



Tactical vs Strategic Selling

There are basically two types of selling strategies, tactical and strategic. The most significant differences between the two are the number of SEPARATE buying influences, the length of the buying cycle, the number of red flags or unknowns faced, and the amount of planning done prior to the presentation.

Strategic Selling Skills

If you are involved in a strategic selling environment you will usually have 4 separate buying influences; economic buyer (signs off on p.o.), technical buyer (sets specs, benchmarks, etc.), user (recommender – end user of the product), and a coach (person that navigates you through the customers internal network of decision-makers and the decision making process). There may be multiple buying influences in any of these categories or a single person may have a buying influence in more than one area.

Once the buying influences are identified, it is then important to determine the current mode of each. Buying influences can be classified into 4 general categories; growth, trouble, even keel, or over confident.

It is important to understand the mode of the buying influences because one of your main objectives will be to lead each buying influence to change the way they are doing things today and each person, based on their influence and their mode, will require a different strategy.

Ultimately you will need to understand how each buying influence's self interest is best served by using your product and service and ensure that both the client and your company can win together.

However, prior to the presentation in which you will attempt this persuasive feat you will also need to determine the following:

- Your position vs competition
- Timing for priorities
- Place of this opportunity in the sales funnel
- How this criteria compares to your ideal customer criteria

-The red flags (new players / reorganization, uncertainty / lack of data).

Once this information is gathered you are ready to **BEGIN** your account strategy that will be focused on leveraging strengths, reducing uncertainties, and eliminating unknowns.

The buying cycle for a strategic sale can vary from months to years, depending on the price of the solution and the risk involved.

Strategic selling skills are used mainly by senior account executives in the field sales arena.

(Strategic Selling Skills – © 1987 Miller Heiman Inc.)

Tactical Selling Skills

On the other hand, tactical selling skills are used mainly when there are a limited number of separate buying influences, the buying cycle is normally less than 60-90 days, and the uncertain or unknown factors are limited and of less significance.

Since the majority of our VIP customers fit into this category we focus on a tactical selling strategy. There are literally thousands of variations of effective tactical selling strategies but each consists of the core components: Contact, Qualify, Present, Close, and Grow the business.

Here is an example of a tactical selling strategy allow with each of its subcategories:

Contact

Are they prospects or suspects?

Build Rapport

Show a genuine interest in the customer

Leverage Pre-Call Planning

Ask questions, and LISTEN

Uncover Needs

P - Is there a problem?

I - How important is it?

Q - Can it be quantified?

C - What are the consequences?

L - Are they willing to look / listen to a solution?

Qualify

Q. Does my product meet their need?

Q. Do they have the money?

Q. What is the urgency?

Q. Is there a bias?

Q. Is it worth my time?

Present

Validate decision criteria

Discuss how needs are met

Leverage strengths

Cost justification

Position vs Competition

Trial close

Close

Answer objections

Seek commitment

Ask for the sale

Follow-Up & Grow

Check level of satisfaction

Repeat business

References / Subsidiary Sites