



Sales Professionals

SALES DISCOVERY

Customized for
The logo for iSpeak, featuring a stylized lowercase 'i' in orange and blue, followed by the word 'Speak' in a blue, cursive font.

Sales Discovery™

iSpeak® prepared this workbook for use in the area of Training and Development for continuing education. It is intended that these materials will be used to assist students in the learning process during a presentation, after the presentation for review, and continued learning as a reference guide.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Curriculum Developers:

Russ D. Peterson, Jr.
Kevin J. Karschnik

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Welcome to Sales Discovery!

“There’s a way to do it better -- find it.” -Thomas Edison, inventor, salesman

Selling is the cornerstone of capitalism and the free market system. It has been around for years and is quite possibly one of the oldest professions. So if that is the case, why is it that it is still much more difficult than what many may think? Selling may come easy to some people, but if you follow those people through their career, you will find out that it may appear to come easy to them, but there is a substantial amount of preparation and work that takes place to position them at the top of their profession. What you will also discover is that the reason their success appears to come naturally is because they have learned how to work smarter and not harder.

Sales Discovery is the iSpeak course that introduces you to communication skills of professional selling. Many may claim that with regard to selling skills “you are either born with it or you aren’t.” This claim is not true; selling is a skill that can be learned. Just as a sports skill like baseball can be learned, so can the skill of effective selling. Just as highly successful baseball athletes add their own style to the skill to create an art form, so do highly successful salespeople.

Research shows that participants who interact during this course will gain a superior understanding of the course content over those who passively read the workbook or listen to the facilitator.

You bring to the class the skills necessary to be a great Field Account Manager or Territory Sales Manager. Research shows that participants who interact during this course will gain a superior understanding of the course content over those who passively read the workbook or listen to the facilitator. *Sales Discovery* will challenge you to step outside of your comfort zone to learn new techniques. To become a skilled communicator in sales, you will have to challenge yourself to improve your skills, and that means participating in class exercises to sharpen new skills.

The *information* and *inspiration* will be provided by your facilitator, but the *implementation* is the single most important factor in your *improvement*. During the next two days, you will be asked to role-play with others and with your facilitators. Only through your implementation will you internalize the skills required for success. In *Sales Discovery*, we will provide you with the foundation and tools that are required to reach your full sales potential.

Exercise: Course Expectations

What do you want to gain after completing the *Sales Discovery* course?

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

4. _____

5. _____

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Unit One: Listening

“Every worthwhile accomplishment, big or small, has its stages of drudgery and triumph; a beginning, a struggle, and a victory.” - Gandhi

The ability to communicate effectively is vital to achieving success in sales. Effective presentations provide the opportunity to communicate your ideas in an organized manner. They can inform your audience about a particular subject or persuade your audience to take a particular action. Few skills in life will contribute to your selling success as much as communication skills, because it is the foundation your relationships will be built on.

Sales Discovery is the iSpeak course to introduce you to the skills of professional sales communication. Many may claim that with regard to communication and selling skills “you are either born with it or you aren’t.” This claim is not true; communication and presenting is a skill that can be learned. Just as a sports skill like baseball can be learned, so too can the skill of presenting. Just as highly successful baseball athletes add their own style to the skill to create an art form, so do highly successful presenters.

Unit Objectives

- Importance of Communication
- Selling value
- Types of listening
- Developing active listening
- What to listen for in sales conversations

Effective Communication

“The single biggest problem with communication ... is the illusion that it has been accomplished.” - George Bernard Shaw

It does not matter if you are meeting someone face-to-face or presenting in front of a large group, you have to Prepare your message, Develop it and then Deliver it. Having an effective communication process will help you develop all types of relationships, both personal and professional. The following studies are evidence that employers value the importance of effective communication and presentation skills in the workplace.

- The *Job Outlook 2010* survey conducted by the National Association of Colleges and Employers (NACE) indicates that good communication skills are the top personal quality sought by employers evaluating a job candidate. In fact, year after year, the number one skill employers look for is good communication skills: the ability to write and speak clearly.
- A survey conducted in 1986 by the Journal of Business Communication of Fortune 500 vice presidents shows that 97.7 percent “believed that communication skills had affected their advancement to a top executive position.”
- In July of 2002, The Association to Advance Collegiate Schools of Business conducted a survey of MBA graduates and found that they felt that the ability to communicate effectively was the single most useful skill in their career.
- A study conducted by the University of Michigan Graduate School in 1984 found that executives from 5000 U.S. companies from a wide range of industries and sizes found that communication played a significant role in their advancement to management.
- In a 1989 study of CEOs by A. Foster Higgins and Company, they found that 79 percent of CEOs surveyed believe that better communication will benefit the bottom line of their company.
- A study of the top 1000 advertising executives in 2001 stated that strong presentation skills (55%) was the single most important business asset to possess. Specific industry experience was ranked a distant second (23%) and management experience at only 3%.
- In the 1984 book, *How American Chief Executives Succeed*, The American Management Association surveyed over 5,000 CEOs and asked “What is the most important thing you have learned in order to perform your role as an executive?” They ranked communication skills as number one.
- In the 1991 edition of *Supervision*, 725 upper and middle managers were surveyed and sited the ability to communicate ideas and plans in front of an audience as the #1 skill in terms of upward mobility, surpassing negotiation, selling and persuasive talents.

Selling Value

“Price is what you pay. Value is what you get.” – Warren Buffett

In a proper selling process, when a buyer’s perception is created around a specific product or service, they will automatically derive a ballpark figure in their head of the pricing. When the pricing is well above that expectation, you will be seen as “expensive.” If the pricing comes in below their expectation, you will be seen as a “good value.”

Selling success depends more on the work you do early in the sales process than on the final negotiation. Perceived value of your offering and the buying urgency you create with your prospect provide the fuel to complete the sale. The stronger the perceived value and urgency by your prospect, the better off you will be in the negotiating process.

Great front work (asking open-ended questions, delivering key benefit statements, responding to objections appropriately, etc.) combined with the delivery of strong value will further strengthen your negotiating position. The graphic below depicts how selling skills and a product or service that fills a need and matches the customer’s decision criteria will have a higher perceived value to the prospective client. This makes the price less of an issue.

The three keys to lowering risk and increasing value are:

- 1) _____
- 2) _____
- 3) _____



Exercise: One-Minute Stories

Follow the instructions of the facilitator and record your insights below.

What did you learn about active listening in this exercise?

From this exercise, what can you apply to your own sales communication interactions?

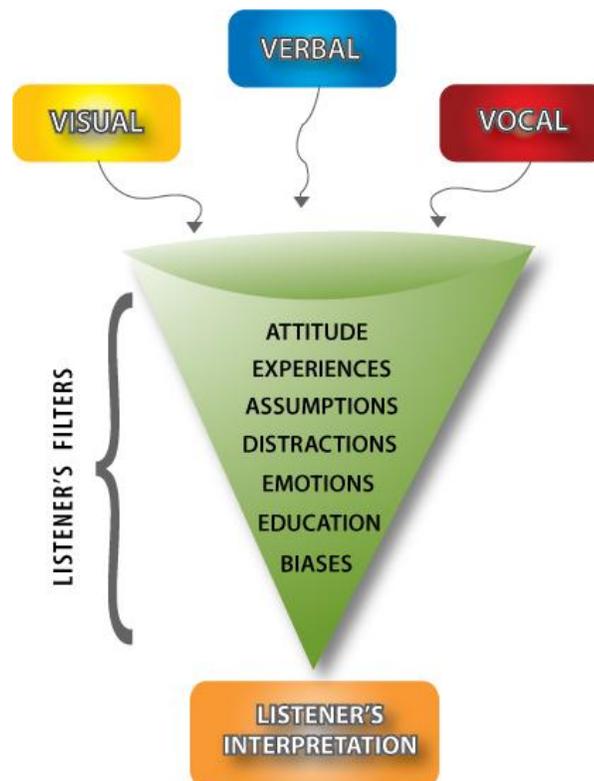
Communication Elements

“There are no facts, only interpretations.” - Friedrich Nietzsche

Communication filters emphasize the skill of listening and how it relates to verbalizing information, feedback, and feeling. While listening may not be the only ingredient in the formula for good communication, it does play a vital role. As we listen to information from the speaker, it passes through several filters before the listener’s interpretation is determined. When we understand this funnel, we can rely on it to:

- Find out where we are in a complicated interchange of ideas and opinions
- Evaluate the way others respond to us
- Learn how to handle those responses, even if they are unexpected or unwanted
- Examine alternatives for changes of direction without sacrificing our goal in the interaction

In all our communication, it helps to have a mental picture of what we are doing, where we want to go, and what we must do to get there. The communication funnel answers this need, by helping us design a strategy for our communications with others. A model of Communication Filters is shown below.



Unit Two: Questioning

“You can tell a man is clever by his answers. You can tell a man is wise by his questions.”

--Naguib Mahfouz, Egyptian novelist, Nobel Prize Laureate

Understanding is similar to the diagnosis of a physician. Prior to prescribing medicine for an ailment, the physician will take the patient through a series of questions. In the same fashion, you will take your prospective customers through a series of questions before determining if and how you can help.

If it appears that you cannot help a prospective customer, it is in both of your best interests to discontinue the sales process. The qualifying process is a two-way benefit for both the seller and the customer. The seller can determine whether or not the prospect will be an ideal customer and the customer receives the benefit of the seller’s recommendation on a solution.

Unit Objectives

- Needs and Decision Criteria
- Questioning to diagnose
- Types of Questions
- Discovery Conversations
- Important Questions to Ask

Needs & Decision Criteria

“We need a bit, so here I go.” – Joe DiMaggio

Once you understand why and how a person makes a purchasing decision, you can better understand how to position and sell.

Why do people buy? Because they have needs (or wants!)

At a basic level, people buy for only two reasons, to avoid pain or to increase happiness. However, the reasons for making a purchase do not necessarily make the decision process any easier.

A customer’s “need” can be defined as “the pain that the customer is trying to cure.” When a customer has a problem they will seek a solution. The defined need must be fully understood before the salesperson can prescribe a solution. In the Buyer process, a prospect will begin by defining their need based on a problem they are currently experiencing and what they see as being the potential solution to that problem.

How do people decide? By ranking their decision criteria

Once a customer’s needs have been uncovered and fully defined, the successful salesperson will question to understand their decision criteria. What will the customer use to make their final decision? Are they strictly price driven? Will the quality of the product be important? Is service after the sale important? Every customer will place a different value on the criteria and as a result, every customer may come to different conclusions for their product or service of choice.

As a salesperson, it is important for you to understand how your products or services can address each of your customers’ decision criteria. If you are not well positioned against your competition on a particular criterion, it will be important in directing your selling strategy. The following are examples of a customer’s decision criteria.

Quality	Brand name, perceived quality based on company or product, quality of technology
Price	Is it within your budget? Is the price fair?
Support	Does it have a warranty? Is support service local?
Features	Does it have the features the customer requires?
Delivery	Does it have to be ordered and shipped? Will it slow down the construction schedule?

Exercise: Decision Criteria

In your group, identify the top decision criteria you use for purchasing gasoline.

Identify the decision criteria your customers may use when selecting who they will purchase from.

Product or Service: Gasoline

Potential Decision Criteria:

Product or Service: _____

Potential Decision Criteria:

Discovery Conversations

“Learn from yesterday, live for today, hope for tomorrow. The important thing is to not stop questioning.” – Albert Einstein

Once you understand the types of questions and the basic process for questioning, the next step is to synthesize all of these components into an actual conversation. What does a conversation using these elements actually look like? How does it sound when all of these pieces come together into a meaningful dialogue with a customer?

A conversation built around questioning can be structured into three key focus areas: Business, Needs and Decision Criteria.

Business Questions

After the cordial remarks have been made and the business portion of the conversation begins, a discovery conversation should begin with an understanding of the business. If this is a larger organization that can be found on many online information sites, the basic questions should already be answered for you (Where is headquarters? How many development projects do you have? Etc.) More specific questions you will most likely not have answers to and must be asked.

- *How are decisions made for in-store promotions?*
- *Who will be involved in this decision?*
- *What is your schedule for deciding on promotions for the year?*
- *Can you tell me about your current promotions you have planned?*

Needs Questions

Understanding what a customer needs is so much more than asking a simple question like, “what do you need?” That would be like visiting the doctor and being asked, “What do you need?” as soon as he enters the room. How should we know? He’s the doctor! In addition, we don’t want a doctor to jump straight to the prescription either. We want a solid diagnosis prior to being prescribed anything. That is the role of the professional salesperson. Ask all the right “needs questions” to perform a proper diagnosis before prescribing. Focus these questions on the customer’s goals for the project and business. Do not just ask them what they’d like to order!

- *Can you tell me more about the store remodeling and how it may affect product placement?*
- *What are your goals with the Thanksgiving promotions?*
- *What level of sales increase do you expect to see from the Labor Day Weekend promotions?*
- *Can you describe the ideal end-cap solution for you and all your vendors?*
- *Which of your construction projects will affect redesigning the product placement?*

Exercise: Asking thought provoking questions

Develop questions based on the iSpeak Examination Process using the customers you call on at Bimbo Bakeries as the example. Once you've answered the questions below and developed your list of questions, practice the questioning with your partner, group or the facilitator.

Title of the person you are calling on: _____

What products or services are you focusing on: _____

What is your goal for this conversation? (set meeting, gain agreement on promo, get information, etc.)

What is the most common need you assume this person will have? _____

What are the most common decision criteria you expect? _____

What are some of the questions you will ask?

Exercise: Prepare to be the Customer

Answer the questions below as you prepare to play the role of the customer.

The Communication Style I will be portraying is *(from your iSpeak card)*:

Systematic

Direct

Spirited

Considerate

How will you show this style during the conversation? *(see pg. 12 of your Selling Style Assessment)*

As the customer, the two most important decision criteria to me are *(from your index card)*:

Notes:

Exercise: Acknowledgement Exercise

Follow the facilitator's instructions to practice acknowledging statements.

What is the challenging aspect of this exercise for you?

How can this exercise apply to the challenges you experience in your role?

If Responding with Questions...

“High achievement always takes place in the framework of high expectation.”
- Charles F. Kettering

When the customer asks a tough question, use the Responsive Acknowledgement formula to start. Then, if you choose to respond with questions, you have two choices.

1. Ask questions to understand “why” this is important to them
2. Ask one question, “What do you need from me to help you with this decision?”

Option One: Understand “Why?”

When you understand why the question is being asked, you can address the true source of the hesitation. Keep in mind that tough questions mean that the prospect is asking for help. They cannot see themselves utilizing your products or services because of an issue.

Prospect: Why would I want to change one of my end caps to Sara Lee bagels and Thomas English muffins?

Bimbo Sales / Acct Manager: Depending on whether you look at it as a short-term event or a long-term change, you may get two different answers. Do you have a specific question or concern about the suggestion?

Prospect: I don’t want to reserve an end cap for something that I already have plenty of on my bread aisle. I need to make sure the end cap items are profitable enough to warrant that shelf space.

Bimbo Sales / Acct Manager: I can understand you don’t want to dedicate space to a product if you won’t see a substantial increase in revenues. With the tough economy on consumers, they will be looking for quality at a good price.

Option Two: Ask what they need from you to overcome the hesitation

If the prospect has a true hesitation, you can ask what they need from you. If they say “nothing will change my mind” then the salesperson needs to offer suggestions on ways to overcome the hesitancy.

Bimbo Sales / Acct Manager: What can I share with you to help with your decision?

Prospect: I’d like to know what level of increase other stores saw when they dedicated an entire end cap to breakfast bread products, like Thomas English muffins and Sara Lee bagels.

Bimbo Sales / Acct Manager: If I can provide you with that information and you see what you want to see, would you be ready to move forward or do you have any other concerns?

Prospect: No other concerns. If you can provide me with that info, and it shows the increases in revenues I’d want to see, I’d be ready to move forward.

Exercise: Three forms of persuasion

In each scenario below, develop responses for each of the different persuasive response techniques. Then decide which method(s) you think would be most effective and why.

Situation 1

In addition to stuffing, you proposed Thomas English muffins and Sara Lee bagels to be placed on an end cap location for the upcoming Thanksgiving holidays. With relatives in from out of town, easy breakfast will be on the consumer's minds. The store manager would rather focus on stuffing only.

Objective:

Direct Statement:

Direct Question:

Indirect Questions:

iSpeak After the Class

“We shall neither fail nor falter; we shall not weaken or tire... give us the tools and we will finish the job.” - Winston Churchill



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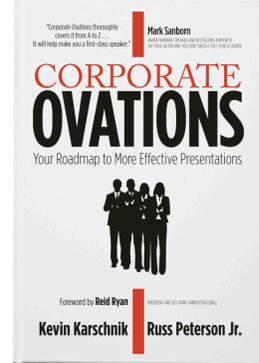
Corporate Ovations

“I only wish I had met them earlier in my career.” – Hernon Lopez, President Fox International

Who made the rule that all business presentations given in a corporate environment must be long, detailed and just plain boring? *Corporate Ovations* is the book to change all that. Without connecting to the audience, your presentations will never be their best.

In this book the authors teach you how to construct powerful and engaging presentations. Whether you are asked to speak for nine minutes on a project update or asked to deliver a keynote speech at the next industry trade show, you can prepare with this winning methodology.

Don't let your presentations end with a feeling of relief from your audience... learn how to end your presentations with a Corporate Ovation! Order your copy of *Corporate Ovations* today at www.iSpeak.com/store.



About the Authors

Russ Peterson Jr. and Kevin Karschnik have been professionally speaking since 1991. Kevin and Russ have founded two successful companies and also experienced success working in the corporate world.

Their workshops have been attended by thousands of students from around the world, ranging from Account Executives to Corporate Executives. Now, in a culmination of their career experience and their success in the classroom, the boardroom, and on the stage, these two experts share their secrets to take your presentations from receiving obligatory applause to receiving *Corporate Ovations*.



“This program was great – the best I’ve had - a day well spent! Kevin was excellent – would love for him to be my speaking coach. Very thorough content. Should be mandatory for all sales people.” – Trina Maull, Champion Technologies

“Russ is a fantastic presenter, everything from presentation skills, voice inflection, stories, supporting points, and anecdotes. Overall, he knows his stuff!!”

– **Scott Knoespel, Bimbo Bakeries USA**

iSpeak Programs

“In the business environment it’s so important to make sure your audience retains your content and iSpeak’s workshop will certainly help you accomplish that goal.” - Brett Berryhill, State Farm

The iSpeak *Corporate Ovations* Programs will change your skills, change your career, and change your life! These three instructor led programs are based on years of experience, research, and successful application. Each program invites you out of your comfort zone to learn and apply new communication skills, which can be applied to both work and personal life.

Business Professionals

As a business professional you are asked to create and deliver messages to your peers and senior managers. These messages may be informative, such as a financial review, or they could be persuasive as in a request for a budget approval. The response from your audience will be dependent on both you and your message. In this program you will learn how to succeed at both.

Sales Professionals

As a sales professional you will be presenting your ideas to customers in a persuasive manner. In this program you will learn how to uncover the data you need to effectively design and deliver a persuasive message that inspires action from your prospect.

Leaders

If you are a manager or leader in your organization, this program is specifically designed for you. In this program you will not only learn professional methods to deliver your message, you will practice your delivery with eight video-recorded presentations. After each speaking opportunity you will receive one-on-one coaching to enhance your skills. The four days for this program can be spread out over several weeks. After each day in the classroom, you will attend a 2-hour coaching session led by one of the authors of *Corporate Ovations*. Whether you are speaking at a weekly team meeting or to the entire corporation, this workshop is designed to develop your effectiveness as a leader.



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