



Customer Mindsets

AUDIENCE

Oriented to those in sales roles, and especially valuable for strengthening salespeople's ability to talk with executives about business issues.

Master your understanding of how customers think about their business and make decisions

Program Benefits

Customer Mindsets, from BTS, puts salespeople inside the customer's head to learn the context and process companies use to make purchasing decisions. This highly interactive and dynamic learning program focuses on what really matters to customers: their corporate goals, their business challenges, their key players, and their decision processes. *Customer Mindsets* gives salespeople the background they need to engage in effective business conversations with decision-makers at all levels of their customers' companies. The program is intentionally not an abstract discussion of corporate structure. Instead, it offers practice and take-away tools that salespeople can use immediately to improve their call performance.

After *Customer Mindsets*, salespeople will be better able to:

- influence customer purchasing decisions
- understand the typical decision-making process in corporate environments
- identify what information businesses need at each stage of their buying cycle
- identify trends and challenges affecting customers
- understand typical organizational structures of businesses, and the different concerns and motivators of key leadership roles
- align their mindset with the executive customer by focusing on six compelling business topics
- sell value by connecting their own products, services, and offerings to the customer's specific business challenges

Program Description

Customer Mindsets focuses on what salespeople need to have a broader and deeper range of business conversations with customers. The program looks at the world from the customer's point of view, exploring how customers conceptualize and implement purchasing decisions. In doing so, it gives salespeople new insights into how to sell in ways that better align with customer needs.

Customer Mindsets emphasizes three critical areas of knowledge. First, it examines how business challenges impact a company's strategy and operational decision-making. By assisting customers with these business challenges, leading salespeople differentiate themselves, their offerings, and their organizations. Second, it navigates through the maze of corporate decision-makers and examines the unique concerns of each role. By better understanding the drivers that CEOs, CFOs, CIOs, and other corporate leaders care most about, salespeople can get access to the executive suite and impact their customers at a higher level. Finally, the program stands the traditional selling cycle on its head and looks at the customer buying cycle. By aligning with the customer's different needs at each stage of the buying cycle, the salesperson can accelerate the process and better meet the customer's objectives.

[CONTINUED]

Customer Mindsets

Customer Mindsets is built upon the principles of experiential and action learning, and leverages the breakthrough technology of learning maps. In tables of six, teams tap into the full power of their collective knowledge and experience.

- 1. Marketplace Trends.** Participants explore 10 trends that are affecting companies throughout the world. Examples include the increasing commoditization of products, accelerated customer expectations, and increased outsourcing. They then consider which trends are having the greatest influence on their customers and on their own company.
- 2. Business Challenges.** Participants investigate 18 business challenges that shape their customers' purchasing decisions. The challenges were identified through independent research by American Express, Hewlett-Packard, and Merrill Lynch as those most affecting corporate decision-making today. Participants decide which challenges are most critical to corporations today, and their answers are compared against the survey research. Participants also decide which challenges are being faced by customers in three customer scenarios that mimic companies on which they call. They finish this segment by considering which challenges are having the greatest impact on their own customers, and by learning ways they themselves can research the challenges their customers face.
- 3. Relationship Paradox.** Salespeople and executives start each day with very different interests and concerns. In this activity, participants explore the gap between what salespeople typically think about each day and what is on the mind of executives. Then they develop strategies for closing the gap between the two lists.
- 4. Customer Roles and Mindsets.** Participants examine the differing roles and responsibilities of leaders in typical companies. The focus is on the top executives and leaders in finance, operations, information technology, and sales. By mastering these topics, salespeople can better align with the interests of the person they are calling on and tailor their approach accordingly. Participants then develop questions they can ask to engage executives on six critical topics: suppliers, customers, employees, money, information, and processes. They integrate their new knowledge to this point by connecting these six topical areas to the business challenges with which they have been working.
- 5. Pre-Call Planning.** Next, participants improve their pre-call planning skills by learning how to prepare differently for calls with leaders and managers in different roles. They connect the six topics from the previous activity with the roles, interests, and concerns of the top executive and leaders in finance, operations, information technology, and sales. They also decide which of their own company's products, services, and other offerings connect best to the roles, interests, and concerns of the top executive and leaders in finance, operations, information technology, and sales.
- 6. Customer Buying Cycle.** Participants explore the differences and similarities between a salesperson's sales cycle and a customer's buying cycle. At each stage of their buying cycle, customers need different types of information, data, communication, assistance, and support. Participants explore these needs and discuss different ways to influence the buying process at each stage of the cycle.
- 7. Case Study and Skill Practice.** To integrate and apply everything they've learned throughout the day, participants get a rich, complex, multi-layered case study that mimics the customers and industries they call on. Each layer of the case involves a customer in a different part of the buying cycle. At each stage, the participants decide how they would sell to this customer. They also role-play sales conversations they would have with this customer. The day finishes with an extended debrief that examines how participants can immediately apply their learning to upcoming sales calls.

Implementation/Customization

Customer Mindsets is a one-day program requiring one trained facilitator per five teams of six people each. The customer scenarios and case study are strategically customized to match the companies on which the participants currently call. *Customer Mindsets* links to other BTS Sales Mastery programs that improve the ability of salespeople to meet the needs of executive buyers. A particularly powerful approach is to combine the program with Customer Simulation for a two-day experience.

