

# Supporting Consultative Sales

Some sales teams have an easy time building meaningful connections between their customers' biggest problems and their offerings. But many teams struggle. The connection is there, but the team can't articulate it in a way that resonates. Here are a few communication tools that can help with that articulation, mapped to a basic consultative sales process.

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## Understand Customer Need

You can do this at a micro-level (what does *this* customer need) or at a macro-level (what do *all* customers need). Surveys or leading questions can be used to identify **objectives** like 3-year goals or a client's vision of success. They can also identify **pain points**, like personal frustrations or company-wide roadblocks.

### COMMUNICATION TOOLS

- Surveys and personas (macro)
- Questionnaires and customer profiles worksheets (micro)
- Customer assessments and analysis (micro)
- Market research paper

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## Find the Appropriate Offering

If your offerings aren't organized in a **logical system**, it can be difficult for sales teams to connect customer needs to products and services. Create and document your product architecture—have principles on all-inclusive versus plug-and-play offerings, define good-better-best options, ensure that products don't overlap or compete with other products and have a consistent nomenclature for all of it.

### COMMUNICATION TOOLS

- Product architecture
- Product catalog

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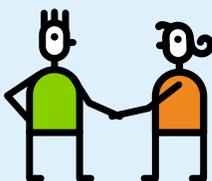
## Build the Business Case

Consultative selling is often used for complex products and especially services, which the customer may not have purchased before. So, they may not understand how the product or service will impact their business. Showing them **savings, efficiency gained, reduced aggravation, or improved customer satisfaction** can help them to justify the investment.

### COMMUNICATION TOOLS

- Data visualizations
- Systems diagrams
- Case studies
- Testimonials

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## Win the Customer

Now that you're prepared, you can create a **sales presentation** to frame the conversation and make your case. A successful presentation should be as specific and detailed as possible to show that you have both an understanding of the client's problems and have the expertise to offer real solutions.

### COMMUNICATION TOOLS

- Presentation
- Document or report (leave-behind)

### Four Stages of a Successful Pitch



A. Recap the customer's objectives or pain points



B. Share the vision for a better future



C. Introduce the offering



D. Explain the business case

If you want to learn more about supporting consultative selling, get in touch at [www.thoughtform.com](http://www.thoughtform.com) or 412.488.8600.