

THREE things you have to know before you even think about public speaking or selling a product, service, idea or cause...

And ONE thing you need to know before you can get anyone to buy what you're selling....

Dear Sales Heroes:

There are THREE types of buyers and buying situations to consider when creating your sales marketing plan. First, a buyer is your audience-- an individual, a group, a business and the volunteer or donor to your cause-- so this holds true for B2B, B2C, Not-For-Profit and even public speaking!

I know, I know. I hate being put that easily into a category, too. But in 25 years selling and marketing it really does all boil down to the three. The trick is to know what the three are and then understand the one thing you need know to deal with them.

Let's take a look at "**Should've... Would've... Could've...**"

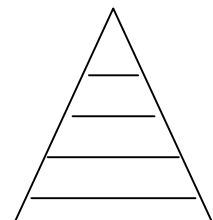
Experts with *several hundreds of years of combined experience* have been giving us advice on the subject of how to sell and market for a long time; including what length of material is appropriate.

You know there are organizations and companies from the smallest business to the largest global advertising house and consulting firms devoted entirely to specializing in marketing for B2B, B2C and Not-for-Profit. And you know within these segments there are companies that specialize in small business, technology, specific charities.

By this time I'm sure you see there is also a UNIFYING foundation and A LOT of overlap happening here-- Really, common sense says that at some point you have to go back to the basics.

Meet My Old Friend, Abraham

Abraham Maslow is the granddaddy of it all. He is directly or indirectly referenced in almost every sales, marketing, Six Sigma and Project Management book ever published since he introduced his theory "the Hierarchy of Needs". You might remember his pyramid from a book you've read or a class you've taken.



Maslow theorized there are five levels of human needs, and that each prior level has to be satisfied for a person BEFORE they can move on to the next level-- in fact, NEEDING to satisfy the next level (and believe it or not-- enough research has been done that we know this applies to businesses, too). They are:

Physiological, Safety, Social, Esteem, Self-actualization

In the spirit of keeping things simple and getting back to basics let's regroup these into three categories:

(Physiological and Safety) = **Should've**
(Social and Self-Esteem) = **Would've**
(Self-Actualization) = **Could've**

...I should buy that from you--

The "should've" category is typically a message about something people or companies find necessary to get through the day. To survive. Or something they really should have and don't know it; or they don't know enough about it yet to make a decision. This fits nicely into Maslow's Theory of Hierarchy under Physiological/Safety.

This is everything from home repair products, fire extinguishers, food and clothing, to office equipment and supplies like a desk, computer, anti-virus software, to specialized services like an electrician and products like medical devices (can you say 'knee replacement?') -- You get the idea.

From your buyer's perspective, they need this (or should have this) and they may have a lot of choices. Your message needs to power past the rest to tell them clearly and quickly what it is, what it will do for them and why it's different from the other available options.

...I would buy that from you--

The "would've" buyer is looking for something that is not necessary to survive but is nice to have-- The equivalent of Maslow's Social/Self-Esteem step.

This can be anything from hobby and crafts- think boat if you *don't* fish for a living; to something that makes life easier- a magazine subscription (home delivery is convenient), a microwave, accounting software; or something that increases their self-esteem- a particular brand of pen that tells people, car or designer label that let's people know you have taste or have a particular income level.

It can also include specialized business products and services like administrative services, application hosting and desktop software packages.

From a buyer's perspective, these things can be important, but may not be critical. Either they don't know about the product or service; or they know about it and need some convincing to make the purchase. Your message needs to be super strong here with compelling reasons for buying. It needs to be bullet-proof.

...I could buy that from you--

The "could've" buyer moves us into Maslow's Self Actualization category. Products and services on this level are beyond basic needs. This is about buying and selling things that advance personal growth and fulfillment.

It can be educational, physical, emotional, spiritual or monetary. In fact-- it could include some or all of these things. What is common is that the buyer has the basics covered (the survival/ should've and maybe even the self-esteem/ would've)-- so this is life-changing.

This message has similar characteristics to the Self-Esteem/Would've message but needs to be even more powerful, unique and bulletproof. Because of its nature it requires more explanation and proof about the benefits and value they will realize from your unique and absolutely irresistible offer.

The One thing you need to know.

So, what's the answer to what kind of format to use and how long should the message be? The short answer is- whatever it takes to be the hero to your buyer.

The long answer is it depends on who your buyer is and what benefits they will receive from what you're selling.

You need to be a problem-identifier and problem-solver... Your customer may not recognize they have a problem or better alternative until you help them see it.

It doesn't matter if your customer is the "Could've", "Would've", or "Should've" Buyer-- You need to be a hero to them.

Be The Hero,
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