



Mastering Technical Sales

October 2008

Volume 2, Number 9

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The official US Department of Labor definition of a Pre Sales Engineer

Are You Really Paid To Read 200 Emails A Day?

Power Writing: The Publication Coach

Say It With Numbers! : Harnessing the Power of Numbers to Make Your Point



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MTS News - Second Edition Now Available

Mastering Technical Sales: The Sales Engineers Handbook (2nd edition) was finally published on September 2nd. It is available at Amazon.com , bn.com and also directly from the publisher, Artech House. We have added/changed over 40% of the content, including many new case studies and tips. New chapters include "The Hybrid Sales Position", "Using the CRM system", "Snap Demos", "Effective Webcasts" and a management chapter about "Running The Business With Metrics". Two sample chapters with a complete Table Of Contents have been posted on the website.

October Talking Point - Clichés and Jargon.



Cliché (n)

(1): A trite or overused expression or idea.

(2): A Sales Engineer whose behavior is superficial or predictable.

(3): The main ingredient of most marketing and corporate presentations.

Just last week I found myself using "raise the bar" and "push the envelope" in one horrific thirty second answer to a leadership question. I paused, took a deep breath to compose myself, and then provided a more original and direct response. I was being lazy as clichés are boring, unoriginal, trite and well .. mostly plain stupid.

Here are eleven ways (mainly because a top ten is clichéd in itself) to either eliminate clichés or use them to your advantage. Therefore, let us run these ideas up the flagpole and see who salutes them.

Read the entire article on our website

Any Questions?



The weakest possible finish you can have to a demonstration or presentation is to say "Any Questions?" at the end. Why is that? Because then you lose control of both the audience and the agenda. The Q&A may proceed flawlessly, yet you also run the risk of getting hit by a "zinger" question right at the end. Or else the questions may slowly peter out and become less and less relevant and interesting. The better way to finish, if you do need to handle Q&A, is to state that you will handle questions for up to, say, 15 minutes. Then you will finish up with a case study, reference story or call to action. Make the audience expect something worthwhile at the conclusion of your session.

★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★

"I wish this book was around fifteen years ago when I first started. Now I make all my new hires read it before they even start working for me. It's a pre-sales mentor in a book!"

John - Pre-Sales Director of Strategic Accounts

★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★

Learning From Your Losses

Does your sales organization actually conduct win-loss analysis? Are wins wildly celebrated and losses discretely closed in the sales force activity system? If that is the case, then you are losing a valuable opportunity to learn from your losses and make wins more likely. Ask a salesperson why they lost a deal and you are likely to hear it was because of (a) price ; (b) a missing product feature ; (c) the decision process was rigged or (d) it was still price. As a Sales Engineer you have an opportunity to analyze the loss and change your approach for the next sale. Did you fail to cover a competitive point, were you blindsided by some new feature of your competition or were there some technical incompatibilities you could have sold around if you had discovered them earlier? Make the change, pre-empt the question, simplify the demo and adapt to the

competitive environment. Start to keep a log of your personal win-loss analysis, share it with your colleagues, collate the results, and then pass that data back to Product Management and Engineering. It will be the best feedback they will ever receive.



The Final Word

It's all in the Packaging. Back in 1905, Albert Einstein published his Special Theory of Relativity. Perhaps the most famous scientific equation of all time, $e=mc^2$, was one of the central discoveries of the paper. However, as Einstein was a physicist and not a marketer, he actually wrote $m=e/c^2$.



Doesn't quite have the same impact, nor does it flow off the tongue. Although I like to make fun of the marketing department, sometimes you need to take a great idea and package it into a world-changing idea. Take a second look at the most compelling feature of your product and make sure it is packaged and easily understandable.

Power Writing. An increasing proportion of communication is now conducted over Instant Messaging and texts. Throw in 100+ emails a day and formal business writing skills are in a sad decline. Words can be a competitive advantage, and for a two minutes investment of your time you can read Daphne Gray-Grant's Power Writing tip of the week. Visit her [website](#), sign up for the newsletter and get a practical business writing tip every Tuesday morning.



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