SELLING WITH NOBLE PURPOSE

HOW TO DRIVE REVENUE AND DO WORK THAT MAKES YOU PROUD

2ND EDITION

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Appendix A

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Traditional Sellers	Noble Purpose Sellers
Focus on quota	Focus on customer
Think product first, customer second	Think customer first, product second
How can I sell my product to this customer?	How would this customer be helped by my product
Stress product features	Stress customer impact
Repeat generic pitch	Tailor presentation to customers
Quickly jump to price	Articulate impact on customers
Annoyingly aggressive	Assertive for customer benefit
View customer as object to achieve quota	View customer as opportunity to make a difference

Implementing Noble Purpose in Your Organization

Ready to get started implementing selling with Noble Purpose? Try approaching your game plan in four steps:

1. Name and claim your Noble Sales Purpose. Give yourself and your team a rallying cry that points your organization toward customer impact.

2. Align your ecosystem. Identify and adjust the pivotal processes and systems, making sure the ecosystem around your team points them toward the customer. This includes things like adding the five categories of critical customer information (listed shortly) in your CRM system; incentivizing long-term, deep customer relationships; and telling client impact stories in town halls.

3. Arm your belief builders. Train your managers in telling customer impact stories, coaching with a purpose-driven mindset, and asking the game-changing question—"How will this customer be different as a result of doing business with us?"—in deal reviews.

4. Train your sales team. Give your sellers the tools to be successful with customers in purpose-driven conversations, such as interactive sales aids, the "you-me-you" technique (described in a moment), and questions that uncover their buyers' biggest goals and challenges.

Need help? Check out the tools on our website: www.mcleodandmore.com. We also work directly with sales-driven organizations to activate a culture of purpose in the cadence of daily business. Give us a shout!

The Three Discovery Questions

To tap into your own sense of Noble Purpose, answer the three discovery questions and discuss them with your team:

1. How do you make a difference to your customers?
2. How are you different from your competitors?
3. On your best day, what do you love about your job?

Customer Impact Stories

You can tell customer impact stories internally to ignite emotional engagement. You can also tell customer impact stories to prospects and customers.
Here are some guidelines for creating a customer impact story:

- It's true.
- It's short. You should be able to tell the story in less than two minutes, which is about 300 words or less.
- It describes the impact on the customer. A good NSP story doesn't stop at the event; it describes the impact. The twins came home; the parents felt safe. You want your team to think about whom the events affected and the implications for their businesses and lives.
- It includes vivid details. Descriptions such as "six inches of water in the basement, mold, and mildew" add energy and drama to the story.
- It touches emotions. A good NSP story is about human beings whose lives were changed in some way. Emotional words such as frustrated, angry, delighted, and thrilled add energy to the story.
- It supports your NSP. The story's value and purpose is not to merely entertain; it is to authenticate your NSP.

The Five Categories of Critical Customer Information

Environment
This will help you understand how your contact relates to the organization as a whole and how the organization is positioned within the context of its marketplace. You want to know things such as:

- What's your contact's core function or role?
- What's going on in his or her organization or life?
- Who is the competition, and how do they stack up?
- What is the customer's position in their marketplace?
- What's happening politically inside the organization?

Goals
You want to find out what your contact's objectives are, as well as those of his or her department and the overall organization. The types of things you want to know are:

- What does your contact need to accomplish?
- How is your contact evaluated?
- What does senior leadership believe is most important?
- What measurements does the customer have in place?
- Where does the customer stand with their goals to date?

The Five Categories of Critical Customer Information (Continued)

Challenges

This area is where you want to find out more about problems and issues that concern both your contact and his or her boss. You want to know things such as:

- What are they worried about?
- What obstacles do they face?
- What are the competitive threats inside and outside the company?
- What resources do they have, and where do they need more?

What Success Looks Like

You'll want to know what an organizational or personal win means for this customer, specifically:

- What is your customer passionate about?
- What does your contact's boss care about most?
- How does your contact define and measure success?
- How will your contact know when he or she has achieved success?
- How does your contact's boss define and measure success?
- How does their organization define and measure success?

What Lack of Success Looks Like

This area is where you want to find out about the potential risks your customer is facing and what their senior leadership is concerned about. You'll want to know:

- What are they afraid of?
- What will happen to the organization if they fail?
- What are the consequences for your contact?

The You-Me-You Call Opening

To engage with customers as a Noble Purpose seller, you need to demonstrate your expertise and get the customer talking. Try this opening technique in your next customer conversation:

- Start with a business topic of interest to the customer—that's the "you" part. Do your research, and find something relevant. For example, if you're a technology company calling a retailer and you've read an article about online ordering, you might say something about how technology has changed the entire customer experience.
- Give a brief statement about your expertise, such as "We help retailers better engage customers."
- Ask a question such as "What kind of customer experiences are you trying to create?" Now the conversation is about their business, in an area you can impact.

The 10-Second Game-Changer

To reset yourself before or after a customer conversation, try this three-part technique:

1. Breathe. This gets oxygen to your brain and more blood flowing through your body.
2. Think. "This is about the customer's agenda and my agenda. I have a plan, and I'm flexible. I'm confident enough to sit with uncertainty."
3. Believe. I'm here to help this customer . . . (your NSP).

The Game-Changing Question

There is a single question a sales leader can ask to increase the emotional engagement of the rep and build a competitively differentiated story: "How will this customer be different as a result of doing business with us?"

The Six CEO Moments of Purpose

1. Town halls. Nothing is more powerful than the CEO standing onstage, telling a customer impact story. If he or she doesn't have one, find one, and brief them on it. When the CEO says, "Here's how we make a difference to our customers: this is why we exist," it speaks volumes.

2. Earnings calls. CEOs who frame their financial results around the organization's purpose signal to investors, "We're a purpose-driven firm focused on customers." When the CEO says, "Our Noble Purpose is X," it creates a public record. This is very good for your brand.

3. Executive team meetings. One CEO we know reads her company's NSP at the start of the monthly executive team meeting. She says, "It's like the bell at school or the gong at church, it calls people into the space and reminds us why we're here."

4. Strategy and budget sessions. When the boss asks how this choice will impact our purpose, you change the frame. New initiatives should further your purpose, and budgeting should be done with an eye toward customer impact.

5. One-on-one updates. When the CEO asks, "How is your team delivering on our purpose?" it helps non-customer-facing teams connect the dots.

6. Casual hallway conversations. It's awkward to run into the CEO. People get nervous. Make it easy and fun. One of our CEO clients loves to say, "Another day of changing lives! Got any good stories for me?" His team may roll their eyes in jest, but they sure know what's important to him.

Glossary

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The words of the leader shape your culture. If you're trying to shift your organization from transactional to Noble Purpose, start using the following terms liberally. These words will animate your Noble Purpose and shift the organizational conversation. While these terms are not unique to Noble Purpose, we'll provide some guidance on how to apply them to this philosophy.

Belief-builder: The role of team leaders (formal and informal) who remind everyone of the nobility of the work and the impact you have on customers. Belief is central to creating a high-performance organization.

Company culture: The internal beliefs, norms, rituals, and daily practices that make your organization what it is. If you don't have a culture by design, you'll get one by default. Make sure you're building a culture of purpose by keeping customer impact front and center.

Competitive differentiation: The factual and emotional ways you set yourself apart from the competition. Most people think of competitive differentiation as an extra feature: slightly lower pricing, more flexible terms, etc. But true competitive differentiation goes beyond the spec sheet. To help your organization stand out, be declarative, internally and externally, about the impact you're having and your purpose for being.

Customer advocate: Customers who are emotionally engaged in supporting you. Customer advocate takes customer satisfaction one step further. When you have customer advocates, your customers can't wait to publicly sing your praises. More customer advocates results in stickier deals, more referrals, and increasing competitive differentiation.

Customer churn: When paying customers leave. Organizations who are commoditized experience high customer churn, meaning their customers frequently leave them. You want to avoid this costly trap by creating competitive differentiation and emotional engagement with your team and customers. That's the sticky sauce that makes your organization irresistible.

Customer impact: The factual and emotive ways you make a difference to customers. This is the North Star of an organization with a Noble Purpose; the root of your NSP. Customer impact is the reason your organization exists.

Customer impact story: A short, emotionally engaging story about how your product/solution or service made a difference to a customer. It includes vivid details and specificity about how the customer was impacted by your work. These stories are used in meetings and coaching sessions to build belief, with customers as proof points.

Customer intelligence: The information you know about your customer. This should go deeper than purchase requirements. NSP customer intelligence means you've clearly articulated the impact you will have on a person or business.

Disengagement: People who show up at work with their bodies but leave their minds and hearts at homes. While this is often blamed on the employees, people are often disengage because leadership has not given them anything meaningful to believe in.

Emotional engagement: People who believe in a cause bigger than themselves and are internally driven. When teammates and customers are emotionally engaged in their work, their frontal lobes light up, commitment increases, and they become physically stronger and more creative.

External conversation: The conversation you're having with your industry, the market, and your customers. Remember, the internal conversation (the conversation inside your company) always becomes the external conversation. The best place to start changing the external conversation is inside, with your team.

Framing: The mental model you apply to something. Think about a picture frame: framing is what surrounds a task, a fact, or an opinion. For example, a mental framing on customer impact can make a task like filling out paperwork move from tedious to crucial for customer success.

Incentive: Monetary, non-monetary, and social motivators. Remember, sales incentives don't always have to be monetary. You should pay your team fairly for their contribution, but more qualitative incentives, like public recognition and customer impact, can dramatically up your level of engagement.

Internal conversation: The conversation you have inside your company. Remember, the internal conversation always becomes the external conversation. If numbers and deliverables are all you talk about internally (forgetting impact), that's all your team will talk about externally.

Mindset: The mental model you show up with. Our mindsets are what guide our behavior. We all have our own mindsets, but they're malleable. In your team, you want to work toward creating a mindset that is focused on the nobility of customer impact.

Mission: How you execute your Noble Purpose.

Naysayer: A person who wants nothing to do with the new philosophy you're bringing. In fact, this person might be outright negative. Don't assume bad intent. Purpose is new to a lot of people. Meet them where they are, and don't let them take away your mojo.

Noble Sales Purpose (NSP): A definitive statement about how you make a difference in the lives of your customers. It speaks to why you're in business in the first place. Used correctly, your NSP drives every decision you make and every action you take. It becomes the foundation for all your sales activities.

Onboarding: The critical moments when new employees are learning, "What does it mean to work here?" When you animate these moments with purpose, you jump-start emotional engagement and frame the entire employee experience going forward.

Passion: The feeling of excitement you have for a project or organization. Passion is great, but purpose has a greater ability to sustain momentum because it is shared and more steadfast than passion.

Sales tools: The tools you arm your sellers with, to engage with customers. Push yourself to be more creative than brochures or slick sheets. Sales tools should start a conversation, not be a one-way pitch.

Shareholder primacy: An ineffective model that puts shareholders at the core of business strategies and operations. Shareholder results are a lagging indicator. Instead, put purpose at the center of your organization. This leading indicator generates engagement, differentiation, and customer advocacy.

Sticky ideas: Concepts, skills, and stories that your team internalizes. They "stick" to the team's frontal lobes, and reps are able to carry them from one situation to the next.

Sticky revenue: Revenue that comes to you easily because of your reputation. It requires very little work or marketing investment. Deals that renew every year, customers who give referrals, and single-source contracts are evidence that you are living your Noble Purpose.

True believers: The people in your organization who have absolute clarity about how you make a difference to customers and who know deep in their hearts that your work matters. Hold on to these people for dear life and put them in front of the team whenever you can.

Vision: How you see the world when you've fulfilled your purpose.

10 Great Questions

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Great questions are sincere, are well planned, and zero in on the customer's environment, goals, challenges, and success factors:

1. What impact does this (change, event, challenge, competitive situation) have on your organization?
The tendency is to ask, "What do you think about this?" But asking how something affects a person gets you a much deeper, more meaningful response

2. What's the most challenging part of (something about the person's role or function)?
This demonstrates that you're genuinely interested in what it's like to live in his or her world.

3. If you could change anything about (a current pressing situation), what would it be?
This helps you understand your contact's goals and challenges. Warning: You want to be sure to ask this in a non-manipulative way. You're not fishing; you're interested.

4. When you look at X (challenge) and Y (other challenge), how do you prioritize between the two?
This prompts inner reflection, which, in turn, gives you clues about the customer's thought process and lets you uncover what's really important to him or her.

5. What do you enjoy most about (insert important job activity)?
Asking someone to describe the best part of his or her job creates s a positive tone and opens a window into that person's world.

6. How do you feel about this (key initiative or goal in the customer's organization)?
This demonstrates that you're interested in your customer's perspective, not just making the sale.

7. What do you think is causing (situation that's on his or her mind)?
This prompts you customer to think about root causes, which will enable you to connect the dots—and discover what issues are likely most important to senior leadership.

8. How can I best support you on (big project, goal, or challenge)?
This enables your contact to define what he or she really wants, and it tees you up to provide specific, requested help.

9. What is your deepest fear about (something important to your customer)?
This allows your contact to share an area of vulnerability. While counterintuitive, most people actually like to do this, as long as the listener makes it nonjudgmental and safe.

10. What are your highest hopes for (your job, company, or project)?
When someone shares his or her hopes with you, that person is telling you what really matters to him or her and giving you a chance to join the team.