

THE RIGHT SALES MESSAGE

Don't *ask* customers what they need, *teach* them what they need to fix.

2020's customers will buy with much greater caution and care, just as they did during the last economic downturn of 2008-09. Both then and now, decision makers and influencers are rewriting the purchasing playbook. If you don't adjust your message and how it's delivered, you'll struggle to capture attention, create opportunities and close business.

Consider first what your sales experience feels like today:

Product-Based

"We have an extensive set of products. There are offerings to fit nearly all of your needs in this area."

Question-Based

"Help me understand what's causing the most disruption in your business right now. What keeps you up at night?"

Insight-Based

"We can solve a problem that has been costing your business more than you may realize."

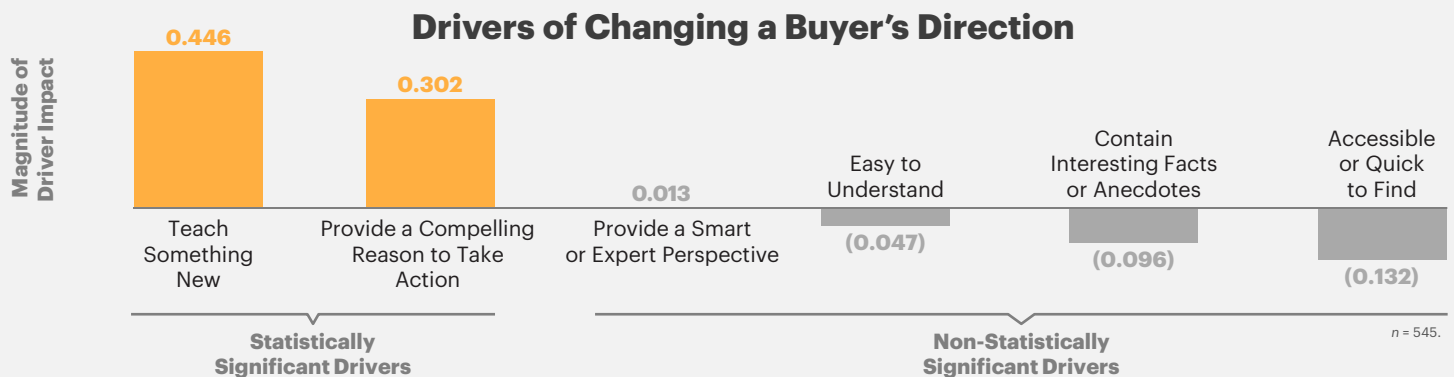
How does today's customer likely react?:

"Is this essential?"

"Do I have time for this?"

"Should I reconsider my approach?"

Today's most common status quo is to do nothing, to delay, to push back. The default is to **not buy**. That's the mind set you need to change, or you'll get the first two responses above. Use the chart below and ask yourself the hard questions "does/is my message...?" for each of the columns. If you only answer "yes" to the four on the right, you have work to do. Your message may be good, but it doesn't stand out and it likely work the way you need it to.



Customers are most likely to rethink their current course and reset buying criteria, only when confronted with surprising information about their business and a compelling case for change based on the cost of inaction.



INSIGHT IS MORE THAN THOUGHT LEADERSHIP.

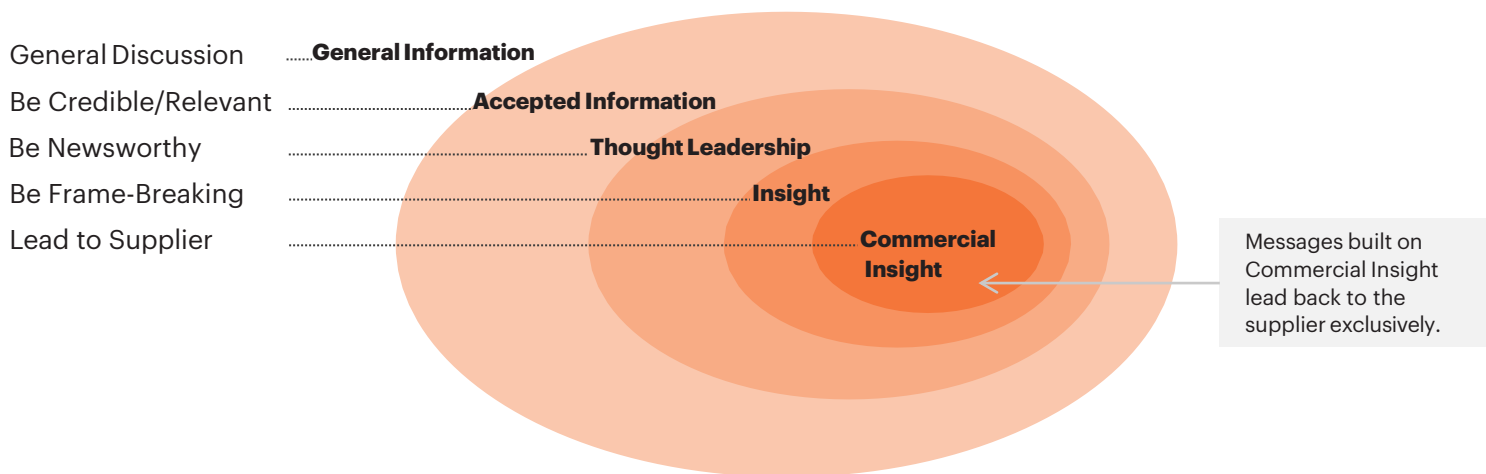
Much of what sellers and marketers mistake for commercial insight today falls into the much broader, and arguably less valuable, category of “thought leadership”. To be clear, this is newsworthy, incremental information that customers won’t discover on their own. But thought leadership doesn’t drive action.

Why, because it’s intended to make you, not the customer, look smart. Customers don’t change for you. They change when they start thinking differently about themselves.

Consider the content you share with customers. Where might it be classified on the chart below? How much of it would not only pass as “frame-breaking”? How much leads back to you exclusively?

The only way to get customers to think differently about you is to first get them to think differently about themselves.

Hierarchy of Information Conveyed Through Sales Messages



The goal of a commercial message, whether delivered in conversation or at arm’s length via digital channels, is to teach a prospect about unknown or underappreciated needs that lead back to your unique differentiators. Messages with those three pieces brought together can make a world of difference in your sales performance. If you don’t have them, we’d like to help you get them.

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COMPLEX
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