

Get Inside the Mind of the Buyer

A sales lead generation expert explains the logical and emotional motives of buyers

Stepbystepmarketing.com

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Why would consumers buy your brand? Ask the average business owner or salesperson that question and you'll probably get a blank stare. That's because they are not taught to understand the mind-set and motives of the buyer. In sales training, little attention is paid to what the buyer is thinking and feeling during a sales interaction, or the real reasons people buy.

World-class salespeople are exemplary listeners who ask smart questions to uncover the buyer's mind-set and motives. But there is more to the process. To successfully sell a brand, a salesperson must value the buyer's rights, as well as their logical and emotional motives for buying.

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Buyer's Rights

The buyer has three fundamental and undeniable rights when shopping:

1. The right to enter into the transaction. Buyers choose whether or not to engage the salesperson. When they do enter into a transaction, it will be on one of four steps:

- **Price.** Will the product fit the buyer's budget, price point or stage of life?
- **Style.** How does the product work, look and feel?
- **Quality.** The materials and workmanship that go into the product, as well as the warranty that backs it up.
- **Brand.** The personal and emotional experience the buyer has when using the product or service.

The job of the salesperson is to understand which step the buyer enters on and find a way to tie into that person's reasons for buying, using brand language and brand-specific examples. In other words, you are migrating the buyer toward your brand. Once you have differentiated your brand and engaged the person in your brand story — regardless of the step on which the consumer entered the transaction — you will likely have a buying customer.

2. The right to open his or her wallet. Once engaged in the transaction, buyers or consumers have the right to spend their hard-earned money when they want, and with whom they want. Therefore, all buyers enter a transaction with another fundamental mind-set: They will part with their money when they are ready to, and not before.

It is important for salespeople to identify with this mind-set and understand the seriousness of the relationship buyers have with their money so that potential buyers don't feel they're being manipulated or that their rights are being minimized.

3. The right to say no. At the buying "decision point," buyers may say yes or no. When buyers say yes, you win. When they say no, you need to understand why.

Buyers say no for three key reasons: They don't trust you or your company; they don't believe that you care about them, their family or their company; or they don't feel as though you know what you're doing.

Note that two of the three reasons are emotional. The sooner you realize that buyers make decisions based more on emotions than on logic, the easier it will be to appeal to their emotions by talking about your brand. Salespeople who understand and can articulate a great brand story using history, testimonials, and compelling language can help people feel an emotional connection with the product and with the salesperson.

Buyer's Motives

Logical motives appeal to the left-brain, logical thinker. They are generally rooted in practical results like saving the buyer time, money, or hassles or improving productivity — producing better results, more efficiency in operation, or more output. Once the salesperson discovers the buyer's motives by asking intelligent, intuitive questions, he or she can steer the buyer to the brand.

Emotional motives appeal more to the right-brain thinker and are rooted in the heart. They include personal motives such as making the buyer's job easier, helping the buyer look good in front of someone important to them (spouse, boss, etc.), getting them out of trouble or freeing up their time. There are also power motives that are quite emotional, including control, recognition, and approval.

A brand is emotional, so it's not difficult for a savvy salesperson to link his or her brand with a buyer's emotion-based motives. Southwest Airlines equals freedom; Nordstrom, uncompromising customer care; IBM, trust and lowered risk; DeWalt, guaranteed tough; and so on. It is our job as salespeople, company owners or employees in customer service to understand the mind-set and motives of the customer by asking good questions, understanding how your products and services compare against competitors', and being ready with your brand story — the main thing that differentiates your company from the competition.

— *Dan Stiff, author of Sell the Brand First: How to Sell Your Brand and Create Lasting Customer Loyalty*