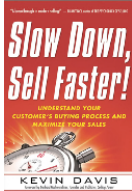


Book Review - Slow Down, Sell Faster! by Kevin Davis



Reviewed by Mary Gospe

[Slow Down, Sell Faster! Understand Your Customer's Buying Process and Maximize Your Sales](#) was written by Kevin Davis, author of [Getting into Your Customer's Head](#) and president of [TopLine Leadership, Inc.](#) a leading sales and sales management training company. Davis is a sales expert with over 30 years experience as sales rep, sales manager, sales trainer and consultant.

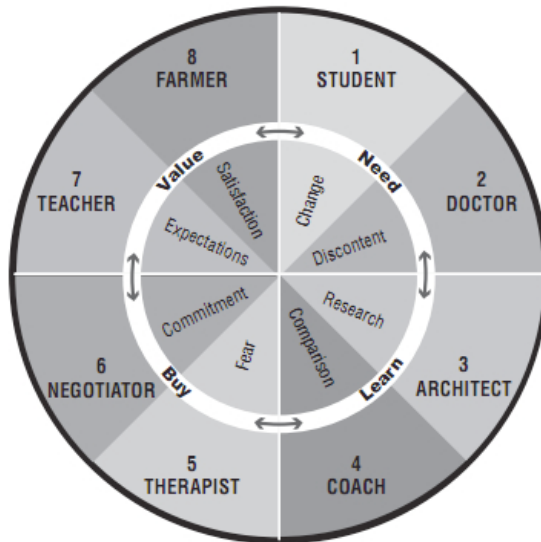
The book, published earlier this year by AMACOM Books, is geared primarily to business-to-business complex sales (multiple decision makers) but readers can apply the concepts to any B2B selling situation. The premise of [Slow Down, Sell Faster!](#) is that sales reps need to focus on helping their customers through their buying process, versus pushing their sales process and timeline. When sellers focus on the buying process they learn that they need to slow down each sales conversation by asking more questions that are in sync with what the customer is thinking. By aligning the selling process to the buying process, sales reps gain credibility, improve win rates and build long-term customer relationships.

Davis developed "The Sales Wheel" (see figure below) which is a useful graphic depicting a typical eight step complex buying process along with the eight roles a sales rep should adopt to match the buying process. Buyers move from **Need** (change and discontent) to **Learn** (research and comparison) to **Buy** (fear and commitment) to **Value** (expectations and satisfaction) in a typical B2B buying process. The eight buying phases and accompanying roles a sales rep plays are:

- **Step 1: CHANGE ==> Sales Role: Student** - learn all you can about the customer's business, the problems they're facing that your product or service can solve and how decisions are made. A great tip is to "know three things about each customer that other salespeople won't know".
- **Step 2: DISCONTENT ==> Sales Role: Doctor** - uncover needs to set the stage for the value of your solution. Build momentum with a Memo of Understanding (MOU).
- **Step 3: RESEARCH ==> Sales Role: Architect** - help your customer develop buying criteria and design a solution that meets their needs.
- **Step 4: COMPARISON ==> Sales Role: Coach** - tips on defeating the competition and developing convincing proposals and presentations.
- **Step 5: FEAR ==> Sales Role: Therapist** - help the buyer overcome any anxiety about choosing your solution.
- **Step 6: COMMITMENT ==> Sales Role: Negotiator** - tips on negotiating win-win agreements.
- **Step 7: EXPECTATIONS ==> Sales Role: Teacher** - help customers through their learning curve in adopting your solution.

- **Step 8: SATISFACTION => Sales Role: Farmer** - cultivate customer satisfaction and loyalty to grow the account.

Figure 1-3 The Sales Wheel



This wheel shows the eight sales roles a sales consultant needs to use to match a customer's buying steps.

With complex sales there are multiple players on the buying team (ROI authority, integrator (technical buyer) power broker, gatekeeper, sponsor, anti-sponsor and user) and each may be at a different point in the buying process. Therefore, sales reps may need to play multiple roles at the same time, depending on the person they are working with.

Part I of the book covers the benefits of slowing down to match the customer's buying cycle, how to master the politics of selling to a complex buying team, and how to win complex sales. Part II is broken into eight chapters, each one covering in detail one of the eight roles of buying-focused selling. Part III provides advice on how to coach on this methodology.

Customers do not want to be sold to, but they do want to make educated purchase decisions that will benefit their company and their career. Slow Down, Sell Faster! is a must read to help today's sales professionals align their selling process with their customer's buying process to achieve their sales objectives and build loyal, long-term customers.

About the author:

Mary Gospe is principal and co-founder of KickStart Alliance. She helps B2B tech and clean tech companies build and nurture their sales pipelines through integrated marketing campaigns, sales development programs and inside sales operations. For more information, contact [Mary Gospe](#) at 650.941.8970. You can follow Mary on Twitter at www.twitter.com/marygospe

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