
Using Emotional Intelligence as a Sales Technique

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Abstract

This article aims to present personalized sales techniques according to the features of a dominant quadrant that belongs to each human being. Concepts and clarifications to aid sales representatives in their day-to-day sales processes. Vast theoretical material was used to accomplish this aim. A range of authors on Relationship Marketing, Sales techniques and Emotional Intelligence. In order to complete the content, a questionnaire was used to demonstrate the need of self-awareness, from the salesperson point of view, before applying the proposed sales technique. The motivation for this article was the perceived need for new sales tools and techniques aiming to improve the relationship with the customer, getting to know him even more and, as a consequence, increase sales.

Key words: Structure,
Technique, Training



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INTRODUCTION

Nowadays, sales techniques are a great advantage when conquering a client. Concurrence for market share brings with it the need to evolve and specialize, and this is the greatest secret to conquer results. This is evident if we perceive the increasing customer demands.

To develop and apply a sales strategy must be linked with a market research process that takes into consideration the customer vision and, most of all, personal traits of the salesperson and his image over himself. This information is crucial to a solid base for the sales strategy and to lead to the final objective that is the sale itself and customer retention.

This article proposes a sales training program based on the salesperson profile, which could be applied to the pharmaceutical sector or any other area in need of direct personal contact to confirm the sale.

It aims to identify each salesperson profile in the sales team, according to the dominant quadrant division created by Herrmann (1990), who studied and created the Herrmann Brain group. Those quadrants aim to guide the salesperson to know and control his and his customer profiles using emotional intelligence.

Results show that is possible that each sales representative assume their own differences, and turn them into positive elements of differentiation, leading the relationship with skill and sensitivity and, as a consequence, reaching a better sale.

Problem Situation

Some companies underestimate the importance of a better customer treatment. Most of them provide annual training that end up simply explaining the relationship marketing without ever turning it into practice, in a strong way, the need to give each customer a special treatment.

Getting to know the customer features in a deeper way, as presented by Ned Herrmann apud CASTRO e MARIA (2016) - Relational, Analytical, Experimental or Controlling - may ease the sales process. This knowledge provides crucial information to establish specific sales training, to search for a faster relationship with customers that will endure.

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Key companies of several industries do not have this kind of training yet. That said, what would be the ideal training to a sales team in order to establish that kind of relationship?

Objectives

General

- Suggest a training program to establish enduring relationships with customers.

Specific

- Review literature about Marketing, Customer Service, Relationship Marketing and People Management.
- Research customer characteristics
- Analyze found characteristics in the light of the dominant quadrants proposed by Ned Herrmann: Upper Left (Analytical), Upper Right (Experimental), Lower Left (Controlling) and Lower Right (Relational).
- Propose a specific training program considering customer features.

Justification

Good professionals in the area recognize that either them and their organization do not develop under a careless sales process. Interaction and changes build relationships. However, companies face difficulties in their search for interaction. The company may not have intimacy with its market or even do not know its customers at all.

Marketing recognizes this issue and manages the setting of a communication program with customers to help them endure.

Getting to know the customer is necessary, but increasingly difficult. Treat the customer in a unique way, recognize his emotional characteristics and strengths according to the predominance of each cerebral quadrant, to know what the customer is looking for and when he intends to buy - all of this is crucial to the successful organization.

Differentiation is a requirement as the market is increasingly competitive and customers increasingly demanding.

This article is justified for presenting a training program to a sales team, able to develop competences in search for a better proximity between the customer and company, getting to know better the characteristics and aiming a better relationship with the customer, and so to improve sales through three steps: Pre-sale, Sale and Aftersales.

THEORETICAL BACKGROUND

Marketing Concepts

Kotler (2000) states that marketing administration should demonstrate great focus on planning, conception, execution and price control, promotion and idea distribution, related to market management, service and demands, promoting negotiations that satisfy individual and organizational goals. Marketing should reach and integrate all these aspects.

Nowadays, there are several answers to the question "What is marketing?". Some say marketing is an area that studies the market, concurrence and the company itself. Others say that marketing is related to advertisement, linked to media.

Truth is that all of this is linked to the marketing, but its structure involves way beyond a simple market research and promotion strategy of a company. Marketing is within every department because it is about a set of tools that links production and aftersales. To produce something one must know what to produce. To know the market, concurrence, research. To promote the product it is necessary to know how to promote and to whom: the target audience. To sell the product it is necessary to know how to sell and to whom. Of course, it is also necessary to retain customers so that they come back to buy again.

Marketing is highlighted in three key moments. The "pre" production, when marketing detects real opportunities and potential market through market research. "During" the production, or before the sale, when traditional marketing functions come. They are called the four Ps: Product, Price, Point of Distribution and Promotion, or promotional mix.

Marketing is a necessary spending to companies so that their sales goals are reached and profit conquered. Nowadays, one can say that a good and adequate marketing investment allows a good and adequate sale.

Marketing was not born as we know it today. Along decades there was a need for improvement and expansion of its goals. The customer has become better informed about his motives on why a product is or is not relevant to him. He is more observing, more discerning. Marketing in its evolution is more and more guided by customer individualization.

Another point in favor of the need for evolving for marketing are the increasing possibilities of product promotion due to technologies that propel new methods of promotion and advertising.

Relationship Marketing

Kotler (2000) states that the search for the relationship marketing represents an important paradigm change, as evolution of conflicting corporate mentality towards a new approach related to cooperation between two important and vital parts of the process.

Up to the 1990s, most organizations concentrated in displaying products and services as fast as possible, as well as obtaining profit as fast as possible. After negotiation with customer and closed sale little attention was given to the client, as the priority was to obtain new customers and not retain the ones already on board.

That demonstrates that a satisfied customer is not only represented in a negotiation, but all the way along the after sales, and that he hopes the company keeps consistently providing services, even after closing the sale of a product or service. This signs out that the negotiation must be endless and, if not, the customer tends to look for other companies and suppliers.

Relationship marketing represents an even further concern, providing a way to keep customers, structural bonds to retain them, satisfying their needs and desires and at the same time customizing their services.

One area linked to marketing deserving of attention is CRM, Customer Relationship Management. As a relatively new practice, it is certainly guiding companies to spot their target audience with precision. The need to know the customer and get close to him is awakening among companies. The problem is, to get to know your client, you'll have to ask them questions sometimes in a delicate way. These questions may scare the customer and prevent him from telling the truth. Other methods include questionnaires, sent via email or available at the company for the customer to fill it in. Even so he might feel too exposed.

The need to know what your customer does simplifies the sales stages. Even so, most companies have not yet really envisioned how important this is for their business. We must understand the customer to know what he wants and how he wants it. Customers are increasingly aware, especially of the difference between companies that use or do not use relationship marketing.

Relationship marketing is based on a smart database and aims to foster brand loyalty through personalizing the contact with customers, in a more open way and not only during the sale process.

Gronroos (2004, p. 42) defines Relationship Marketing as follows:

Marketing must establish and highlight (usually, but not necessarily, in the long term) relationships with customers and partners, with profit, so that the goals of all parties are met. This is done through mutual exchanges and keeping promises.

To the author this definition may still be complemented:

Sales companies' resources, personnel, technology and systems should be used so that the customer trusts them as he trusts the organization itself, and this trust is kept and reinforced. Gronroos (2004, p. 42).

According to Jackson apud Kotler, (2003) to establish, maintain and focus the relationship with customers imply three totally different points of view from marketing:

- First contact with customer so that the relationship occurs.
- Keeping an existing relationship so that the customer is able to do business again.
- Focus on relationship so that the customer decides to expand it.

Jackson reinforces that the first contact demands excellent communication skills. A direct, by word of mouth, favorable and known image. Maintenance and focus on relationship with customers need mainly on other tools and activities.

When implementing a service strategy, one needs a Relationship Marketing approach and a excellent interactive Marketing ability.

Marketing today searches for needs, desires and expectations of the market considered essential, defining a target audience, aiming to satisfy them so that concurrence has no chance to win the customer, promoting a sense of conquest that retains customers. Essential Marketing is to attract and obtain customer loyalty, especially strategic ones, faster and in a more effective way than the concurrence.

Satisfy customers and keep duration value of their loyalty is key to profitability and is directly linked to Relationship Marketing, which basics are quality, services and post-Marketing according to Vavra (1993).

Finally, Levitt (2001) presents four requirements to manage successfully the relationship supplier-buyer. Understand problematic areas and areas of opportunity.

Assessment of current company positions related to reaching desired results.

Accountability through reports on customer relationship that can be considered against other performance measures.

Decision making and routines based on impact of them over target relationships.

Another interesting focus reported by Garvin (1997) are the eight critical dimensions of quality that may serve as structure to strategic quality analysis.

Reliability: reflects the chance of a product or system to perform a specific function in an environment during a defined period. "Common ways of reliability measure are average time before first failure, average time between failures versus time units". (GARVIN, 1997, p.51)

Service: speed, courtesy, competence and resourcefulness regarding repairs. Customers are not only concerned with product failure but also with time spent until functioning is restored, timeliness over scheduled services, nice treatment from service personnel and frequency of repair are not able to correct significant problems. When problems are not resolved on time and complains are raised, company's procedures are also factors that impact the final evaluation of product and service quality.

Aesthetics: two of the final quality dimensions are subjective in nature. Aesthetics, or the visual, sound, taste or olfactory aspect of a product is clearly a personal issue and reflects individual preferences. Regarding aesthetics it is possible to please everyone.

Perceived quality: customers are not always fully informed about product and services features. Indirect reviews may be their only basis to compare products. Reputation is the raw material of perceived quality. Its power comes from a tacit analogy: that the product quality now is similar to previous ones, or that commodities in a new line are similar in quality with previous lines.

Market is very aggressive, with several concurrents, each one offering similar products or services. In this market dynamic it is difficult to keep customers regularly buying from our brand. The only way to profit in this situation, in face of high costs of conquering new customers, is to extend the buying lifetime for the current customers.

Therefore, retaining customers is more important than attracting new ones.

Marketing costs for conquering are impossible to hold, once mass media costs rise in an unrealistic way. Concurrence demands positioning marketing efforts with tools and tactics to allow customer conquering and retention. It is vital to observe current customer value through statistics as cited by Vavra (1993): 65% of companies businesses result from keeping customers satisfied. It is five times more expensive to conquer a new customer than keeping an existing one. Ninety one percent of dissatisfied customers will never buy again from the same company and will communicate their dissatisfaction to at least nine other people, multiplying the dissatisfaction rate for nine.

Therefore, as Schiffman (2000) states, it is an advantage to the company to search an intense and enduring relationship with customers, as it is way cheaper to close an additional sale than to sell to a new customer.

Relationship Marketing Strategies

Relationship marketing is present in the three steps related to sales: pre-sales, sale and aftersales. Understanding the customer better can prepare to surprising situations, getting closer to the customer's everyday life and showing that you're there to better serve him. Customer then can rest and feel important, even if this is done with all your customers.

Despite how we name it, relationship marketing is about knowing the power is in the customer hands, and recognizes this power giving him what he desires. If not, we will have fewer chances to win market demands and prepare for the next millennium.

Companies investing in relationship marketing know that the contact with the customer is a valuable opportunity to understand him better, to develop actions that make him feel important and special, turning him from an unknown into a friend who refers other friends to your company.

Imagine the value to a company that focus its decisions, claims, requests and suggestions on each customer and how this information would help to develop and strengthen the brand.

Kotler (2003) affirms that the closer customer deserves privileges. This is done through affiliation programs. The goal is to get customers to come back and never leaving the company because the benefits are so advantageous. The author presents four levels of affiliation programs:

- a) Reward programs for frequent customers
- b) Affiliate clubs with benefit packages
- c) VIP programs to the most important customers
- d) Special programs to recognize customers

It is clear that to retain a customer we need to perform well in the relationship marketing, and two factors are essential: a strong brand to inspire loyalty and involving customers in the services we offer.

Emotional Intelligence

Goleman (2016) divides Emotional Intelligence in five areas of skill:

1. **Emotional Self-awareness:** recognize emotions when they occur.
2. **Emotional Control:** ability to deal with one's own feelings, fitting them into the situation.
3. **Self-motivation:** guide emotions to serve a goal is essential to keep walking on your search.
4. **Recognizing emotions in other people.**
5. **Skills in interpersonal relationships**

This way, author affirms the importance of two important skills: interpersonal intelligence and intrapersonal intelligence.

Interpersonal intelligence: ability to understand other people, their motivation, how they work, how to collaborate with them. Author defines key points as emotional self-awareness, emotional control and self-motivation.

Intrapersonal intelligence: the same ability, applied towards oneself. It is the ability to form a real and precise model, using it in an effective and constructive way. Cited by the author as the intelligence that recognizes emotions and abilities in interpersonal relationships.

Each person has a preference for one of the features and those combinations may be extreme. Sometimes one or two preferences prevail and consequences over behavior are clear and not understood by people with different preferences. That is why team work ends up performing according to preferences and not to what needs to be done.

It is important to group people with similar preferences or prepare them to benefit from differences in their private life and work. This is a virtue of a professional with great relationship and emotional intelligence control. A group of people with similar preferences reaches consensus faster about issues within their thinking model.

The emotional intelligence related to the cerebral dominance model resulted from several researches conducted by Ned Herrmann in the USA along twenty years. He developed the theory based on a mental process classification in four quadrants. They are:

-Upper Left (**Analytical**): Analyzes, quantifies, logical, critic and realistic. Prefers numbers, money, know how things work. Likes to work alone, perform tasks, apply formulas, analyze data.

- Lower Left (**Controlling**): Decision making, procedures, doer, reliable, organized and punctual, plans and organizes. Likes to stick to the timeline, build things, being in control.
- Lower Right (**Relational**): Curious, plays, sensitive with others, likes to teach, touches people, supports, expressive and emotional, talks a lot. Likes to have people working together, very communicative.
- Upper Right (**Experimental**): Summarizes, guesses, imagines, speculates, takes risks, impetuous, breaks rules, likes surprises. Likes to take risks, come up with solutions, develop a vision, variety, projections, changes, experiments. Loves to sell ideas.

The most important result is to learn from the least preferred quadrant. This will prevent mocking from people with that preference when describing an opinion in a discussion. During a sale, understanding other preferences will allow better understanding and dealing with differences with ease and without impact over business.

We use all the quadrants all the time. There are no inadequate or ideal profiles. The goal is to raise awareness on all styles to understand strengths and get familiar with different preferences.

Be a different salesperson, understanding characteristics of each quadrant and learn to control different preferences in style and taste of each customer. Know yourself first, your dominant quadrant e turn it easier to observe and learn about other people with different or equal quadrants. You will know how to act directly over customer needs, his favorite approach and way to receive information.

Plan, invest in different points to benefit from the knowledge over your preferences. Remember there are people different from yourself and develop cooperation, determination and flexibility.

METHODOLOGY

Research Type

The most adequate method for this subject is the descriptive research, as it regards observed facts, registered, analyzed, classified and interpreted, without interference from the researcher and using standardized techniques for gathering data: questionnaires and systematic observation. This kind of research keeps characteristics of determined population or phenomenon. It also establishes correlations among variables to define its nature. There's no commitment to explain the phenomena it describes, but serves as base to explanation.

A literature research was done to base the article theoretical frame. This research consisted in systematized studies available, articles, books, Internet; all reference material with public access. Literature search consists of primary and secondary fonts, according to Cruz e Ribeiro (2004, p.19). Primary type encompasses "original work with original knowledge and published for the first time", i.e.: books and articles in scientific journals. The secondary type consists of "non-original works that basically review, mention and interpret original work", i.e.: encyclopedias, treatises, review articles.

Research Universe

According to Vergara (2004, p.50), "universe refers to definition of the population and sampling". As population we understand not the number of habitants of a local but a set of elements with characteristics that were studied here.

According to Vergara (2004), questionnaire is the set of questions not answered in writing by the subject, assures anonymity and aims to measure something. An informal way of gathering information from a known or unknown audience.

Data gathering and information techniques

The technique used to research was direct, due to the possibility to search a complex content and even more direct inside research intention.

A questionnaire was applied (appendix 1), developed by Herrmann (1990) for more than 20 years, considered a diagnostic instrument that demonstrates an inner vision and dominant quadrant. As well as a specific chart with classified answers.

According to Vergara (2004), questionnaire is the set of questions not answered in writing by the subject, that assures anonymity and aims to measure something. An informal way of gathering information from a known or unknown audience.

The questionnaire was applied to verify each salesperson profile and his dominant quadrant.

Data analysis

According to Vergara (2004), data treatment refers to the section explaining to the reader how the gathered data was treated, justifying the reasons why this fits the project.

We may consider that the analysis was qualitative and quantitative, once that it is necessary to know the amount of answers that fit into each option and interpretation of each dominant quadrant proposed by Herrmann (1990).

Development

The questionnaire survey aimed to build a tool to measure the need for training and development for the area responsible for sales techniques in a company.

Each respondent knew the reason to fill the questionnaire. After execution by the researcher, a demonstration of how dominant profiles are important to the profession and how they would help the sales representative everyday job. Each one must recognize his own profile to understand the customer's profile.

Proposal

Nowadays, companies promote training programs to qualify sales techniques among its employees, directed to formal techniques and focused on product, with quality management and able to consistently deliver goods and services. These programs also aim to raise productivity gain, demand that the salesperson search for satisfaction level for their customer through sales volume.

Data gathering for this research through the questionnaire aims to identify the need for training and employee development to the company. This allows each employee to understand his own vision through emotional intelligence.

Interviews with employees revealed that different companies have different people thinking and acting in different ways. Some of these aspects can be better used to improve the organizational performance. It is important to implement broader training and people development policies to follow strategies on organizations that grow and improve their processes.

This study brought several expectations that can be overcome with more knowledge from the salesperson himself and through training. The salesperson must have a real vision of his dominant quadrant and what it means. The same for his customer dominant quadrant. When the salesperson knows these two key points of the sales process it is easier to act according to the way the customer would like to be treated.

The company must be aware of the training and people development are of utmost importance to their future, as the process triggers the innovation ability and ongoing process improvement.

This way, it is viable and timely to deepen this study regarding technologies for future training programs. As for the present, one can see considerable space for training development, also involving behavioral aspects, especially regarding self-awareness and easiness to live and work in a team.

Final Considerations

The present study aimed to raise data and information about reality and how to apply training and people development concepts to sales professionals, helping to raise consciousness among employees about their skills and abilities. Information gathered aims to defend that, if the concepts are applied, one can forecast improvements on interpersonal relationships, originate space to grow, train and develop to improve methods and new ways of working. Therefore, this guarantees better results, helping organizations to acquire productivity by numbers, but also by quality and excellence in customer relations.

The theoretical base and its application proposed by this study confirms the feasibility of the proposal, as through learning processes implementation, participative and with integrity of all professionals of the area is possible to reach procedure improvement in all operational sectors to obtain a more competent team.

Companies with commercial areas adapt to the development and training program with surprising results, reaching abilities, developing competences through better training systems. Managers of all areas play an important role in raising awareness on the importance of people development and training that would build teams highly committed with the company's profitability.

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APENDIX

APENDIX 1 - SELF-DIAGNOSE TOOL

Chose only one alternative for each question:

1. People usually say that I:
 - a. use to plan ahead
 - b. use to participate in all with spontaneity

2. To do something well is better to:
 - a. work in concentration and silence
 - b. work in a team

3. What I like the most is:
 - a. to see all activity in details
 - b. to understand sooner where I'm getting to

4. I'm the kind of person that others:
 - a. get to know only after some time
 - b. get to know immediately

5. Most of the time I prefer:
 - a. to do things at the last minute
 - b. to plan ahead in detail

6. In my opinions, my routines:
 - a. are difficult to perform daily, I need a change
 - b. are way better than constantly change, I need organization

7. To make a decision is important to:
 - a. check its impact over people's lives
 - b. check concrete facts and analyze data

8. When meeting unknown people I prefer to:
 - a. observe their behavior and, as soon as possible, present my opinion
 - b. present my opinion only if necessary

9. I like to make decisions analyzing:
 - a. emotional environment and its consequences
 - b. the logic of the problem

10. When in a group I prefer to speak:
 - a. with one person at a time
 - b. with everyone at once

11. Other people define me as someone:
 - a. intuitive
 - b. organized

12. I enjoy a lot when I plan my day and:
 - a. something new happens to motivate me even more
 - b. almost everything I planned happens

13. Most of the times I prefer being guided by:
 - a. reason
 - b. emotion

14. I think it is much better to get compliments for being:
 - a. very practical and organized
 - b. very creative and intuitive

15. Most of my life I've been searching for:
 - a. keeping the tradition
 - b. taking risks

16. I consider myself a person:
 - a. hard to know
 - b. easy to know

17. It is important that I:
 - a. take step by step notes on my ideas
 - b. think first about the final goal and take notes after

18. Usually, I'm recognized by the group as a person that decides based on:
 - a. the logic of things
 - b. the importance and value of things

19. It is awful when I start an activity and:
 - a. nothing new happens, this discourages me
 - b. everything that was not planned happens, this discourages me

20. I think most of the times I'm more:
 - a. discreet than other people, because I think ahead about what I should do
 - b. participative than other people, because I prefer to do what I consider right

Mark each word pair that least reflects your way:

21) a) theoretical; b) sensitive

22) a) analytical; b) practical

23) a) confident; b) spontaneous

24) a) organized; b) discreet

25) a) enthusiastic; b) punctual

26) a) emotional; b) detail oriented

27) a) intuitive; b) logical

28) a) innovative; b) shy

29) I am more inclined to decide based on logic and data than on emotions and feelings.

a. right; b. wrong

30. I use to make decisions without considering their impact on my relationships: it is more important to consider concrete facts.

a. it is almost always this way

b. it is almost never this way

31. I prefer not trusting my intuition, as it is better and more practical to perceive reality through real data.

a. almost always; b. almost never

32. I prefer to observe people in the light of known facts instead of trying to perceive the double meaning behind the facts.

a. I agree; b. I disagree

33. In order to feel comfortable in a situation, it is enough to be introduced to the people there:

a. yes; b. no

34. I like open people, who say whatever they are thinking and like to listen what I have to say (I promptly give my opinion):

a. it is almost always this way

b. it is almost never this way

35. It is awful to be in a meeting with people that prefer everything organized - it is better not to know everything and use spontaneity.

a. right; b. wrong

36. I like to improvise with creativity. I plunge into things even if I do not know where they are going.

a. most of the time it happens this way

b. most of the time it does not happen this way

37. Imagine a situation: you need to communicate a serious fact to someone during a conversation. It is better that you:

- a. expose all the problem details in an organized way
- b. speak about the key points as they are asked for

38. If someone got sad about what I said, I'll probably:

- a. assure I was fair and sincere
- b. try and imagine how the person is feeling

39. In this case, it is better to:

- a. demonstrate my feelings with discretion
- b. demonstrate my feelings openly

40. If the person opens up, you prefer to value:

- a. her words, as they signify what she really means
- b. the meaning behind the words she says

Congrats!

Now that you have finished, let's classify the alternatives.

Please transfer your answers to the following chart:

CEREBRAL DOMINANCE					
Question	Option a	Option b	Question	Option a	Option b
1	C	E	21	C	A
2	A	R	22	R	E
3	C	E	23	A	C
4	A	R	24	E	R
5	C	E	25	A	E
6	E	C	26	E	A
7	R	A	27	C	R
8	R	A	28	C	R
9	A	R	29	A	R
10	A	R	30	A	R
11	E	C	31	C	E
12	E	C	32	C	E
13	A	R	33	R	A
14	C	E	34	R	A
15	C	E	35	E	C
16	A	R	36	E	C
17	C	E	37	C	E
18	A	R	38	A	R
19	E	C	39	A	R
20	A	R	40	C	E

Now, count how many times you chose the following letters (remember that the sum total must equal 40).

A (Analytical) =		E (Experimental) =	
C (Cerebral) =		R (Relational) =	