



## TenStep Supplemental Paper

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### Planning a Sales Call

Sales are the life-blood of most enterprises. Planning a sales call covers issues ranging from deciding on which clients to approach to closing the deal.

#### The Stages of a Sales Call

**1. Prospecting.** Involves an exhaustive listing of potential customers. When listing, you can also verify if they have the required infrastructure to support the product.

This stage is completed when your list of prospects goes through a vetting cycle where you eliminate those prospects that do not fit the defined target segment.

**2. Preapproach.** This is a critical stage wherein you gather as much information as you can about your client. This will allow you to analyze and determine (to an extent) the customers' needs. During preapproach, you can also determine the selling tactics that you will use with the customer. For instance, will you make a cold call? Or will you use a referral?

**3. Approach.** This deals with the content of the first interface with the customer. What will the salesperson say? How should he dress? What questions should he go armed with? What are the most likely questions that will be asked?

**4. Presentation:** Not all customers can be approached with a standard presentation. The presentation has to be tailored to match the product to the customer needs.

**5. Handling Objections:** A salesman can keep himself prepared for the kind of questions that he expects from the customer. Objections and queries that are being raised need to be handled swiftly as well as politely. He should look at objections as an opportunity to assess and evaluate how the product can be customized to benefit the client and develop a marketing program accordingly.

**6. Closing and Follow-up:** Once the objections have been handled and the customer has indicated that he is willing to make the purchase, the salesman may need to push the customer into placing an order. Each institution has its own bureaucracies that need to be handled. Processing the paperwork for the final delivery might take time and will demand patience on the part of the salesman.

Once the sale has been made, the salesman needs to regularly check on the customer to see how comfortable he is with the product and if he has any problems. Regular follow-ups may also give you the opportunity for further leads.

#### Summary

For a small enterprise, relationships often lead to a competitive advantage. The first step in building a relationship is planning the sales call. Let the customer know that his needs are understood.