3 Approaches *for* Effective Sales Positioning

Even once they have discovered the prospect's needs and desires, salespeople often position their product on the basis of features and functionality. They attempt to match these to the needs they perceive the prospect to have, and essentially sell a list. This approach will usually fail. In order to position well, this focus must become prospect-centric. something the prospect can work with. Rather than resting with the comfortable but ultimately unrewarding purely feature and function approach in your B2B conversations, try one of these instead; you'll be pleasantly surprised by the outcome. You will, of course, still discuss features and functions, but the context of the discussion will be more effective.

Convenience

Rather than thinking of what you can add to their life in terms of features and functions, think about what you can remove. How can you reduce their workload? Can you reduce their daily time to value? What about the time spent working on things they may not enjoy as much as others? Remember: you're speaking with a C-level executive who values time above all else; both their own and that of their employees. Time is of more immediate impact than money, and time saved is money earned. Position accordingly.

Vision

Instead of focusing purely on their needs, take the time understand their business and what drives it. Learn about their values, their vision, and their business model, and discover as much as you can about the market trends affecting them. Consider this when preparing your next step: your goal is to position your product not only as the solution to their current needs but also as a stepping stone to the future. In order to be successful, you must align this to their company values and vision, and embed it into their business model. You're painting a picture based on their needs and their future; make it powerful.

Effects

The vast majority of deals aren't lost to competitors; they're lost to inactivity. Your prospects may recognize the need for change, but be unwilling to change "right now." Perhaps they're resistant to change, or perhaps the timing is simply never right. If you're in this situation, your positioning must be slightly less positive: you must seek to make them fully aware (by allowing them to direct themselves) of the effects, both short- and long-term, of their continued inactivity. Help them quantify their needs and challenges in dollar amounts, and extrapolate, with them, the costs of avoiding change. The vision *approach is particularly well suited following this, as it highlights the stark contrast to their current situation.*

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