



Useful Knowledge of Communications Solutions to Customer Business Problems

Course Objective

The core objective of this course is to assist the participant in understanding the consultative sales approach, when and where it can best be used to advantage, and how to integrate product training with customer business analysis.

Course Outcomes

At the completion of this course, the participant will be better able to:

- 1) Analyze their customer's business from a consultative perspective to more efficiently discover opportunities for Communications technology products, services, and applications
- 2) Have the confidence needed to venture beyond the typical IT department contacts and accurately determine the various interest groups and decision-makers in customer organizations and design the optimal sales strategies for each group
- 3) Correlate defined business problems with the most appropriate offers and derive applications using products and services to solve specific customer business problems
- 4) Effectively differentiate from competitors through improved consultative selling techniques

Course Pre-Work

- 5) Obtain a copy of *Competitive Advantage: Creating and Sustaining Superior Performance* by Michael E. Porter (The Free Press, ISBN 0-02-925090-0). Read Chapter 1, *Competitive Strategy, the Core Concepts*, Chapter 2, *the Value Chain and Competitive Advantage*, and Chapter 5, *Technology and Competitive Advantage*. From the reading, map a key account or account segment to the value chain and competitive scope models. Be prepared to review and present these maps in class.

Course Outline

Selling Strategies

- (a) Hit and Run
- (b) Speeds and Feeds
- (c) Price, Price, Price
- (d) Consultative Selling

What Is a Consultant?

- (e) Customer Expectations of a Consultant

6) Analytical Tools

- a) What Is a Business Application?
- b) How Does This Differ from a Technology Application?
- c) Solving Business Problems with Business Applications
- d) A Model for Analysis: The Value Chain
- e) Exercise: Listing Business Applications for Each Primary Activity
 - i) Competitive Analysis Techniques
 - ii) Generic Competitive Strategies
- f) Case Study: Participant Presentations of Account Opportunity Analyses

7) Decision Criteria: Beyond the Milleseconds

- a) Technological Criteria
- b) Economic Criteria
- c) Political Criteria

8) The Positioning Steps: Meeting Needs and Interests on the Customer Level

- a) Senior Management: Needs and Interests
- b) Business Unit Management: Needs and Interests
- c) Information Technology Management: Needs and Interests
- d) The Data and Telecommunications Manager: Needs and Interests

9) Business Process Improvement with Communications Technology: Matching the offer to customer business problems

10) Selling Strategies (Final Case Study Presentations)

Case Study: Developing the Proposal to Meet the Customer Needs

- (1) Developing a Statement of Benefits for the Technical Manager
- (2) Developing a Statement of Benefits for the Business Unit Manager
- (3) Developing a Statement of Benefits for the Senior Executives

ii) Final Presentations