-alueisiin, jotka voivat kasvattaa yrityksen asiakas- ja kassavirtoja.

Tutkimus toteutettiin 2012 kevään ja kesän aikana käyttäen laadullisia tutkimusmetodeja apuna. Materiaalit laadullista tutkimustyötä varten kerättiin yrityksen työntekijöiden haastatteluilla. Tutkimuksentulokset olivat hyödyllisiä, yritys oli tyytyväinen opinnäytetyön tarjontaan ja työ sopi myös yrityksen toimintaympäristöön.

Avainsanat myyjä, asiakas, suostuttelu, myynti ja asiakkaiden virtaus, laatu, kysely

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1 Introduction

In recent years, efficient selling has become one of the most significant issues for companies. Customers are more aware of the competition between companies and the extensive range of products and services on offer. Companies have to be more active to acquire new customers and keep existing customers satisfied. A company needs to be able to persuade customers of the value of the company's product range and assure the customers that their products or services are the best to meet certain needs. Effective customer management and excellent selling techniques are important for all companies; in this way the company can maintain customer satisfaction, retain customer loyalty and increase sales. Because of the importance of effective selling strategies and customer management the topic "Guidebook for Improving Sales for Company X" was chosen for this thesis. It is essential for all companies to understand the vitality of effective customer service and selling. By contributing to the know-how and skills set of the salespeople at the company will it most likely affect the customer flows positively within the company. There are various gestures that a single salesperson can do to increase a company's sales and customer flows by satisfying, assuring and persuading the customer. All these issues will be introduced and discussed in the thesis.

1.1 The Goals and the Purpose of This Thesis

The purpose of this thesis was to support and to increase the company X's employees' know-how in sales and sales strategies. By increasing the employees' know-how among sales, this would most likely have a positive effect on the company's customer and sales flows. The company wanted to stay anonymous, because of that the company will be referred as Company X in this thesis. The Company X has been in a strong growth state the in the last years. It has been able to expand the company mainly with previously established customer. However, the company has grown so widely during the years and now it wants to expand the amount of customers the company has and increase their sale flows. In other words, the company wants to increase their customer flows and sell more to both new and existing customer. Furthermore, by achieving these goals the company wants to strengthen and develop its employees' know-how in selling and persuading existing customers and gaining future customers.

Selling is familiar to many people, and it is something people get involved almost every day. However, there are not that many sales personnel who know how to sell to different customer groups and how to persuade the customer by still keeping the customers' trust in the relationship (Jolles 2009, 104). Many previous cases from salespeople and psychologists' are studied in this thesis, and the best ones to fit the company's culture and concepts are introduced and examined. This makes it interesting to examine the topic, because it has a lot of critical parts to understand and to maintain in everyday work.

The company X has two goals; it wants to increase the amount of customer they already have, and also to increase the amount of sales among all customers, existing and new ones. This thesis will be a “start-up guideline” for the salespeople and bookers of the company to do even better in their sales meetings and to gain new potential customers more efficiency. The second goal this thesis will provide is that it will give the company a written standardized plan how to proceed in every step of a sales meeting, so it will be easier to have a standardized protocol that every employee in the company broad-mindedly follows.

This thesis will concentrate in a concept of selling, which is why it will go widely into basic factors of selling; it is important to have a strong base and to build an own method on the top of it. The thesis explains methods from the salesperson view point. Everyone has a different way of persuading people, and the purpose of the thesis is to help and guide to find the best methods for every salesperson. That is the reason why it does not give direct answers how to cope in a certain situation. This thesis is a basic guideline to strengthen employees’ sales meetings.

In brief, the purpose of the thesis is to give the company X a written guide on how every step of the customer process should go, to understand how the customer’s mind works and to be able to persuade a customer closer towards a sale or a sales meeting. In other words, the idea is to provide the employees of the company X a theoretical report with multiply selling methods that are paraphrased within the theory to support the employees’ sales meetings. The company will have a standardized plan which will help the sellers to contact the previous and new customers with using the same methods.

1.2 Theoretical Approach

The theoretical approach is done by collecting and combining multiple academic sources, books, articles and internet, which mainly processes the different methods of selling and persuading. Several sources of information are from previous salespeople who have greatly succeeded in selling and persuasion others. These studies are written by their own experience and own learning which makes it accurate to use them in this thesis. There are also references used from other academic resources that touch the topic of selling. These references paraphrase multiply different studies in their reports, not just one person’s experience; they use findings that are widely used around the words in selling and persuading. This theoretical approach suits best for the company business environment because the sales processes are never exactly the same; the processes vary widely on the customers and their interest. Therefore, the salesperson needs to be able to adapt to numerous different situations.

1.3 Research Approach

The research is done by using qualitative research approach method in the thesis. The qualitative research is also often referred to action study. The method was chosen because it fits the studied topic's nature and is the most suitable for the company's environment. The method provides a technique to implement the study. Qualitative research will be implemented by interviewing the employees of the company with a questionnaire, and the data is analysed and processed. (Janhonen & Nikkonen 2003, 21-22.)

1.4 The Framework of the Thesis

This thesis is built up from five different sections: introduction, theoretical part, research approach, empirical study and finally conclusion and recommendations. The theoretical background part is built up to match company X's environment and the company's culture. The goal of the theoretical background is to introduce the factors that include in customer management, selling and persuading in order to increase the employees' know-how within the subject. In the beginning of the thesis, the theoretical parts of selling and persuading will be discussed. Salespeople and customer buying process will be outlined and explained in the basic parts of selling. Secondly the theoretical part will go more into details and explain every step of the selling processes from contacting the customer for the first time to the step of closing the sale. The last part of the theoretical part discusses the small gestures that a salesperson can do to persuade the customer closer to a sale or sales meeting.

After the theoretical part the research approach part discusses on how the study is conducted and how the data is processed. The empirical part follows the research approach part, and it discusses on the company and the study more in details and analyses the result of the study. Lastly, the conclusion and recommendations is introduced. The framework of the thesis is described in Figure 1.

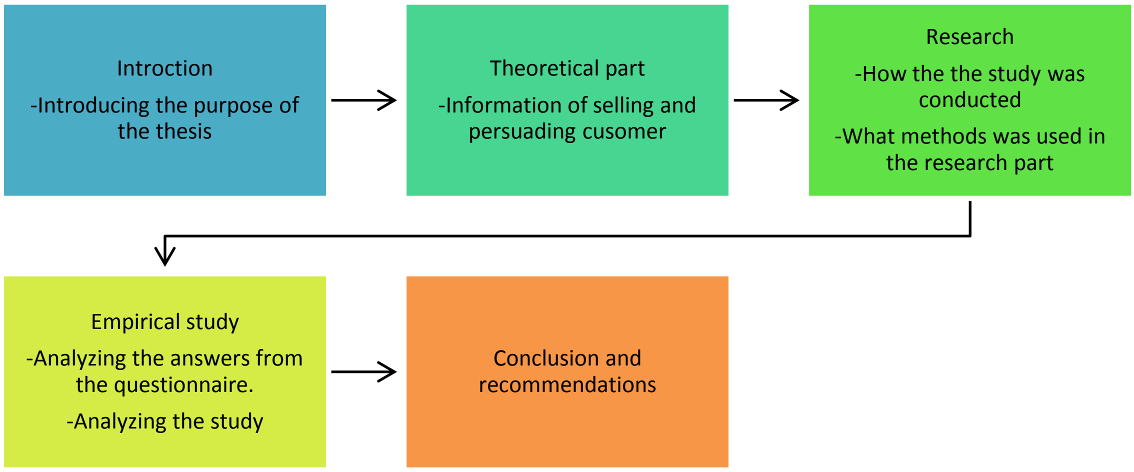

Figure 1: The framework of the thesis

2 Theoretical Background

The theoretical background is built of ten sections; also the sections can be called inner parts. These sections go from basics of selling and sales processes to details that can effect positively on a salesperson's sale and customer flows. The theory is built to match the company's environment and their processes. Mainly, the factors are explained from the salespeople's view point, except the part two. The first section explains basic factors on sales and explains which skills are demanded from a seller. The second section shares information of customers and explains the issues more from the customer's point of view. The third section gives a brief picture of three main personality types humans have and helps the salesperson to recognize these personalities. In this part, human psychology is examined to get the salesperson familiar with persuading different types of people while doing business with them. The fourth section gives the seller a plan for his or her work. The fifth part explains a standardized process of the way to contact the customer. The sixth section guides the salesperson through the whole sales process and gives details how to proceed in every step of the sales negotiation. The seventh section explains the methods and the critical parts that can be used in today's world when contact a customer. The eighth section gives examples of which question methods the salesperson could use when trying to persuade the customer. Before the last section, the ninth section gives the salesperson suggestions that he or she can do when trying to persuade a customer of the company's products or services. The last section is a conclusion of the whole theoretical part.

2.1 Defining Sales and a Salesperson

This chapter goes deeper in basics of selling and salespeople's nature. It will define sales work and explain which factors involve in selling.

2.1.1 Definition of Sales

The purpose of selling is to help a customer to find the best solutions to his or her needs and wants. The customer does not buy a product or a service, the customer always buys a solution of his or her needs; the customer buys the idea that the product or service will do for him or her. The reason for a company to make a sale is to make profit. The salesperson's main purpose is to persuade linking the customer's needs to the company's products and the benefits it offers. (Alanen, Mälkiä & Sell 2005, 14; Jolles 2009, 77.)

2.1.2 The Purpose of the Seller

The main and most important purpose of the salesperson is to help the customer to come to the final buying decision. The salesperson's task is to identify the customer's needs and to provide the customer the best solution to satisfy their needs. In addition, the salesperson's goal is a decision from the customer that benefits both parties, the customer and the seller. The salesperson's work does not only include persuading customer's behaviour and decision making, but also assuring the customer of the right choices and caring about the customer's needs and wants In short, the seller's purpose is to persuade the customer to correct a present problem. (Alanen et al. 2005, 15; Jolles 2009, 77.)

Mr Alanen et al (2005, 15) specify the seller's purpose well in their book: "A seller is the business card of the company". If the seller is unable to conduct the sale he or she should always bear in mind that they represents the company and should take every interaction as an opportunity to promote the goodwill of the company. Furthermore, when the customer is contacted the second time by the company, it will be easier for the salesperson to persuade and awaken the customer's interest based on the first contact, if he or she was left with a good impression of the company. (Alanen et al. 2005, 15.)

The salesperson's work includes multiply fields that he or she has to be able to operate successfully. The work includes communication, negotiation and persuasion with clients and peers. Also, the salesperson has to be able to send and observe different people's reactions and body language; silent and vocal, in same situation. (Alanen et al. 2005, 15.)

Personal interaction is the key to good selling. Selling belongs to every step of a customer phase; from the starting phase to the customer relationship, to the maintenance phase and sometimes even to the terminating phase of the relationship. A salesperson with good interaction skills can read the customer's facial impressions and body language, and can fit accurate body language to right situations. Owning good interactions skills can lead to better results, in other words more sales. A professional salesperson is able to strengthen the positive atmosphere in the sales negotiation, reduce customer's prejudices, and is able to push the customer towards the purchasing decision. A salesperson can have an effect on the customer's decision-making process in an early stage and awaken customer's needs towards certain product or service. (Alanen et al.2005, 14-16.)

Even if, the customer is profitable for the salespeople and the company, it does not always mean that the sale should be done right away; it can also mean building a new relationship with the customer for further sales or earning a good reputation among the customer and his or her peers. (Alanen et al. 2005,16.)

2.1.3 Ideal Personal Qualities of Salespeople

Salespeople are usually known by their persistency and determination. A salesperson needs to have a good self-confidence, be comfortable of working under pressure, have effective interaction skills and be capable of challenging themselves by setting demanding goals to their own work. Furthermore, salespeople are usually capable of recognizing feelings and doubts in other people; they are talented of motivating and leading others and also skilful of regulating and directing their own emotions in interactions. (Alanen et al. 2005, 18.)

Salespeople need to be capable of handling and sustaining bad feedback and criticism in their work. Many times people easily accuse the salesperson of a bad product or a service, even if the unpleasant experience would not be the salesperson's fault. The salesperson is usually the main contact to the company, so all feedback often goes through them. (Chitwood 1996, 13.)

2.2 The Customer

In sales the customer also faces the seller on an emotional level. The seller needs to understand the meaning and consequences of this level and the importance of developing and sustaining the emotional level on the positive side. The salesperson needs to be able to continually practice his or her interaction skills and knowledge in human relationship management. If the salesperson has ability to continually develop and maintain these skills it guaranties the salesperson with successful sales meetings. The customer needs to feel that the salesperson sincerely wants to find a solution to the customer's needs and is willing to help the customer to find the best solution to satisfy the customer's needs, not just to conduct a sale. Winning the customer's trust is the main and most important thing to achieve in sales. A salesperson might have to win this level of trust every time when dealing with a certain customer. The customer needs to be able to also trust the products, services and the company behind the salesperson before making a purchasing decision. (Alanen et al. 2005, 15.)

2.2.1 Interaction with the Customer

When the seller interacts with the customer the major thing the seller has to concentrate on is the trust building. If the customer does not trust the seller; he or she will not make a purchasing decision or plan any future actions. Foremost important thing for the customer is to feel that she or he is being cared. To tend the relationship even after the sale is done is vital for the customer relationship; If the customer does not feel cared it can easily be the end of the relationship. The key issue of keeping a customer relationship is to make the customer feel that the company genuinely cares about the customer. (Alanen et al. 2005, 15.)

2.2.2 Knowing the Customer

Before the sales negotiation or the first meeting, the salesperson should find enough information of the customer; the salesperson should know the customer's field of work, background, values and the level of income approximately. Researching information about the customer before the sales negotiation will give a great advantage to the seller; it gives more reasons for the seller to argue his or her sale and also it gives more time for the salesperson to study the customer's behaviour and body language when he or she already knows the basic things of the customer. Also, the conversation will flow more when the salesperson knows more issues to talk about to awaken the customer's interest. It does not only give a great advantage to the seller in the negotiation but also it gives a well-prepared and a professional picture of the salesperson. (Alanen et al. 2005, 26.)

The salesperson needs to know the basic facts of the company he or she is representing. The seller needs to know and to understand the resources the company has, for an instant the company's selling process, the range of products, the services and the lowest offer he or she can agree on. It is not only important for the seller to know his or her business, but also to keep on knowing the company's business. The seller needs to be aware of what is written about the company and its competitors in the media. (Alanen et al. 2005, 26; Bettger 1977, 87.)

2.2.3 The Six Most Common Reasons Why People Make Purchasing Decisions

Mr Chitwood (1997, 76) highlight the six most common motives that make people do purchasing decisions. These motives usually overlap one and other. Also, people mainly make purchasing decisions emotionally, not logically. If a person has a pleasant feeling of something, even if it would not be logical for his or her needs, the person might still make the purchasing decision. (Chitwood 1997, 76.)

The first motive that makes people buy is a desire to gain something from the product or service. For example, if a company buys better computer software they desire their employees to be more productive, or if a person purchases stocks he or she desires to make more profit with the money the person already owns. The second motive is the fear of losing something. This is usually seen as financial losses. For instant, many times people are persuaded to rather buy stocks or invest their money somewhere to gain profit rather than keep it on a simple bank account where the inflation eats the value of the money. The third motive is comfort and convenience. For companies, a useful example could be to maintain a comfortable employees' lounge, or for a private person it could be a trip to somewhere warm or even a CD-player to enjoy music during the day. The fourth motive is security and protection. For companies, this could mean that they do not like to change their vendors easily, or they want to make sure the fire alarms are in the most excellent shape. For a private person, security and protection could mean changing locks to a new apartment, or securing their savings from the fluctuation in the market. The fifth motive is pride of ownership motives; this is something people want to represent. Usually these are people's belongings, for instant brands that they are proud of. This could be luxury cars, boats, clothes, bags and watches. The last motive is emotional satisfaction. These purchases are things that make people feel good about themselves since they are doing something for another person. Mainly these are seen as charity, throwing a party for friends or buying something to their loved ones. (Chitwood 1997, 76.)

2.2.4 The Customer Buying Process

For the salesperson to succeed in his or her work, it is practical to understand how the customer buying process basically works. The buying process has four stages. First the process starts from building the relationship and trust between the seller and the customer; the customer needs to trust and believe that the seller genuinely wants to help the customer to satisfy his or her needs before making any decisions. Also, when the customer trusts and respects the seller, the customer will take the seller’s, opinion and ideas easier to his or her consideration. If the customer has respect towards the seller, the customer will be convinced by the seller’s points of view of the product or service. Furthermore, the customer will more likely accept the seller’s opinion of which product or service would be most suitable for him or her. The customer acknowledges the fact that he or she can always take their business to someone else; the customer will seek reasons to partnership with exactly that salesperson when negotiating. The customer needs to be convinced that the salesperson is the finest for him or her and also will be in the future. The salesperson’s responsibility is to influence the customer’s attitudes and decision making. (Alanen et al.2005, 67.)

The second stage in the process is the analysing stage. During the second stage, the seller and the customer, both collect information of each other. Throughout this stage, it is important to the seller to listen and ask enough and right questions from the customer. When the seller asks the right questions, it becomes more obvious to the customer which is his or her needs and wants. Such questions should be used that the customer realizes he or she needs some solution to fix a problem, or to be prepared for something. The finest technique is making the customer answer him or herself to the problem by solving it with the seller’s product or service. During this stage, the seller also aims to resolve and awaken the customer’s needs for the product or service. (Alanen et al. 2005, 67.)

The third stage of the customer buying process follows resolving the customer’s problem. This is the stage where the salesperson’s ability to convince the customer is put in process. The seller aims at influencing the customer’s decision making and persuading the customer to believe that the product or service the seller is offering is the best for him or her. The challenge during this stage lays in the seller’s capability to convince the customer that he or she needs that certain product from the customer.(Alanen et al. 2005, 67.)

The fourth step is the customer’s decision making stage. Through the fourth stage the customer weights the pros and cons of the product or service and makes the decision of purchasing it or not. If the customer is not enough convinced by the seller’s argument, the customer will not make the purchase. During this stage, the seller has to observe how critical is the decision making for the customer, and what is the customer’s price limit. Even throughout this stage the salesperson needs to make enough convincing arguments to the customer to encourage him or her to make the positive purchasing decision. (Alanen et al.2005, 67.)

2.3 Three Types of Personalities

It is known that there are millions of different types of people with unique behaviours in the world. There are many different methods used when dividing people into different personalities. However, there is one method that is found useful when salespeople need to quickly recognize a person's personality type, and to understand how the person's mind works. The method works by dividing personalities to only three different categories; the categories are blue, green and red personalities. Some examiners like to add yellow personality in along with the other three personalities. However in this thesis the three personalities are enough, and green and yellow are put together as it is often done in other studies. The main principal for the salesperson to remember is that no-one has just one colour; the personality groups overlap each other; everyone has a mixture of all these three personalities. However, one category is stronger than the other ones. For the salesperson it is efficient to persuade the customer closer to the sale if the salesperson understands which personality type the person is. (Dunderfelt 1998, 46-49.)

2.3.1 Blue Personality

The blue personality's mind is mainly driven by logic and fear. A blue person often has a bigger fear of losing something rather than the desire of gaining something. Furthermore, blue people do not enjoy taking risks; they rather keep their money in a safe bank account where an interest rate is eaten by inflation and the value of money sustains almost the same. Moreover, the best way to influence on the blue person's buying decision is to sell them a risk avoiding method. (Dunderfelt 1998, 50-52.)

The fundamental characteristics of a blue personality is calm, controlling, has careful consideration from own clothes to own behaviour, is introvert, analysing, perfectionist and reserved. The blue person aims at perfection in every task he or she conducts and is highly controlling in every part of his or her life. The blue person does not enjoy being the centre of attention and thinks that showing emotions is not proper. The blue person also does not enjoy emphasizing him or herself and usually is seen driving a regular colour car and wearing regular clothing; nothing too showing. The blue person is mainly an introvert person; he or she does not enjoy showing their feelings or reactions to other than their closest people. The blue person also does dislikes physical contact with others than family members. In addition, the blue person is mainly a listener and an analyser; the blue person always seeks reasons for action. The blue person mainly considers all his or her actions beforehand. The blue person also dislikes changes and surprises, because he or she does not feel safe or comfortable if he or she loses his or her control over something. (Dunderfelt 1998, 50-52.)

The blue person feels comfortable with regularity and safety so usually the blue person is seen in occupations offered by the government or other safe companies that will not be that affected with economic changes. In these jobs the salary comes regularly, the working hours are regular; the routines are similar and not a lot of changes happen. Also, the blue person can be seeing working in financial occupations because of the detailed characteristics of the work and the accurate of the work. Besides financial occupations also engineer and controller occupations are also popular among blue people because of all the rules to follow.. Often others find the blue person highly pessimist, distant and abstain, he or she critical attitudes towards others, the blue person is often too careful, unsocial and controlling, and pays too much attention to other's mistakes. (Dunderfelt 1998, 50-52.)

In the beginning when the salesperson tries to make a sale to the blue person, he or she needs to win the blue persons trust. The blue person is often suspicious of others, and especially salespeople. The blue person often sees salespeople as people who only have their own interest in mind rather than both parties interest; this is why the sales person needs to win the blue person trust right away. It is better that the blue person sees the salesperson more as an expert and adviser rather than a seller. In addition, there are several strong words that are seen helpful when the salesperson tries to persuade the blue person. These words are safety, risk avoiding, reliable, smart, control over something, common, a plan, to be prepared, protection, and general. (Dunderfelt 1998, 50-52.)

In brief, the blue person considers all his or her actions carefully and does not enjoy making a decision right away; the blue person wants to consider and value all his or her options before making the final decision of purchase. The salesperson needs to be little pushy when dealing with a person that is highly blue. As said before the most useful method to influence the blue person's decision is trying to sell him or her idea of avoiding a certain risk when making the buying decision, in other words: sell them safety. The blue person does not usually want to be one of the first people who try a product or a service; the blue people are mainly followers. When dealing with a highly blue person the most efficient way to appeal to him or her is to use statistics, for instant how many people tried the product or service and was more than satisfied with it, or which well-known people use the product or service. Also, calculation, studies and the law are effective to use when persuading the blue person. In additional, the blue person is highly careful with details. The salesperson should prepare him or herself in a way that he or she is able to answer and explain every part of the contract, even the legal parts to the blue person. (Dunderfelt 1998, 50-52.)

2.3.2 Green Personality

The green person's mind is mainly driven with emotions rather than logic, feeling pleasant about things is the most important subject for the green person. In addition, the green person makes his or her decision often based on the feeling he or she gains from the situation. However, other people's behaviour and emotions are forces that also drive the green person's behaviour; the green person is more frequently likely to choose an option that pleases everyone rather than making a decision that is closer to his or her own goal. The green person is highly an extrovert person and enjoys being around people rather than alone. (Dunderfelt 1998, 54-58.)

The fundamental characteristics of a green person are spontaneous, benevolent, anthropocentric, talkative, touchy, and pleasant. Also, green people often are highly optimistic; they see more opportunities than threats. Green people enjoy the easiness of daily life and like to do everything with as minimal effort as possible. Furthermore, when the green person talks about his or her future it usually consists of days, weeks or months; the green person do not think or plan things too much beforehand. Usually green person can be seen working in occupations that are close to people and where they can work with their hands, for instant restaurants, bars, clothing stores and barbershops. Besides working in fields close to people, they can also be seeing working in occupations where a great imagination and generating new ideas are important, for example, artists, musicians, advertising agencies and decorators. (Dunderfelt 1998, 54-58.)

The green person does not aim at making a big number of him or herself in public. However, the green person often ends being the centre of attention. Others usually enjoy being around green people because they are highly people oriented and want others to enjoy themselves around them. Frequently, the green person can be recognized by driving a really colourful car or having a flashy cell phone cover. Although having a visible car or a cell phone it can often have knocks all over it; the green person does not mind if something is broken as long as it does its job. Moreover, the green person likes to be around humans and also likes to touch other people while talking to them. Others often sees the negative sides of green people that they are irresponsible and lazy, they constantly lose track of time and are late, their logical thinking is not their strongest side and also that they can change their minds truly quickly which makes it hard to conduct a contract with them. Rarely a person with a green personality and a person with blue personality are seen together as a couple or as co-workers. (Dunderfelt 1998, 54-58.)

In conclusion, emotional world is really important for the green person; he or she usually makes purchasing decisions only based on feelings rather than rationality. Because of this it is important that the green person likes and enjoys talking to the salesperson. When the seller negotiates with a person who is highly green it is good to remember that he or she is not that strong with logics and does not care about detailed that much; it is better to remain the conversation within a broad picture and to use real life examples to make it easier for the green person to follow and to understand the issue. Also, the green person gets bored truly easily, due to that it is effective for the salesperson to include the green person in the conversation more frequently and also draw the big picture around the green person. The most beneficial words to use when persuading the green person are carefree, easy, ease up, uncomplicated, simple, flexible, surprise, right away, quickly, practical, handy, great solution, helpful, supporting, and unnoticed. (Dunderfelt 1998, 54-58.)

There are ways for the salesperson to prepare for the sales meeting and assure the sale with the green person. Because the green person changes his or her mind easily it is important for the salesperson to assure the sale immediately by signing the contract right away, or as soon as possible after the meeting. Also, the green person is known to be impatient and does not enjoy waiting; the salesperson could prepare to this and give samples to the customer right away or send it to the green person as soon as possible. Usually, it is harder to persuade the sale to the green person if the contract fulfils after few years. Because green people can be easily lazy, the hardest part for the salesperson is to persuade the green person for the sale, and make him or her wanting to see the effort to make the changes for their current situation. It is efficient for the salesperson to keep these three factors in mind when negotiating with the green person. (Dunderfelt 1998, 54-58.)

2.3.3 Red Personality

A red people's personality and behaviour are mainly driven by action. People who are highly red have a strong will of achieving their goals. Willing is the red person's strongest character; he or she has a drive towards finishing tasks and usually has a really big ambition in life. For the red person it is extremely hard not to finish a task; if the red person cannot or is not allowed to finish a task he or she will feel disappointment of not succeeding in an assignment. Furthermore, the red person's life is full of tasks to complete, and he or she enjoys taking risks. (Dunderfelt 1998, 52-54.)

The red person is also extrovert but in a different way that the person with a green personality; the red person does not have as great of a need as the green person has to please people. The red person is more likely to speak his or her mind without considering if it would insult others. The red person's fundamental characteristics are observant, energetic, systematic, effective, straightforward, initiator, logical and they always have a goal to aim at. They are also honest, brave and have a strong will. Moreover, the red person is often highly impatient and does not like to talk small talk when he or she knows that there is a job waiting. The red person does not enjoy talking that much. However, when the red person talks he or she is truly honest with their words, and usually has strong opinions and is not ashamed to say them out loud. The red person is also really precise with his or her words. With emotions, the red person shows his or her emotions and opinions straight and honestly, and this might often irritate other people, especially the blue people who cannot understand why people show their emotions and feel that the red person expresses him or herself with no considerations. The red person's emotions are frequently raw and often uncivilized. (Dunderfelt 1998, 52-54.)

The red person usually has really strong beliefs of him or herself and does not often trust anyone to do a better job than he or she would do. Because of this the red person usually has many projects going on where he or she takes the main responsibility of the tasks. Also, when the red person shares factors from his of her life he or she often exaggerates, for instant the amount of salary he or she gains. Often the red person can be seen wearing expensive brand clothes and driving a visible unique car. Mainly, the red person sees his or hers future somewhat unrealistic. Besides exaggerating, the red person can take most of the recognition of a well-done project, even there would have been others working with the same project. Frequently, the red person can be seeing working alone or as a leader; usually the red person works for him or herself or then in occupations as a doctor, stock broker, flight captain, researcher, in transportation or night guard. There are characters that often raise negative feelings in others. These characteristics are self-centred, aggressive, impatient, and arrogant. The red person is not good at handling others' emotions and thinks that he or she is irreplaceable. (Dunderfelt 1998, 52-54.)

In short, there are factors which are efficient for the salesperson to remember when dealing with the red person. As said before, the red person can often be arrogant. Clearly, this is efficient for the salesperson to know, because the salesperson can admire and give compliments to the red person during the negotiation, and make the red person feel pleasant when someone knows his or her value. Also, the red person wants to be different from the mass and wants to show his or her success; the red person does not like to buy anything that is sold to regular people. Clearly, it is helpful not to refer to others when making a sales speech to the red person. The red person is often the one who tries a new product or service in the markets first. During the negotiation the red person is practical and thinks about tasks as much as they need to be thought. The red person might change a theoretical conversation in to a practical conversation. The red person often uses a lot of examples and asks hypothetical questions to understand the issue. The most effective words for the salesperson to use when persuading with the red person are effective, logical, new, individual, best, win, challenge, dynamic, opportunity, unique, tactic and strategy. (Dunderfelt 1998,52-54.)

2.4 The Seller's Plan

The salesperson should always have a plan and goals for every working day and every week. These plans should also include the people who the seller will contact, the use of time and how to contact the customers, via email or by phone. The seller should also outline on which stages are certain customer relationships and on which stage they should move next. The seller should also write down particular argument that he or she will use for certain customers or customer segments. A professional salesperson understands the importance of planning his or her work. However, professional salesperson also understands how significantly important it is to take breaks from work to sustain an excellent level of quality in his or her work. A salesperson should take short breaks from his or her work during the day to keep the tone of his or her voice enthusiastic and to sound professional. (Alanen et al. 2005, 36.)

There are three factors that have an impact on a seller's work: the amount of contacts, the customer segments and the quality of work. The seller should have a certain amount of contacts every day. The customer segments should also be right; there is no logic for the seller only to contact unprofitable customers. Furthermore, the quality of negotiations with customers should be in excellent and profitable condition. Seller should always make sure that the customer was satisfied with the product or service. The seller's duty is to take care of the customer in the level that the customer does not only make one purchase with the company, and then take his or her business to other competitors. The seller's responsibility is to assure that the relationship continues, and both parties stay satisfied as long period as it is possible. (Alanen et al. 2005, 36.)

2.4.1 The Six Steps of Contacting and Negotiating with the Customer

According to Mr Alanen et al. (2005, 31) a salesperson should familiarize him or herself with following the six steps when contacting and negotiating with a customer. The first step is the level of influencing the customer's knowledge; the salesperson's goal is to get the customer to remember the name of the company, the field where the company operates and which products or services does the company provides. The second step is the information sharing level; during this level of negotiation the salesperson should be able to give enough information, not too detailed, of the product or service to the client while still keeping the customer's interest. Furthermore, the third step's goal is to awaken and strengthen the customer's positive feelings; positive feelings should rise towards the selling company, the seller, the sales event and the range of products and services. The third step is followed by prioritizing which is the fourth step. The fourth step's main goal is to gain the priority from the customer towards the company's products or services. The fifth step is the level of insuring the customer that the offered product or service will satisfy and benefit the customer the most. The last step is the decision making step; during this level the salesperson's target is to make the customer to do a positive buying decision and to purchase the product or service from the company. In additional, the sixth step does not always take place during the first sales meeting. This stage often varies of how expensive the product or service is. If the product or service is expensive for the customer, he or she usually wants to think about it and weigh the pros and cons of it before making the decision. (Alanen et al. 2005, 31.)

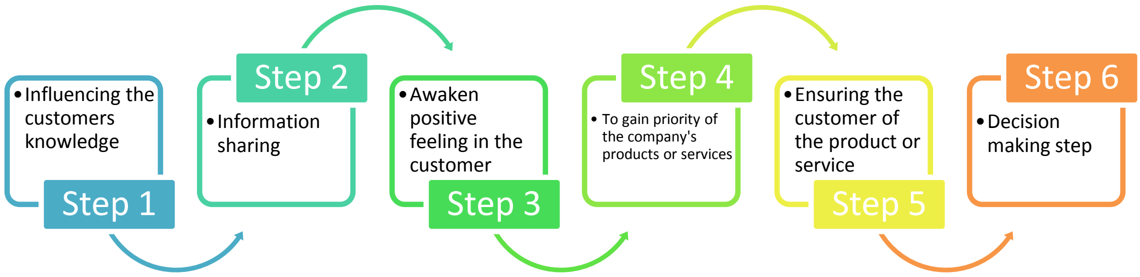

Figure 2: Six steps of contacting and negotiating with the customer (Alanen et al. 2005, 31).

2.5 The Standardized Way to Contact the Customer

When the Company X contacts the customer (Figure 3: Action 1) it can be a first phone call the customer receives from the company. If it is the first time the customer hears about the company it is important for the caller to share enough general information of the company to give the customer a picture of the field the company is operating in and why it is interested of that precise customer. The caller has to be careful not to go to too many details, since the caller does not know yet which factors persuade the customer the most and which factors the customer values. Also, it is essential for the caller try to gain the customer interest and make the customer feel that he or she is gaining something from attending for the sales meeting. If it is possible the caller should try to gain some information from the customer's life situation for the future sales meeting. (Alanen et al.2005, 71-71.)

When the booker or the salesperson calls the customer, he or she explains the customer that they might have a same interest and if the customer attends the sales meeting he or she will profit from it. There are two options where the conversation can move to. The option A (Figure 3: Option A) is that the caller gains the customer interest and settles to attend to the sales meeting. When the customer settles for the sales meeting the Company X's caller should make sure he or she receives the customers email address, so that the seller can send the customer an invitations to the meeting, where the driving directions to the company's office are also attached to it. The meeting can also be settled in the customer's place, especially if the customer is another company. In contrast, if the customer is not enough convinced of the benefits he or she will gain for attending to the sales meeting, and wants to think about it. If the customer wants to think about the sales meeting the caller can ask if he or she can send more information via email or by post. The caller can settle another time in the near future with the customer when it will be acceptable to call him or her again, this is option B (Figure 3: Option B).

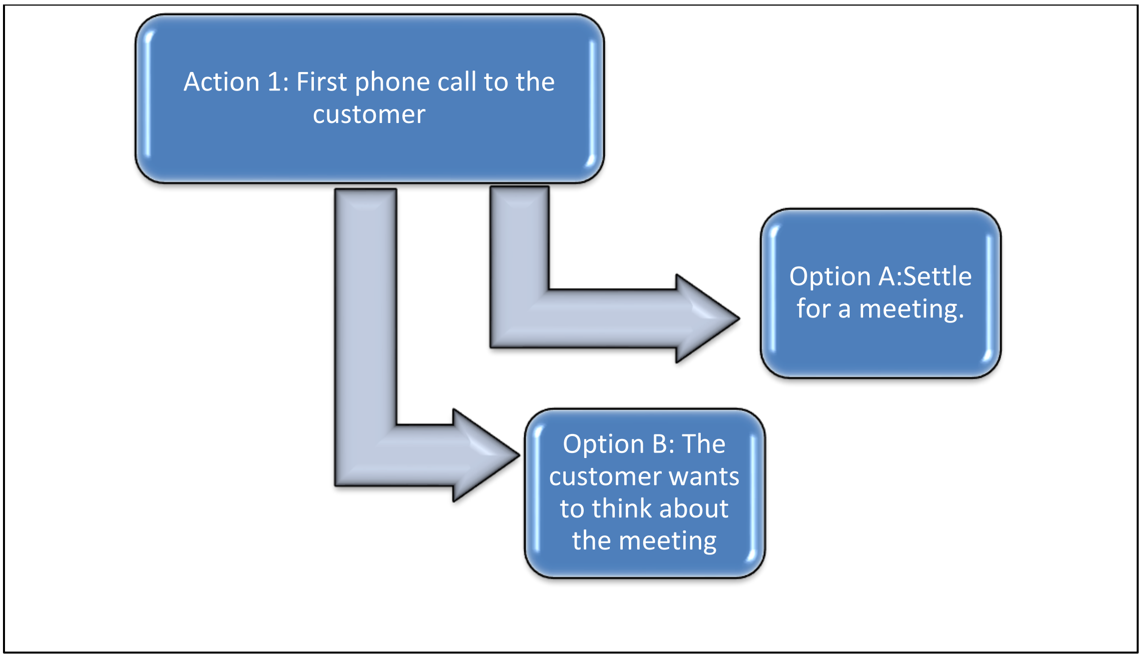

Figure 3: The first contact to the customer

If the caller is not able to gain the customers interest during the first negotiation or the customer did not see the actuality of the meeting the caller can try to persuade the customer again after a certain time. Usually the customer informs the caller when it would suitable to try to contact him or her again. It is critical for the caller to call the customer again, if he or she promised to do that. It can be crucial for the customer relationship if the seller forgets to get back to the customer during the settle time. (Alanen et al.2005, 71-73.)

First when the caller contacts the customer for the second time he or she should make assure that the customer received the materials which the caller promised to send after the first negotiation (Figure 4: Action 2). After assuring this, the conversation can similarly move as described above; either the customer is convinced to settle for the meeting (Figure 4: Option A), or then the customer still is not enough convinced that he or she would profit in anyhow of the meeting, and does not see a reason to attend to it. If the customer chooses option B, it is still important for the caller to thank the customer of his or her time and try convincing the customer later in the coming future. Also, the caller can guide the customer to contact them through email or by calling if he or she changes their mind in the future.

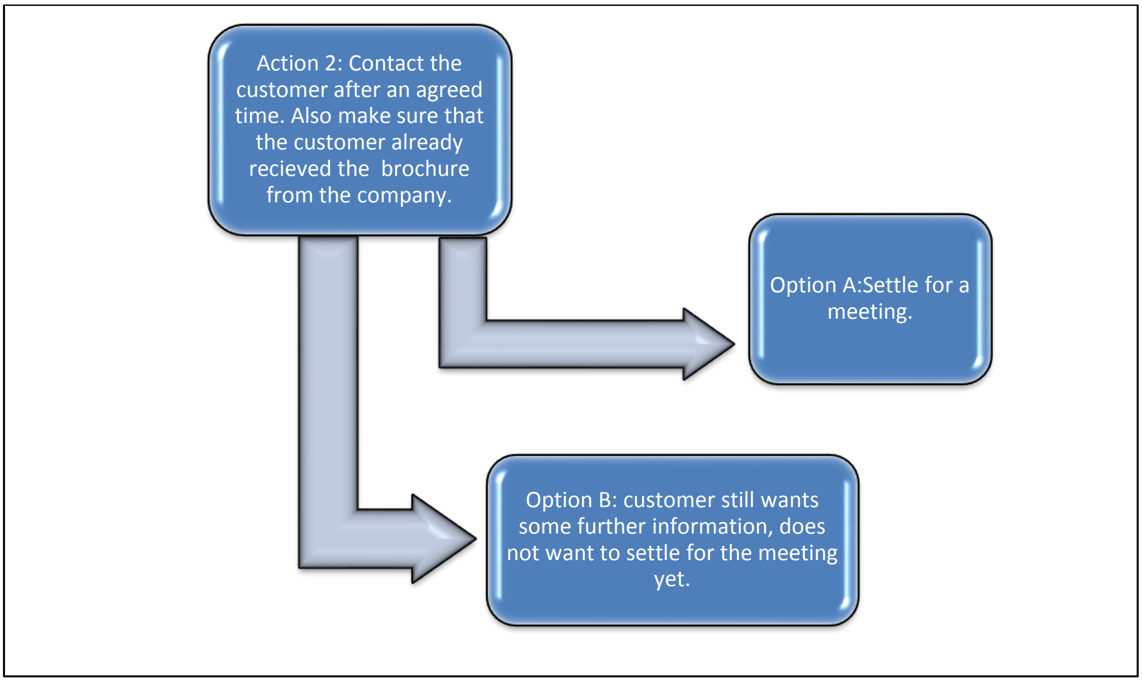

Figure 4: The second contact to the customer

2.6 The Seven Steps of Sales Negotiation

Every step of a sales negotiation needs preparing and setting up concrete goals; each step has its targets and backup targets if the customer is not ready to make the agreement with the first offer. Not only should the salesperson map out his or her tactics for the meeting and a plan how the negotiation should flow, but also the salesperson has to find out which parts does the seller need the customer’s acceptance on so that the customer would later approve the sellers offer in the decision making stage. (Alanen et al. 2005, 69.)

When building a new customer relationship and negotiation with the customer Mr Alanen et al. (2005, 69) points out clearly the steps the seller should follow when preparing for the customer. There are seven steps for the sales negotiation: contacting the customer for the first time, preparing for a meeting with the customer, opening the negotiation in the meeting, analysing and collecting information of the customer and his or her situation, argument the objections, asking for the decision, negotiating and agreeing on the future actions and after-care. The length of all these steps varies on the customer and his or her needs. Often convincing the customer for a purchasing decision takes more than just one meeting, it can take several times to convince the customer to make the purchasing decision. (Alanen et al. 2005, 69.)

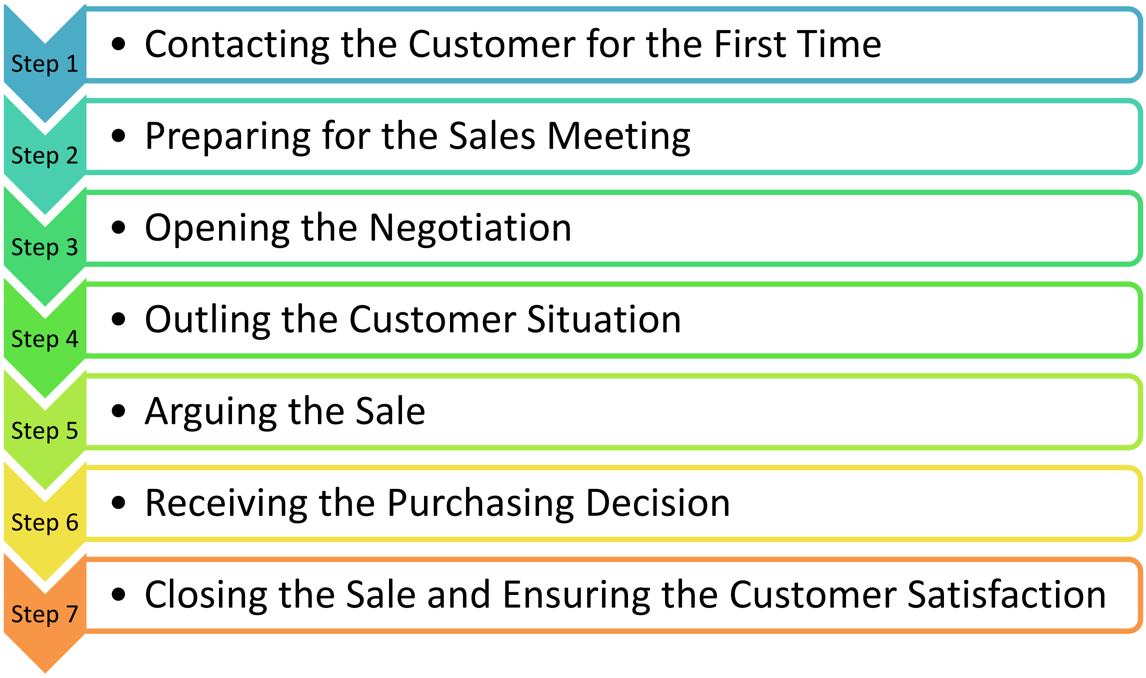

Figure 5: Seven steps of sales negotiation (Alanen et al. 2005, 69).

2.6.1 The First Step: Contacting the Customer for the First Time

The first step begins when the customer is contacted for the first time. Furthermore, the main goal during the first step is to awaken positive interest in the customer towards the contacting company and the sales event. The purpose for the first contact is to make the customer remember the company and the seller. Also, the seller should awaken the customer interest towards an interaction within the company and convince the customer to agree on a meeting. The seller’s purpose is to make the customer to understand that he or she gains something from the meeting, material value or knowledge, which gives the customer a reason to attend the meeting. The seller needs to be able to provide an idea that benefits the customer. If the seller is able to assure the customer of the benefits the customer will gain, the meeting can be settled, and the seller can continue to the next step. (Alanen et al. 2005, 71-73.)

After the meeting is settled, the customer will always search and weight the benefits he or she will gain from the meeting. Even before the meeting the customer seeks reasons for buying and builds a picture of the company in his or her mind. (Alanen et al. 2005, 71-73.)

When the seller prepares for the meeting he or she needs to find all the information available about the customer. The seller needs to be able to answer all the questions asked about the seller's company, even topics that have been in the media. Also, the seller needs to understand how much it costs for the customer to settle for the meeting, in other words how much his or her time costs. Customer weights all the benefits he or she might gain for the meeting and also the losses he or she will lose when attending to the meeting. (Alanen et al. 2005, 71-73.)

If the customer would not settle for a meeting, the seller should bear in mind, that he or she is always promoting the company and its goodwill. Even if, the customer does not settle for a sales meeting, the salesperson does a valuable job if the customer will remember the company, and pay more attention to it in the future. This will make it helpful to persuade the customer the next time to attend to a meeting. Clearly, it is important to leave the contacted person a positive feeling of the company. Not only will it be harder to make an appointment in the future if a negative picture is given of the company, but also it might have a negative impact on other customers when the customer, left with a negative picture of the company, shares his or her negative experience with colleagues and friends. (Alanen et al. 2005, 71-73.)

Besides the first goal, the seller needs to have a backup plan. Another goal is to make the customer convinced for future actions; the seller should offer to send materials via email or by post and then ask when would be a proper time to call back to the customer concerning the same issue. If the seller promises to get back on the issue after a certain period it is highly essential that the seller does get back to the customer, because otherwise the customer will be left with a negative and unreliable image of the company. (Alanen et al. 2005, 71-73.)

2.6.2 The Second Step: Preparing for a Sales Meeting

Second step is the stage where the seller prepares for the meeting with the customer. Clearly, the key to a successful sales meeting depends on how well does the salesperson prepare for the meeting. If the customer is left with a feeling that the seller was not prepared, it can harm the whole relationship and give a trustworthy picture of the seller and the company the seller is representing. In addition, a good preparing strengthens the seller's self-confidence and makes the conversation flow more naturally. A good preparation also creates interests towards the customer and his or her needs within the seller when he or she knows more about the customer. Furthermore, the seller needs to plan every meeting carefully and he or she has to have enough information of parties, the customer and the company the seller is representing. (Alanen et al. 2005, 73-77.)

Knowledge is power in selling; the more the seller knows about the customer, and especially of his or her future, the easier it is for the seller to ask precise question from the customer and to justify the sale to him or her. Furthermore, when the seller knows enough background information of the customer the easier it will be to focus the questions to a certain area. It gives more time to study the customer's body language and silent language when the seller holds basic information of the customer. Clearly, the customer similarly studies and observes the seller the first time even more accurately; the customer tries to find out if the seller is the person he or she wants to trust and do business with, and also the customer tries to find out what are the seller's values and do their values come across. (Alanen et al. 2005, 73-77.)

When the salesperson is preparing for the sales meeting the seller should view the meeting from a sales perspective and plan how he or she wants the customer to view the representing company and the seller. Furthermore, the seller should make a strategy of how the meeting should flow, which questions to ask, which are the goals for the first meeting and which issues would be on top of the customer's mind when he or she leaves the meeting. The seller should plan which goals he or she aims at gaining from the relationship during the first meeting and in the next years. The seller should also write down the backup goals for the meeting, if the first offer to the customer is not enough tempting or does not answer the customer's needs. In additional, the seller should not ever show his or her lost in front of the customer; the seller should always value the customer to the end, even if the customer would not make the purchase. (Alanen et al. 2005, 73-77.)

It is also important that the salesperson has a good foundation of the company he or she is representing; the seller should have enough information of different fields and departments of his company, how the media views the company, the company's resources, the company's turnover, how many employees does the company employ, which organizational structure does the company follow, customers, competitors, competitive advantages, the trends the company follows and the partners of the company. In other words, the seller should know at least the public information of his or her company. (Alanen et al. 2005, 73-77.)

Lastly, the company should always keep records of every customer, even from customers that were contacted without interest. The critical issue is if the seller is not aware that the customer has operated with the company in the past. If the customer has done business with the company in the past and the seller is not aware of this, it could harm the whole relationship. The customer does not ever want to feel that he or she is lost in the mass of other customers. It gives the customer an unprofessional, untrustworthy and impersonal picture of the company. In additional, records should always be kept in company's data base from every meeting, even if the meeting would not have led to a sale. Records will also help the salespeople later when doing a new sale with an existing customer. When negotiating with an old customer, the importance emphasizes in the fact that the promises and attitudes the customer received the last time are also kept in that meeting. (Alanen et al. 2005, 73-82.)

2.6.3 The Third Step: Opening the Negotiation

The third step involves opening the negotiation stage. Before opening the negotiation, the customer should have gained a good first impression of the seller and the company. The customer should be able to adapt to a positive negotiation environment which the salesperson creates. The seller can assure positive expectations from the customer by sending the customer enough information and positive reminder messages before the meeting. The customer typically has a preconception and picture of the seller, the company and the products or services. Usually the customer seeks more for those preconceptions that he or she already has. If the customer has heard negative criticism of the company, the customer will try to search signs for especially those negative pictures he or she has. (Alanen et al. 2005, 78-82.)

A professional way to start the meeting is to tell the agenda to the customer and tell the customer why the company wants to meet him or her and emphasizes how the meeting benefits them. The seller gains the customer's interest when he or she points out how the customer benefits from the meeting. (Alanen et al. 2005, 78-82.)

The seller's main purpose is to lead and direct the conversation. However, the salesperson should bear in mind not to be too pushy because then the customer will easily withdraw from the negotiation while feeling pressured. If the customer starts to feel too pressured it can easily lead to a situation where the customer does not feel comfortable of making any decisions, and might start to focus on who is going to be the main ruler in the interaction. In contrast, the seller should not be too pushy or too polite. If the seller is too polite, he or she weakens his or her position of being the leader of the negotiation and can easily be pushed aside. The customer usually approves the fact that the salesperson is the leader of the negotiation; the seller should keep everything balanced during the negotiation and also concentrate on studying and reading the customer, even the customer's body language. When negotiating with a customer for the first time it is highly essential to keep a positive atmosphere and emphasize a positive approach. It is truly easy to lose a customer with wrong words or attitudes. (Alanen et al. 2005, 78-82.)

When the seller naturally involves the customer in every step of the negotiation this reflects respect towards the customer. A professional salesperson makes the customer feel that he or she is being the cooperating partner, not an opponent. To make the right and trustful connection with the customer, the salesperson should genuinely be interested of the customer and have an urge to resolve the customer's situation. If the seller believes in the product or service him or herself, the easier it will be to sell the product or service to the customer. (Alanen et al. 2005, 78-82.)

It is more professional to keep the customer in the conversation during the whole negotiation. If the customer is only the information receiver in the conversation he or she usually gets wearied and uninterested. The seller should always draw the picture around the customer; the most efficient method is to sell the idea to the customer by concretizing the customer using the product or service. Also, a good tactic to keep the customer in the conversation and sell the product to the customer later is to take multiply approvals of the product in the middle of the conversations. (Alanen et al. 2005, 78-82.)

During the negotiation, an effective method to approach the customer is to use the customer's words; if the customer uses a certain way to talk, certain tempo in his or her speech or certain words while referring to different issues it is good to use those words. It makes the customer feel that he or she was listened; their needs were paid attention to, and it makes it easier for the customer to follow the conversation. Also, if the customer points out items that he or she uses in their daily routines, the salesperson can concretize the price of a product or a service to the customer, by using the same items as an example when concretizing it to him or her. Such example could be that the customer smokes cigarettes, so the new solution would only cost the customer an X-amount of cigarette packets. (Alanen et al. 2005, 78-82.)

2.6.4 The Fourth Step: Outlining

The fourth stage involves outlining the customer's situation. Furthermore, the fourth stage is the key step for the salesperson to find justification for the customer to make a purchasing decision; the salesperson needs to be able to find out as much essential information of the customer as possible. The seller cannot move to the next stage before finding sufficient information to back up his or her sale; the seller needs necessary information from the customer’s situation to support his or her arguments. Besides outlining the customer’s present situation it is also good to know of the customer’s preconditions of similar products. (Alanen et al. 2005, 82-87.)

In fact, the seller should already outline which information is necessary to find out from the customer before the meeting. A helpful approach is to outline certain open and specific questions before the negotiation. Inspiring questions also reflect of the seller excellent preparation for the meeting; it gives and well prepared picture of the seller. Moreover, the seller should encourage the customer to take part of the conversations and make the customer ask question him or herself too. A good question helps both parties; the seller gains more information to support his or her arguments and it increases customer knowledge of own situation and needs. (Alanen et al. 2005, 82-87.)

The questions that are asked should be challenging enough for the customer and should open new points of view to the customer. Besides using direct questions, the seller should also use indirect questions. An open question, indirect question, typically helps the customer to understand his or her own situation and also gives valuable information for both parties. The direct questions specify an answer or make sure what the customer just said and did the customer understand the importance of his or her situation. (Alanen et al. 2005, 82-87.)

The most successful salespeople are able to ask questions that make the customer realizes a new need for something and sells the idea of a product to themselves while answering the questions. The questions should be such questions, which supports the sales arguments later in the conversation and should make the customer understand why the product suits for his or her situation. Also, for the seller it is beneficial to concentrate on the factors that matter to the customer the most; they are saving time, saving money, gaining profit, the quality of the product, efficiency, relief of basic routines or something else. Furthermore, acute attention is rewarded, usually the answer from one question leads to another question. The seller can use questions in a new way if he or she wants to emphasize the importance of the issue. Besides using some question again in the different form the seller can also use question with options in it. This is usually used to find out which are the most important parts for the customer. (Alanen et al. 2005, 82-87.)

Picturing the customer in a hazard situation is a beneficial method to awaken the customer’s interest. The seller should ask the how the customer would react and what would he or she do in a certain situation. This method refers to processing the customer situation through fear of losing something; the losses can be financial, safety or something else that is important to the customer. Helpful way to emphasize the situation to the customer is to use the customer’s language and to concretize the hazard situation to him or her, to make the customer understand the importance of the situation. (Alanen et al. 2005, 82-87.)

Leading questions are useful when a seller wants to introduce the customer a new point of view. Customer mainly gives “yes” or “no” answers to leading questions. A professional salesperson typically uses leading question when he or she knows enough information about the customer. Furthermore, leading questions are an excellent method to direct the customer to approve the sale arguments in the negotiation. However, when the seller asks a leading question from the customer the seller has to be careful not to assume too much about the customer. The seller also needs to be cautious not to make the customer feel that he or she is trying to affect too much on the customer’s opinions. (Alanen et al. 2005, 82-87.)

Even, the questions are important, too many questions should not be asked, and all questions should be asked in a conversational approach. The customer should feel that the questions are coming from the seller’s mind during the conversation; it is more professional to make the customer think that the seller does not have them written down. If the customer is asked numerous questions and the customer starts to feel that it is too much, the customer can withdraw him or herself from the conversation and it can make selling the even harder. There are also questions that should not be asked; the seller should be able to conclude the answer from the conversation. The seller always needs to be prepared to tell the customer where he or she needs the information for and where will the seller use it. (Alanen et al. 2005, 82-87.)

There are some mistakes the salesperson can easily do during the outlining phase. The first mistake the seller can do is when the customer tells the salesperson a problem he or she is having, and if the seller has a solution to fix that problem, the seller should hold back in that stage and finish asking all the questions. A common mistake is that the seller starts to sell the product to the customer before he or she has gained enough information from the customer and might use inefficient arguments to conduct the sale. Frequently, it happens that the first solution is not interesting enough for the customer to make the purchase and the salesperson loses his or her sale. The second mistake that salespeople easily make is by talking disrespectfully of the competitors or does not know the company’s competitors well enough. It is helpful to know what the competitors are offering. When the salesperson compares his or her company to competitors’ respectfulness, should always be used. If the competitor is talked in a disrespectful way it gives unprofessional picture of the seller. By talking respectfully of the competitors a trustworthy picture of the seller and the company can be given, there is no need to abuse the competitors. (Alanen et al. 2005, 82-87; Jolles 2009, 116.)

2.6.5 The Fifth Step: Arguing the Sale

The fifth stage consists of arguing the sale stage. After the salesperson gained enough information of the customer's situation the seller can start arguing the sale. The seller needs to provide enough information about the products, he or she needs to justify which products would be the most efficient for the customer and why. If the seller increased his or her knowledge of the customer in the outlining phase, the seller knows which supporting arguments he or she can provide. The seller can already estimate which are going to be the customer's objections. (Alanen et al. 2005, 89-108.)

Clearly, the main purpose for both parties in selling is to gain something from it. If the customer feels that the only one who benefits from the sale is the seller, the relationship can be terminated by those facts. In addition, the benefits that the customer will obtain from the product or service should be emphasized and introduced to the customer from his or her point of view, so that the customer is able to understand the value he or she would gain from the sale. The benefits the product offers should correspond to the customer's needs. The values the seller emphasizes should fit the customer's current life situation and should make the customer feel that he or she needs those benefits. (Alanen et al. 2005, 89-108.)

The basic fact is that a customer always makes a purchase for two reasons; he or she either wants to add or improve the current situation or then he or she wants to downsize a risk or reduce the situation. The salesperson also needs to understand the essential information of the customer's buying decision before arguing the sale; the customer makes a decision only based on a problem, not based on a need. (Alanen et al. 2005, 89-108; Jolles 2009, 78.)

Every seller faces objections from the customer. Objections are not a bad thing; if the customer places a lot of objections it reflects on the fact that the seller got the customer's interest. Objections should always be answered properly. If the seller gets a lot of objections from the customer, the best method to resolve the situation is to ask directly from the customer is there something that doubts him or her. (Alanen et al. 2005, 89-108.)

There are different kinds of objections that can be divided to four different categories: rational arguments, reasons of sentiment, personal reasons and tactical reasons. Rational arguments occur when there is information lacking; the customer has understood something wrong, the customer has had unpleasant experiences in the past with the company, the product or service, or then the customer just does not have enough capital to make the purchase. Reasons of sentiment or personal reasons occur when the seller awaken negative feelings in the customer; the customer does not feel that he or she would benefit that much to see the trouble to make the changes, the customer is afraid that his or her status will suffer if he or she makes the purchase, or the customer just feels that the product is not right for him or her. Furthermore, a tactical reason occur when the customer wants to win time and tries to make his or her position better than the sellers, the customer tries to emphasize that he or she is professional with the subject or if he or she tries to shake and weaken the seller's position. (Alanen et al. 2005, 89-108.)

Price is often a significant issue when the seller and the customer are discussing. Mainly this issue occurs when the customer does not feel that he or she will gain as much benefit from the service or product as it will cost. There are three valuable methods to remember when the price of a service or product is introduced. The first technique for the seller is to introduce the price by using a technique that is called the layer techniques. The seller first provides a benefit for the customer, then tells the price and then provides another benefit. By using the layer technique, it softens the price. The second effective method is to only use positive words when introducing the price, for instant, when the price is introduced the seller should not use costly or expensive words; the seller should rather use positive words such as valuable, appreciated or even worthy. The third method is to emphasize the security over costs. People are more motivated on the fear of losing something rather than gaining something from it. (Alanen et al. 2005, 89-108.)

When the customer doubts about making the purchasing decision, an effective method is to assure the customer by showing particular references. The references can be partners, other customers, legal factors or statistics. Typically the customer does not want to be the first one to take the risk, so showing real references can assure the customer of the sale. Most efficient way is to use references the customer already knows; if the customer works for a certain company he or she might consider the sale if the customer sees a prove that another person from his or hers company, someone he or she admires or from a competing company bought the same products or service. The references should always be discussed with the specific company before making them public to other customers. (Alanen et al. 2005, 89-108.)

2.6.6 The Sixth Step: Receiving the Purchasing Decision

The sixth stage is the stage where the seller receives the customer's purchasing decision. It is the salesperson's role to ask the customer's decision and also to make the decision making easier for him or her. The seller creates a positive decision making environment if he or she believes in the product or service him or herself, the seller knows every feature of the product or service, the seller is able to recognizing the customer's buying behaviour, the seller has been able to maintain a positive atmosphere for the whole meeting, the seller is able to direct the customer and knows when it is the right time to ask for the decision from the customer. By maintaining all of these factors, the seller creates an optimistic selling environment for the customer. (Alanen et al. 2005, 108-114.)

There are also a number of psychological actions the seller can do to support the customer's positive decision making. The first one is to talk to the customer in a way that the customer would already be using the product or service. In other words, the seller acts like the decision has already been done. This makes it easier for the customer to make the buying decision. However, the seller has to remember not to act too obvious. The second method is to try to avoid using conditionals when talking with the customer; conditionals create uncertainty in the seller, for instant, "if you would possibly buy this product" does not sound strong and believable. The third method is being proved to be useful, and many salespersons use this because they understand the power of "yes" answers. The method holds on gaining as many approvals as possible from the customer of his or her life situation and makes the customer agree on the benefits the product or service offers. In other words, get the customer to answer "yes" as many times as possible during the whole negotiation. This method makes it easier in the end to gain a positive decision from the customer. It is harder for the customer to answer "no", if he or she already agreed with the seller in so many points. It makes the customer see irrational if he or she answers "no" after so many factors he or she already agreed on. Even if, there would not be a sale it is good to gain "yes" answers and especially to ask if it is alright to contact them in the future or to send some material to their email. (Alanen et al. 2005, 108-114.)

2.6.7 The Seventh Step: Closing the Sale and Ensuring the Customer Satisfaction

The seventh stage is the stage where the salesperson monitors the sale, ensures that all the promises are met and makes sure the customer is satisfied. In short, this stage is called "the after work" stage. It has been estimated that almost 80 percentages of clients are lost because of lack of after work and follow up. During the last stage the seller makes sure that the conditions of the contract are met and that the customer is satisfied with the product. The customer's satisfaction is fulfilled when the customer feels that he or she gained enough return for the money the customer paid. (Alainenet al.2005, 114-120.)

Many times happen that after the customer makes the purchasing decision the customer might regret it right away or later. The salesperson's task is not only to make the customer do the purchasing decision, but also to make sure that the customer is and will be happy with the decision later. An efficient way for the salesperson is to make the customer feel that he or she made the right decision is to admire and desire the property the customer bought. As an example, first the salesperson should congratulate the customers of the wise selection and the taste he or she has, and then tell the customer something nice of the product or service he or she purchased. Another option the seller can do is that the seller tells how other customers have been happy with their choice, or that other customer would have wanted to have the same product or service but could not afford it. This makes the customer more assure of the decision he or she made. (Bettger 1977, 156.)

Clearly, the seller's goal after the sale is always a next sale, and the easiest way to make the next sale is it to sell to an already satisfied customer. The follow up and after work stages are always a part of the sale and when it is done properly it will make the customer sure about the decision he or she made. On the same time, it creates a great opportunity for the next sale. If the customer is satisfied with the product or service, he or she will be pleased to cooperate with the same seller again in the future, and also recommend him or her to others too. After the first sale, the next sale can be more easily done by phone if the customer is convinced by the company and the seller. (Alanen et al. 2005, 114-121.)

2.7 Different Methods to Contact the Customer

These days technology has advanced so greatly that there are many different techniques to approach customers. Even today contracts can be signed electronically through secure networks. The technological development has helped private people and companies to do business more efficiency. Because of the technological growth there are many factors that the company needs to take to its consideration. Everything can be made public in today's world, and companies need to understand the benefits and the harms this can cause to them when something is not done in a proper way.

2.7.1 Contacting the Customer by Phone

Usually the first contact to the customer is made by phone. Furthermore, it depends heavily on the sellers skills how the negotiation goes by the phone; will the seller be able to convince the customer to attend a sales meeting or not. If the company is not familiar with the customer, the seller's main focus should be in the first phone call; the seller should make sure the customer remembers the company's name, the field the company is operating, why the company is interested in the customer and also give a positive picture of the company. Throughout the first phone call if the customer does not settle for the meeting the caller can ask permission from the customer to send more information via email. If the customer settles for a meeting, the seller should remember just to sell the customer the idea of the meeting, and not to start to sell the product or service in that situation before knowing anything about the customer's situation. At first the seller needs to sell the customer the idea of the sales meeting, then schedule the meeting and in the meeting the seller ought to sell the product or service. (Alanen et al. 2005, 121-124; Bettger 1977, 144.)

The seller needs to have the control and has to be able to direct the conversation during the whole phone call. However, it is essential that the seller maintains a positive atmosphere during the whole negotiation. A professional salesperson is able to talk to the customer on the same level; he or she is able to use the same speed that the customer is using while talking, the tone of the seller's voice stays the same as the customers, and the seller is able to adapt to use the same words the customer is using. The seller should always avoid the feeling of rush when contacting the customer; feeling of rush weakens the opportunity to give trustful picture of the company. (Alanen et al. 2005, 121-125.)

How the seller approaches the customer in the beginning is highly important and it is the situation where the seller needs to right away gain the customer's attention and interest. When the seller calls to the customer the seller should act in a way that he or she was expected. However, the seller has to understand and respect the how the customer values his or her time. If the seller knows a bit about the customer he or she should move the conversation to something that the customer is familiar with to keep up the customer's interest. If the seller is not able to achieve the stage of interest, the customer can tell them really quickly that they are not interested and then the seller loses his or her opportunity. After a short and pleasant greeting the salesperson should right away introduce the reason for the phone call. The reason why the customer is being contacted should be presented shortly, efficiently, kindly and it should awaken the customer's interest. (Alanen et al. 2005, 121-125; Bettger 1977, 48.)

The sound and the tone on the sellers voice has an impact on how the customer sees and visualizes the company. The seller should be enthusiastic, happy, believable and clear in his messages. Moreover, Mr Bettger (1977, 110) studied the impact of a voice that was smiling during a phone call and the voice that was not smiling, and the voice with a smile in it won. The voice with a smile got more sales and meetings settled than the voice that was not smiling. Besides Mr Bettger's study it has also been proven many times that a smile can be heard from a person's voice and it leads to better results. (Alanen et al. 2005, 121-124; Bettger 1977, 110)

Mr Alanen (2005, 121-124) also points out helpful advice to remember when products and services are sold by phone: When services are sold by phone the greater focus lies on the seller and the feeling that the customer gains from the seller, while as when selling technical products by the phone, there is less focus on the seller than on the product. (Alene et al. 2005, 121-124.)

2.7.2 Avoid Routines

Salespeople, especially the salespeople, who contact the customer only by phone, the critical mistake they can do is sounding that the phone call is their twentieth or more phone call of the day. The most important picture the customer should gain from the conversation is that the salesperson wanted to call to that certain customer, and he or she is the only customer for the seller that day. Customers do not like to feel that they are lost in the mass of other customers; they want every contact to feel like it was personally made just for them. A salesperson should take breaks from his or her work; change the speeches he or she is using to get the customer’s interest, and to avoid the tone of a routine call. In other words, the salesperson should not sound like a machine when he or she calls customers. (Metsämäki 2011, 19.)

A company called Celectus Ltd made a study of how consumers perceive salespeople and which are the factors that can go wrong with a seller. It was found that in Finland most consumers get irritated by salespeople’s aggressive selling. However, the second irritating thing about salespeople was indifference. There is a fine line between these two features. The salesperson should be able to read from the customer, especially a Finnish customer, how the customer wants the seller to approach him or her. (Metsämäki 2011, 19.)

2.7.3 Contacting the Customer by Email

Email is a good tool for a salesperson to complete or fulfil his or her work. It is an efficient tool to communicate and send materials, contracts and follow up with the customer. Even if, emails are basic daily tools for employees, they should always remember that every email they send represents the company. Each email should be written in a professional and grammatically correct way. When a salesperson or any employee writes an email, they should always consider if the email is written in a way that it could be published on the company’s web page. Each company should take the time to establish ready written email forms to personnel to use; by doing so the company can avoid bad reputation and make sure that every email is done as proper as possible. Unprofessionally written emails are usually read carelessly and give an unprofessional image of the company. (Alanen et al. 2005, 129.)

2.8 Importance of Asking Question

Asking questions from the customer always helps the seller to argument his or her sale; by asking question the seller gains more information about the customer’s wants and needs and the seller can also find out if there are some factors that doubt the customer. There are different types of question that the salesperson can present to the customer in a different situation to persuade the customer closer to the purchasing decision. The reasons why it benefits the seller to place questions to the customer and these question forms will be discussed in the following.

2.8.1 Six Reasons to Ask Questions

There are six reasons why it is important for the seller to ask questions from the customer. The first, it helps the seller to avoid arguments. The second, it helps the seller to avoid talking too much; the seller involves the customer in the conversation even more when the seller asks questions. The third, the seller helps the customer to recognize his or her wants and needs; the seller's idea becomes the customer's idea. The fourth, it helps the seller to understand the other person's thinking. The fifth, it helps the seller to find the most vulnerable points, which are the key issues to close the sale later. Also the sixth reason is that it gives the other person a feeling of importance when his or her affections are asked. When the seller shows that he or she respects the customer's opinion and points of view, the customer is more likely to respect the seller's opinion and point of view. (Bettger 1977, 58.)

2.8.2 Open Questions

Open questions are the question which the salesperson replaces in the conversation when he or she aims at gaining information of the customer's desires, lifestyle, habits and point of views. Open questions are questions that cannot be answered with "yes" or "no" answers. Many salespeople have a hard time to place these questions and they often ask questions from the customers which includes "yes" and "no" answer, for instant an open question could be "what kind of factors do you look at before you make an investment?" Open questions are most useful when the seller meets the customer for the first time and needs to know as much information as possible to argue the sale. Also, usually people like to talk about themselves so open questions are good to encourage a customer to talk about their life and desires. Besides, open questions are a good way to find out valuable information about the customer; open questions are also good for small talk. (Chitwood 1996, 71; Jolles 2009, 86.)

When the salesperson places open question to the customer it is useful to use Mr Chitwood's FSQS technique. The FSQS stands for "friendly, silent, questioning and stare" (Chitwood 1996, 71). This refers to a technique that the salesperson places a question to the customer, then stops talking and lets the customer talk as long as possible, and also stares the customer with a friendly waiting look. However, more frequently it has been evidenced that many salespeople, because salespeople are often talkative, start to talk right after the customer only tells them one thing and this can cause the loose of some important information.

Because of this the salesperson should always remember to use the FSQS method (Chitwood 1996, 71.)

2.8.3 Reflecting Questions

Reflecting questions are used when the salesperson wants to know more about some issues the customer mentioned. A reflecting question refers to a method that the seller repeats the key words that the customer just said, for instant, this could be a situation that the customer says: “Last summer I bought myself a new car” and the seller would ask “A new car?” Not only do the reflecting questions make the customer share more information without even noticing it, but it also makes the customer feel that he or she is being listened. (Chitwood 1996, 72.)

2.8.4 Directive Questions

Directive question are manipulative questions; directive question are mainly used to introduce the customer a new point of view. These questions are many times presented when the salesperson wants to know what the customer would do in a hazard situation and also to push the customer closer to the sale. In other words, the seller asks the customer what he or she would do in a hazard situation, for instant, if the seller would sell insurances to insure investments, so that a investments would remain a part of its value if the economy would go down. The seller could ask the customer: “What would you do if the economy would go down and your investment would lose value?” If the customer does not have an answer to the situation it is easier to for the salesperson to argue his or her sale and if the customer has a solution, the salesperson can take a closer look at it and find out if there is something to support the first solution. (Chitwood 1996, 74.)

2.8.5 Close-Ended Questions

Closed-ended questions are useful to use when the seller wants to emphasize something or wants to make sure that the seller understood what the customer just said. Furthermore, closed-ended questions are usually helpful to use after a directive question. Closed-ended questions are questions that customers can only reply “yes” or “no”, for instant, a closed-ended question could be such as: “Do you feel that it is smart and important that your investments are save even if the economy would go down?”.(Chitwood 1996, 72.)

These questions can also be manipulative; these questions can be questions that are represented to the customer in a way that they answer “yes” to something rational which backups the sale later. With closed-ended questions, the salesperson can use the answers he or she gained from the customer before and use it in the sales argument. Furthermore, in the sales argument the seller can use “As you said before that it is smart and important to you that your investment are save even the economy would go down so this service provides you solution to keep the value on your investments. Does it not sound reasonable to make sure your investments are protected?” It would be irrational for the customer to answer “no” in the second question when he or she already agreed on the first one. Answering negatively in the second question would also make the customer look illogical. A beneficial fact with the close-ended questions is that the salesperson can ask the same question over and over again in different words from the customer to back up the sale later. (Chitwood 1996, 72.)

2.8.6 Feeling-Finding Questions

It is practical for the salesperson to understand how the customer feels about a particular issue, and what emotions and motivations the purchasing decision awakens in him or her. The customer can have certain feelings or opinions on some of the issues that are being processed during the negotiation, or the customer might have attitudes towards certain subjects. The salesperson should read the customer’s body language or listen carefully how the customer talks about particular topics and place questions of how he or she feels about the specific topic. The seller does not have to have the same opinions with the customer. However, if both parties’ opinions differ a lot from each other it is better to thank the customer of their point of view and say that it is interesting to see and learn how other people view the certain subject. If the customer feels that the salesperson does not respect his or her feelings or attitudes of a specific matter it can be crucial for the sale, because the customer might feel insulted. (Chitwood 1996, 70.)

2.9 Gestures to Persuade the Customer

There are small gestures the salesperson can do to persuade the customer closer to the sale. These gestures are gathered from different studies and from great salespeople who have used these small gestures to get closer to the sale by persuading the customer. These gestures should be helpful for the salesperson to remember in his or her daily work.

2.9.1 Facing Objections

It is being claimed that when the salesperson faces objections from the customer it is the real place where the selling starts and the salesperson is put on test. Usually, that is the situations where the excellent salespeople are recognized from the other salespeople. Also, certain customers might present objections only to see how the salesperson can tolerate in the situation and is he or she capable of answering professionally to the customer. (Bettger 1977, 41.)

A good method to face objections is to make questions of the objections. In contrast, if a customer makes an objection the seller should reply by answering the question and making a question of the objection to the customer to understand how important the issue really is to the customer. The seller should give the ball right back to the customer by asking him or her questions of the objection and challenging the customer to think more about the issue and the importance of the issue. By doing so, the customer gives the salesperson answers by asking question and answering them. Throughout this method, the customer often sells the idea of the product or service to him or herself, if the salesperson is capable of making the right questions of the objections the customer presents. Also, the method gives the seller valuable information about the customer. (Bettger 1977, 41-56.)

Mr Frank Bettger was one of the most successful life insurance salesperson in United States of America in the 1960's, and seventies 1970's, thereby he is paraphrased many times in the thesis. One discovery that he made during his long career was following: Mr Frank Bettger kept records of his sales and sales that failed during his career, and he found out that in more than five thousand sales negotiations with customers only in 38 percentage told him the real objections why not to make the purchase and other 62 percentage just gave him a reason that sounded good but there was a hidden objection –the real objection behind it. After Mr Bettger found out that the customers were not always telling him the real reason behind it he started asking the customer "In addition to that isn't there something else in the back of your mind?" (Bettger 1977, 66) and then usually the other 62 percentage would tell their real reason for not to make the purchase. (Bettger 1977, 65-66.)

As said above, the customers do not often tell the real issue that is concerning them of the purchase; the customer gives and objection that sounds good. However, it is not usually the real reason that concerns them, customers often has another objection that they do not want to reveal to the salesperson. The seller should always ask after facing a objection if there is something else that concerns them or then another efficient method that Mr Bettger used when he faced objections were to agree with the customer and always ask "why" as long as the real reason was found out. Furthermore, Mr Bettger emphasized a lot the power of "why" question word. There are many salespeople who are afraid to ask it, because they are frightened to lose their sale because of the objection they might face by asking "why". (Bettger 1977, 61.)

A way to find out the objections beforehand or make it irrational to the customer to present objection later is to involve the customer in the statements the seller is making. In other words, when the seller for instant says: "This is how the plan should go" is not convincing enough and does not take the customer into consideration. However, if the salesperson reconstructs his or her sentence and asks: "Do you not think this is how the plan should go?"

Often the customer answers “yes” and if he or she answer “no” it is easier to the seller to find out which things are behind the objection in that situation. It also makes the customer feel important if his or her opinion is asked in the situation. (Bettger 1977, 57.)

2.9.2 Enthusiasm

As Mr Frank Bettger is paraphrased many times in this thesis because he was a poor salesperson in the beginning of his career, but throughout his career he learned to be a successful salesperson and discovered several gestures that can build trust between the salesperson and the customer. (Bettger 1977, 8-16.)

Mr Bettger starts his book with what he thinks is the most important part of selling and what made him sell more than ever before. In the late 1950’s Mr Bettger was not that good of a salesperson and did not make that much profit. However, after trying to sell life insurances after one and half years without making almost any sales and nearly quitting his job he got a suggestion from his colleague one day, which had a positive impact on his sale numbers. The suggestion was: be enthusiastic always when approaching a customer. After that Mr Bettger forced himself to be enthusiastic every morning before he left to work. Only after couple of sales meetings the effort started to show as an increase on his sale flows. Being enthusiastic was one of the reasons which made him later one or the greatest life insurance salespersons in United States of America. (Bettger 1977, 16.)

When a salesperson is enthusiastic it often catches to the customer, and the customer feels interested because someone else is so eager to help the customer to find the best solution just for him or her. Always, when a salesperson contacts the customer the salesperson should at least act to be enthusiastic because it gives a positive and caring picture of the company to the customer. It has been estimated that when the salesperson negotiated with the customer it is only 5-10 percentage of the matter that affects the customer’s reaction, other 35-40 percentage is the salesperson’s voice and 50-60 percentage is the facial impressions and body language of the salesperson. (Alanen et al. 2005, 121; Bettger 1977, 16.)

2.9.3 Physical Appearance

As it was mentioned before the salesperson is a company’s business card; the salesperson represents the company and he or she should physically look professional and reliable. Physical appearance is the first issue the customer lays his or her eyes on. Elaborated physical appearance gives a professional picture of the seller and the company. The seller should focus on his or her physical appearance; if the seller in presenting a finance department or a consumer goods store the physical appearance is slightly different. Also, the salesperson should bear in mind that what kind of customer he or she is negotiating with. Clearly, a classical business dressing creates a professional and trustful picture of the salesperson. (Alanen et al. 2005, 73.)

2.9.4 Importance of Using the Customer's Name

When the salesperson has a discussion with the customer and wants to get the customer's full attention, it is advantageous to use the customer's own name. Throughout the whole negotiation if the seller uses the customer's name in suitable situation the seller is more likely to gain the customer's full attention, and the customer will concentrate more on what the seller is telling him. Also, the customer feels more respected and feels that the seller is only making the speech to him or her, not to every customer. (Bettger 1977, 112.)

2.9.5 Involve the Customer

Showing figures and statistics to a customer are an effective method to convince the customer of the purchase. However, the technique that the salesperson uses can also have an impact on the customer. Mr Bettger found an advantageous method to influence the customer throughout numbers and statistics. He involved the customer in the part where he presents them. He gives the customer a pen and makes him write down the numbers, for example how much money he or she would gain from an investment and with what percentage change would the profit grow. When the customer is involved by writing the numbers out he or she will understand and adapt the idea much easier and the customer will easily remember the numbers - the benefits the customer will gain. Also, the salesperson can use the method to make the customer write down all the pros and cons that the customer would gain from the purchasing decision. (Bettger 1977, 153-155.)

2.9.6 Let the Customer Know He or She is Being Appreciated

All humans are the same in a way that each and everyone want to feel important, and people enjoy when they are praised. Also, people are delighted to tell their own achievements, and they love to be listened. Mainly humans prefer sharing their own stories rather than just listening to the opponent. Furthermore, the more the salesperson listens and wants to hear about the customer the more will the customer enjoy sharing his or her time with the seller. Honest appreciation from the salesperson often makes the customer feel that the salesperson is the person they enjoy working with and they want to do business with. The hard part for the seller is to not to make it too obvious and tasteless when praising the customer. A classy and useful praise are to praise the customer of their business and how they achieved the position where they are right now. Moreover, people also enjoy hearing if they helped the other person or if they were an inspiration to others. (Bettger 1977, 52,104; Chitwood 1996, 62.)

2.9.7 Using Close People to Conduct the Sale

The salesperson should be more a buying assistant to the customer rather than an opponent; it creates confidence and trust between the customer and the seller. The customer will value and appreciate the seller more if he or she is more of a close friend to him or her rather than a seller. Also, the salesperson should make the customer feel that the customer is more a friend to the seller than just a customer whom the seller is trying to profit. Whereas to build a bonding environment the salesperson can use an efficient method to build this kind of trust between both parties. It is a method where the seller uses a close friend or a relative example when he or she is trying to persuade the customer, for instant, the salesperson could use “if you were my sister I would tell you to”. However, the seller should not make it too obvious, because the customer could start to doubt the seller’s sincerity. Besides using close friends or relatives as an example when trying to persuade the customer, the seller should also be able to tell the customer when he or she thinks that the customer is doing a wrong decision; by doing so, the customer will trust the salesperson even more when the seller is not just trying to sell anything possible to the customer. (Bettger 1977, 51.)

2.9.8 To Arouse Fear

Moreover, a helpful method to push a customer to make a purchasing decision is to make the customer or something the customer owns feel more protected. This is the method where the customer makes a purchasing decision because they are in fear of losing something. For instant, insurances are a good example: People buy insurances because they are in fear of losing something that they cannot afford to lose and they buy a solution. If they would lose the item they would get a new one to return or at least get some of the money back from it to purchase a new one. (Bettger 1977, 48-49.)

People are mainly more scared of losing something that they already own rather than gaining something they do not yet have. In other words, to arouse fear in a customer is an efficient way to make a sale, when the company sells solutions to fix a problem. It is also important to have other factors to support the sale. However, the factor that arouses fear in the customer is usually the most efficient one to make the purchasing decision. The seller sells the customer a solution that protects the customer or the customer’s commodities. (Bettger 1977, 48-49.)

2.9.9 To Use Examples

An efficient way to make the customer understand the benefits he or she will gain is to draw a picture of the situation to the customer where the customer is in, or then use real life examples what happened to the seller or his or her friends, relatives or even to other customers to make the certain customer to understand the importance of the issue. (Altman 2002, 52.)

2.9.10 To Summarize the Meeting to the Customer

Always after a sales negotiation it is professional from the seller to summarize to the customer what was just discussed and also make the final changes. It is advantageous to the seller to summarize briefly after certain topics and do a final summary of everything, especially the benefits the customer will gain. If the salesperson summarizes the issues discussed in the meeting, the customer will more likely be able to remember all the benefits he or she will gain from the purchase. (Bettger 1977, 166.)

2.10 Conclusion of the Theoretical Background

Excellent selling techniques are vital to all companies to understand and to have. The theoretical chapter was built to match the Company X's environment and to fit the company's sales culture. The goal for the theory was to introduce a broad picture of selling, and persuading. The theory was a framework for the Company X's employees, especially for the salespeople. The theory was outlined in five sections.

First the theory defines and introduces the basic factors of sales, a salesperson, a customer, the customer purchasing decision and the customer buying process. The salesperson needs to be able to understand these factors discussed inner sections one, two and three before he or she can move to the next part. The second step involves the processes of how the salesperson should act, and how every step of the sales processes should be conducted from contacting the customer the first time to closing the sale and assuring that the customer satisfaction is fulfilled. These parts give the salesperson a written plan what he or she should do in every step of a customer relationship, it guides the salesperson through the processes. The part draws also attention on which parts the salesperson should lay more attention to not to lose the customer. The third step introduced methods how to contact the customer and factors the salesperson should be cautious with when negotiating with a customer. Mainly the first time the customer is contacted it is done by a phone call. The third step follows the fourth step where different question methods are introduced. These theory parts, part seven and eight, support one another because the question asking methods helps the booker or the salesperson to persuade the customer to attend a sales meeting or to close a sale. Well placed questions can persuade the customer to realize him or herself that they need a certain solution to fix a problem. It is efficient for the salesperson to use these different question forms in certain situations to get the customer realize him or herself the vitality of the issue. The fifth step paraphrases small gestures the salesperson can do to persuade the customer even more efficiently. The small gestures are mainly discovered from great salespeople through history. The salespeople often learned these small gestures from their own or colleagues experience.

3 Research Approach

The research of the thesis was done by using qualitative study method in it. The qualitative study a method is often also called an action study. Moreover, before choosing the study method all different study methods were studied carefully and the best one to fit the Company X's and the thesis's nature was chosen. Qualitative study method was seen as the best one to fit in the case, because there were not that many employees who could participate in the interviews so the sampling would have been too tiny for quantitative study method. Most of the questions were also open questions, which makes it easier to use qualitative study method when analysing the answers. Qualitative study method provides a technique how to process a questionnaire and how to analyse the outcome of it.

For Company X, the action study was done by interviewing the company's employees, and also own information of the company's processes and culture was used. A questionnaire was used in the interviews. Whereas, open and close-ended question were used to find out if the employees in the company found out the theoretical part of the thesis valuable and suitable for their business environment. The theoretical chapter of the thesis will be used as a guidebook for the company's employees to approach customers and to support their sales meetings

3.1 The Questionnaire

Four employees of the Company X were asked the following question for the empirical study:

a. How long have you been working for the company?
b. Have you been in other comparable types of occupations before entering Company X work force?
c. Did you find the thesis's theoretical part helpful
    i. In your own work?

ii. For the company, especially for new salespeople?
iii. For the bookers?

d. Did you find the theoretical chapter convenient to the company's working environment?
e. Are you going to try some of these sections of the theoretical part in your own sales meetings? If yes, which one?
f. Did you find any similarities in the theoretical part within your company?
g. Which were the critical parts of the thesis? Which parts of the theory will be hard to conduct to the company's operations model?
h. To improve sales flows which parts in a sales meeting should be paid more attention to?
i. Do you feel it would be important to lay daily goals for the salespeople of the company?
j. Do you feel it could be efficient to make a specific form for the salespeople to fill in so the company could see where in the stages is the biggest customer leak?
k. How did the thesis's theoretical part answer your expectations?
l. Were you happy with a certain part?
m. Were you dissatisfied with a certain part?
n. What else you would wish to have in the thesis?

The questionnaire can be found from the attachment section (attachment 1).

3.2 Chosen Method

The qualitative research method was chosen for the thesis's study method because it fitted it the best. Qualitative study method is a widely used method.

In Scandinavia, the qualitative methods became popular in the 1970's. Qualitative research method is often also referred to an action study method. The qualitative research method is a method that gives a technique how to process a study material and how to analyse the outcome of it. The method gives a direction how to examine and evaluate the studied issue; it gives a practical way to understand the matter. Furthermore, the main purpose of the qualitative research method is to understand and to adapt the studied topic. Qualitative research method benefits usually by providing new ideas and new information of the studied subject. (Janhonen & Nikkonen. 2003, 21-22.)

Using the qualitative research method takes the examiner near the topic and the studied issue. Furthermore, the examiner is not supposed to involve his or her own believes, attitudes, and values to the studied subject. The examiner aims at interacting with the examinee and tries to adapt the examined person's perspective and points of view of the issue that is being processed. During the study, it is important to try to find the essential issues concerning the study. It is also important for the examiner to frame his or her studied field. (Aaltola & Vallin. 2001, 68-71.)

In qualitative method, the basic techniques to collect information are interviews, observation, questionnaires and by studying varieties of data's. The main method that was used in the thesis to collect information was interviews. The examiner examines the studied persons with an interview; the interview can happen in groups or only between the examiner and the examinee. Usually the group interviews are seen more affective because of the flow of the conversation and the environment is often seen easier to the studied person to adapt to. Frequently, new ideas are born during these group interviews when people discuss the topic and share their own ideas, emotions and points of view. During the interviews, the examiner observes the studied persons and their answers and emotions (Aaltola & Vallin 2001, 68; Tuomi & Sarajärvi 2003, 73).

One of the main methods to collect information is to use a questionnaire. The method how the questionnaire is implemented can vary. The examiner can be there him or herself to examine the studied persons or then there can be someone else who supervises the questionnaire. If the examiner is there to supervise the questionnaire he or she can make more precise question if there are some misunderstandings. However, there is need to have someone to supervise the questionnaire; the examinee can also answer the questionnaire by him or herself. (Aaltola & Vallin 2010, 103-108.)

Even if, qualitative research method is widely popular in Scandinavia there is no clear definition for it or a clear plan how to carry out a study, it only gives a direction how to precede the topic. It does not provide precise answers how to implement every step of a study, it is more of an upper concept for multiply different study methods; the qualitative study methods can be adapted to many studies. Hence, qualitative research method does not have its own theory. A theory, which is chosen for the study is useful in the qualitative research method if the theory helps the studied issue. In a qualitative research the amount of materials is not the key matter, it is the acceptability of the study. In a qualitative research method it is more important to gain something useful from it rather than the amount of materials which are in the study. (Aaltola & Vallin 2010, 19; Metsämuuronen 2008, 9).

Qualitative research method differs extremely of quantitative research method; the methods are one another's opponents. Quantitative research method concentrates on numbers and statics rather than qualitative research focuses on adapting the studied issue. If a study is not quantitative, it is qualitative. Qualitative research is more often seen as text rather than numbers. Also, in a qualitative research method usually the study sampling is taken under consideration while in a quantitative research typically incidental sampling is used. In a qualitative research method the studied issue is chosen with a belief that the phenomenon can be studied. Furthermore, in a qualitative research method the analysing part is more material oriented. (Aaltola & Vallin 2001, 68.)

3.3 Defining Empirical Study within the Thesis

The definition of an empirical study is that it is a study. The research of the study is not only based on a theory but also on an experiment - evidence. In contrast, the evidence in this thesis is the answers of the questionnaire. In other words, the empirical study in the thesis is to see how the company found the theoretical part useful to fit the company's norms and environment. In a empirical study the examiner can use qualitative or quantitative study method. The qualitative research approach observes the studied persons opinions, emotions behaviours and values. As in the quantitative study method numerical data is analysed. In this thesis the qualitative study method is used. (University of La Verne 2012.)

Mr Eskola &Mr Suoranta (2008, 137) points out well that in an empirical study when using qualitative study method the most challenging part of it is the analysing phase. By keeping a clear picture of the results in the examining phase the analysing was done by using a content analysing method. In brief, this means that after the questions and answers are outlined, all the answers were summarized together so that the issue can be analysed shortly and rationally. (Eskola et al. 2008, 137; Janhonen & Nikkonen 2003, 23.)

3.4 Validity and Reliability

In a qualitative research the validity and reliability is ensured when the examiner explains well all the details which included in the implementation of the study. The examiner should outline the interviewed employees' background, the environment where they had the opportunity to answer the questions and the length of how long time the employees had time to think about the issues. It is important that the employees were interviewed in the same environment, and by using the same questionnaire, so that the answers would be as dependable as possible and that the environment would not affect the person's opinions. Also, the examiner has to explain also the critical parts that disturbed the interviews and affected the qualitative study. By keeping the validity and reliability within the study, the examiner should not embellish the results and is not allowed to misguide the reader. (Hirsijärvi, Remer & Sajavaara 2009, 25-27, 232.)

After the theoretical part was completed, it was introduced to the Company X, and while it was introduced to them also the questions of the theoretical part was presented. The company’s employees had approximately two and half months’ time to get familiar with the material and answer the questions. The employees were allowed to answer the questionnaire by themselves. Furthermore, the employees had a good amount of time to think about the material and how it would possibly affect on their daily work in the future; the employees also had time to try some of the methods in their sales meetings. The challenging part with the interviews was to gain the answers from the employees in time, because the employees were asked to get familiar with the theoretical part and answer the questions during the summer and their vacations.

Four employees of the company were supposed be interviewed. However, two of the employees never handed in their answers, so there were two employees interviewed for the thesis’s empirical study in the end. Moreover, to keep the company and the employees anonymous their answers were labelled as person A and person B. The employees’ background is summarized as follows: The interviewed people’s entire main task is to be an adviser for customers and their work also includes selling and persuading a customer. Furthermore, the advisers work is as well highly sales oriented and they regularly obtain potential new customer themselves. The employees had worked for the Company X already for two and a half years. Both employees had previous experience as being an adviser and working among sales already from 9-15 years before entering the Company X’s workforce.

3.5 Methodology; How the Study was Carried out and How the Data was Processed

The qualitative research was supposed to be carried out by interviewing four employees of the company. However, two of the employees’ answers were received from the Company X in the end. The interview was done to employees who have already worked for the company for years. First the employees were introduced with the guide, the theoretical part of the thesis and then the employees were interviewed.

The qualitative research was implemented by using a questionnaire where was several open questions and also few close-ended questions used, in other words question with “yes” and “no” answers. First the questionnaire was started with the basic questions of the person’s background within the company and the background before starting to work for the Company X. The goal of the questionnaires was to find out, if the employees found the theoretical chapter helpful for their and new salespeople’s everyday work, did the plan give the employees a new perspective to see how the customers’ mind work and how to approach customers, did it change their working methods for future sales meetings and was the plan occurred for their company’s business environment and culture. The questionnaire was kept short, because the goal was to keep the examined person’s interest and enthusiasm in the questionnaire; too long questionnaire can take the examined person's interest away from answering properly. (Aaltola & Vallin. 2001, 102; Aaltola & Vallin. 2010, 104-105.)

In the questionnaire, many open questions were used because they help to analyse the study. Open questions give an advantage to understand the examinee's opinion, emotions and points of view. Also, new points of view and ideas are often found out by using open questions. However, open questions are more challenging to analyse and many times the examinee might also understand the question differently and answer next to the topic. It was also important not to make any leading questions so that the study would be as truthful as possible. (Aaltola & Vallin. 2010, 103–104, 126.)

In the questionnaire, a half structured question method was used to collect information. This method refers to a method where the questions are the same for every employee. However, the answer choices were not given to the employees, they had the opportunity to answers to the question by using their own words and own opinion. This half structured method variances from the basic structured method; not only are the questions same to all the employees but also all the employees are given readymade answer choices for the questions in the basic structured method. The structured method is easier to analyse due to the readymade answers. The structured method might not expose any new ideas with the readymade answer choices. The person who makes the questions and the readymade answer choices might not think about some factors that are also important for the company. In conclusion, for this thesis the half structured method was seen more efficient and that some new ideas could be born. (Eskola et al. 2008, 86.)

After the data was collected from the interviews the data was analysed. In the analysing part a content analysing method was used. This means that the answers were summarized of the collected materials so the issues can be described shortly and that the answers are tenable. The answers were categorized to similar answers and dissimilar answers. After the data was analysed and processes the recommendations and a conclusion was written. (Janhonen & Nikkonen 2003, 23.)

4 Empirical Study

First the empirical study starts by introducing the Company X's current situation and then the study continues by analysing the results of the interviews. The empirical study was conducted by using interviews and own knowledge of the company X's culture and norms. There were two employees interviewed of the theoretical part and the usefulness of it in their and other employees’ daily work. The empirical study was done by summarizing the answers to four different categories: the usefulness of the thesis, similarities in the thesis within the company, critical parts, advices for the future and the whole picture of the theory.

4.1 Situation of the Company

The Company X’s environment where the company operates is highly sales oriented environment, and there are many rivals competing for the same customers. The company has grown widely during the last years; it has expanded from five employees to approximately thirty employees. The company has done it mainly with already existing customers. However, now the company came to a point that it wanted to start to gain more new customers and sell more to existing ones. By reaching these new levels the Company X wanted to increase its employees’ knowhow in sales and sales strategies.

4.2 Result of the Study with Comments

In following parts, all the answers from the interviews will be outlined, summarized and analysed. First the questions and the employees answers are introduced then they are analysed more in details. The first questions that involved questions concerning the advisers’ background (A and B) are not outlined anymore; the employees’ background was summarized in the previous “Reliability and Validity” chapter.

4.2.1 Usefulness of the Theory

Question C: “Did you find the theoretical part helpful in your own work, for the company, especially the salespeople and for the bookers?”

Person A:”The theory was familiar for me, but it is good to once in a while review basic factors among sales. For new salespeople the theory will helpful. It will help them to understand fast the basic structures of selling and understand how the sale processes will work. For bookers’ the whole theory will not be necessary to learn. However the different personality types will be efficient for the bookers to recognize. The ‘closings’ for a sales meeting could improve considerable when the booker would be able talk to the customer in his or her own ‘language’. In my opinion I think this is the most important issue for the booker to learn.”

Person B: “For me it was good revision. Different theories were sampled and combined well in a compact information packages. For the company it will be useful especially for the salespeople. It is good basic knowledge among sales and the data of different personality types and sales processes will be beneficial. For the bookers the guide will be useful, especially for the starting bookers it builds a good basic structure among sales.”

The employees were asked how useful they found the theoretical part of thesis. Furthermore, both employees felt that for them, the theory was a good revision of selling, and how to persuade different customer in different phases of the sales negotiation. However, they did not find that the theoretical part taught themselves anything new concrete; it only reminded them of some points to remember in their meetings. In additional, the employees understood that the theoretical part would be truly helpful for new sales people to understand the basic structures of selling and persuading. The employees likewise found segments of the theoretical part to be useful for the bookers.

Question D: “Did you find the theoretical background convenient to the company’s working environment?”

Person A: “Yes. We have professional salespeople working for us, and in my opinion the theory supports our business concepts. Our work is professional selling that base on trust.”

Person B: “Yes I found. Our work includes working with people and in this theoretical guide these processes are systematically discussed which benefits us the most.”

Furthermore, the employees also came to a conclusion that the theory part fitted the company’s business environment and culture because the company’s working methods are close to people and persuading customer plays a enormous role in their environment. For these parts, the theoretical section was useful for the company.

Question E: “Are you going to try some of these sections of the theoretical part in your own sales meetings? If yes, which one?”

Person A: “The basic factor of selling might sometimes be forgotten. Sometimes it is good to stop and rehearse the issues that the customer values. I am going to try to use the FSQS techniques even more in the future. Sometimes I get so carried away with my own ideas and the company offering that I forget to ask enough questions from the customer.”

Person B: “I am going to try to use several sections in my work. For other salespeople and bookers I find it suitable to especially to learn the personality types and why people make buying decisions”

Person A especially pointed out that he should more often remember to use the FSQS technique when negotiating with customers to find out more information about them. He told that frequently he gets so exited of his ideas and the company's offering that he forgets to ask enough question of the customer situation. The person A could concentrate in the first half of the meeting only on the customer's situation and give just pieces of information from the company's offering to keep the customer interest within the company. In the future it would be easier for the person A to argue the sale to the customer when he holds enough information from the customer. Besides the FSQS technique, both employees also suggested that the bookers could study the different personalities from the theory to understand various personalities and how to react when negotiating with a person who is highly blue, green or red. Clearly, if the bookers would be able to recognize different personalities, it would help them to close the meeting while they would know which type of words and factors persuade the person the best.

The person B came across with a proposal that not only should all the new sales people and bookers learn to recognize the different personalities, but also they could get familiar with the reasons why a person makes a buying decision. By doing this, the new salespeople and bookers could be able to understand which factors effects on the customer's decision making. While, understanding these factors salespeople and bookers could be able to persuade the customer closer to the sale or the meeting. If a salesperson, or a booker recognizes why a person makes buying decisions it could help a salesperson or a booker to argument the sale or the meeting even more efficiently because he or she would be able to argument it from the customer's point of view.

4.2.2 Similarities in the Theoretical Part within the Company

Question F: "Did you find any similarities in the theoretical part within your company?"

Person A: "The company's business activities' work pretty much around the six steps when customers are contacted and around the seven steps in the sales processes.

Person B: "Yes, almost every part, but it is not written out anywhere."

Both employees' also recognized many similarities within the theoretical part. For instant "Six steps of contacting and negotiating with the customer" and "The seven steps of sales negotiation" they found similar to their company's own methods. Furthermore, the first six steps works similarly in the company's business activity when contacting the customer and the seven steps work similarly in the sales process. Person B discovered that many methods that were pointed out in the thesis were already working in the company's culture. However, the methods were not ever written for Company X’s business processes. This gives the company a great advantage in the future when they have these processes written out. It will be easier for all salespeople adapt to one process and follow it, and it will also help the new employees to enter the company’s sales force when they have one written out plan to follow and just someone explaining it to them. Frequently, people understand easier these complex processes when they are written or drawn down for them.

4.2.3 Critical Parts

Question G: “Which were the critical parts of the thesis? Which parts of the theory will be hard to conduct to the company’s operations model?”

Person A: “The critical part is to get the bookers to internalize the needed information, so that they could positively stand out from other competitors. The booker is often the first person to contact the potential new customer. He or she should not tell too much to the customer, but some ‘hooks’ should be told so that the booker could gain the customer’s interest and settle for a meeting. This topic could have been discussed more within the theory. Also, the sources used in the theory could have been more from current sources”

Person B: “The guide fits the company’s operation model very well.”

The employees did not find many critical parts of the theory that would not fit their company’s culture. However, the critical feedback that was given from the theory part was that the sources that were used in the theory could have been more up to date, for instant from the last five years. Person A also found the critical parts of the theory; the hardest part for the bookers is to get them internalize the needed information to be noticed from other competitors when contacting new customers. Mainly these customers get similar contact attempts frequently from other competitors. The booker should not tell too much to the new potential customer; the booker should keep the conversation general, because he or she does not know which factors and values are important to the customer and affect his or her decision. The person A would have liked that the theory could have touched this issue even more. There could have been more methods explained especially to help the bookers to stand out from other competitors. The part “Gestures to Persuade the Customer” goes into these gestures that the booker or the salesperson can do to persuade the customer. However, the theory does not go precisely into subject how to stand out from other competitors.

4.2.4 Advices for Future

Question H: "To improve sales flows, which parts in a sales meeting should be paid more attention to?"

Person A: "More attention should be placed on the customer situation; good service selections should not take the attention away from basic selling."

Person B: "In the question methods should be placed more attention to"

The question, which parts in sale should be taken a closer look so it could be improved was asked from both employees. The person A pointed out that more attention should be placed on the customer's situation; great products and service selection should not take the concentration away from a traditional sales meeting. Perhaps first part of the negotiation could concentrate only on the customer's situation before mentioning the company's offering; this could lead to greater result. Moreover, person B realized that more attention should be placed on how the questions are placed to the customer. As said in the theoretical part, there are many ways to ask a question from the customer to get him or her closer to a sale. Well-placed questions can also be persuading to the customers.

Question I: "Do you feel it would be important to lay daily goals for the salespeople of the company?"

Person A: "No, the sales processes can be really long. Monthly goals could work, maybe quarterly."

Person B: "Daily goals are not accurate. However, weekly goals could work. For the bookers daily goals are would be fitting."

Both employees were also asked if they saw it important to set up daily goals for their work. Daily goals refer to the amount of sales they make per day, or the amount of customers they meet per day. The employees did not see the importance of setting daily goals for their own work, perhaps monthly or quarterly goals could offer more current information, because the sales processes are much longer than daily or weekly. Person B saw that it could be useful to setup daily goals for the bookers to book sales meetings with potential customers.

Question J: "Do you feel it could be efficient to make a specific form for the salespeople to fill in, so the company could see where in the stages is the major customer leak?"

Person A: “Everyone already take responsibility to follow in which stage their customer relationships are. A specific form could be a good option, also after a meeting the customer situation could be summarized on the specific sheet.

Person B: “For the bookers it could be efficient. For the sales people I do not know.”

The person A noticed that it could be beneficial to have a specific form to follow that how many from contacted potential customers lead to a sale, so that the company could be able to find out in which step of the process is the major customer leak. All the employees take their own responsibility to follow their own sales processes. To start to use a specific form to find the major leaks, it could be efficient for the company and could help them to pay more attention on the weakest links of the processes and try to fix them. If the company would be able to fix the weakest leaks, they could be able to gain greater customer and sales flows. Also, if the company would have a specific form to follow the sales processes, the customer situation on which stage it is could be summarized on the form. This would help the seller later to remember all the critical parts of the meeting and also it would help another salesperson to take care of the case when he or she would know more of the customer’s situation.

4.2.5 The Whole Picture of the Theory

Question K: “How did the thesis’s theoretical part answer your expectations?”

Person A: “It answered well, it gave a clear picture of sales and sales processes. I would have been able to gain excellent picture of factors that includes in selling even I would not have been a professional in it.”

Person B: “It exceeded my expectations. It was a good sampling from different sales processes and the good points to remember.”

Question L: “Were you happy with a certain part?”

Person A: “A harmonious whole”

Person B: “Personality types”

Question M: “Were you dissatisfied with a certain part?”

Person A: “Nothing that was not pointed out earlier.”

Person B: “No I was not”

Question N: “What else you would wish to have in the thesis?”

Person A: “Nothing else. It was a good basic guide, were the readers quickly catches on the secrets of selling and the ideas.

Person B: “Nothing else.”

Both employees were happy with the theoretical chapter the thesis had to offer, it gave a clear picture of the different processes. For person B it exceeded his expectations. The person B was especially happy with the different personality types and person A liked the whole picture the theory had to offer. In brief, the thesis’s theoretical background accomplished its goals and satisfied the Company X’s needs with most parts.

4.3 Feedback from the Company

Both interviewed employees were happy with the theoretical chapter, and they both came across to a decision that the thesis did meet their expectations. The company’s employees found the thesis useful for their new salespeople and bookers who work in booking sales meetings. Also both interviewed employees agreed that the theoretical part of the thesis fitted the company’s culture and environment. In short, the theoretical chapter met the company’s demands and was useful for the company. However, for the advisers it was more a refresh of the secrets of selling. All of the existing employees had worked for a good of amount of time among sales before entering Company X’s work force, so they had a lot of previous experience from selling and persuading. In conclusion, for new sales people and bookers the thesis will be advantageous and it will enrich their know-how in sales and sales strategies when trying to gain greater customer and sales flows, yet for the existing employees, it was more a review for their previous knowledge of selling and persuading.

The person A came to a conclusion that the theoretical part of the thesis did meet his expectations. It gave a clear and brief picture of the factors that include selling, persuading and sales processes. He also highlighted that a person that is not a professional in selling would gain a clear picture of selling from the theoretical part. Furthermore, person A mentioned also an improvement that could have made the theory even more actual. His advice was that the literature that was used in the thesis could have been more up to date. In other words, there were some references used from the 90’s and earlier, and there is a great variety of sales books even from the beginning of 2000, that could have been used in the theoretical chapter.

The person B was greatly pleased with the theoretical chapter and highlighted that it exceeded his expectations. The person B also found the theoretical part useful and was greatly satisfied how the different theories was collected and put together to fit the company's business environment. He was especially satisfied with the part with different personalities and basic structures of selling and how the parts were explained. Person B did not find anything that he was dissatisfied with. All the employees saw the theory part more as a refresh from the secrets of selling, but revision never harms anyone. For new sales people and bookers the theory part will be useful. The employees saw that the theory part will most likely increase their new salespeople's and bookers' customer flows and enrich their knowledge among selling and persuading.

5 Conclusion and Recommendations

In brief, the thesis did meet the Company X's demands with most parts: It did ask the company's needs, by offering the company's employees a written plan for every step of their work, and it also gave for new sales personnel and bookers a guide to enrich their know-how in selling and persuading customer. The theory part of the thesis was just a refresh for already existing employees; the theory did not teach many new methods to the already existing employees. The one new subject that was valuable for the existing employees was the part of different personalities and how to recognize and talk to customers with different personality backgrounds. Moreover, the main purpose was to help the new employees to do better on their work, and to give them a clear picture how different processes work within the company. Also, the theoretical guide will save time from the existing employees, when they do not have to explain separately to the new employees every step of the company's sales processes. The theory part of the thesis did fit the company's working environment. All of the employees were satisfied with the outcome of the thesis and will most likely use it in the future.

There were particular issues the employees noticed in the theory that could help their work in the future, and suggested to make these methods a part of the company's processes. The first one was to give the new salespeople the guidebook when they enter the company's sales force. For the new salespeople it would be important to understand the part that explains how to recognize different personality types and how to talk to a person from a certain personality group, and also part that explains why people make purchasing decision. It is efficient for new employees to understand the customer's decision making, and to recognize various different personalities; this can help them to get closer to a sale or a scheduled meeting. The second suggestion was that the already existing employees could refresh their memory with the theoretical chapter of the thesis and also remember to use certain methods in their daily work, for instant the FSQS technique. The third issue that the interviewed realized was that there were several similarities with the theory part within their company. These similarities could be introduced to the new salespeople and bookers directly to help them to understand various processes within the company. Also, the company could standardize these methods in the company's database and make them the processes for every employee. The fourth notice was for the future actions: the employees realized that they could pay more attention to the customer's situation in the first meeting, and not concentrate that much on the company's offering; when more attention is placed on the customer's situation the salesperson gains more factors of the customer to argue the sale later. In contrast, the employees also understood that more attention should be placed on how questions are asked; well-chosen questions can persuade the customer closer to purchasing decision. The sixth observation was that the employees saw that it could be efficient to set daily goals for the bookers and quarterly goals for the salespeople's and advisers' own work. Lastly, the employees became aware of the issue that they could create a specific form to follow how many contacted customers lead to a sale and where in the process is the major customer leak.

The recommendation that the company made for the thesis was: at first, the sources that was used in the theory part could have had more up-to-date sources, many of the sources that was used in the thesis were from earlier than 2000. The second recommendation was that the advices, which were outlined in the theory, were more for new employees or people that do not have that much of experience among sales. However, for the employees that had worked among sales for many years already it did not teach anything concrete new, it was just a refresh of factors that includes in selling. Moreover, the challenging part of the thesis was to provide enough information for both parties; new employees and old ones. It was hard to outline which information should be used so that it would not confuse the new employees' mind too much. One point that the person A pointed out well was that the challenging part for new employees is to get them internalize the needed information to stand out from other rivals. The customers the Company X contacts get, similar attempts repeatedly. The person A wished that the theory part could have touched this topic even more and could have provided a suggestion to overcome this problem and make the company stand out more from the competitors.

For the future, it would be recommended that a new study could be conducted to the company to see how the theoretical chapter helped the company's salespeople and bookers. In other words, did it improve their sales processes and did it increase their customer and sales flows. To see the impact of the theoretical chapter the study should be conducted after several years. Also, if another study would be done for the company all the information that the company wished to have in this thesis could be provided.

6 Theoretical Linkage

The purpose of the thesis was to discover if the employees of the Company X found the theoretical chapter suitable for their company's business environment and sales culture. For the theoretical part, various different books, articles and internet was used to find the most valuable information for the company. For empirical study the chosen theory was suitable, because the purpose was to find out if the employees' of the company found the theoretical part helpful for their sales work, and would it support their sales meetings in the future. The method used in the interviews was effective for collecting information from the employees. However, more interviews could have been implemented to gain more feedback from the company.

7 Summary

Selling and persuasion is something each person gets involved almost daily; a person can be the target of selling and persuasion, or then he or she can also take the role seller. These days it is essential for all companies to understand the importance training employees in professional persuasion techniques and efficient selling processes to maintain the company's sales and customer flows. Customers have more varieties to choose from in today's world; therefore it is important for a company to be able to assure a customer of a company's products or services.

The goal for the thesis was to provide the company's salespeople, especially the new salespeople, a theoretical guide to support and to enrich their know-how in the techniques of sales and persuasion. The guide would most likely have a positive effect on the salespeople's sales meetings and help them to gain new customers more efficiently. If the employees would be able to encourage even more customers to attend their sales meetings or assure them of the company's product or services it would lead to greater sales and customer flows. The company was satisfied with the guidelines offered in the theoretical sections and will most likely use parts of the guide or the whole in the future, when new employees are familiarized to the company X working environment and sales processes.

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Figures

Attachment

Attachment 1 Questionnaire

Questionnaire

a. How long have you been working for the company?
b. Have you been in other comparable types of occupations before entering Company X work force?
c. Did you find the thesis's theoretical part helpful
    a. In your own work?
    b. For the company, especially for new salespeople?
    c. For the bookers?
d. Did you find the theoretical background convenient to the company's working environment?
e. Are you going to try some of these sections of the theoretical part in your own sales meetings? If yes, which one?
f. Did you find any similarities in the theoretical part within your company?
g. Which were the critical parts of the thesis? Which parts of the theory will be hard to conduct to the company's operations model?
h. To improve sales flows which parts in a sales meeting should be paid more attention to?
i. Do you feel it would be important to lay daily goals for the salespeople of the company?
j. Do you feel it could be efficient to make a specific form for the salespeople to fill in so the company could see where in the stages is the biggest customer leak?
k. How did the thesis's theoretical part answer your expectations?
l. Were you happy with a certain part?
m. Were you dissatisfied with a certain part?
n. What else you would wish to have in the thesis?