How to Find, Create, and Be First with Motivated Buyers

A special report by

Craig Elias

Entrepreneur, Speaker, Advisor, Sales and Networking Guru
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Sales success starts with three simple things: a product or service buyers want, credibility, and timing. Since most sales professionals represent quality products and services and assuming for the moment establishing credibility is not an issue, the last hurdle to sales success is timing — being first with motivated buyers.

Research shows that the average sales person is five times more likely to make a sale when they are the first viable sales person in front of a motivated buyer — a buyer who knows that what they have no longer meets their needs but has not yet started searching for alternatives.

Buying Modes

Research also shows that it does not matter what you sell or whom you are selling to, buyers are always in one of three Buying Modes:

1. **Status Quo**: Status Quo is when a buyer perceives the product or service they are currently using meets their needs.
2. **Searching for Alternatives**: Searching for Alternatives is when a buyer realizes what they have no longer meets their needs and is actively engaged in the process of searching for alternatives.
3. **Window of Dissatisfaction**: A Window of Dissatisfaction exists between the better known buying modes of Status Quo and Searching for Alternatives — after the buyer realizes that what they have no longer meets their needs but before they have started the process of searching for alternatives. A buyer in the Window of Dissatisfaction is a motivated buyer.

By finding, creating, and being first with motivated buyers you will:
- Increase your close ratio
- Shorten your sales cycle
- Raise your prices
- Create the kind of core loyal customers that are likely to represent 80% of your profit and gladly give you references and referrals

Finding Motivated Buyers

 Buyers generally move from the Status Quo mode to the Window of Dissatisfaction because of an event or a series of events. Finding buyers in the Window of Dissatisfaction requires knowledge of what event or events create buyer dissatisfaction, finding out who knows when these events cause buyers to become dissatisfied, and then getting those ‘in the know’ to tell you about these dissatisfied buyers first.

Creating Motivated Buyers

As a long as a buyer’s perception of the performance of their current solution exceeds expectations, satisfaction is the result. Creating motivated buyers requires you to create dissatisfaction with their current solution. While you can’t change the performance of a buyer’s current solution, you can create dissatisfaction by raising their expectations of their current solution. Creating dissatisfaction with what they already have can result in them entering the Window of Dissatisfaction and becoming motivated buyers.

Being First with Motivated Buyers

We all know buyers make emotional decisions and rationalize them after the fact. Being first with motivated buyers means becoming their ‘Emotional Favorite’ — aka their ‘Go to’ person — so they call you first when they want what you sell.
Motivated Buyers and Prices

It's important to understand the role Buying Modes play in sales. As a rule, buyers pay for perceived value: their perception of the difference in value between a proposed solution and their current solution.

A buyer’s perception of the current solution shifts as the buyer moves from one buying mode to another. For example, when a buyer is in Status Quo, they believe that what they have meets the needs of their business. During Status Quo, a buyer's perception of the difference between the current solution — what they already have — and what you provide is usually not enough for them to buy from you.

But when the buyer realizes that their current solution no longer meets their needs, they move into the Window of Dissatisfaction™. Now, because their perception of the value of what they already have drops, the difference between the current solution — a reduced perception of the value of what they already have — and what you provide, increases to the point where they have become motivated buyers.

The value of being first with motivated buyers is that you sell more, sell sooner, and sell at a higher price. By acting quickly when the buyer is motivated — in the Window of Dissatisfaction™ — sales professionals can help buyers become emotionally tied to their solution and create a new Status Quo. If you succeed, the buyer will remain committed to your solution and will see little value in doing business with your competitor.

When buyers start searching for alternatives, their perception of value is now the difference between you and your nearest competitor. If you miss the Window of Dissatisfaction™ and the buyer becomes actively engaged in ‘Searching for Alternatives,’ you are much more likely to have a low close ratio, a longer sales cycle, and IF you win the business, it’s likely to be at a much lower price.

The REAL Value of Motivated Buyers

The REAL value of selling to motivated buyers — buyers in the Window of Dissatisfaction™ — is you are more likely to get core, loyal buyers who will represent 80% of your profits. These are appreciative buyers who are more likely to be a reference and provide you with the most treasured thing in sales — referrals.

The reason is simple: when you connect with buyers during the Window of Dissatisfaction™, their increased perception of the value of what you sell creates higher profit margins. With higher margins you’re able to assign more resources to the buyer, which helps you to provide better service. With better service comes more loyal customers.

Miss the Window of Dissatisfaction™ and the buyers’ reduced perception of the value of what you offer typically results in getting disloyal, price sensitive buyers who are likely to be 80% of your headaches. The REAL value of selling to motivated buyers is, you grow faster because you don’t have to replace those peripheral, demanding, disloyal buyers who are likely to leave before your sales grow.

Finding Motivated Buyers

Buyers typically move from the Status Quo mode to the Window of Dissatisfaction™ based on an event or a series of events.

These events usually fall into one of three different categories:

1. **Experience** – The buyer has a bad experience with their current supplier, e.g. the company, its product, its sales people, or its customer service department.
2. **Transition** – A change or transition in the buyer or buyers’ environment, e.g. a change in CEO or the buyer who purchases your products or services, or a competitor’s sales person.
3. **Awareness** – Buyers become aware that there is a better way.
Once a buyer leaves Status Quo they generally pursue new solutions for three primary reasons:

1. **Legal or regulatory requirements** – Legislation requires changes in a buyer’s business.
2. **Risk reduction** – The new solution lowers the likelihood of an undesirable situation.
3. **Economics** – The new solution either lowers expenses or raises productivity.

**Creating Motivated Buyers**

A buyer is in Status Quo when their perception of the performance of their current solution is greater than or equal to their expectations. Since you can’t change the performance of a buyer’s current supplier, to shift the buyer from Status Quo to the Window of Dissatisfaction™ mode, you need to raise the buyer’s expectations. You can raise a buyer’s expectations in one of three ways:

1. **Sales Professional** – Educate the buyer as to what sales professionals should do, i.e., to help buyers be successful, not just sell to them.
2. **Product or Service** – Educate the buyer on how your product or service can help them to catch up to or stay ahead of their competition.
3. **Company** – Educate the buyer on how your company is a better corporate citizen and therefore, more desirable to do business with.

**Being First with Motivated Buyers**

To be first with motivated buyers you need to become your ‘Emotional Favorite™’ — aka ‘Go to’ person. A buyer’s Emotional Favorite™ is the person the buyer knows, likes, trusts, and, most importantly, wants to see succeed! This is the person the buyer believes has earned their business and actually deserves it. Their Emotional Favorite™ is the first person the buyer is likely to contact as they shift from the Status Quo to the Window of Dissatisfaction™, regardless of whether that sales person sells what they want or not.

One of the best ways to become a buyer’s Emotional Favorite™ is to help them solve problems unrelated to what you sell. For example, on every sales call, ask buyers about their key challenges and whenever possible connect them with a solution. If you don’t sell what the buyer wants, perhaps you know a colleague who can solve the problem. If you don’t know a colleague who can solve the problem, then connect the buyer to a solution by using an online lead exchange like the one found at www.InnerSell.com. This will allow you to pass information to trusted vendors who will pay you, or your favorite charity, when your information results in a sale. Recently, people have been calling this practice ‘Reverse Social Networking™’.

**Avoiding the Top Three Sales Killers**

Assuming that you are now selling to motivated buyers, odds are you will lose the majority of your opportunities to one of the following three sales killers:

1. **Risk vs. Credibility**
2. **First Call Effectiveness**
3. **The Law of Diminishing Intent**

**Risk vs. Credibility**

The first thing buyers do when you try to sell to them is to assess the risk of doing business with you. The #1 reason buyers don’t purchase from you is: their perception of the risk of doing business with you is greater than their perception of your credibility. One of the biggest mistakes sales people make is chasing sales where their credibility is lower than the buyer’s perception of the risk of doing business with them.

In order for you to make the sale, the buyer needs to believe that you and your company’s credibility is greater than their perception of the risk of doing business with you. To maximize your selling opportunities, you can raise your credibility with the buyer and/or lower the buyer’s perception of the risk of doing business with you.
First Call Effectiveness℠

The second biggest reason most sales people lose the majority of potential sales to motivated buyers is on their first call with the buyer they fail to help the buyer understand that they can address the buyer’s needs and are capable of delivering the solution. As a result, the buyer calls, or is called by, a competitor shortly after the first sales person’s call or visit. First Call Effectiveness℠ is, on your first call, having a buyer believe in your ability to solve their problem and deliver the best (i.e. your) solution.

The Law of Diminishing Intent

The third biggest reason most sales people lose the majority of potential sales is urgency. In sales, urgency is related to what I call Craig’s Law of Diminishing Intent — “Odds are what does not get done NOW does not get done.” This means you need to complete the sale while buyers are still motivated. The longer you take to fulfill your promises and close the deal, the less likely you are to close the sale. By not acting with urgency, you increase the likelihood that buyers could decide not to buy — settle for what they already have — find a different solution, or work with your competition.

Conclusion

Success in sales is seldom an accident. It’s the result of finding, creating, and being first with motivated buyers while managing the three sales killers that kill the majority of qualified opportunities. By matching your sales strategies to buying modes and overcoming the top three sales killers, you will maximize your sales effectiveness, develop and maintain superior customer relationships, and create the incredible opportunities that come with finding, creating, and being first with motivated buyers.

Sales Tips for Each Buying Mode

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Priority #1</th>
<th>Priority #2</th>
<th>Priority #3</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Window of Dissatisfaction℠</strong></td>
<td><strong>Searching for Alternatives</strong></td>
<td><strong>Status Quo</strong></td>
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<td>Spend the first 50% of your selling time on opportunities where you are FIRST with motivated buyers.</td>
<td>Spend the next 25% of your selling time on opportunities that will close soon.</td>
<td>Spend the last 25% of your selling time on buyers who will become dissatisfied in the future.</td>
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<td>Don’t get distracted by other opportunities — focus on becoming the buyer’s new Status Quo and managing the three sales killers to close these opportunities.</td>
<td>If you are not the buyer’s first choice, position yourself as their second choice — by focusing on the relationship — while waiting for the buyer’s first choice to falter.</td>
<td>Educate the buyer and raise their expectations while becoming their Emotional Favorite℠ so they call you first when they want what you sell.</td>
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About the Author

Craig Elias is the man behind the modern revolution in sales strategies. For almost 20 years, Craig Elias has been a top sales person at EVERY company that has hired him - including WorldCom where he was named the #1 sales person within six months of joining the company.


Call (+1.403.874.2998 / 866.744.7904) or email (Craig@ShiftSelling.com) Craig to learn how your or your organization can apply Craig’s expertise to sell more, sooner, and at a higher price.
Craig Elias, Entrepreneur, Speaker, Advisor, and Sales Guru

Craig Elias is the man behind the modern revolution in sales strategies.

For almost 20 years Craig’s insights and strategies have helped him be a top performer at EVERY company that has hired him including WorldCom where he was named the top performer within six months of joining the company.

Craig’s expertise and strategies are highly regarded, most recently winning him a $1,000,000 prize in a global “Billion-Dollar Idea” pitch contest and coverage on NBC news (twice), in The New York Times, Business 2.0, The Wall Street Journal, Sales & Marketing Management magazine, and earning his company the distinction as one of Dow Jones’ 50 most promising companies in North America.

Speaking Topics

- ‘Event Based Selling’ SM
- How to Find, Create, & Be First with Buyers in the ‘Window of Dissatisfaction’ SM
- Become a Buyer’s ‘Emotional Favorite’ SM and Get Them to Buy from YOU
- ‘First Call Effectiveness’ SM
- Be First: How to Rise to #1 in Sales and Stay There!
- Overcoming the Top Three Sales Killers
- Networking Is DEAD: How to Go Beyond Networking for Sales Success

Previous Engagements

- Canadian Professional Sales Association (CPSA)
- Computer and Technology Showcase
- High Tech Women’s Network
- The Alternative Board (TAB)
- Canadian Information Processing Society (CIPS)
- Executive Women International
- Sales Start at the Top
- The Virtual Handshake
- The Dallas Blue Network
- Ignite Your Business!
- North American e-Learning Conference

What started as a passion quickly turned into a business for Craig Elias...

Craig’s passion is helping start-ups and small businesses compete against larger more established players. It was while conducting sessions for his customers and prospects that he learned that his insights and revolutionary strategies were a ubiquitous solution to the universal problem of sales and could be applied to any product, or any service, in any industry and any geography.

Craig spent much of 2004 and 2005 in San Francisco launching his company InnerSell and recently returned to his hometown of Calgary, Alberta, to be a first-time father. Craig now shares his experiences, original insights, and revolutionary sales and networking strategies with entrepreneurs, business leaders, and sales teams around the world.

How others have gained from Craig’s expertise...

“Using Craig’s strategies we have grown the business by more than 50% from the previous year.”
Donato Polignone, MSDS a Division of NuGeneration Technologies - Rohnert Park, California

“We gained equipment sales almost immediately after we applied Craig’s strategies.”
Rodd Stubbs, Owner, International Security & Protection Co., Ltd. - Ho Chi Minh City, Vietnam

“The strategies are straightforward and non-intimidating. Craig will save us 100’s of hours of wasted time and effort while increasing our conversion rates.”
J.P. Obbagy, President, Good Earth Travel Adventures LTD. - Vancouver, British Columbia

“I went from closing one sale in twenty to closing two out of three a ten fold increase in my close ratio.”
Jess Harding, Independent Consultant - Banff, Alberta

“Craig is an excellent presenter who is both entertaining and informative. He is very knowledgeable about the sales process and this makes him a very credible speaker.”
Larry Keet, Sales Manager, DeVry Institute of Technology - Calgary, Alberta

“We would, without hesitation, recommend Craig to be the ‘go to’ person in sales strategies for your company.”
Rick Robertson and Charles Clymer, Owners, Micron Filtration Inc. - Calgary, Alberta

“He is very interesting to listen to and a lot of his insights and strategies could relate to almost any business.”
Vicky Miller, Owner Manager Mayor Magrath North Liquor Store Ltd. - Lethbridge, Alberta

“He gets the audience involved enabling them to assimilate the information for their own situation.”
Karen Hawke, Director of Professional Services, Envista Technologies Inc. - Calgary, Alberta

Contact Craig Elias @ +1.403.874.2998 • 866.744.7904 • Craig@ShiftSelling.com