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# CONVEYING VALUES

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Do your prospects know your principles? It seems like a strange question, but what you stand for, or your values, is core to who you are as an individual and has an impact on whether people like you or want to do business with you. The ideas that I am sharing are not “entry-level” sales strategies. The concept of conveying values is an advanced strategy and will increase your ability to develop better relationships with your prospective customers. No doubt, some of these actions you are probably doing automatically, but I encourage you to take this to a level of awareness - doing it with purpose.

Again, the goal of this exercise is to enhance relationships between you and your prospects. Like most people, you have personal values that you hold dear. What if you can casually share this information to help the person you are dealing with understand these values? If you refine this technique, do you think it could improve your relationship-building abilities? Even if you never apply it in a selling situation, you are still going to benefit from this exercise as you evaluate where you stand on these principles. I encourage you to take the time to reflect on the list and consider



what is important to you, and which values have no significance to you at all.

The following is from HBR's 10 Must Reads on Emotional Intelligence (from Harvard Business Review's “10 Must Read” collection of best practices in business). This book in the series contains some of the work of Danial Goldman, a leading expert on Emotional Intelligence, as well as several other experts in the field. (I recommend you take some time and

read this book.)

## What Are Your Values?

THIS LIST IS DRAWN from the Personal Values Card Sort (2001), developed by W.R. Miller, J. C’de Baca, D.B. Matthews, and P.L. Wilbourne, of the University of New Mexico. You can use it to quickly identify the values you hold that might inform a challenging situation at work. When you next make a decision, ask yourself whether it is consistent with these values

Accuracy	Friendship	Passion
Achievement	Fun	Popularity
Adventure	Generosity	Power
Authority	Genuineness	Purpose
Autonomy	Growth	Rationality
Caring	Health	Realism
Challenge	Helpfulness	Responsibility
Change	Honesty	Risk
Comfort	Humility	Safety
Compassion	Humor	Self-knowledge
Contribution	Justice	Service
Cooperation	Knowledge	Simplicity
Courtesy	Leisure	Stability
Creativity	Mastery	Tolerance
Dependability	Moderation	Tradition
Duty	Nonconformity	Wealth
Family	Openness	
Forgiveness	Order	

Let's isolate a few that many individuals may have in common. First, there is the value of "accuracy." As a consumer, I would certainly like to know that the salesperson who is working with me is accurate or correct in providing information about the product or service. How about "caring"? Does the salesperson express concern about me and my needs? "Friendship" - is the salesperson likeable? "Honesty" goes without any explanation.

The question is when you identify specific values that you consider most important - ones that you want to share with a prospect - how do you convey those? It is best shared during natural conversations, giving a series of simple messages, doing so in a way that is not awkward or seemingly rehearsed, which would be off-putting. As you reflect on your interactions, you can probably identify occasions during your sales

process, where you can insert short stories or brief messages based on your values. You can incorporate this information when you are reasoning with a prospect, perhaps formulating a social proof presentation to convince them that your product or service is the best solution, or when you are resolving specific issues for the prospect, leading up to the final sales proposal. In other words, during the entire presentation, you can include "mini" value presentations.

Consider this scenario: during a phone conversation, the salesperson mentions that they have been married for ten years, and they have two children. Now on the surface, those comments may seem unimportant, but it conveys the message about the value of family, caring, and responsibility. Sometime later, during a face-to-face conversation, the same salesperson shares a story of participating in a volunteer project

over the weekend. The prospect asks how long they have been involved with it and what the charity does for the people it serves. Those questions allow the salesperson the opportunity to provide an enthusiastic response about this charity. What values are relayed? Passion, duty, and helpfulness. All reasons to like and have confidence in this person, right?

Again, these conversations mustn't seem contrived, but instead, they are happening as a natural part of a conversation. What about including the following message in your dialogue during the reasoning part of the presentation? Explain how customers have excellent outcomes using your product. Next, let them know about a specific time that you determined that a prospect would not have a good result using the product or service and you told them that it would not be a good idea to buy your product to solve their problem - that it was inappropriate for them, they would only have a negative outcome using it. What are the values conveyed in such a discussion? Knowledge, humility, and honesty. An individual that possesses those three values - isn't that the kind of salesperson you want? Someone who isn't out to make a sale at any cost, especially the cost of you having a bad experience.

Explaining adverse outcomes is a technique that I have frequently used. I tell the real account of a prospect that was not suitable, where I strongly recommended that they not buy my product. I weave this story into my conversations with prospects as often as possible. It conveys a strong value message and is based on actual events, which is what makes it so powerful.

I am sure you would agree that conveying values is a sophisticated approach to persuade people as to why they want to do business with you. So, take some time and evaluate your values and make sure to naturally convey stories in your day-to-day conversations with prospects about your values. No doubt, you will build stronger relationships with your prospects, which will equate to better sales results.