

# WORKBOOK



## THE HEART OF THE WOLF

THE UPSIDE-DOWN  
SECRET TO BEING A  
KICKASS SALESPERSON

BY BEN LAWRENCE



# **THE HEART OF THE WOLF:**

## **THE UPSIDE-DOWN SECRET TO BEING A KICKASS SALESPERSON**

**BEN LAWRENCE**

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## **STEP I**

### **BECOME THE PROBLEM SEEKER**

# CHAPTER 1. UNDERSTAND YOUR CUSTOMER'S PROBLEMS (OR HOW TO FALL OUT OF LOVE WITH YOUR OWN SOLUTION)

## ACTION ITEMS



Complete the following questionnaire for an honest and revealing view of your current starting position.

Now let's examine how clearly you understand your customer's problems, how efficiently you can link a solution to your offering, and how well you can tell a story with the assessment on the next page.

If you struggle right now to answer these questions that's OK! Throughout this guide we'll be walking through a number of exercises that transform your customer connections and storytelling abilities, so by the end of your journey through this guide you'll be ditching the PowerPoint and engaging with customers at a new level.

My suggestion: Complete this assessment once now, again after completing the other exercises in this book, and again and again with others on your sales team to further sharpen your skills.

## **ASSESSMENT: HOW WELL CAN YOU SPEAK TO YOUR CUSTOMER'S PROBLEMS?**

1. What's the best real-world story you have about a customer who had a problem that your offering solved? What did it look like? What were the stakes if they didn't solve it? How did they solve it? What's the company's "Happily Ever After" since they solved it?

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2. In addition to your own customer story, what's a relatable, well-known problem that a similar approach solved? For example, a riddle related to how to:

- Land a man on the moon.
- Build a safe suspension bridge.
- Run a sub-4:00 mile.
- Create DaVinci's river diversion project.
- Break the sound barrier as the US Air Force did.

In short, a story where the riddle seemed impossible to solve until someone took an unconventional approach to solving it. (This is important because sometimes you'll have to help the customer understand that it takes bold thinking and new partners to solve old problems!)

For example, if I'm selling a training certification course to aspiring software coders, I might have to help them understand that standard repetition and drills, a foundational principle baked into every other vendor's course, is a flawed approach vs. a new, hands-on program that leverages images and art theory.

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3. What are the top three questions (i.e. riddles) that your prospects often ask themselves that your offering can help them answer? List at least three. For example:

- How do I know I'm capable of learning this material?
- What happens if the code I learn becomes outdated before I finish the program?
- How can I find the time to complete the course?

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4. What's the cost to those who leave these riddles unsolved? List at least three. For example:

- What percentage of aspiring software coders never complete certification and end up stuck in dead-end jobs?
- How much more quickly do certified coders tend to advance vs. non-certified coders?
- How much in additional earnings do certified coders earn over their careers vs. non-certified coders?

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5. Why have so many people failed to solve the problem that your offering is uniquely positioned to solve? List at least three. For example:

- Few training programs offer flexible scheduling.
- Most materials start at too high a level.
- Most programs require payment up front.

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6. What's the most common approach to solving this problem, and why does this approach so often end in failure? List at least three. For example:

- They try to piece together their own program.
- They wait for their employer to pay for it.
- They resist new coding opportunities and become irrelevant.

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7. In 30 words or less, what is your company's offering?

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8. What makes your offering uniquely capable of filling the need?

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9. What's the simple three-step process that customers follow to get started?

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10. What are the top three reasons your offering could still fail, and what advice would you offer to make sure your customers avoid those pitfalls?

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11. What's the call to action? How does a customer get started with you?

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12. Why does a customer need to move quickly? For example:

- Limited availability on the schedule.
- Price increases hit January 1.

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## ACTIVITY

Not sure if your current sales approach is sufficiently customer problem-focused? Review some of your company's marketing materials. Grab your brochures, log in to your website, or pull up your most recent sales presentation. Count how many times the words "we" and "I" appear relative to the word "you." If the "we/I" outnumber the "you," things need to change. It should refer to the customer three times more than it refers to your company. What's your ratio?

Now, brainstorm how you could change the pitch to instead focus on the customer's problems and something your customer cares about deeply.

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*Activity sheets built for this assignment, and every other task assigned throughout this book, can be downloaded at [leadthesalespack.com](http://leadthesalespack.com)*



# CHAPTER 2. DISCOVER YOUR CUSTOMER'S KNOWN AND UNKNOWN PROBLEMS

## ACTION ITEMS



On the following page, you'll find a series of four questions to ask. **Now please — Put this book down, print out the four questions on the next page, grab a clipboard, and hit the streets. Once you've interviewed 50 prospects and completed the table on page 58 in the book, then come back and prepare for jet-fueled sales success.**

*About reaching out: Email and social media are better than nothing but not by much. You're in SALES, damnit, not academic research! Hit the streets! And remember that if you're not having any luck getting anyone to engage, bring donuts.*

*And crazy as it sounds, use a clipboard. I don't know why, but I've learned that approaching a prospective customer at a luncheon, networking event, or their office with a clipboard lands me more responses. When approaching them, you might say something like, "Hi, my name is \_\_\_\_\_. I'm conducting research into the biggest problems people in roles like yours face when trying to [name a challenge related to their work and your product. For example, if I'm selling health insurance to benefits administrators, I might say, '...when trying to select the best benefits package for your company']. Can I ask you a few questions?"*

**ASK YOUR PROSPECTS FOUR QUESTIONS IN THIS ORDER:**

<p><b>WHEN YOU APPROACH THE PROSPECT</b></p>	<p><b>WHEN THE PROSPECT APPROACHES YOU</b> <i>(e.g. real estate agent hosting an open house, auto dealer greeting someone who's walked onto their lot, salesperson fielding an incoming lead, etc.)</i></p>
<p>1. What's the number one frustration you face related to [something related to your offering]?</p>	<p>1. What prompted your interest?</p>
<p>2. Why do you think your industry hasn't already solved this problem?</p>	<p>2. How are you looking to benefit?</p>
<p>3. If that problem went away, how would that benefit you?</p>	<p>3. What's held you back from already buying?</p>
<p>4. Who else in your line of work do you recommend I poll? Ideally, someone like you who's committed to improvement and open to sharing their obstacles?</p>	<p>4. Who else do you know who, like you, is in the market for something like this and seeking guidance?</p>

Welcome back! Congratulations, you've just completed more valuable research and gained more street credibility than some Fortune 500s have before they throw \$100 million at a new product launch.

Was it difficult? Yes? Good!

If it was difficult it means you reached the right audience, busy decision makers, and you bit your tongue enough to listen at a time most of your sales brethren would have been talking their way right out the door.

Next step: Take your list of customer-reported problems — **only those problems your customers shared in response to Question #1, "What is the number one problem you face related to [something related to your offering]?"** — and jot them all down on a single sheet of paper.

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Below is an example of customer problems I recently put together when polling industrial plant managers. In my experience, you'll be surprised how often the same problems come up across job roles and industries! Perhaps your customers' problems will be similar? Regardless, there are no right or wrong responses here, just document as objectively as possible the key concerns your customers share.

## **EXAMPLE CUSTOMER PROBLEM LIST**

- Cannot keep pace with demand
- Struggling to get buy-in from frontline workers
- Corporate leadership out of touch with frontline realities
- Global competition driving prices too low
- Too many projects, not enough time
- Obstinate boss won't try anything new
- Government regulations have become too burdensome
- Outdated technology unable to meet new demands
- Drowning in data and not sure how to use it
- Company politics keeping me from doing my best
- Material costs too high while profit margins too low
- Lack of training for our top talent
- Not enough qualified applicants to fill job openings
- Competition outpacing our product's capabilities
- Employee turnover rates are too high
- Falling behind in race for innovation
- Losing top performers to the competition
- Making too many poor choices when hiring
- Not closing enough of the opportunities in our sales pipeline





You've now reached a critical step: Consolidating and down-selecting this list into 8-10 customer problems that your company's offering can in some way help solve, and separating the problems that your offering can solve from those problems that your offering can't solve. You'll do that by separating out the customer problems that are unrelated to your offering and combining similar problems into one problem statement. Once complete, you should be able to scan through the updated list of problems your company is in a position to at least in part solve and say to yourself, "Yeah, even if it's only tangentially, the product/service I'm selling can help resolve this problem."

For example, let's imagine that you represent a personality assessment software that organizations use to profile their employees, job candidates, customers, and suppliers. You know that your company's software helps organizations hire the best candidates, communicate the right way with different audiences, and offers insight into which profiles are best suited for various job roles. Through that lens, let's walk through the next exercise.















We'll boil down this list to 8-10 topics that:

- A. effectively articulate the problems your customers described, and
- B. align in some way with problems your assessment software can solve.

Paring down this list of customer concerns to only those your assessment service can somehow address may look something like this. I've added symbols to represent similar themes that can be consolidated. **Download additional copies at [leadthesalespack.com](http://leadthesalespack.com).**







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- Cannot keep pace with demand
- Struggling to get buy-in from frontline workers 
- Corporate leadership out of touch with frontline realities 
- Global competition driving prices too low
- Too many projects, not enough time 
- Obstinate boss won't try anything new 
- ~~Government regulations have become too burdensome~~
- ~~Outdated technology unable to meet new demands~~
- Drowning in data and not sure how to use it 
- ~~Company politics keeping me from doing my best~~ 
- Material costs too high while profit margins too low
- Lack of training for our top talent 
- Not enough qualified applicants to fill job openings 
- Competition outpacing our product's capabilities 
- Employee turnover rates are too high 
- Falling behind in race for innovation 
- Losing top performers to competition 
- Making too many poor choices when hiring 
- Not closing enough opportunities in our sales pipeline 

= unrelated for what I'm selling

Grouping this list into separate categories (in this case we have nine of them), we'll move to the next step, which is rewording those customer problems to read as positive outcomes instead of problems.

	ORIGINAL PROBLEM STATEMENT(S)	REPHRASED AS POSITIVE OUTCOME
	Struggling to get buy-in from frontline workers	Gain enthusiastic buy-in from my frontline employees for new projects
	Corporate leadership out of touch with frontline realities Obstinate boss won't try anything new Company politics keeping me from doing my best	Persuade senior leadership to support my top initiatives
	Too many projects, not enough time	Know with confidence which work to do myself and which work to delegate
	Drowning in data and not sure how to use it	Quickly sort personnel data and make good decisions based on it
	Lack of training for our top talent Losing top performers to the competition	More quickly develop and promote our top talent
	Not enough qualified applicants to fill job openings Making too many poor choices when hiring	Consistently hire the best candidates for job openings

	<p>Employee turnover rates are too high</p>	<p>Reduce employee turnover</p>
	<p>Competition outpacing our product's capabilities Falling behind in race for innovation</p>	<p>Beat the competition in product innovation</p>
	<p>Not closing enough of the opportunities in our sales pipeline</p>	<p>Close more of the deals in our pipeline</p>

## REWORDING RELATED CUSTOMER PROBLEMS INTO POSITIVE OUTCOMES

ORIGINAL PROBLEM STATEMENT(S)	REPHRASED AS POSITIVE OUTCOME

Finally, take the remaining problems on your original list – the problems your offering cannot solve in any way – and re-word those so that they, too, read as positive outcomes.

ORIGINAL PROBLEM STATEMENT(S)	REPHRASED AS POSITIVE OUTCOME
<p>Cannot keep pace with demand</p>	<p>Increase production to meet demand</p>
<p>Global competition driving prices too low</p>	<p>Beat back global competition</p>
<p>Government regulations have become too burdensome</p>	<p>Streamline government regulations</p>
<p>Outdated technology unable to meet new demands</p>	<p>Build a business case for new technology investment</p>
<p>Material costs too high while profit margins too low</p>	<p>Reduce material and/or production costs</p>

**REWORDING UNRELATED CUSTOMER PROBLEMS INTO POSITIVE OUTCOMES**

ORIGINAL PROBLEM STATEMENT(S)	REPHRASED AS POSITIVE OUTCOME



## **STEP II**

**BECOME THE  
PROBLEM SOLVER**



# CHAPTER 3. LEVERAGE CHALLENGES UNRELATED TO YOUR SOLUTION

## ACTION ITEMS



Select a few trending issues from your list of unrelated problems and aspirational statements on which you can share a book, white paper, seminar, or other guidance with relevant clients.

Set yourself an aggressive deadline for doing so and post a reminder where you will see it daily (like the bathroom mirror).

## YOUR MISSION

1. Referring back to your list of UNRELATED problems and aspirational statements, select the top three that seemed like the hottest issues across your customer base.

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2. Beneath each item that you listed, jot down two or three ideas on materials you can share, introductions you can make, or seminars or lunch meetings you can arrange that guide your customer toward happy resolutions.

Put effort into this step. Don't just Google the topic and grab the first book or white paper that pops up. Rather, contact a few subject matter experts. Is anyone in your network familiar with these topics? Ask them which thought leaders, books, seminars, etc. tend to offer the most valuable insight. What books can you deliver? Can you host a luncheon with a subject matter expert? Coordinate a workshop with someone who's overcome similar challenges?

Choose wisely. Refer your prospects to an idiot and guess who looks like the idiot?

## **SOLVING UNRELATED PROBLEMS: IDEAS TO GUIDE YOUR CUSTOMER TOWARD HAPPY RESOLUTIONS**

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3. Down-select from your ideas the best one from each category.
4. Enter a due date by which you'll have delivered these materials, hosted the webinar, conducted the workshop, etc. for your customers, and make the due date aggressive. For example, if you're ordering a book, writing an executive summary of it, and hand delivering it to 25 prospects, I'd encourage you to give yourself no more than 10 days to complete the task. Act with focus and urgency. Time is ticking. Your customers need help. Your competition is scheming every day to eat your lunch. You need to sell something.

## **DUE DATES FOR SHARING YOUR RESEARCH AND INSIGHTS WITH YOUR PACK**

- #1 \_\_\_\_\_ IS DUE ON \_\_\_\_\_ !
- #2 \_\_\_\_\_ IS DUE ON \_\_\_\_\_ !
- #3 \_\_\_\_\_ IS DUE ON \_\_\_\_\_ !

5. Once you've completed this list, post a photo of it. I've found the magical formula for bringing important projects to life on time is to put them on a piece of paper and place it somewhere you'll often see it. For me, that's the bathroom mirror. In that location it'll be the first thing you see in the morning and the last thing you see at night, and its presence seems to prompt my subconscious to stay on track. And if you and your significant other share a bathroom, even better! Ask any successful salesperson and they'll confirm it's not the boss at work who motivates us to get results, it's the boss at home.

## **SUMMARY: PROCESS FOR ADDRESSING UNRELATED CUSTOMER PROBLEMS**

1. Select the top three unrelated problems that seem like the hottest issues across your customer base.
2. Jot down two or three ideas on materials you can share about each.
3. Down-select from your ideas the best one from each category.
4. Set a due date by which you'll have delivered these materials (and post it somewhere prominent!).

### **FINAL NOTE ON THIS MISSION:**

This is important! You've worked hard to engage your prospects and learn about their challenges. **Be the consistent customer advocate who serves them, even when it's not related to your next sale, and you're on your way to mutual success.** Move fast, sales professional.

Here are some examples of the exercise I just walked you through on the previous pages that turns unrelated problems into opportunities. You can find more blank copies of this worksheet at [leadthesalespack.com](http://leadthesalespack.com).

*Unrelated Problem #1*

*Due Date: 3/31*

**REDUCE MATERIAL AND/OR PRODUCTION COSTS**

*Idea 1* Coordinate webinar with Lean Manufacturing guru

*Idea 2* Read & Report on the Latest Six Sigma publication

*Idea 3* Offer to buy their ticket and attend together in an Industry 4.0 conference

*Unrelated Problem #2*

*Due Date: 4/15*

**BUILD A BUSINESS CASE FOR NEW TECHNOLOGY INVESTMENT**

*Idea 1* Seek tech industry business cases and summarize them

*Idea 2* Sponsor a Business Case audit through a new tech vendor

*Idea 3* Set up a field trip to a non-competing site to see new tech in action

*Unrelated Problem #3*

*Due Date: 4/20*

**STREAMLINE GOVERNMENT REGULATIONS**

*Idea 1* Author and co-sign with customer a letter to local gov't

*Idea 2* Host a site audit with a gov't regulation specialist

*Idea 3* Find a Subject Matter Expert to host a seminar on best practices

## CONCEPTS FOR ADDRESSING UNRELATED PROBLEMS

*Unrelated Problem #1*

*Due Date:* \_\_\_\_\_

**PROBLEM:** \_\_\_\_\_

*Idea 1* \_\_\_\_\_

*Idea 2* \_\_\_\_\_

*Idea 3* \_\_\_\_\_

*Unrelated Problem #2*

*Due Date:* \_\_\_\_\_

**PROBLEM:** \_\_\_\_\_

*Idea 1* \_\_\_\_\_

*Idea 2* \_\_\_\_\_

*Idea 3* \_\_\_\_\_

*Unrelated Problem #3*

*Due Date:* \_\_\_\_\_

**PROBLEM:** \_\_\_\_\_

*Idea 1* \_\_\_\_\_

*Idea 2* \_\_\_\_\_

*Idea 3* \_\_\_\_\_

Activity sheets built for this assignment, and every other task assigned throughout this book, can be downloaded at [leadthesalespack.com](http://leadthesalespack.com)



# CHAPTER 4. WEAVE CUSTOMER PROBLEMS INTO GOLD WITH THE BENEFIT CARD

## CREATING THE BENEFIT CARD — A FIVE-MINUTE TOOL WITH MASSIVE RESULTS

Using the materials that you have developed so far, you are going to create a Benefit Card, a single sheet of paper that fits in your coat pocket and will bring you more insight in five minutes than other salespeople glean from their customers in five months.

## CUSTOMER BENEFIT CARD

Below are the most common benefits our customers report.  
Select your top three and rank them in order of importance.

<input type="checkbox"/>	_____
<input type="checkbox"/>	_____
<input type="checkbox"/>	_____
<input type="checkbox"/>	_____
<input type="checkbox"/>	_____
<input type="checkbox"/>	_____
<input type="checkbox"/>	_____
<input type="checkbox"/>	_____
<input type="checkbox"/>	_____
<input type="checkbox"/>	_____
<input type="checkbox"/>	_____



## ACTION ITEMS



Identify 30 prospects, perhaps drawn from your initial engagement pool contacted after Chapter Two. Take them through a conversation guided by steps 4-10 in the next section.

## YOUR MISSION

1. Refer back to your list of RELATED problems that you converted into aspiration statements. [page 58 in the book]
2. Following the Benefit Card format, rewrite those 8-10 aspiration statements in the blanks. [page 90 in the book]
3. With copies of your new Benefit Card in hand, go visit<sup>8</sup> at least 30 of your top prospects, likely the same audience you polled when you were in Problem Seeker mode. When contacting them, say something like, “Mr./Mrs. Smith, you may recall we spoke recently while I was researching the top challenges you and others in your industry face. Based on all that feedback, I’ve compiled a list of the top 10 challenges folks like you shared, and I’m curious to hear your feedback on this final list.”

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<sup>8</sup> I’m probably sounding like a broken record, but once again, you must perform this exercise LIVE with your top prospects! This exercise goes real deep real fast, and in my experience you will not earn the meaningful conversation you need if you try to pull this off with an online poll or email. This is hand-to-hand engagement and it requires face-to-face conversation. Now (sigh), I know face to face is not always possible, so if you have to resort to video conference, it’s better than nothing, but that’s the minimum bar you need to clear.

If you're courageously standing in front of them when you ask this question — and I'm so proud of you if you are! — ask this way: “Can I review it with you for a few minutes?”

If you called them on the phone and you're trying to set an in-person review, ask them this way: “Do you have your calendar handy?”<sup>9</sup> “Do you prefer [date #1 and time] or [date #2 and time]?” Then book the meeting and hang up! There is nothing else you can say in that moment that will further your cause. Save your next words for the all-important Benefit Card review.

4. Once seated in front of your customer, pass them your Benefit Card and say something like, “Mr. Smith, based on the problems you and others in roles like yours shared, this is a list of the leading benefits my company delivers. Please read through this list and select the top three that are most appealing to you, and then rank them one through three with one being most important.”

At that point, stop talking! Give these Benefit Card Instructions, then sit back in your chair and keep quiet. In my early selling days, I'd go on and on about who else I'd interviewed, how excited I was to hear their feedback, what a nice day it was outside, blah blah blah. And you know what all that extra chit chat got me? Nothing.

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<sup>9</sup> OMG. This question, “Do you have your calendar handy?” has landed me more meetings than any other words I've ever spoken. Maybe the question triggers some magical door in the brain that opens us up to saying yes? After all, I'm not asking for an appointment, which many prospects do not want to grant; rather, I'm asking only if they have their calendars handy. More often than not, I've seen executives instinctively respond, “Yes,” while they automatically reach for their calendar before their conscious mind catches up with what their hands are doing. And once they've begun the physical exercise of reaching for their calendar, it's a foregone conclusion that they're going to meet with me.

We're not there to talk about the weather or continue that Hallmark Movie romance. We're there to learn about their aspirations and whether our company can help them reach them. Give these Benefit Card instructions, then sit back in your chair and keep quiet.

5. Upon completing the Benefit Card, usually only a minute or two while you **sit quietly** 😊, your customer will lean across the table and try to hand the card back to you, as if they just completed a homework assignment. **Do not take it back.** This is important because the Benefit Card is meant to drive conversation, and you're blowing the whole process if you snatch the card back and read it. So instead, smile and respond, "Oh no, that's yours to keep."

Once they're settled back in their chair, you will lead your customer through what's likely to be the most important conversation the two of you will ever have. Why? Because you're about to cover the topic that makes or breaks sales careers: The degree to which you understand **WHAT** your customers want and **WHY** they want it.

Now pay attention, because this defining moment forces us to use our ears while our eager, misguided little sales-devil-brains are screaming at us to talk. So... before you move to the next phase of the conversation, take a moment to remind yourself, **"Listen. Don't sell, just listen."**

6. Working our way from the bottom to the top of the customer's Benefit Card selections, ask, "What did you choose as your number three?"

And the moment the customer reads their selections back to you, we'll see what kind of sales professional you are. This is THE moment when your eager sales brain will scream at you to start talking. Imagine, for example, you're selling electric vehicles and your customer selected a benefit from your card reading, "Reduce pollution."

Oh, how tempting to leap from your chair and begin extolling the zero emission virtues of your electric vehicles! For God's sake, don't do that. Even though your prospect just served up a softball that you think you can knock out of the park, you are still too early in the game to start selling. Patience, grasshopper. You may have just discovered WHAT your customer wants but you're still blind as to WHY they want it, and without the WHY, you're nowhere close to making a profitable sale or earning a meaningful partnership. So instead of jumping on your sales wagon, proceed to step #7.

7. Lean forward, focus all your attention on the customer, and ask, "And why did you choose that one?" Then let them tell you.

This is the moment where you'll learn the backstory driving the need.

Understanding WHY your customers need certain benefits from your offering is extremely helpful, if not imperative, when shaping the story you eventually tell about your offering. In fact, getting this far into understanding your customers' needs puts you in the top 15% of salespeople I've ever seen engage with customers.

But is reaching the top 15% of the world's salespeople sufficient? No — not when reaching an even higher level is now well within your grasp.

Understanding your customer's WHAT and WHY, across as many as three different areas where your company might be of service, is the critical insight that matches your sales pitch to customer needs in ways that only the elite one percent of our profession ever reach.

8. We just learned WHAT the customer wants and WHY they want it. Or have we?

When responding to the WHY question, most customers will respond with a surface level reason as to why it's important to their company. For example, if your customer chooses "reduce costs" (that's their WHAT) and says they chose that one because, "Our company needs to increase profits" (that's their WHY), we've learned only why it's important to the business, not why it matters to them personally. And there is a MAJOR difference between understanding why something's important to a company and why something's important to an individual working in that company.

If you want to become an elite one-percenter, that highest level sales professional who understands customer needs better than anyone else, you'll now ask this question: "How would that benefit you personally?"

I know what you're thinking: "This is too personal. I'm a salesperson, not a daytime talk show host. Asking a question like this makes me uncomfortable."

I understand. I felt the same way when first taking this step. But I've learned this final question opens the door to a completely different customer engagement. **At the end of the day we're all humans, not robots, and we each hold dreams and aspirations that fuel the work we do.** No one wants to be remembered solely based on the profits or growth we brought to a company; we want to be remembered for the ways we helped others.

When we link our offering to a path that enables others to reach both their professional obligations and their personal goals, we've built a bridge that I estimate fewer than one percent of salespeople ever build.

9. After your customer has shared their WHAT and WHY — including their own personal WHY — for their number one selection on your Benefit Card, you've earned the right to do a little talking. Yet again, however, this is not the moment you start blabbing about your company or whipping up a product demo! Instead, you're going to share a "future exciting picture," just as I'll illustrate in the next chapter.

The exciting picture you describe illustrates what their world will look like once their number one aspiration becomes reality. Does this seem like overkill? Perhaps you're asking, "Why do I need to bother with this? Clearly my customer already has an inspiring vision of the future or they wouldn't have chosen that aspiration in the first place!"

In truth, however, your customer has a lot going on in their minds, just like you and I do, and they may not have made the effort to actually envision what victory looks like. You've got to do it for them in a way that's genuine.

10. Offer to brief your customer on your offering, with heavy emphasis on the piece they told you was important to them. Offer something like, “There’s a lot about my company’s offering that we could talk about, but how about we stay focused on the details related to your need to reduce costs (or whatever they shared as their most important benefits)?”

Provided the customer agrees, and by this point they almost always do, you finally have an opportunity to speak — a little bit, though conversation and not lecture format! — about your offering.

Ready to give it a try? The following chapter offers a powerful true story of the Benefit Card in action and demonstrates how the wolf heart leads by strengthening the pack.

# CHAPTER 5. UNCOVER THE WHY WITH THE BENEFIT CARD: CARLOS' STORY

## EXERCISE

For every item you listed on your Benefit Card, write a brief “future exciting picture” that puts your customer in a happy place. The wording I’ve found works best sounds something like, “Mr. Smith, picture this... It’s six months<sup>11</sup> from now and you’re [describe a day in their happy, transformed life.]”

I’m asking you to write down these future exciting pictures because they need to become a natural part of your conversation, not robotic canned lines. Get comfortable with your future exciting picture descriptions. Make every effort to “see” your customers in these elevated states, living better lives tomorrow than they are today. This is rocket fuel for both you and your customer!

Unless you’re the founder of your company, the wild-eyed optimist who saw the customer benefits in your dreams long before your company ever came to life, I can almost guarantee you that your company is never going to fill your heart with customer benefits. Your company will fill your brain with all sorts of product knowledge, pricing strategies, process documentation, competitive threats, and sales quotas, but they’ll never fill your heart with true compassion for the customers you’re serving. That, my friend, is on YOU to fulfill, and consistently walking your customers through their benefits and their future exciting pictures is the fuel that keeps your mission alive.

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<sup>11</sup> Based on how long it takes for your offering to deliver that benefit, select a reasonable timeline. If you’re selling lawn cutting services, for example, the timeline may be the same day. If you’re selling a city skyscraper, it may be five years. Be realistic. The last thing you want to do is set an unrealistic expectation that crushes your back office’s ability to deliver and ends up disappointing your customer.



You already know the sales profession is hard. Lose sight of how your customers can personally benefit and the sales profession becomes impossible. Make the effort. Become a master at painting your customers' future exciting pictures. Write them down, right here and right now. Grab a notebook; use the space provided here, your phone or laptop, or download and print the activity worksheet packet from **[leadthesalespack.com](http://leadthesalespack.com)**.

## FUTURE EXCITING PICTURES

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*Activity sheets built for this assignment, and every other task assigned throughout this book, can be downloaded at [leadthesalespack.com](http://leadthesalespack.com)*



## **STEP BY STEP: THE BENEFIT CARD PROCESS IN REVIEW**

1. Refer back to your list of RELATED problems that you converted into aspiration statements.
2. Rewrite those 8-10 aspirational statements using the Benefit Card format.
3. Schedule meetings with at least 30 of your top prospects, likely the same audience you polled when you were in Problem Seeker mode.
4. Pass the Benefit Card to your customer and ask them to rank the top most appealing benefits. At that point, stop talking!
5. Do not take the card back. Make sure the customer knows it is theirs to keep, then take a moment to remind yourself, "Listen. Don't sell, just listen."
6. Working from the bottom to the top of the customer's Benefit Card selections, ask, "What did you choose as your number three?" Resist the urge to start selling.
7. Lean forward and ask, "And why did you choose that one?" Then let them tell you.

8. Ask this all-important question: “How would that benefit you personally?”
  
9. Describe a future exciting picture illustrating what their world will look like once their number one aspiration becomes reality.
  
10. Offer to brief your customer on your offering, with heavy emphasis on the piece of your offering they told you was important to them.

***Now let's reflect on this for a moment... We just went through TEN steps to a sales engagement, and you're not talking at all about your offering until step #10. How does that compare to the way you're selling today? How many steps are you taking in advance of your sales pitch that give you a deeper understanding of the person you're meeting?***

## REFLECTION

Challenge yourself to identify your own “Carlos.” Is it a moment or interaction that’s already happened to you, or could there be a story waiting to be written? Either way, sit down with some paper or your computer and write out your story (feel free to use the space provided below) — how you remember it or how you imagine it? Explain why.

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Identify three key takeaways for yourself. If you’ve already met your own Carlos, what larger lessons have you learned because of it? If that moment of clarity still awaits just over the horizon, what can you hope to draw from it when the time arrives?

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## **STEP III**

**BECOME THE  
FLASHLIGHT  
EDUCATOR**

# CHAPTER 6. WHY YOU'LL MISS OUT ON TWO-THIRDS OF YOUR SALES OPPORTUNITIES, EVEN IF YOU MASTER THE FIRST FIVE CHAPTERS

## ACTION ITEMS



Follow the activities to home in on three core unique selling propositions (USPs) that you know and believe in with all your heart.



Put on your research cap and flex your storytelling muscles to craft an informed explanation of the various misfortunes that will befall those who don't benefit from your USPs.

## EXERCISE #1: DEFINE YOUR UNIQUE SELLING PROPOSITIONS (USPs)

What are the components of your offering that make it special — those high octane ingredients that you're convinced will drive more value for your customers?<sup>15</sup> We call those special features your Unique Selling Propositions (USPs), and they're the pieces of your offering that we've got to leverage to separate you from the competition and shape your Flashlight Educator approach. Hopefully you're already familiar with your company's USPs. If not, connect ASAP with the highest performers on your team and/or the brainiacs who designed your badass products, and ask them. Another great audience to ask — in fact, the best audience of all if you're lucky enough to have them

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<sup>15</sup> If your answer to this question is, "lowest price," this guide is probably not much help to you. Good luck in your race to the bottom.

— is your company’s existing customers. Ask your customers, your colleagues, and yourself this question:

“What parts of my company’s offerings are unique — meaning our competition cannot match them and they’re valuable to our customers?”

Can you list at least five of them? In addition to listing your top USPs, note why each are of value to your customers.

On the following page is an example of what a USP document might look like for a real estate agent like Gina.

*Activity sheets built for this assignment, and every other task assigned throughout this book, can be downloaded at [leadthesalespack.com](http://leadthesalespack.com)*





## REAL ESTATE AGENT

- USP #1: Guaranteed sales contract within 60 days for minimum 95% of asking price or you can cancel the contract

*Important to customer because:*

Most agents lock you in for several months with no guarantees, so you're stuck with a deadbeat agent.

- USP #2: 75% of commissions to the buyer's agent

*Important to customer because:*

As opposed to 50%/50% split, giving buyer's agents less incentive to show your property value vs. another.

- USP #3: Free interior design consultation

*Important to customer because:*

Most agents do not offer interior design expertise, meaning your home doesn't show as well and sells for less than it should have.

- USP #4: Free storage for clutter

*Important to customer because:*

Customers can remove clutter, increasing home appeal and sale price.

- USP #5: Free use of local moving truck

*Important to customer because:*

\$1500 savings.

- USP #6: Client concierge service for financing, legal and inspection services

*Important to customer because:*

The customer doesn't have to waste time shopping around and will be in the hands of trusted professionals.

- USP #7: 25 years of experience

*Important to customer because:*

Left to an inexperienced agent, you're less likely to have a positive experience or get maximum value.

## USP WORKSHEET

USP #1: \_\_\_\_\_

*Important to customer because:*

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USP #2: \_\_\_\_\_

*Important to customer because:*

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USP #3: \_\_\_\_\_

*Important to customer because:*

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USP #4: \_\_\_\_\_

*Important to customer because:*

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USP #5: \_\_\_\_\_

*Important to customer because:*

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USP #6: \_\_\_\_\_

*Important to customer because:*

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If you ask enough people, chances are that you'll hear them mention many USPs that only you and your company can deliver. That's terrific! But like most things in life, you'll probably discover that only a fraction of your offering's USPs are crucial for your customers to consider.

## **EXERCISE #2: SELECT YOUR TOP THREE**

From the list you created, select your top three. When choosing your top three, narrow down the USPs you believe best set you apart from the competition and pose the biggest threat to your customers if they are left out of the deal.

On the next page you'll find the top three we selected from our real estate example that best meet those criteria.

## REAL ESTATE AGENT

- USP #1: Guaranteed sales contract within 60 days for minimum 95% of asking price or you can cancel the contract

*Important to customer because:*

Most agents lock you in for several months with no guarantees, so you're stuck with a deadbeat agent.

- USP #2: 75% of commissions to the buyer's agent

*Important to customer because:*

As opposed to 50%/50% split, giving buyer's agents less incentive to show your property value vs. another.

- USP #3: Free interior design consultation

*Important to customer because:*

Most agents do not offer interior design expertise, meaning your home doesn't show as well and sells for less than it should have.

- USP #4: Free storage for clutter

*Important to customer because:*

Customers can remove clutter, increasing home appeal and sale price.

- USP #5: Free use of local moving truck

*Important to customer because:*

\$1500 savings.

- USP #6: Client concierge service for financing, legal and inspection services

*Important to customer because:*

The customer doesn't have to waste time shopping around and will be in the hands of trusted professionals.

- USP #7: 25 years of experience

*Important to customer because:*

Left to an inexperienced agent, you're less likely to have a positive experience or get maximum value.

## **EXERCISE #3: KNOW YOUR USPs AND BELIEVE IN THEM WITH ALL YOUR HEART**

Now I'm going to make a leap of faith about your USPs: Your company baked them into your offering for a good reason, and those good reasons are related to a benefit to your customer. For example, our landscaper offers lifetime warranties because he's learned that his competitors do subquality work and customers don't get a lasting product. Our software vendor invests heavily in network security because she's heard of customers who've suffered massive setbacks due to security breaches.

My point is, you need to understand not only what your company's USPs are, but why they're important to your customers. And if you've done a thorough job following this guide's process, you're already equipped with validation that these problems are real.

If you're still unsure why your company's USPs are a critical ingredient to your customers' success, stop reading here! Go back to your prospect network, seek guidance within your own company, and become fluent in why these USPs are so important to a complete customer solution. **Ask yourself, "If my own family were in the market for what I'm selling, would I insist on including these top three USPs in the contract they sign?" If your answer is anything other than a resounding, "Hell yes!" then you need to find better USPs or go sell something else.** Believing deep down in their importance is critical to a winning salesperson's success.

## **EXERCISE #4: RESEARCH THE BAD THINGS**

What happens when customers select products or services that do not include your USPs? This is the only activity in this entire guide that encourages you to do what top salespeople hate to do: Sit in your office and surf the internet. In this case, however, it's vital that you research, understand, and learn to describe — in vivid detail — how terribly life can go when customers make ill-informed buying decisions. As we covered previously, avoiding a bad outcome often inspires action more than working toward a good outcome, and these bad outcomes are the foundation of your Flashlight Educator briefings.

For as many of the USPs as possible that you listed in Exercise #1, find stories and statistics that illustrate the negative effects of life without your USPs. At this point, let's limit your research to the top three USPs you selected in Exercise #2. Why limit your research to the top three? Because if you get too sucked into this research effort, you'll waste more time than necessary at your desk. Trust the 80/20 rule on this one: You will find 80% of the details you need in 20% of the time, so grab the top stories and then get the hell out of your office. There are no customers there!

For each of your top three USPs, list two or three research-backed stories or statistics that validate your USPs' importance.



Here's what top-three USP research might look like for our real estate agent example:

**USP: Guaranteed Sales Contract within 60 days for minimum 95% of asking price or you can cancel the contract**

*Research that validates this USP's importance:*

- ✓ The average home sells within 55 days, so if you're not under contract within 60 days, you're stuck relying upon an uninspired real estate agent for several more months.
- ✓ If you're stuck in a long-term contract with a lousy real estate agent, you'll spend thousands more in ongoing taxes, insurance, and utilities than you should have.
- ✓ Seventy-six percent of home buyers cannot buy their next home until they sell their current one, meaning you might lose out on the home you want to buy next.

**USP: Client Concierge Service for financing, legal, and inspection services**

*Research that validates this USP's importance:*

- ✓ The average home sale requires that 42 people all work together in harmony (inspector, title agent, attorneys, bank, appraiser, etc.) and if only one of them screws up, the whole deal is threatened. A client concierge service ensures every person involved is at the top of their game and unlikely to kill your deal.

- ✓ Many states do not require home inspectors to be licensed, meaning without expert guidance on whom to select, the buyer can end up with an under-qualified inspector and incomplete inspection.
- ✓ Fewer than 15% of lawyers specialize in real estate transactions, meaning without an experienced concierge service helping a home buyer or seller select a good one, the client's at risk of poor representation.

#### USP: 25 years of experience

Research that validates this USP's importance:

- ✓ Around 87% of real estate agents fail within the first five years, meaning the market is flooded with inexperienced and soon-to-fail agents less capable of driving successful transactions.
- ✓ Homes sold without a real estate agent sell for an average 17% less, meaning without an experienced real estate agent's guidance, the average homeowner could lose over \$60,000.

Get the picture? OK, now complete your own "Consequences of the Wrong Choice" document, transferring from Exercise #2 your top three USPs and listing your research validation beneath each of them.

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## TOP 3 UNIQUE SELLING PROPOSITIONS — “CONSEQUENCES OF THE WRONG CHOICE”

USP #1: \_\_\_\_\_

*Research that validates this USP's importance:*

✓ \_\_\_\_\_

✓ \_\_\_\_\_

✓ \_\_\_\_\_

USP #2: \_\_\_\_\_

*Research that validates this USP's importance:*

✓ \_\_\_\_\_

✓ \_\_\_\_\_

✓ \_\_\_\_\_

USP #3: \_\_\_\_\_

*Research that validates this USP's importance:*

✓ \_\_\_\_\_

✓ \_\_\_\_\_

✓ \_\_\_\_\_



# CHAPTER 7. THE ULTIMATE PITCH

## ACTION ITEMS



Fill in the worksheet with your own set of “Questions You Must Ask Before Making a Buying Decision.”



Complete the 12-step storytelling sequence that will guide you in crafting your winning briefing.

Now, referencing your own notes and following a format similar to what we compiled for our real estate agent, complete your own one-pager list of questions. (List minimum five questions, maximum seven questions.)

# QUESTIONS YOU MUST ASK BEFORE MAKING A BUYING DECISION

1. \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

2. \_\_\_\_\_

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3. \_\_\_\_\_

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4. \_\_\_\_\_

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5. \_\_\_\_\_

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6. \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

7. \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

## **BUILD YOUR BRIEFING**

Over the course of the previous exercises, you've done something few sales professionals ever do: you've become fluent in not only what you sell but also why your customers are in serious trouble if they make uninformed buying decisions. At this point, you likely know more than your prospects about the blind spots in their current approach and the disastrous outcomes they could suffer if they don't change direction. It's your obligation to share your insights with your prospective audience. But how can you do so in a way that's altruistic and doesn't make you look like some fear-mongering doomsday evangelist?

Much like we shaped our briefing with Brian and his factory's executive team, you'll follow a template that references your prospect's world, not yours, and goes deep on research and education that your prospect has likely not considered. In this exercise, we'll revisit our briefing with Brian's executive team, which follows the same template you'll create here. We'll also showcase a few examples from other industries — landscape, real estate, software — that illustrate how to weave your company's USPs into a Flashlight Educator briefing.

Taking ingredients from all previous exercises you've completed so far, you:

- Have the ammunition to build powerful briefings that educate your prospects, elevate your standing, and win sales.
- Selected your top three USPs and researched their importance to your customers.
- Identified three different Flashlight Educator briefings that you can build.

For this exercise, select one of your top three USPs and complete this template with that single USP in mind. Ready to cast aside your old, tired, rejection-filled sales approach with something fun and new?

OK, let's do this! It's time to craft your first story.



# STORYTELLING WORKSHEETS

In these storytelling worksheets, you'll see...

- The opening to a topic or sentence highlighted at the top of the page
- Examples of how other sales categories might finish the topic or sentence in the middle of the page
- An open space for you to write your own material at the bottom of the page

Make a statement that acknowledges your top problem(s) is actually a pain point for OTHER PEOPLE LIKE THEM.

*"We're hearing from others in roles like yours that..."*

LANDSCAPER	REAL ESTATE AGENT	SOFTWARE VENDOR
...they're frustrated with the hardscape projects that fall apart within a couple years.	...the home buying process is causing more stress and costing more money than what they expected.	...they're struggling to get buy-in from frontline users who need to adopt new software systems.

Referencing your own list of USPs and customer challenges, finish this sentence in your own words.

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## STEP 1:

Make a statement that acknowledges your top problem(s) is actually a pain point for OTHER PEOPLE LIKE THEM.

*“We’re hearing from others in roles like yours that...”*

LANDSCAPER	REAL ESTATE AGENT	SOFTWARE VENDOR
...they’re frustrated with the hardscape projects that fall apart within a couple years.	...the home buying process is causing more stress and costing more money than what they expected.	...they’re struggling to get buy-in from frontline users who need to adopt new software systems.

Referencing your own list of USPs and customer challenges, finish this sentence in your own words.

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## STEP 2:

In these storytelling worksheets, you'll see...

### ***“How does this compare with your reality?”***

If the customer responds, “Nope. I don't have those problems at all. We're in great shape.” You can ask, “OK, what are the challenges that you're facing?” but at that point you're losing control of the briefing as noted at the bottom of this page. Instead, follow up with, “OK, another challenge we're hearing is [X],” with X being another of the top customer challenges you listed in the previous exercises. But understand that if your prospect continues to push back and respond, “Nope, we don't have that problem,” there's a possibility you...

- Haven't done enough homework on what this customer's or this industry's problems are, OR
- You're talking with a very special customer who is different from most of their competition, OR
- You're meeting with an adversarial jerk, in which case you should be ready — and brave enough — to end the meeting and go find another customer.

...AND you've now lost control of the conversation. You are at the mercy of talking about what THEY think the problem is, which might not be a topic on which you're prepared to educate.

*Note: We do NOT say, “Anyway, that's the problem we're hearing from other customers. What are your challenges?” DO NOT ASK THIS. Now you've invited the customer to change the topic and you have lost control of the conversation.*

### STEP 3:

Describe the way most companies are trying to solve this problem.

*“Most people in roles like yours are trying to solve this problem by...”*

LANDSCAPER	REAL ESTATE AGENT	SOFTWARE VENDOR
...calling back the landscape contractor a couple years down the road and demanding repairs.	...surfing the internet or asking friends/family for answers as to why this home buying process has become so complicated.	...forcing software usage across frontline workers and punishing those who do not comply.

Write your own finish to this sentence.

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## STEP 4:

Educate them on why the old school solution to the problem is dangerously wrong.

*“We’re learning that this is not a good way to solve the problem because...”*

LANDSCAPER	REAL ESTATE AGENT	SOFTWARE VENDOR
...most landscapers offer only a one-year warranty so you’re stuck paying a premium for problems that never should have arisen in the first place.	...every property purchase is unique, with up to 42 different people from different companies trying to work together on your unique transaction.	...force-feeding software adoption has the opposite effect, driving long-term resentment that’s nearly impossible to overturn.

Write your own finish to this sentence.

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## STEP 5:

Lead them to a better way.

*“So instead of jumping on the same bandwagon as everyone else, a few of our customers have found there’s a better way...”*

LANDSCAPER	REAL ESTATE AGENT	SOFTWARE VENDOR
...Smart customers are demanding a lifetime warranty on the work, with the warranty backed by a third-party insurer who will cover the repair costs if the landscaper goes out of business.	...Savvy clients are carefully researching a real estate agent’s background and success metrics before signing an agreement.	...They’re carefully reviewing the software vendor’s training and frontline adoption strategy, and making sure those training programs are baked into the contract.

Write your own finish to this sentence.

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## **STEP 6:**

Confirm that they're with you.

***“Can you see how this approach is better?”***

*or*

***“Can you see how this new approach might solve the problem?”***

Just as in step two when we asked the customer to confirm agreement or appreciation, listen carefully here to your customer's response. Are they on the same page? Are they nodding in affirmation? Does their body language indicate you're speaking their language?

If so, you're ready to move ahead. If not, it's time to jump OUT of this template and investigate their concerns. There is zero need to waste your time proceeding with this material if the customer doesn't agree with the logic of your briefing.

## STEP 7:

Share EVIDENCE that it's a better way.

*“After a lot of [field testing, engagements, interviews, customer feedback, etc.] here’s how [others in roles like yours] or [your competitors] are benefitting...”*

LANDSCAPER	REAL ESTATE AGENT	SOFTWARE VENDOR
...Their hardscape investment remains in great condition for the long term, with peace of mind it's guaranteed to remain that way.	...They're closing transactions in half the time of the market average, saving an average of \$3,000, and accelerating their next purchase by as much as four months.	...Instead of taking 18 painful months to earn 50% adoption, they're seeing 80% adoption in six months and reaching positive ROI in less than half the time.

Write your own finish to this sentence.

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## STEP 8:

Confirm that they care.

***“How important is it to you to [protect your investment, enjoy the home buying experience, win frontline adoption, etc.]?”***

I’m sounding like a broken record but again, it’s important to confirm here whether the customer is still with you! Unless your research and customer feedback were off the mark or this customer is just an argumentative jerk, you should receive positive feedback here but never assume you have it until you hear it.

Write your own version of this sentence:

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## **STEP 9:**

Find out why this is important to THEM PERSONALLY.

*“If you [knew your investment was protected for life, your home purchase was going to be smooth and predictable, you would avoid the normal headaches associated with new software adoption, etc.] how would that benefit you personally?”*

*or*

*“Imagine it’s six months from now and you’ve accomplished this. What does that look like?”*

Write your own version of this sentence.

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## **STEP 10:**

Learn WHO MAKES THE DECISION  
and GET IN FRONT OF THEM.

At this point, if you've done your job right, your customer is thinking, "Oh man I'm glad my boss [or spouse] isn't here because if she heard what I just heard she'd be all over me to fix this problem RIGHT NOW! And she'd be mad that we didn't already know about this."

***"In addition to you, who else makes the decision about what service provider you choose?"***

**AND THEN ASK...**

***"How do we arrange a similar briefing that brings them up to speed?"***

What do you do when the customer responds, "No need to set another meeting. Just give me the materials and I'll go share it with my boss."?

Refer back to page 155 in the book and write your answer here. It's important to reinforce in your own mind why this is a death trap, and writing it down here will reinforce your commitment to standing firm.

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## STEP 11:

Learn to what extent they're intelligently trying to solve this problem by baking this issue into their vendor selection criteria.

***“To what extent is this type of approach to [selecting a landscaper/selecting a real estate agent/selecting a software vendor/etc.] baked into your selection process?”***

Write your own version of this sentence.

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***“Why or why not?”***

***“To what extent do you think it should be?”***

## **STEP 12:**

IMPORTANT: Reverse the Tables.

Move from SELLER to BUYER.

*“It’s important we partner with clients who share our commitment to... [quality work at a quality price/best in class service for discerning buyers/frontline adoption and positive ROI/etc.].”*

*Then ask, “Help me understand why your company is a good partner for us?”*

Write your own finish to this sentence:

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## STEP 13\*:

\*Step 13 is only used if and when you cannot close the deal right there and the customer insists on doing more research before making a commitment...

**No brochure, no t-shirts, no “thank you for your time” drive...  
Leave them with QUESTIONS.**

*“We’re learning that the best way to make sure you partner with someone who doesn’t leave you exposed to [poor craftsmanship/a nightmare home buying experience/a failed software investment/etc.] is to ask every company – ours included! – these five questions.”*

Then hand them a copy of the Top Questions document you completed on page 170 in the book.

*Activity sheets built for this assignment, and every other task assigned throughout this book, can be downloaded at [leadthesalespack.com](http://leadthesalespack.com)*



## **BUILD YOUR FLASHLIGHT EDUCATOR BRIEFING**

Use this storytelling framework to build engaging and informative Flashlight Educator Briefings that will serve your growing pack.

**STEP 1: “We’re hearing from others in roles like yours that...**

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**STEP 2: ASK: “How does this compare with your reality?”**

**STEP 3: “Most people in roles like yours are trying to solve this problem by...**

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**STEP 4: “We’re learning that this is not a good way to solve the problem because...**

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**STEP 5: “So instead of jumping on the same bandwagon as everyone else, a few of our customers have found there’s a better way...**

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**STEP 6: ASK: “Can you see how this approach is better?”**

or

**“Can you see how this new approach might solve the problem?”**



**STEP 7: “After a lot of [field testing, engagements, interviews, customer feedback, etc,] here’s how [others in roles like yours] or [your competitors] are benefitting...**

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**STEP 8: ASK: “How important is it to you to \_\_\_\_\_?”**

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**STEP 9: “If you \_\_\_\_\_, how would that benefit you personally?”**

or

**“Imagine it’s six months from now and you’ve accomplished this. What does that look like?”**

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**STEP 10:** ASK: **“In addition to you, who else makes the decision about what service provider you choose?”**

AND THEN ASK: **“How do we arrange a similar briefing that brings them up to speed?”**

**STEP 11:** ASK: **“To what extent is this type of approach to \_\_\_\_\_ baked into your selection process?”**

**“Why or why not?”**

**“To what extent do you think it should be?”**

**STEP 12:** **“It’s important we partner with clients who share our commitment to...**

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AND THEN ASK: **“Help me understand why your company is a good partner for us?”**

**STEP 13:** (If needed) **“We’re learning that the best way to make sure you partner with someone who doesn’t leave you exposed to \_\_\_\_\_ is to ask every company — ours included! — these five questions.”**

Hand customer copy of Top Questions document from page 170 in the book.

# CHAPTER 8. YOUR MISSION: GET THE MEETING

## EXERCISE

Referencing your Flashlight Educator briefing materials and the opening lines you created in the previous LIVE exercise, fill in the blanks to this letter.

Hi, I'm \_\_\_\_\_ with \_\_\_\_\_.

I stopped by/I'm calling because over the last \_\_\_\_\_

we've \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ \* and

\_\_\_\_\_ \*

and uncovered three blind spots that seem poised to \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ \*\*.

We've prepared a \_\_\_\_\_ \*\*\* minute briefing that shares our findings. Shall we review it now or do you have your calendar handy?"

*\*List two things you've done through your Problem Seeker, Problem Solver, or Flashlight Educator exercises. For example, did you meet with 25 of their industry peers? Survey their top customers? Research their industry? Interview subject matter experts? Choose two of your top activities and list them here.*

*\*\*Add something here that speaks to the bad things that happen to those who are left behind or do not take advantage of your company's USPs. For example, are these blind spots poised to reduce their revenue? Leave exposed a safety hazard? Increase employee turnover? Make them overpay? Get stuck with a poor quality product? Choose one and list it here.*

*\*\*\*List the approximate duration. I recommend 20 minutes max. Any longer and your prospect will be reluctant to invest the time, and you've not done enough to boil your big ideas down to their essence.*

In reality, few prospects jump right to “yes” without a couple follow-up questions such as, “Hold on... What's your name again?” or “What's the topic?” or “Who'd you talk to?”

We could write another book on how to navigate the entire dance, but to summarize, your mission is to engage in the shortest conversation possible until you're in the right setting to give the briefing. No long-winded narratives on who you are, where you came from, or who all your customers are — just brief responses that convey the following message:

**My number one purpose for being here is to educate you on our findings and hear your feedback on them. Until we complete that step we're getting ahead of ourselves. We cannot possibly know if we are a match until we determine whether there are holes in your current approach.**

Referencing your Flashlight Educator briefing materials and the opening lines you created in the previous LIVE exercise, fill in the blanks to this letter.

**Subject: Is This Why Your \_\_\_\_\_ ?**

*(Add something that speaks to the consequence of not addressing the blind spots your Flashlight Educator briefing outlines. Jimmy at ACME Software focused on the importance of maintaining customer relationships, but similar-sounding subject headlines for other industries might look like these:*

Real estate agent: *“Is This Why You Won’t Get Top Dollar for Your House?”*

Landscaper: *“Is This Why You’re Going to Be Disappointed in Your Next Outdoor Landscape Project?”*

*I don’t know exactly why — certainly a marketing genius can explain it, but headlines beginning, “Is This Why [negative outcome here]?” Have netted me the most engagement.)*

**Dear \_\_\_\_\_,**

**Over the last few months [companies including \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_ if you can, name  
competitors and other people in their industry] / [others in roles  
like yours] have confirmed the same concerns our research  
concluded: There are two (two or three is plenty) pitfalls (pitfalls,  
blind spots, dangerous trends, oversights, etc.) in your industry's \_\_\_\_\_**

\_\_\_\_\_

*(item related to your offering. For example, software system,  
accounting practices, equipment design, buying processes,  
training programs, etc.) that, when left unaddressed, \_\_\_\_\_*

\_\_\_\_\_

*(referring back to our Flashlight Educator materials, what are the  
bad things that can happen if they don't change direction and  
incorporate your company's USPs into their buying decisions? For  
example, are these blind spots poised to reduce their revenue?  
Leave exposed a safety hazard? Increase employee turnover?  
Make them overpay? Get stuck with a poor quality product?  
Choose one and list it here.)*

**We've developed a \_\_\_\_\_ minute briefing** (Maximum 20  
minutes. Be prepared to complete the briefing within the time  
you promised, though if you deliver a compelling message you

often find yourself engaged with your customer for much longer!)

**entitled** \_\_\_\_\_

*(Choose a title that skirts the edge of your customer's comfort zone, something that triggers their inner voice to say, "Yikes! This sounds important. I might be missing out.")*

*Examples:*

- *Most Dangerous Trends in Software Purchasing*
- *Three Pitfalls in Traditional Consulting Engagements*
- *Top Three Reasons Home Sellers Leave Money on the Table*
- *Two Blind Spots Soon to Disrupt American Furniture Manufacturing*
- *Biggest Mistakes Small Business Owners Make When Selecting a Payroll Service (and How to Avoid Them)*

**There is no charge for this briefing. Rather, it's something we're**

**doing to support the industry and market that supports us,**

**especially** \_\_\_\_\_ *(list specific job roles*

*related to your target audience. For example, CFOs, home sellers,*

*software coders, HR specialists, restaurant owners, etc.)* **in the**

\_\_\_\_\_ *(name their industry. For*

*example, manufacturing industry, greater Houston area, Silicon*

*Valley region, food and beverage industry, etc.)*

**We're offering this briefing through \_\_\_\_\_ [date]**

*(list a date that's within 30 days of the time you're sending the note. Any less and their calendars are too full. Any more time and they'll procrastinate.)* **at \_\_\_\_\_ [time]** *(I recommend 9am. Why? Confirmed after years of experimenting, human nature seems to be that we're more open-minded and inclined to say yes at the start of our day.)*

**Contact us at \_\_\_\_\_ [email] or [phone number] to reserve your spot. Otherwise, I'll call you\*\* on**

**\_\_\_\_\_ [date] at \_\_\_\_\_ [time]** *(Within two business days of when they're receiving your note, and call in the mornings because it's the time of day people are most likely to say yes!) to confirm your reservation.*

*\*\*Long ago, a sales mentor instructed me, "Never relinquish control." He meant that when leaving a voicemail or sending notes, never put the onus on the customer to call you back. Most of us leave a message or write a note instructing the customer to call us back without any promise on our part to follow up again, at which point you handed control over to someone who has neither time nor interest in doing any such thing. Takeaway: Remember to say and write, "You can contact me or I'll follow up with you on [date] at [time]." It's a small adjustment in communication style that leaves you in control and keeps your sales effort alive.*



# CHAPTER 9. DON'T BE LAZY; THERE'S TREASURE OUT THERE

## ACTION ITEMS



Revisit the questionnaire from Chapter One (on page 26), and answer all 12 questions again. Compare these with your original responses. How has this journey sharpened your senses and honed your instincts when it comes to understanding your customers and marketplace?



Continue the journey. Do wolves ever stop hunting? Heck no, and neither should you.

In that spirit, consider this book the start of your journey to sales excellence, not the end.

Visit our website, [leadthesalespack.com](http://leadthesalespack.com), to learn about additional wolf heart strategies that will make you and your pack even stronger. You'll find podcasts, newsletters, and other powerful materials designed to elevate your game.

Stay sharp. Stay hungry. May you serve your pack as enthusiastically as I am honored to serve you.