



## Station Break

Consultative sales are  
especially dependent on  
trust.

What do clients look for in an  
adviser they can trust?

## The E&Y Trust Study



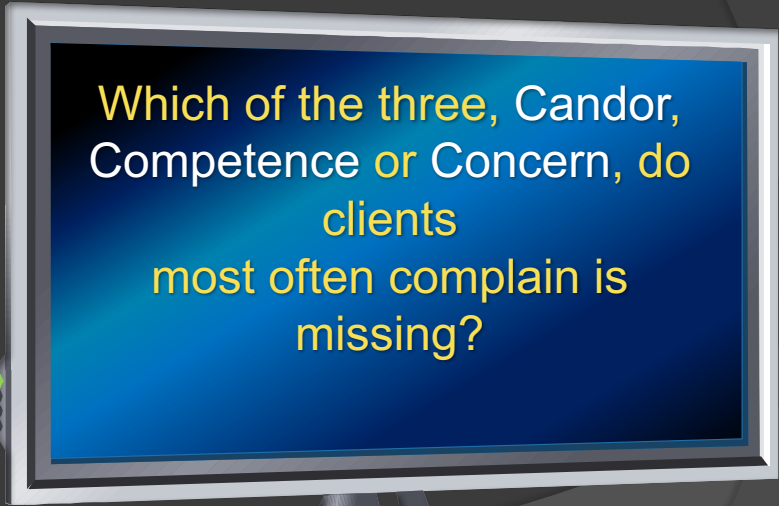
- ◉ E&Y, like other accounting firms, had an oversupply of highly trained professional auditors
- ◉ They retrained them and redeployed them to sell tax and consulting services
- ◉ Their sales results were abysmal
- ◉ E&Y's customer surveys showed that clients didn't trust them
- ◉ E&Y was outraged [in the days before the Arthur Andersen nasties] and asked me to look deeper.

## The 3 C's of Creating Trust

What clients look for in salespeople they can trust:

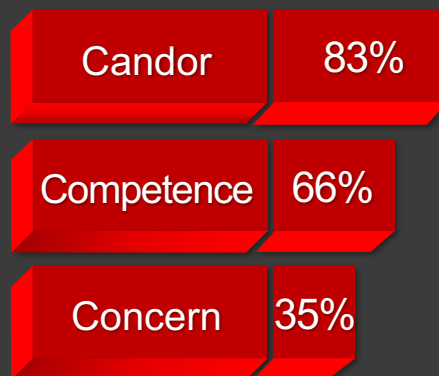


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Which of the three, Candor, Competence or Concern, do clients most often complain is missing?

## How Clients Rate Professional Salespeople



Percentage rated adequate or better

## The “SPIN” Sales Success Studies

### Calls Studied:

Researchers sat in on over 35,000 calls, the largest study in history

**Duration:** The basic research took us 12 years, from 1974 to 1986

**Countries:** 23 countries and 14 languages from North and South America, Europe and Asia

### Behaviors studied:

we looked at 116 different behaviors that might be linked to sales success

## Fundamentals of Successful Calls

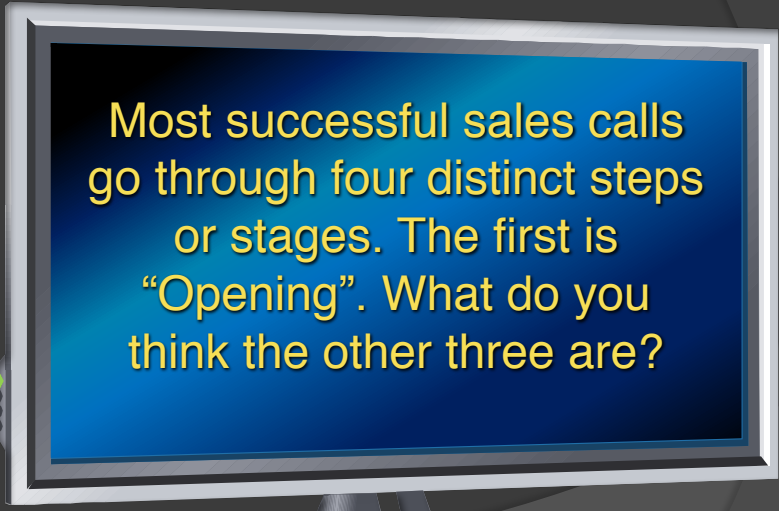
- In successful calls clients talk more than sellers

- In successful calls sellers ask more questions

- In successful calls sellers talk about products and solutions later in the discussion.

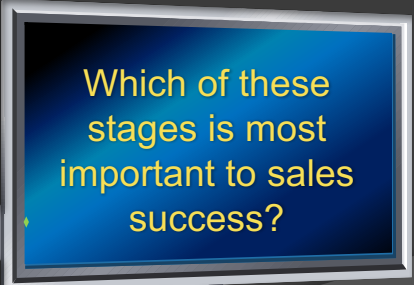


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Most successful sales calls go through four distinct steps or stages. The first is “Opening”. What do you think the other three are?

## Four Stages of a Sales Call



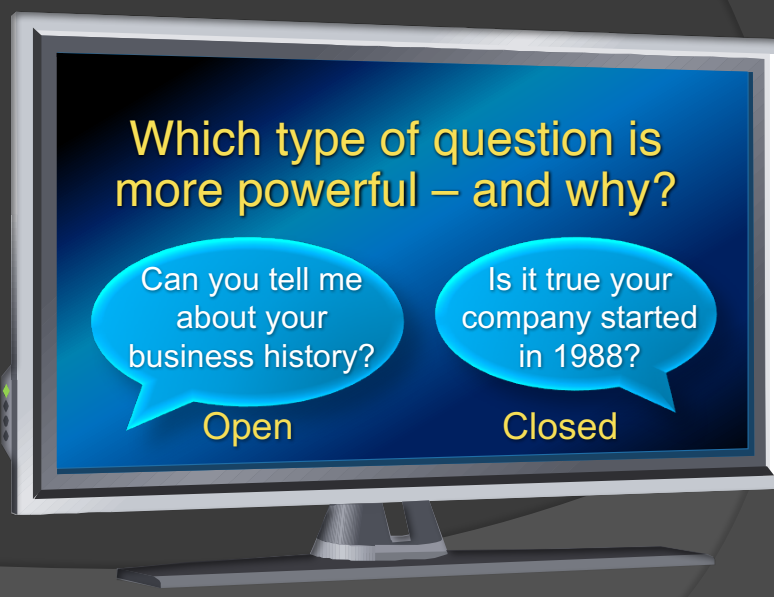
Which of these stages is most important to sales success?

## The Investigation Stage of the Call



- The most important [and the hardest] stage of the sales call
- Nothing else in a sales call has as much impact on call success than the questions you ask.

## Station Break



## What We Were Taught About Questions



# Q's

- Open questions are more powerful
- They get the customer to talk
- They reveal unexpected information

## Disturbing Research Findings

The top 16 IBM salespeople in Europe were no different from the rest of the IBM sales force in their use of open/closed questions.



- A \$250,000 research study couldn't show that open questions brought more success than closed questions.
- Either we do bad research or there's something complicated happening here.

## A Different Approach to Questions



- We studied salespeople's questioning behavior in IBM, Xerox, Olivetti, and 28 other companies.
- We looked for a different way to classify questions.
- We started by watching the sequence of questions used by successful salespeople.

## The SPIN Questions

S

Situation  
Questions

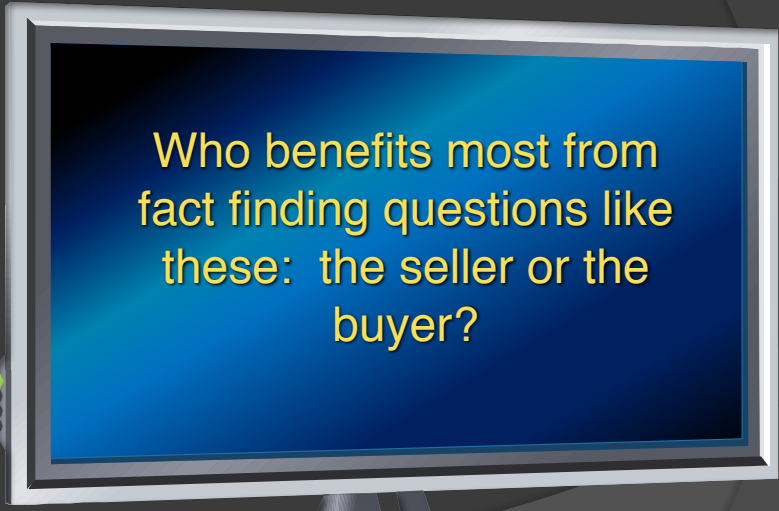
What's your  
position in the  
company?

What  
system are  
you using  
now?

Do you operate  
in Europe?

Questions about facts, existing  
operations, present methods etc.

## Station Break



Who benefits most from fact finding questions like these: the seller or the buyer?

## Situation Questions



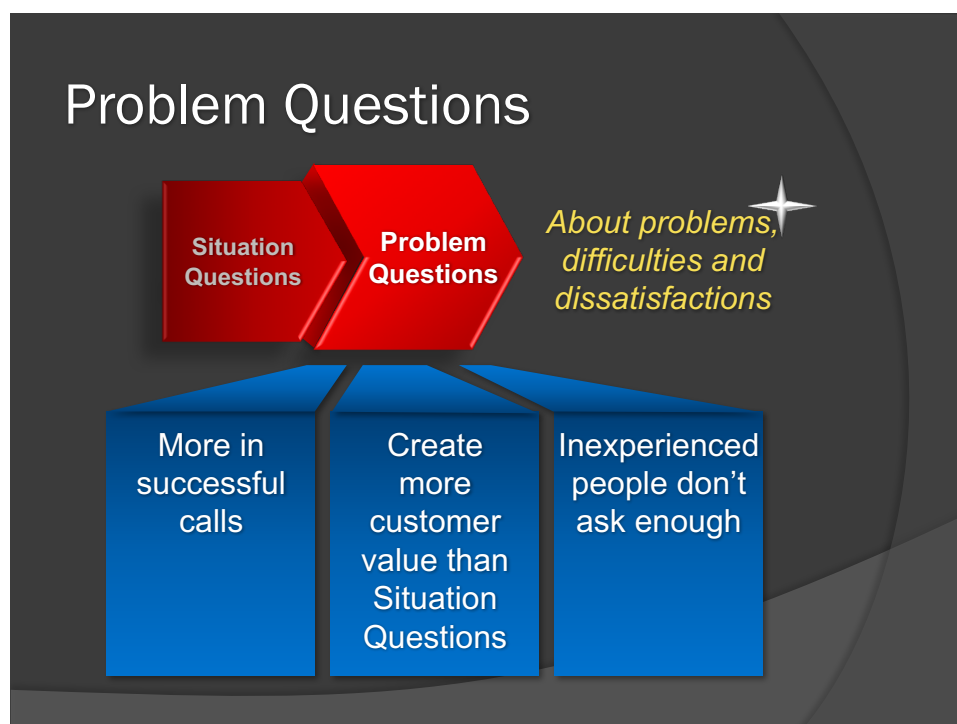
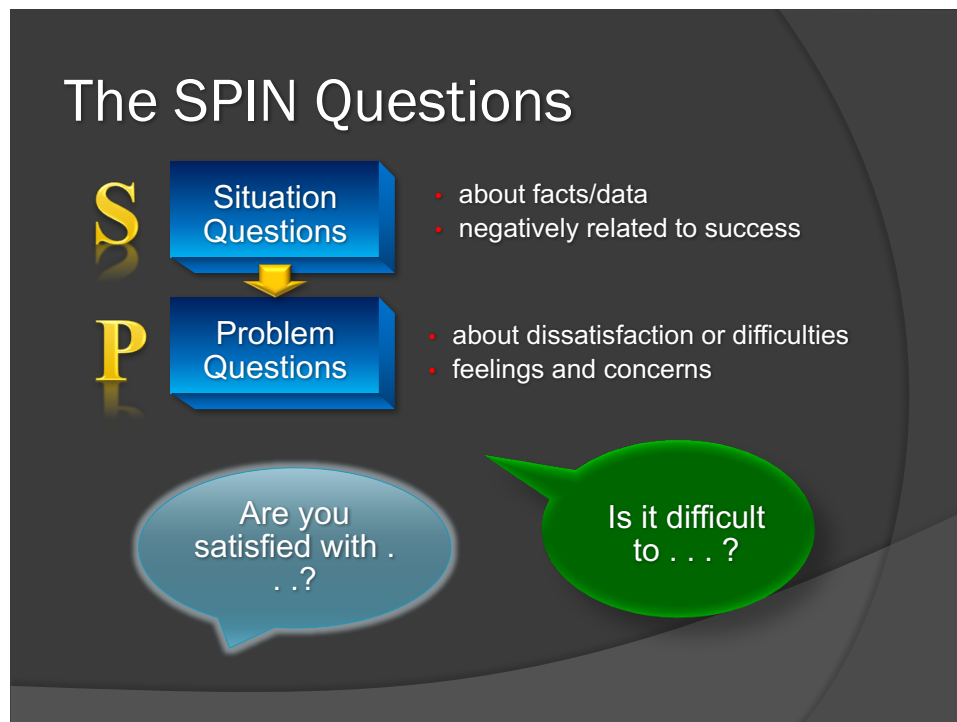
**Situation Questions**

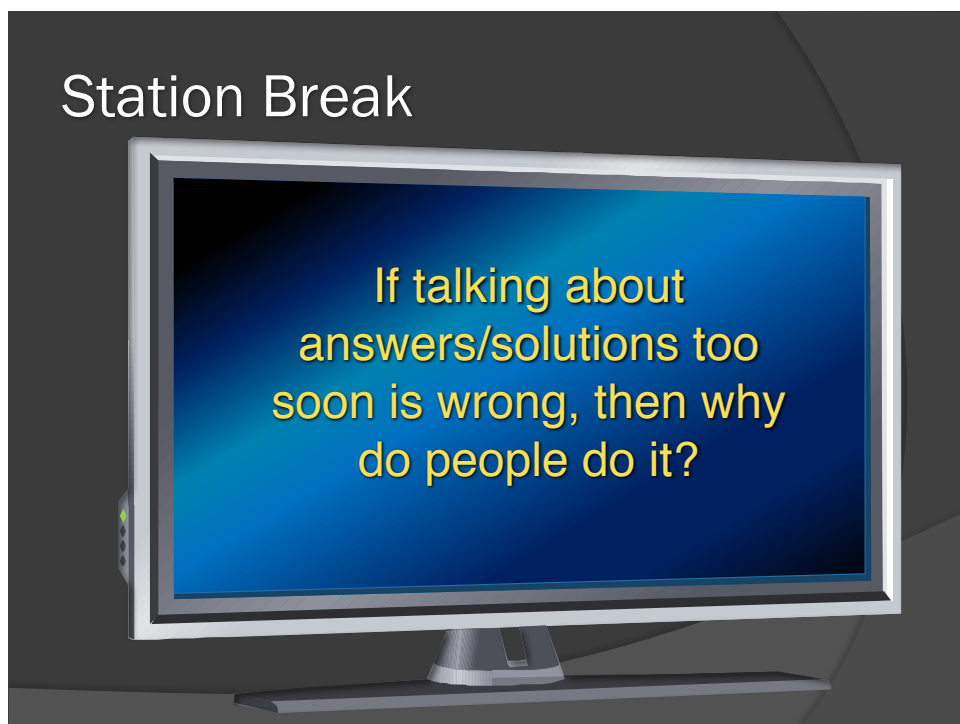
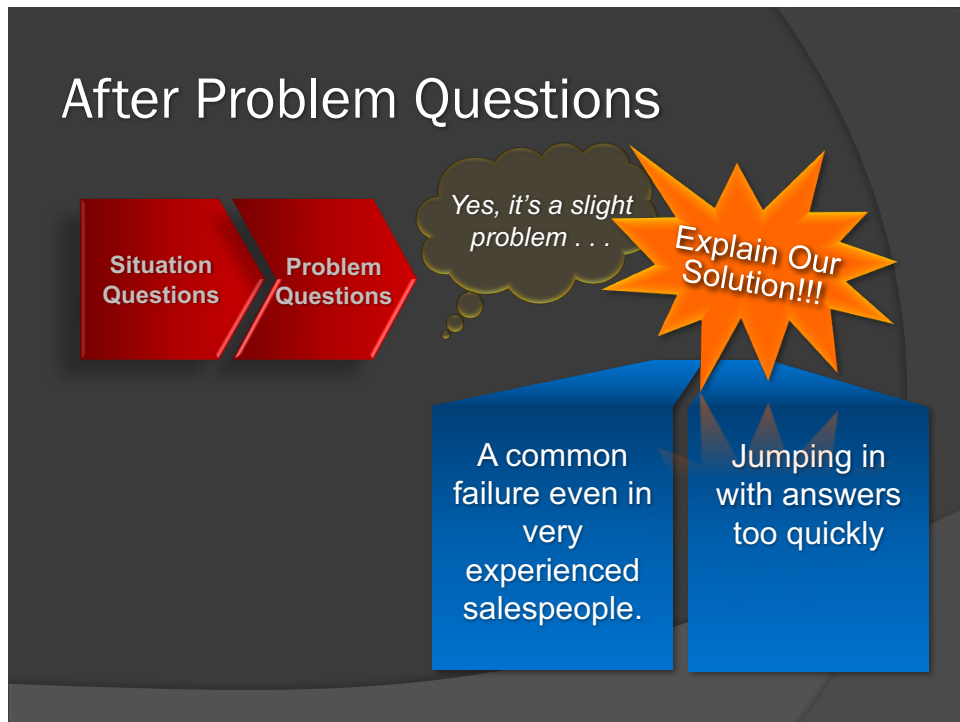
*About facts and background*

Create more value for the seller than for the customer

More in unsuccessful calls

Essential for selling big ticket or complex products / services






## Why People Offer Solutions Too Soon



- It feels as if you're adding more value
- You've got clients, so you have to move forward
- Your buyers expect you to talk about solutions
- It's easy to do and we get good at it
- If you've got a great service you can't wait to talk about all it can offer

**It's the WORST thing you can do.**

## The Most Powerful Questions



- What will happen if you don't take action?
- Could this damage your competitive position?
- How could that hurt your customers?
- What's that doing to your costs?
- Could this lead to problems in other areas?



## The SPIN Questions

**S****Situation Questions**

- about facts/data
- negatively related to success

**P****Problem Questions**

- about dissatisfaction or difficulties
- feelings and concerns

**I****Implication Questions**

- about consequences/effects or problems
- increasing seriousness of problems

## Implication Questions

**Situation Questions****Problem Questions****Implication Questions**

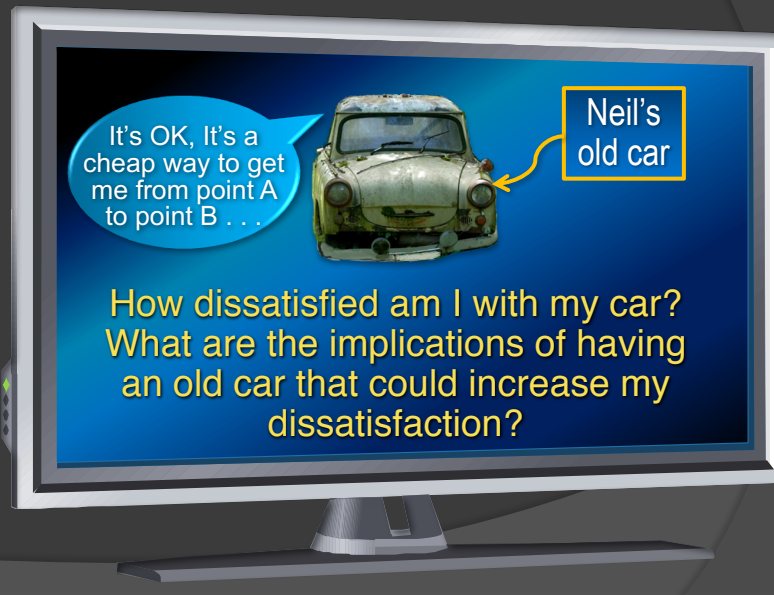
*Explore the effects or consequences of a customer's problems*

Top salespeople ask 4 times as many.

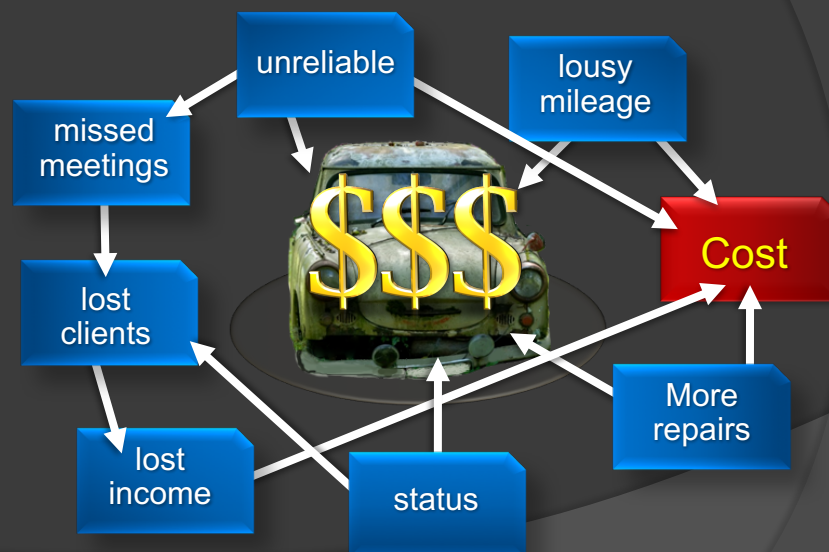
Very powerful with decision makers.

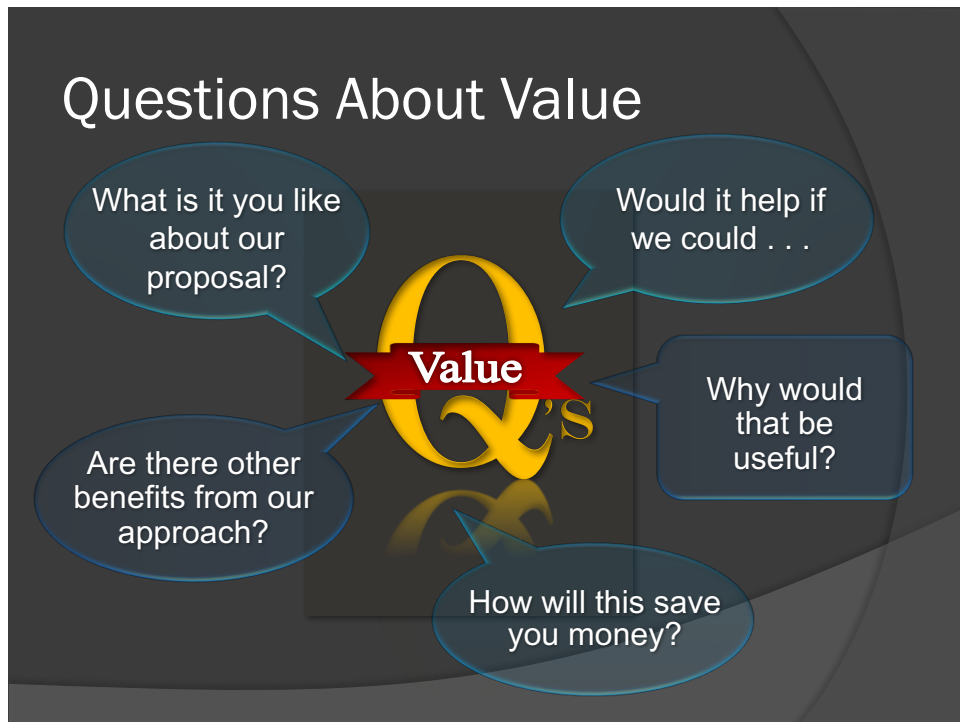
Essential for selling big ticket or complex products / services

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## Implications of Neil's Old Car





## The SPIN Questions

**S****Situation Questions**

- about facts/data
- Negatively related to success!

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**I****Implication Questions**

- about consequences/effects or problems
- increasing seriousness of problems

**N****Need-payoff Questions**

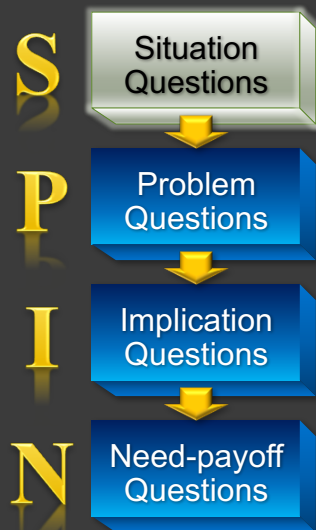
- about solutions and their value
- how we can help

## The SPIN Questions

**S****Situation Questions****P****Problem Questions****I****Implication Questions****N****Need-payoff Questions**

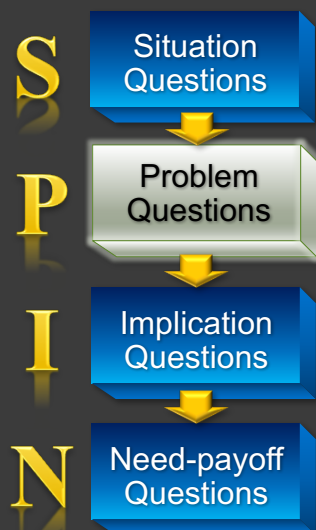
Does this model  
still work 30 years  
later?

## How Situation Questions change



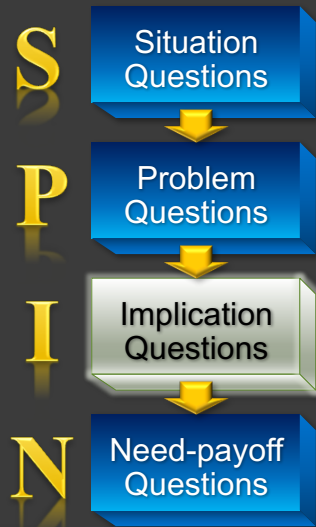
- Customers are becoming impatient with fact-finding questions
- Homework and pre-call research is more important than before

## How Problem Questions change



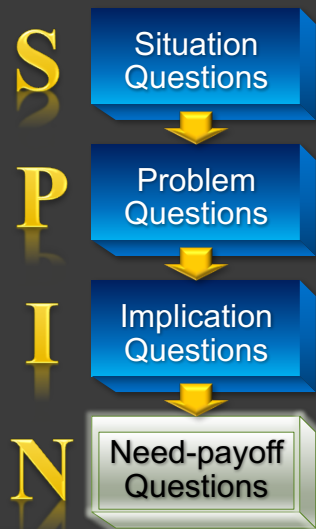
- Problem Questions are still the important foundation for value-creating selling
- But it's not enough to ask about present problems: you have to help customers anticipate future problems

## How **Implication Questions** change



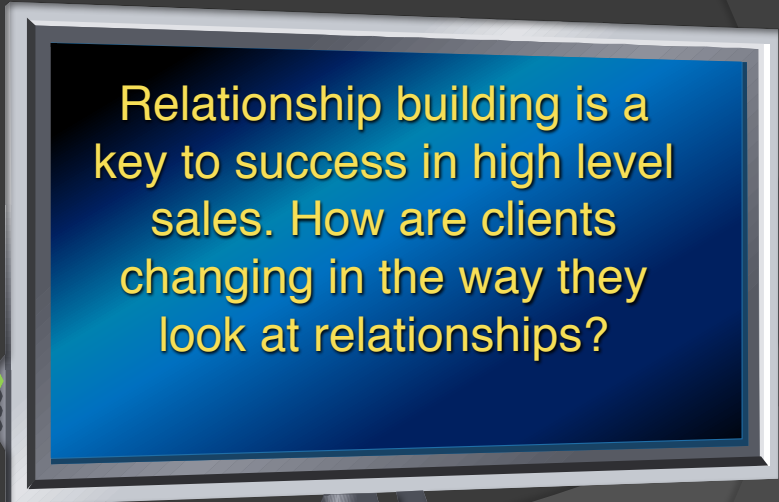
- Customers expect you to have a deeper understanding than ever before: Implication Questions achieve this
- Top salespeople in 2012 are asking 4x as many Implication Questions as average salespeople

## How **Need-payoff Questions** change



- The new sales role is creating value: Need-payoff Questions are about value
- In today's b2b selling, Need-payoff Questions are more important than ever before


## Station Break



Relationship building is a key to success in high level sales. How are clients changing in the way they look at relationships?

## Relationships and Selling

The old wisdom



Build the Relationship



Make the sale

- The relationship comes first
- Relationship-building establishes trust
- Trust makes sales
- So invest in relationship-building

## Relationships and Selling

### The new wisdom

Create  
customer  
value

Earn the  
relationship

- Customers no longer want relationships with salespeople
- Instead they demand value creation
- If a salesperson creates value, then customers reward them with a relationship

## Some Interesting Research

- In 2010 I was asked by the Sales Executive Council to review some puzzling research they had conducted into effective selling
- The research team spent two days with me going through their findings
- I was interested: particularly because their main discovery was the opposite of what they were expecting: always a good sign
- This research, published as *The Challenger Sale*\*, has been widely misinterpreted.

The Challenger Sale, Dixon & Adamson, Penguin, 2011



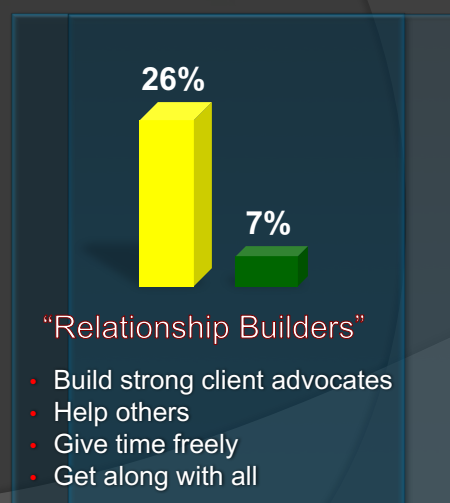
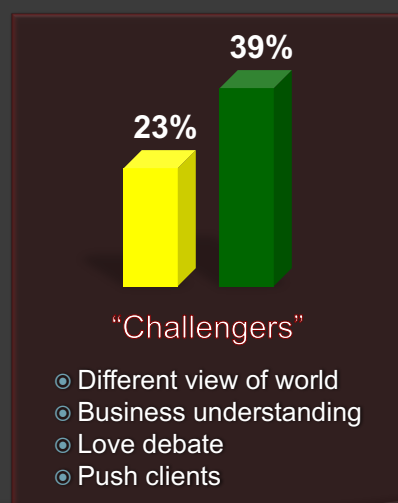
## Five Profiles for Sales Performance\*



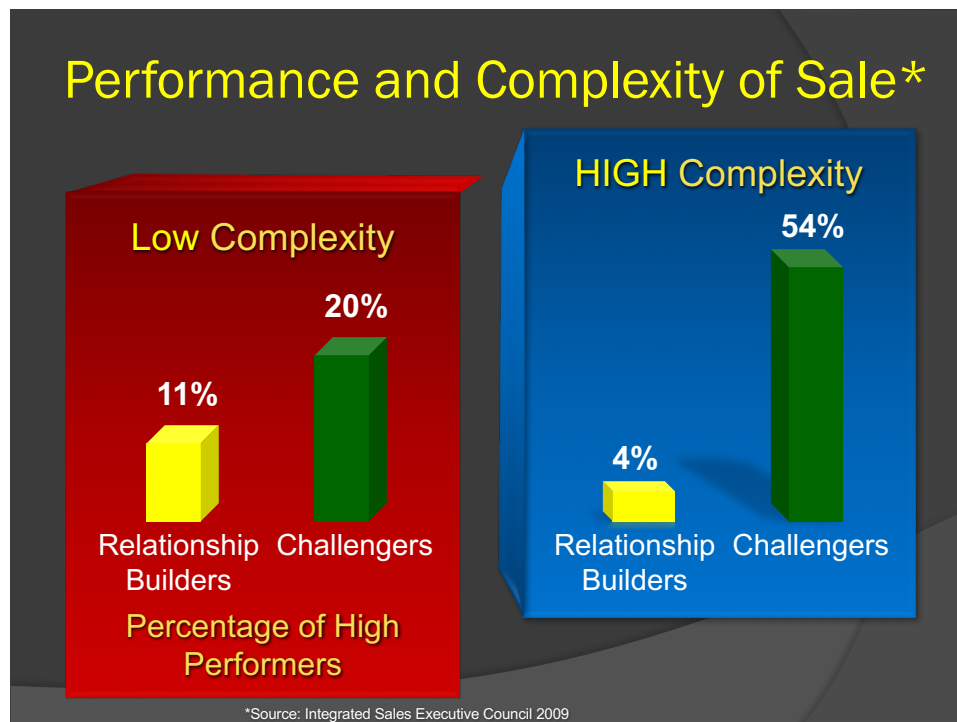
\*Source: Integrated Sales Executive Council 2009

## Comparing High and Core Performers\*

Core performers High performers



\*Source: Integrated Sales Executive Council 2009



## Misinterpreting the Challenger Research

- The research does **NOT** say relationship selling is dead; just that relationship-building, by itself, is no longer enough
- The best Challengers are also Relationship-builders; inadequate relationships will always lose sales
- Established consultative selling models, like SPIN Selling are not outdated, they are even more important skills for successful Challengers
- The Challenger research is no “magic bullet”; its concepts are difficult to implement and may be more useful for marketing than for selling.