Sales Coaching Track

S3: SALES SKILLS / MCODE MEETS SPIN SELLING

SESSION OUTCOMES

- To process the SPIN selling sales model in light of their motivation code themes.
- To discuss sales skill strengths and gaps.

SESSION PREPARATION

In order to ensure a successful session, it's important that both you and your client do a little pre-work.

Ahead of Session S3 you will:

- Make sure you have a basic grasp of the SPIN selling model by watching the video and reading the article.
- If you prefer, or have more familiarity with a different sales model OR you are aware that the client prefers another model, you may want to pivot the session to use this format.
- Review the role play exercise ahead of the session.

Ahead of Session S3 your client will:

- Review any notes they took from the past sessions.
- Watch this summary video: https://www.youtube.com/watch?time_continue=1&v=KL0c-9ZJKEY&feature=emb_logo
- Digest this post that goes into more detail about SPIN selling (optional): https://blog.hubspot.com/sales/spin-selling-the-ultimate-guide
- Review their "trigger–process–outcome" motivational flow. This is going to be a key we will return to again and again in the weeks ahead.

COMMUNICATION

One week ahead of the appointment send an email message similar to this to your client:

Greetings ________,

I'm looking forward to connecting again with you in this third session of the "Becoming a Best Seller Sales Track." Our next coaching session is scheduled on ______ at ______ [via Zoom (the link is here) or face to face at (address)].

In our last session together we explored how your motivational flow impacts your capacity to seize opportunities and avoid blindspots. In your context we discussed _______, and in response you committed to ________. We'll begin our next session – before diving into our main topic – with you sharing some of how this commitment is playing out. I look forward to hearing of your progress and any questions you have or challenges you've faced.

Our focus for the upcoming Best Seller Track (S3) will be introducing the SPIN sales model to work intentionally on basic persuasion communication skills. We'll explore how you can leverage your unique motivation code to ensure you are covering all of your sale bases.

To gain the most from Session S3 I also suggest you work through the following preparations:

- *Review any notes you took from our past sessions.*
- *I would like you to have a basic understanding of the SPIN sales model for an exercise we will do in the next session. Please watch this summary video: https://www.youtube.com/watch?time_continue=1&v=KL0c-9ZJKEY&feature=emb_logo*
- *If you are inclined, you can also digest this post that goes into more detail: https://blog.hubspot.com/sales/spin-selling-the-ultimate-guide*
- *Review your "trigger–process–outcome" motivational flow. This is going to be a key we will return to again and again in the weeks ahead.*

Heads Up: For our remaining three sessions following this upcoming discussion, you will be driving our agenda. So far, based on our previous discussions, I have made note of the following areas of potential focus (e.g. Insecurity in closing, Transitioning through SPIN sequence, etc.) Be thinking about what you are most interested in focusing on.

I look forward to our time together.
Sincerely,

____
Certified MCODE Practitioner

SESSION OUTLINE

Meet + Greet [3 minutes]:
Practitioner Note: *Come with something personal to share with your client (no more than 30 seconds of this 3 minute block). Then ask them to share, and follow up with at least one probing question.*

Accountability [2 minutes]: "Our last session together we talked about purpose in sales. In response you committed to ________. How is this commitment playing out? Have you had an opportunity to reflect on or apply anything more from our session? [Client responds].

Practitioner Note: For each coaching session – whether it is a scripted format or an open discussion format – keep the F.L.O.W. coaching model front and center in your mind. Make running notes through the session and keep track of where you are in the model and particularly when you transition from one segment to another. Make note of specifically where in the F.L.O.W. pattern you are seeing the energy and the "aha" moments. These will be key insights when you guide the client to potential action items at the the "W.ork It" segment of the F.L.O.W. model. Also, keep close tabs on the clock. It's the coach's responsibility to strike the healthy balance between following the improvisation of the session WITHIN the bounds of time and topic. This takes practice, and watching the clock is vital.

Role Play Exercise (20 Minutes)

Practitioner Note: In this exercise you are going to put your client on the spot. Skills break down under pressure, so it's a good time for you to observe them and experience their sales abilities. Take notes on where their questions are falling within the SPIN model. Also note how long they spend in the Situation questions, and how much time they invest in listening to you vs. talking to you. See if you can see how their motivational themes may cause bias in any way.

"As preparation for your session today I asked you to watch a video and read through an article about the SPIN method of sales communication. We're going to do something different to launch our session today. I want you to pretend I'm a customer who knows nothing about your product or service. I'm a completely cold contact who is busy, and you need to find a way to get my interest. Close the deal using the SPIN selling model… Go!"

Practitioner Note: Sit quietly until the client begins. Engage with them in the role play as it is fitting, asking questions and responding to the transitions in the sales conversation. Take the conversation through to a positive conclusion. That is, provide reasonable but not resistant objections to their pitch, and then land with a "yes" to their close.

Role Play Debrief [10 minutes]:

- How would you rate your sales performance on a scale of 1–10?
- How do you think you did with the SPIN questions? (ie...Did you spend too much time in the S. section?
- How did you react to being put under pressure?

Practitioner note: Make observations about sales strengths, gaps, and motivations in action. Make notes on these for future discussions.

Consultative Coaching Conversation [15 minutes]:

Let's take a walk through the SPIN selling sections one by one and talk about your tendencies in each of these categories. (NOTE: Source)

Practitioner Note: You are simply going to walk through these in light of the participant's self-assessment of how they are doing, and you can bring in the perspective of motivational flow. Where will their themes cause bias? Where will their themes shine the brightest?

SPIN: Situation Questions

We begin by using *Situation* questions. These help you learn where your prospect stands – from their processes and pain points to competitive plans and results. The specific questions will depend on your product. For example, if you offer leadership training for mid-level managers, you might ask, "How do you currently teach first-time managers best practices and strategies?" If you sell office supplies, you might ask, "How do you purchase office supplies right now?"

Here are some sample "S" questions. You can customize these:

- What is your role at [company]?
- How do you do X?
- What's your process for X?
- Walk me through your day.
- Do you have a strategy in place for X?
- Who's responsible for X?
- How long have you done X this way?
- Why do you do X this way?
- How much budget do you have assigned to X?
- Why do you do X this way?
- How important is X to your business?
- Who uses X most frequently? What are their objectives?
- Which tools do you currently use to do X?

- Who is your current vendor for X?
- Why did you choose your current vendor for X?

Note: You are NOT asking fact-gathering questions like, “How big is your company?”, “How many locations do you have?”, “Which products do you sell?”, and so on. A quick online search reveals a long list of key details about your prospect, these situational questions should be uncovered ahead of a conversation. Not only do they now make buyers impatient, they leave you less time for the most important queries. Ask as few of the questions in this category as you can – and make sure you’ve done research before the call.

SPIN: Problem Questions

In this stage, reps identify potential areas of opportunity. What gap isn’t being filled? Where is the prospect dissatisfied? They may be unaware they have a problem, so delve into the common places your solution adds value.

Here are some sample “P” questions. You can customize these:

- How long does it take to do X?
- How expensive is X?
- How many people are required to achieve the necessary results?
- What happens if you’re not successful with X?
- Does this process ever fail?
- Are you satisfied with your current process for X? The results?
- Are you happy with your current supplier?

SPIN: Implication Questions

Once you’ve identified an issue, figure out how serious it is. Implication questions reveal the depth and magnitude of your prospect’s pain point, simultaneously giving you valuable information for customizing your message and instilling urgency in the buyer.

According to Rackham (the author of SPIN SELLING) they should have a new appreciation for the problem by the time you’ve finished this part of the conversation. Rackham also says top-performing salespeople ask four times as many Implication questions than their average peers.

Here are some sample “I” questions.

- What’s the productivity cost of doing X that way?

- What could you accomplish with an extra [amount of time] each [week, month]?
- Would your customers be [more satisfied, engaged, loyal] if you didn't experience [problem related to X]?
- If you didn't experience [issue], would it be easier to achieve [primary objective]?
- Does [issue] ever prevent you from hitting your goals in [business area]?
- When was the last time X didn't work?
- How is [issue] impacting your team members?
- Would you say [issue] is a blocker in terms of your personal career growth?
- Would saving [amount of time] make a significant difference to your [team, budget, company]?
- How would you use an extra [amount of money] each [week, month, quarter, year]?
- Has a problem with X ever negatively impacted your KPIs?

SPIN Need-Payoff Questions

Need-Payoff questions encourage the prospect to explain your product's benefits in their own words, which is far more persuasive than listening to you describe those benefits. Essentially, you're asking questions that surface your offering's potential to help with their core needs or problems. These questions focus on the value, importance, or utility of the solution. Make sure your Need-Payoff questions don't highlight issues your product can't solve. For instance, if you help corporate recruiting teams identify potential engineering candidates, you shouldn't ask about the impact of hiring better marketers.

Fortunately, it's relatively simple to develop Need-Payoff questions – they should come directly from your Implication questions. Example: "Start with the implication question: "Has a problem with X ever prevented you from meeting a deadline? Leading to the Need-Payoff question: "If you could do X in half the time, would that make it easier to meet your deadlines?You can customize these:

Sample "N" questions:

- Would it help if … ?
- Would X make it simpler to achieve [positive event]?
- Would your team find value in … ?
- Do you think solving [problem] would significantly impact you in Y way?
- Is it important for your team members to see X benefit so they can take Y action?

Application: [5 minutes]

O.wn: Given the “shadow side” tendency in your motivation themes articulate one personal growth area that might hinder your effectiveness to leverage the SPIN principles?

W.ork it: Given what you have learned about your motivation pattern, what one adjustment could you make to upgrade your communication with your customers? Is this your commitment?”

Practitioner Note: In response to your client’s commitment to pursue this action, commit in return to offer encouragement and accountability. Also, make notes as to potential topics for the open sessions 4–6.

Wrap [2 Minutes]

- Ask the client: “What was most helpful from our session today?”
- Provide a succinct, reflective, encouraging summary of what *you* heard from the session.

SESSION FOLLOW UP

The day after Session S3 send your client an email:

- Recapping insights and commitments.
- Affirming the schedule for the next session.
- Asking them to keep track of progress and challenges as they implement principles day to day.