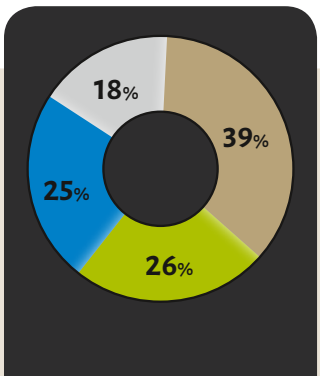
STORYTELLING + STORY-TENDING IN SALES

THE POWER OF TRUST IN SALES COMMUNICATION

- **Does your sales team** continue to rely on techniques which annoy buyers?
- **Price & lack of a clear offer** that would make you stand out against your competition: are these your main sales headaches?
- Check out **how to transform your sales team from persuasion** (push strategy) **to trust-building** (pull strategy), thanks to the power of story and vulnerability

Sales and Marketing Management magazine has inquired with over 5000 company managers about their experience of salespeople. The results are cause for little optimism: **39**% responded with "I don't trust them!", **26**% – "They don't understand my business nor my needs", **25**% – "Act like every other salesperson".

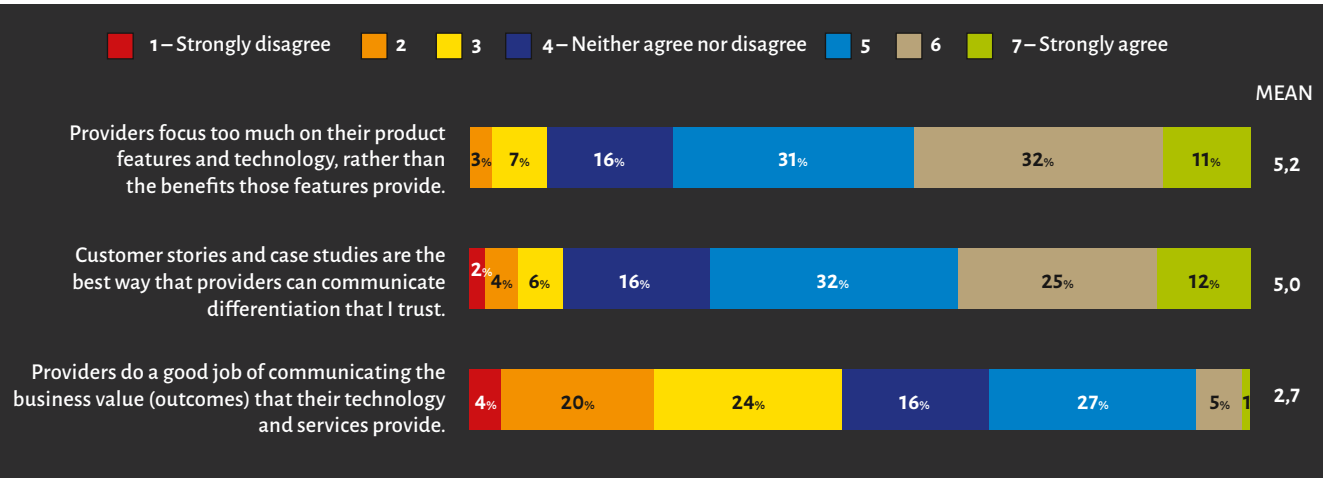


- Don't trust.
- Don't understand my business or my needs.
- Act like every other salesperson.
- Lack follow through.

Where's **the problem?**

Asked about their meetings with salespeople, purchasing directors have concluded that the majority of the salespeople (as many as **74**%) concentrate on features, advantages and benefits of their products and services, with only a small fraction (**34**%) having sufficient business-value communication skills for clients.

Buyers Want to Hear About More Than Features



Gartner

Furthermore, as the recent study by Gartner has pointed out, salespeople are least influential in the entire purchase cycle with clients who, before adopting new solutions, look for recommendations from colleagues or perform Internet-based searches and consult with market experts.

CEB
WHAT THE BEST COMPANIES DO

"Clients are 57% through their buying cycle before engaging with a salesperson."

SIRIUSDECISIONS

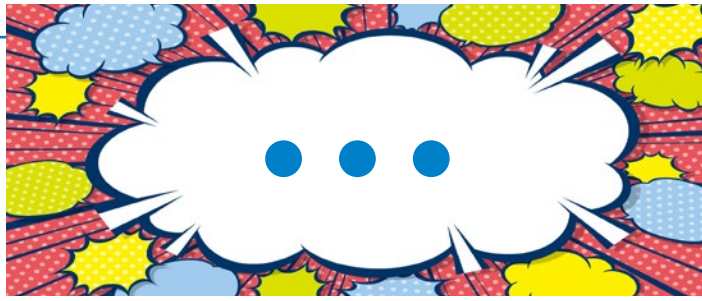
"70% of the buying cycle is completed by the time buyers contact a salesperson."

So how do you **effectively build trust** with customers from the very first meeting?

According to the results of the Gartner study, the best method for building trust (inspiring, showing new or untapped business opportunities) and building a distinctive offer by salespeople is to use *success stories and case studies from other customers, who have already used a product or service.*

The power of a story

Stories help people remember products or companies much more effectively than statistics, brochures, PowerPoint presentations or tables (a Stanford University study has demonstrated that **63**% of recipients remember messages based on stories, and only **5**% remember statistics ("Made to Stick", Chip & Dan Heath, p 243).

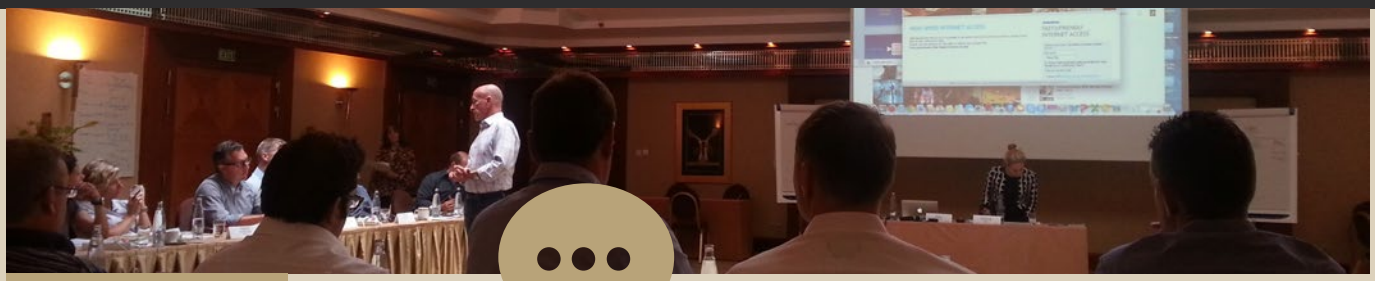


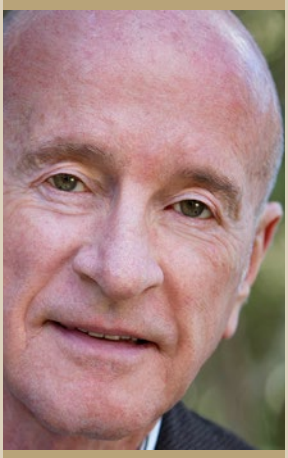
How do I implement business storytelling?

Many salespeople are natural storytellers, who are deeply familiar with the stories of their clients, have a natural ease at public speaking, are capable of building a good rapport. However, a formal storytelling framework is rarely part of the formal sales process.

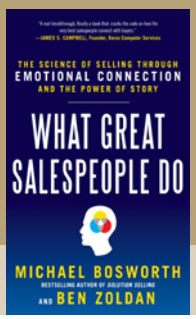
Is that the case in your company?

- Your salespeople are capable of **using the stories** at every stage of the clients buying cycle
- Your salespeople know **how to build inspiring and engaging product/service stories,** which will change clients' perspective and will make your offer look distinctive against the background of your competition
- Your salespeople are capable of **building a "buying vision" through a story**
- **There is a library of case studies,** client stories, success stories "Who we (our company) have helped"?
- **Your marketing department is in close cooperation with your sales department** when it comes to harvesting, accumulating and promoting the stories of clients





Mike Bosworth



Throughout my life, my main mission has been to discover the secret of the 20% top salespeople *and improve performance of the bottom 80%. Back in 2008, when it turned out that this ratio deteriorated even further (87/13%) despite the development of multiple sales process methodologies, I decided to include psychologists, neurologists and filmmakers in my research. It turns out that the MISSING LINK for the bottom 87% is their difficulty building trust through an emotional connection. What makes the top 13% so much better is their ability to lead their buyers to the emotional decision they are trustworthy – people of character with competence, AND the resulting ability to get the buyer to see things from a different viewpoint.*

Mike Bosworth, the person behind the method, is well known in the world of sales as a coach, author and speaker. Back in the 1970s, he cooperated with Neil Rackham from Xerox in a study, whose research outcome was SPIN Selling. Mike has authored two sales methodologies to date: **Solution Selling** and **Customer Centric Selling,** based on which he published to bestselling books. In 2013, he set up a company called Mike Bosworth Leadership, where he teaches managers from all over the world a framework for emotional connection using the power of story.

The Story Seekers™ methodology has been implemented in multiple companies worldwide, mostly in the B2B sector for companies in new technologies, IT, medical and financial services.

In 2012, Mike Bosworth published a book entitled **"What great salespeople do: The science of selling through emotional connection and the power of story",** which became a global bestseller and one of the best books on sales.

The key tenants of the **Story Seekers™** methodology:

- **Story Seekers™** is a framework for Connection to help those who are **NOT** natural connectors improve their ability to connect with strangers (and familiars too). Connection is a **TEACHABLE/LEARNABLE** skill
- #1 issue buyers have with sellers is **TRUST** – Trust is a feeling, not a logical conclusion. First change the way people feel, then the way they think.
- People don't share pain with salespeople without trusting first.
- In our society today, we have grown over reliant on facts and information to get people to understand us.
- The skill of story tending is key for getting salespeople out of their own story and listening into the story of the buyer. This is where connective listening is crucial.

INSIDE THE TRAINING PROGRAM

Please consider attending a **Story Seekers™** Workshop **July 20-22 in Seattle.** The cost of the 2.5-day workshop is **$1800.**

Most customer-facing departments spend very little time training and coaching their teams in emotional connection and listening skills - even though recent brain science and research shows that emotions are the basis for all decision-making. No exception. (We all have real life stories to tell where the best "solution" did not win the deal.

Here are the program details:

Day 1 STORYTELLING – THE POWER OF THE STORY

You can attend **Day 1** only for **$800**

- **The evolution of sales methodologies** from transactional sales of generic products all the way to customer centric selling and insight selling
- **Learn the difference** between push and pull strategies in sales
- **Sales communication** – why is it so important ?
- Why is a **traditional sales conversation is becoming less and less effective?**
- **How to take advantage of the revolutionary breakthroughs** in psychology, brain science and anthropology in order to significantly increase the efficiency of sales influence communication?
- Using the **FBI Behavioral Change Stairway** in sales
- **Whole brain story building & telling** – a story board and a card system

DAY 1 EXERCISES:

- Change of Point of View Story
- Who (and Why) I Represent Story

Day 2 STORY TENDING – LEARN TO CONNECTIVELY LISTEN AND REFLECT

- Vulnerability in building **connection** and **trust**
- **Different types of listening** (avoidance, defensive, problem-solving and connective - empathic)
- **Tending emotions and feelings,** not just the facts
- **Empathic listening** and its role in discovering customers' latent needs
- **Learn to "Disarm" resistance**
- Story tending – tools for practicing **empathic, connective listening**
- **Earning the right to ask questions,** reflecting, acknowledging understanding as pillars of engaging sales dialog
- Building a repository of **tactical and strategic stories**
- **Initiating a Buy Cycles** with a "hook"
- Learn to create **buying visions** for targeted buying personas

DAY2 EXERCISES:

- Build and practice Who I Am Story
- Tending an unhappy customer experience
- Build and practice Who I Have Helped Story
- Tending the story of a loved one

Day 3 INTEGRATE – STORY WITH SELLING

- **Facilitating the buying process with stories**
- **How to use the power of stories** in a sales process
- **Closing a story tending sales conversation**
- **Public displays of trust** (PDT)
- **Documenting the buyer's story**
- **Sales without "Selling"**

DAY 3 EXERCISES:

Initiating and tending a new buying cycle

- Hook ('Are you curious?)
- 90 second who I have helped story
- Transition to tending buyer's current situation, struggles & resistance
- Recap and confirm situation, struggles & resistance
- Propose specific buying vision related to your offering
- Confirm buyer's resolution

Story Seekers™ testimonials

This workshop really made me aware and confirmed some things that I had done as a salesperson, but the challenge was that I had done them unconsciously. I have always been a storyteller, even in sales, but now I started to understand why engaging and connecting with people in conversation was not a problem for me. It was my ability to connect through the use of story. The great thing about being conscious of this ability to connect is that I now can use it on demand and I can teach it to others! The learned listening skills also acquired have been extremely valuable not only in my professional life, but in my personal life as well. In fact, the listening skills I have learned through the Story Seekers workshop are arguably the most valuable skills learned.

Rob Stenberg, Director, Dealer Sales, AMSOIL INC

It was a life changing experience. It was amazing to watch our group go from being complete strangers to trusted friends in the course of 2.5 days, all from sharing stories with each other. The biggest learning experience for me was how well we can make connections with people when we show vulnerability. It was something I had read in Mike's book, but seeing it happen in front of my eyes was totally different. What I learned has not only has helped at work, but in my personal life as well. I would recommend it to anyone.

Nick Wetta, Software Sales Manager

More testimonials at:

www.**mikebosworth-leadership.com**/#testimonials

I've used storytelling techniques in my work for the past three years. So far I've been doing it only intuitively. What I lacked was structured knowledge of Story Seekers. During the inspiring workshop, I had a chance to observe how incredibly fast you can build trust thanks to Mike's methodology, which is extremely important in my day-to-day work. I will undoubtedly use the Story Seekers tools in daily work situations, both to inspire and build committed teams, and to work with clients at various levels (technicians, salesmen). The positive message coming from this form of dialogue reduces stress and encourages the other person to reflect, which is, in my opinion, key to effective performance.

Mariusz Megier,
Managing Director, ORGADATA East Europe Sp. z o