

Method Listening®

Orchestrating discussions for maximum discovery



Missed business opportunities

One of the great ironies of the business world is that we have a lot riding on the ability of our sales people to listen to our customer at a world-class level. However, the same natural strengths and talents that enable them to be good sales people can also make them poor listeners.

Sales people are usually in a hurry. They have a highly refined Pareto mind-set whereby the 80/20 rule is absolutely fine. They need these abilities in order to cover a lot of ground and to avoid chasing sales opportunities that can't be won. They make quick judgments and decisions based on their excellent intuitive judgment. Unfortunately, these same qualities often make them poor listeners and they miss essential information and business problems that their client is trying to convey.

The net result is that we miss massive opportunities. We just don't hear about the needs of our customers until our competition is well ensconced in the account and leading another sales campaign.

Listening carefully!

The root of the issue is that the best sales people don't necessarily have active listening skills.

Too many sales people have a habit of chasing after the first problem they hear the customer mention without qualifying further so as to uncover other areas where their solutions may help the client. Not only that but they may not take the time to listen to that first problem in its entirety. They jump to conclusions too fast and don't allow enough time with the customer. This can result in a half-baked sales campaign because they don't truly know the most important problem to solve from the customer's point of view.

When it comes to questioning the customer they very often don't know the kind of information that the pursuit team will need in order to structure a complete solution. They will often listening out for the summary of the problem and will jump to quick conclusions about the solution the customer needs. The best sales people are very resilient but, quite frankly, project low empathy by constantly trying to fit the customer's problems into their

framework of solutions. They don't consider that other people have different natural talents to their own and channel their thinking in a different way.

Many times the sales people don't know how to be quiet long enough so as to draw out key information from the customer. They fail to understand if other solutions from their competition have been tried and the results of those projects. All this means they sometimes don't learn how to win the deal or how to best shape and position the solution. They will also tend to be blinkered to the possibilities of teaming with allies and strategic partners as their natural desire is win all of the pie for themselves.

We have singled out stereotypical sales people but consultants, as a group, are not far behind in their inability to properly listen. Consultants are also prone to making the mistake of that one of their solutions will be the best fit to the problem, even though it won't work.

What is Method Listening?

Method Listening is a unique approach that helps people to stop and listen much better. Not everyone has the natural empathy to question and intentionally listen to what the customer is really saying. Specifically, Method Listening will help in the following ways:

- Remove the smoke screen and identify the real issues and problems facing the customer
- Discover big sales opportunities and be ahead of the competition and allow us to win opportunities that we could never have won before
- Project more empathy and build better customer relationships which will lead to improved customer satisfaction which will lead to other new opportunities.
- Enable a better way to assemble solutions and speed up the sales process.
- Increase sales margins which, in turn, will drive bigger profit margins.

How does Method Listening work?

Method Listening is learned by attending two training sessions. These two workshops are purposely set one month apart so that learning can be put into action, reviewed and reinforced.

The workshops are designed to be very hands on and intuitively simple. The lectures are interactive. Each student will be "on stage" for 2 hours as the sales person or consultant and a further 2 hours as the surrogate customer over the course of the two days. They will also observe and critique other students as they role play.

The second one-day session has a primary focus on the issues, problems and successes that the students may have had in applying Method Listening over the prior 30 days.

8 students are assigned to each highly qualified instructor. The ideal class size is 24 people but OND has flexibility to vary this according to customer requirements.

A prerequisite is that students have already been trained on Method Teaming, which they will draw on during their Method Listening training. The student's Method Teaming Intellect Profile (MTIP) allows the instructors to understand the natural tendencies of the student and craft their executive presence in a manner consistent to their natural strengths and talents.

Business Outcomes

Businesses should expect speedy results from implementing Method Listening bringing the following business results:

- Revenue and margin growth
- Improved customer experience
- Quicker sales
- Bigger sales
- Retention of the best people

About OND

OND LLP was founded in 2003 by a former Big-Four partner and has offices in the USA and UK. OND's core offering is called Method Teaming, which is used to create and manage mission-perfect teams using Intellectual Diversity. Method Teaming can be applied to any business function or mission-specific team to accelerate business performance.

To learn more about Method Teaming go to:
www.methodteaming.com



We Build Mission-Perfect Teams