

Salespeople who engage in Strategic Selling establish themselves as experts and business partners. They leverage knowledge of the client's business, industry, product, or marketplace to bring new insight, challenge assumptions, or ask difficult questions the customer may not have thought about. The Strategic Seller must establish the credibility to position herself or himself as a confident, strategic partner. Through this sales process, they are challenging their clients to find a deeper understanding of their business, the issues they face, and their path moving forward, which ultimately results in closed sales.

Example positions

Strategic Selling is about how the sale occurs rather than about what is being sold or whether the target is a current customer or a prospect. This model may apply to many different sales job titles.

COMPETENCIES

Influence and persuasion – Strategic salespeople are effective in persuading, convincing, influencing, or impressing others in order to get them to support a specific agenda, make a specific type of impression, or take a specific course of action.

Strategic thinking – They develop and help drive a shared understanding of a long-term vision that describes how the organization needs to operate now and in the future.

Learning agility – They discern patterns in data, recognize relationships between concepts, and rapidly apply learning from one context to solve analogous problems in different contexts.

Active listening – Strategic salespeople enhance mutual understanding in communicating with others by expressing genuine interest in, and providing full attention to, the content and meaning of others' messages.

Business acumen – They make sound business decisions based on a strong understanding of the company's business model, strategic goals, and relevant policies, as well as best practices and current technologies in their own discipline or functional area.

Organizational savvy – They gather and accurately assess information related to the organization's formal and informal communication channels and power relationships.

Relationship building – They develop effective long-term professional interactions with others based on trust: trust that they will always work toward the best interest of those involved and that they are sufficiently competent to provide positive results.

Planning and priority setting – They identify the priorities, processes, and practical actions that are necessary to achieve an objective or an idea. Strategic salespeople develop detailed action or project plans, including objectives, accountabilities, time frames, standards, review stages, and contingencies.

Composure and resiliency – Strategic salespeople are able to deal effectively with pressure, maintain focus and intensity, and remain optimistic and persistent, even under adversity. They have the ability and propensity to recover quickly from setbacks, rejections, and conflicts and to maintain self-control in the face of hostility or provocation.

Representative behaviors

- Persuasively sells ideas to gain support and buy-in
- Thinks strategically to promote growth or gain competitive advantage
- Links current issue to knowledge gained from a different situation in order to solve a problem
- Asks questions to gain clarity
- Understands and leverages the drivers of company's business
- Leverages contacts to stay informed of new company developments
- Positions self and company as a strategic business partner
- Thinks through what is needed to meet goals in terms of people and time frames
- Stays composed in challenging interpersonal situations



