



UNDERSTANDING CUSTOMER MOTIVATIONS

Understanding the motivations behind your customers purchasing decisions will not only help better prepare your sales team to guide your buyer through their journey, but it will also assist them in reducing the overall sales cycle. In his book, "Selling is Hard. Buying is Harder." Garin Hess points out that a sales team can reduce the sales cycle by as much as 68% when learning to equip their internal champion at a prospective account.

Understand Your Customers Needs

To dig a little deeper into the understanding of your customers' needs we revisit Clayton Christensen's job's theory given its relevance toward understanding the motivations behind why a customer is looking to acquire a product or service. What is the job your target buyer is trying to get done, or the need they are trying to satisfy? For the purposes of our discussion we are going to focus on two of the job dimensions.





Functional Requirements: What is the minimal functionality required to get the job done?

This can be easily translated into the features and benefits of your product or service offering to understand if your solution will satisfy the need the buyer has. Perhaps it is a particular manufacturing technology or capability your organization possesses such as 3D printing or cleanroom assembly.

Financial Requirements: What are the monetary targets needed to stay within that make this financially feasible?

Every decision comes with a willingness to pay for a desired outcome. We see this every day in our own lives when considering a product or service. Think about the last time you looked at a service for your home and thought, for that price I will just do it myself. When translating this to apply to your client, work to understand what the intensity of the need is or the level of pain they are feeling by not having this job done to determine their willingness to consider and/or adopt your solution.

Let's put this to practice

Uncovering your customers underlying motivations starts with understanding the journey they purchase through. This can be done by looking at a few key clients and creating a storyboard as to how they became your customer.

Interview them with a series of questions that will help define why they chose your product or service. Make this part of your QBR process. as a way to add further value to the discussion.

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Ask questions like:

Why did they buy from you?

Discuss what it was about your solution that made them decide you were the best option for them.

How long they thought about the decision to purchase?

Was there a process they had to navigate internally to gain approval, or perhaps there were other factors they had to weight prior to making a decision.

What was it that made them look to make a purchase?

Perhaps they are making do with something else, maybe an alternate supplier, or is there a technology gap in their current supply chain for which they do not have an existing solution for.

Keep in mind during this process that it is just as important to understand why your particular offering might not be the best fit when compared to an alternate solution. This will help you to fully understand where there is room for improvement, or opportunity for growth, with your existing accounts as well as identify attributes about your business that would be attractive to other prospects.

Create a Job Story

After you have gained deeper insight into the motivations of your customer use this to develop a story to describe the job you are trying to accomplish as part of your sales script to help support the value you bring to the table.



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