



Three Sales to Make Before They "Buy" You

Extended Version

Your introduction goes a long way to help your audience to be fully engaged with you and your content. Whether it is a product, service or concept, your introduction is a great way to get your customer, prospect or audience to “buy” you and what you are presenting.

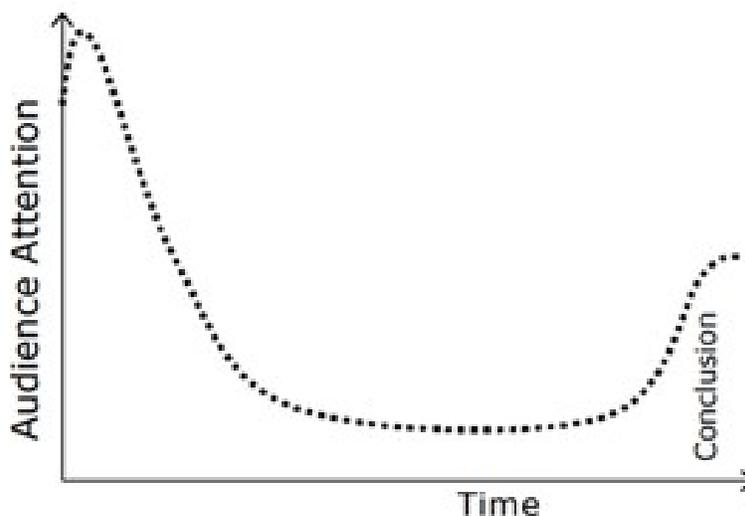
In this course you'll learn how to apply the 3 three sales in order to properly prepare your audience to listen to your message, grabbing their attention in your opening by:

- 1) Establishing likability, and trust.
- 2) Validating yourself as a credible resource.
- 3) Creating a message worth listening to.

Open the Door to Sell

It is about interest and motivation levels of the audience

According to *The Attention Curve*, as the diagram below illustrates, your audience's attention is at its highest at the beginning of your presentation. This is a widely accepted concept in many professional circles. However, depending on the study you read, attention spans have been said to range anywhere between 8 seconds to 10-15 minutes. So, why such a difference and what does that mean for you as a salesperson, speaker or teacher? It likely means that your audience's attention has more to do with their interest and motivation level rather than a specific timeframe.



Your ability as the presenter to successfully grab your audience's attention early and maintain it throughout is a significant challenge and can be the difference between good and great presentations. It also has a great deal to do with you, as the presenter, sufficiently selling your audience on WHY they should invest their time, energy and focus on what you have to offer them. The most successful salespeople and presenters are able to accomplish that in the first few minutes of their sales pitch and presentation. When this happens, they are essentially opening the door to a buying opportunity.

Make three sales in your introduction

Before your customer, audience or prospect buys the product, service or concept you are selling, they must first buy YOU. In order for your audience to buy you, you must first gain their trust, establish credibility and make your message worth listening to. Those are three sales you need to make.

To accomplish that, it may be helpful to think of each "sale" like the force that opens a door and that every "sale" you make, that door opens up wider and wider. And, the wider that door opens the more open (receptive) your audience is to you and your message. When your audience is open, you have their attention. The goal of your introduction should be to successfully make each sale before you move on to the content of your presentation or sales demonstrations.

Action Item:

With that in mind, as you work through this course, think about an upcoming presentation you will be delivering and consider how you can apply each of the following three sales to your own introductions. Another option could be to think about a presentation that you have recently given and look for how you could have improved it by applying the concepts and tips for each Sale.

Sale ONE - Are You Likable & Trustworthy?

Have you ever purchased something because you liked the salesperson? Think about the last time you made a large purchase. Who sold it to you? Did you like them? Did they connect with you in a way that made you feel comfortable? Successful salespeople and presenters are able to quickly prove themselves as likable and trustworthy.

Fair or not, it takes just a moment for the audience to decide whether or not they like and trust you. If they like you, they will give you more of their energy and attention. If they trust you, you will have them in the palm of your hands. Of all the sales that you can make, the **MOST IMPORTANT SALE** is to establish yourself as likable and trustworthy.

In order to help you better establish a connection with your audience, it will be incumbent upon you to focus on how quickly you can get them to like and trust you.

Here are 3 Ways to Sell Yourself as Likable and Trustworthy:

Enthusiasm Sells

Greeting your audience with high energy and a welcoming tone is a good start. Your enthusiasm for your message and what you are selling can have a significant impact on getting your audience to listen to you and your ideas.

A few ways to express enthusiasm are:

a. *Smile* - Your smile is probably the biggest asset you have when delivering a presentation, whether over the phone, virtually or live. Because of a phenomenon called emotional contagion theory (one's emotions can trigger similar emotions in others) and the power of mirror neurons (neurons that fire when we observe an action performed by another person, mentally stimulating that action in ourselves), smiling can actually impact the mood of other and aid in their feeling of comfort and trust. In other words, smiling is contagious and people feel better. You may be wondering, "does that still apply to virtual situations, when a smile is not physically seen?" The simple answer is yes, when you smile it changes the tone and timbre of your voice and directly affects the energy that you present with. That, in turn, will affect the experience of your audience. So, smile, it's contagious!!

b. *Use Vocal Variety* - Nothing says unenthusiastic than using a monotone voice throughout your presentation. When you vary the tone of your voice, you indicate to your audience that you are eager to share your information and help to keep the content more engaging. Vocal variety includes the pace (rate of speech & pauses) of your speaking, tone of voice, volume & pitch.

c. *Change Pacing* - Digging down a little deeper on the concept of vocal variety, there will be times you will need to speed up your presentation to express excitement and other times you will need to speak deliberately when you need to emphasize a key learning that you want to make clear. Changing your pace can really help you to grab your audience's attention and display enthusiasm. A brief pause can also be a fantastic way to draw your audience into your presentation to listen more intently.

Establish Rapport

If your audience likes you, they will be more open to listening to your ideas. Building rapport with your customer or audience is a great way to accomplish that. Here are a few quick ideas for you to consider before and during your presentations to establish rapport quickly:

a. Use the Power of Email - Connect with your audience prior to the presentation with a series of emails (automated, if possible). Depending on what type of presentation you are giving, the content of your email(s) will vary. Your welcome email, agenda email and/or reminder email are great ways to build name recognition, increase attendance numbers, as well as build excitement for your presentation.

b. Small Talk Works - Before you jump into the main content, it can be a good idea to take some time for small talk with your audience. In most situations (whether virtual or live), small talk has little to nothing to do with the purpose of your presentation. Small talk may look like chatting about the weather, sports, something you saw on TV or maybe an observation you noticed on LinkedIn about a prospect or customer. This is an opportunity for you to connect with and/or establish rapport with your audience in a light way.

c. Personal Stories - One of the more effective ways to establish rapport is through a personal story. Sharing something about yourself can endear you to your customer, prospect or audience.

Pro Tip: If you can, share a story that is relevant to the point of your presentation. Your story can be about a similar experience that your customer has gone through (depending on their situation) to relate to their situations.

Bring the Humor

You do not have to be a comedian to add a little levity to your presentation or sales call. Humor can be a very powerful way to endear your audience to you quickly and have them on your side. Laughter has the ability to relax your audience (and yourself). So, find opportunities to include humor in your introduction. Whether it is with a funny picture, quote or story and you will instantly make them more open to you and your message. This video by Alex Lyon has a few quick examples of how you can bring humor to your opening without being a stand-up comedian:

Call to Action

What is the one thing you have learned that you will apply to your next presentation, meeting sales call, demo, or keynote? How will you make yourself more likable and trustworthy?

Sale TWO - Are You a Credible Resource?

Whether you are selling a product, service or trying to persuade your audience to buy into a concept you are trying to convey, first impressions are extremely important. Once the audience has made a decision about whether or not they like you and trust that you have their best interests in mind, the next question that will come to them is “Who are you?” and “Why

are you the one to be giving this presentation?” Your job is to give your prospect/audience some background as to why they should listen to you.

By sharing a little about your background and experience, you can help yourself gain credibility in the eyes of your audience. Some people feel anxious, like maybe they are “bragging” or being “boastful” by sharing their credentials. If you find yourself feeling something similar, I challenge you to look at it as your opportunity to establish credibility. Convince your audience that you are the **RIGHT PERSON** to be presenting your topic. Your background and experience is what makes it true and establishes you as a credible resource.

Here are 3 Ways to Sell Yourself as a Credible Resource:

Establish Credentials

In most cases, it can be helpful to share your credentials and experience as it relates to the audience that you are speaking to and/or the topic that you are speaking about. Among many different approaches, establishing credentials can look like sharing certifications you have earned, education, sales experience, years in the business or maybe even individuals that you may be working with. Be sure that when you share your credentials and introduce yourself, you speak clearly and emphasize why you are the right person to present to your audience/prospect. Too often salespeople and presenters will rush through their own introductions and, as a result, will lose their audience's attention. When you speak low, slow and in a clear confident voice you are enhancing your credibility in the eyes of your audience.

Pro Tip: A creative way to share your credentials without feeling as though you are being boastful is to include your experience in a story. By weaving into your opening story information like, previous roles that you have had, specific accreditations you have earned, years in the business, and/or customers that you have worked with, you are indirectly sharing your credentials in a way that builds credibility and limits the feeling of bragging about yourself. This will be discussed in further detail later on in this section.

Get Referrals

One way to immediately increase your credibility with your prospect/audience can be to get a referral from a current customer that is happy with your service or presentation. A referral will (in most cases) help to gain your prospect's attention for a moment and allow them to listen to your opening pitch. To help further, you may even encourage your referral to reach out to your prospect by phone or via email and let them know that they can expect your call or presentation. Here are some ways to get referrals:

a. ASK for the Referral - This may sound silly, but it's amazing how much more likely you are to get a referral if you actually ask. The best times to ask for referrals are prior to delivering your presentation and immediately following your attempted (successful or not) sale.

Prior to Presentation - Let your customer know in advance that at the end of the presentation, you will be asking for referrals and ask them to think about 2 or 3 people or organizations that might be a good fit for what you have to offer.

After your Presentation - The best time to get a referral is when you have your prospect/customer in front of you (virtually or live). This is the time where they have the most information about your product or service and can give you the best referrals. You may say something like, "I wouldn't be doing my job if I didn't take a moment and ask you for some referrals..."

b. Show up with the Referrals You Want - Come prepared with a list of possible referrals prior to asking for them. This shows that you have done your research and will prevent the common response of "Um, I can't think of anyone off the top of my head." This could be mutual connections on LinkedIn, related businesses, senior leaders within their organization or even businesses in the same building or neighborhood.

Share a Story

As mentioned earlier in this training, a great way to establish credibility is to share a story. Stories have a powerful ability to connect with your audience and can persuade them to consider your message. Your story can be one of the following styles: personal, customer success, customer failure, journey or related business story. The only caveat is that your story should have something to do with the point of your presentation. There must be a reason for telling your story that ties to the purpose for your meeting, call, demonstration, or presentation. In fact, after you share a story, it is a good idea to say something like, "The reason I tell you that story is...". By saying this, you will help your audience know that a point is coming to justify that you know what you are talking about, thus making you a more credible resource.

In order to help you get a better idea of the types of stories that you can access when delivering your introduction, here is a quick over of the five to consider using. **See below**

Call to Action

What is one thing that you have learned that you will apply to your next presentation, meeting, sales call, demo and/or keynote? How will you establish yourself as a credible resource?

Sale THREE - Is Your Message Worth Listening To?

Now that your audience has decided that they like and trust you, and that they believe that you are the right person for the presentation, you must then make sure to answer the final question that will cross their mind before they decide to give you their full attention: "Is this message worth listening to?"

Another way to think about it is from your audience's perspective. Your audience is always wondering, "**What's in it for me?**" (WIIFM) How is the information you are sharing going to help them make more money, be more efficient, save time, get that promotion or be better at what they do, etc...?

Here are 3 Ways to Make Your Message Worth Listening To:

To help you clarify your message, it is a good idea to ask yourself, "Does my audience have a clear idea of the main learning and goals for their experience?" By setting the proper expectations for the training then they will be more confident that they can accomplish your goals. To help with this, I recommend you invest enough time in the beginning of your presentation to walk through the purpose and goals of your presentation (we will go into further detail later in this section), to help your audience get clear picture of what to expect in your call, presentation and/or demonstration. This will go a long way to helping you and your audience gain clarity and understanding of the WIIFM.

Be Direct & Concise

Nobody likes to be sold, but everyone likes to buy. If your audience or prospects suspect that you are hiding something from them that might help them make a better decision, they will likely tune out to your presentation. Or, in the case of a prospecting call, simply hang up on you. It is in your best interests to be direct with your audience or prospects. For example, if you are hoping to sell something at the end of the conversation, then tell them that is your goal. Whether it is a request for more time, a conversation with a decision maker, the purchase of your software or widget or simply an invitation to implement an idea you are sharing, tell them upfront what you are hoping for. That will improve the chance of your intended audience finding your message worth listening to.

In most situations, it is in your best interests to also be as brief and concise as possible in your opening message. The longer you take to get to the point of your presentation, the more you risk losing your audience before you have even had a chance to deliver your sales pitch or key learnings.

Pro Tip: To ensure that you can deliver a concise message, you will need to practice your introduction out loud and time it.

Address the WIIFM

"What is in it for me?" is one of the most likely questions that will run through your audience's mind before they fully commit to listening to your message. You must effectively answer this question in your introduction. In his well-received TED Talk, "*How Great Leaders Inspire Action*" (see below), Simon Sinek shared that before you share the **WHAT** we do or **HOW** we do it part of your presentation, it is important to first address the **WHY** you are doing it. When you answer the **WHY**, you are addressing the purpose for your presentation. If you are successful, you will answer the WIIFM.

Once you have established yourself as likeable & trustworthy, and presented yourself as a credible resource, it is incumbent on you to then make a case for why your message is worth their time to listen to, addressing the WIIFM. The SSOFA System is a fantastic way to effectively answer the **WHY** that Mr. Sinek is referring to.

There are five questions that you want to answer to make sure you answer and present to your audience before you deliver the content of your speech, presentation, sales call or demonstration. You must first:

- Consider what the problem that you are trying to **SOVLE** in your presentation.
- Come up with a **SUBJECT** (title).
- Set an **OVERVIEW** (agenda).
- Think about what you want your audience to **FEEL**.
- Decide on the **ACTION** or actions that you want them to make.



Once you have determined this, you will be well on your way to making the message worth it for your audience. **See below**

Call to Action

Take a moment to write down at one least one thing that you are looking to apply to your upcoming presentation, sales call, keynote, or demonstration.

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