

# ESCAPE THE SEA OF SAMENESS

Customers are drowning in a sea of sameness, in a world filled with 'me-too' options.

Now more than ever, the responsibility of differentiation lays squarely on the shoulders of the salesperson.

Yet, even after decades of investment into sales training and development -

**In that critical moment when your salespeople need to be the most convincing,**

**9/10 times they are not\*.**

We fix this. Whereas most training makes salespeople better and better at skills customers care less and less about – we apply the neuroscience of storytelling to enable salespeople to have more relevant, insightful, sharable and engaging sales conversations that elevate your offerings out of the sea of sameness.

DifferentiatedConversations™.

**The Neuroscience of Persuasion and Differentiation through Storyselling**

*\*Forrester Research: 89% of sales conversations are deemed to be a waste of time by corporate decision makers.*

## ▶ Differentiation. The CEO's #1 Dilemma

Why business and sales leaders need to pay more attention to the sales conversation.

### 53% of the reason customers buy and remain loyal is associated to the sales experience<sup>1</sup>.

In principle, a CEO has three decisions to make when choosing a differentiation strategy: "Should I build the best product, or should I offer the most aggressive pricing, or should I offer the best sales experience?"

Most CEO's will aim for a combination of the above, but what is clear is that as products become more commoditised, and pricing becomes more aggressive, **the sales experience is fast becoming the final frontier for differentiation.** Based on the Corporate Executive Board research, it seems this is also the frontier customers care about most.

The challenge many B2B companies face, is that the primary channel to achieve this is through salespeople – salespeople who have not been taught how to create value, share insights and navigate chaos.

Salespeople have historically been taught to understand needs, communicate value, and drive the sale to its conclusion. These skills are far less relevant or effective as they were in the past, yet most companies continue to make salespeople better and better at these skills, skills customers care less and less about.

**Customers want a Sherpa.** They need someone to help them navigate the chaos of the world they face. In every interaction, in every conversation, salespeople have the ability to either add to this chaos or help customers navigate it.

They scary facts as you read on are **that salespeople are failing dismally at having relevant, business outcome based conversations** that shape differentiation and influence buying behaviour.



It is obvious that the sales experience goes far beyond just the salesperson and the sales conversation. Each touch point in the value exchange has an impact. What was interesting from the research was that what **clients valued most was attributed to behaviours inside the salespersons control.**

These included:

- Salesperson offers unique and valuable market insights
- Salesperson helps navigate alternatives
- Salesperson educates new issues and outcomes
- Salesperson helps avoid potential pitfalls and landmines

Clients want a Sherpa. Someone who will guide them through the mountain, and ensure their success.

SAMPLE CONTENT

<sup>1</sup>Corporate Executive Board – Sales Executive Council Research on Drivers of Buyer Loyalty

## ▶ Relevant Conversations. The CEO's #1 Weapon



The sales conversation offers the highest leverage point off which to differentiate

Value should be designed from the conversation backwards.

### If the conversation fails, everything behind it fails.

What happens to all the analysis, vision, planning, and strategic direction when your people are in front of an existing or potential client? **That is the ultimate moment of truth in any strategy.**

If that is true, and we believe it to be, then according to Forrester Research most companies are failing dismally. They found that **89% of sales conversations fail to address what is important to corporate decision makers.**

This means that 9 times out of 10 your salespeople are irrelevant, and doing your differentiation strategy more harm than good. More significantly, if the conversation fails, then **all the mechanisms aimed to support it fail as well**, and the cost-of-sale goes through the roof.

But what if we could engineer relevance into the sales conversation – what if we could design sales conversations that were not only more relevant, but insightful, memorable and engaging as well?

The reality is we can. **Scientists have learnt more about the brain in the last five years than they have in the history of mankind** – and applying these insights to sales conversations gives salespeople the ability to better persuade and differentiate.

The biggest find was that the brain responds to stories more than any other form of information. Differentiated Conversations is not however about teaching salespeople to tell stories. It is about teaching them to **shape information in such a way that the brain responds** to it in the same way as a story, firing the same neurochemicals.

**The Relevance of Salespeople is under question**

- 57%
- 89%
- 60%

**57% of the value salespeople used to bring to a sales conversation, customers are now doing themselves.<sup>1</sup>**  
**How will salespeople remain relevant?**

**89% of sales conversations are deemed a waste of time by corporate decision makers.<sup>2</sup>**  
**How will companies differentiate?**

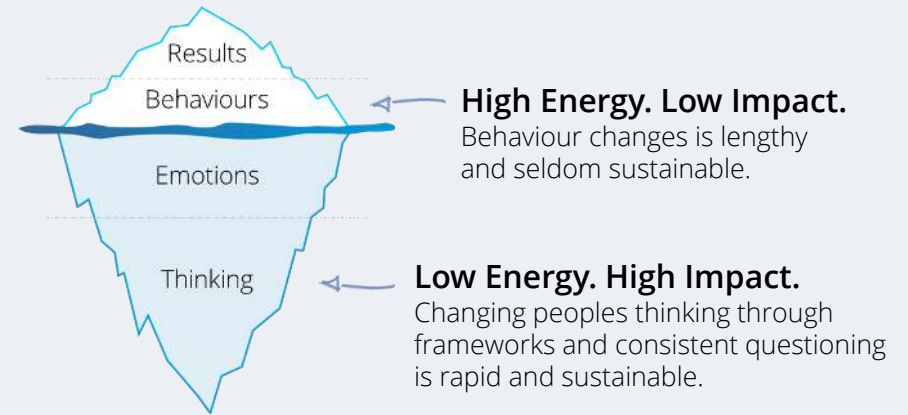
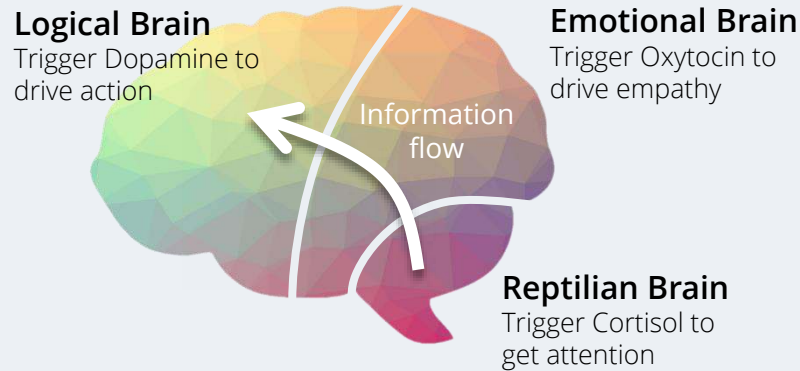
**60% of qualified deals end in no decision, making status quo your number one competitor.<sup>3</sup>**  
**How will CEO's get a positive return on sales resource?**

<sup>1</sup>Corporate Executive Board. <sup>2</sup>Forrester Research. <sup>3</sup>SEI Investments.

**SAMPLE CONTENT**

## ▶ The Brain. Persuasion and Learning.

We teach brains. We sell to brains. Isn't there a place for neuroscience in sales training?



### The brain as it relates to **Selling**.

If we want the brain to respond to our insights and information in the same way it responds to a story, we need to shape information in such a way that it triggers three neurochemicals: Cortisol, to get their attention; Oxytocin, to get them connected (empathy); and Dopamine, to get them to act.

The Differentiated Conversations StoryCanvas™ helps salespeople structure information in such a way that it is more likely to trigger the right chemicals to drive the desired actions.. Sales becomes a science artistically applied.

### The brain as it relates to **Learning**.

Recent developments in neuroscience have given facilitators great insights into how the brain learns. The most significant finding was discovered and articulated by Dr. David Rock of the NeuroLeadership institute.

It associates the brain with an iceberg. The premise is that most training is only aimed at working with the visible behaviours of people. This will do little to change results, especially if how the person feels and thinks is still anchored in old 'filters' of the world, in an old way of thinking. It is far more effective to try and influence the thinking of a participant, rather than dump content.

Differentiated Conversations achieves this though process-led facilitation.

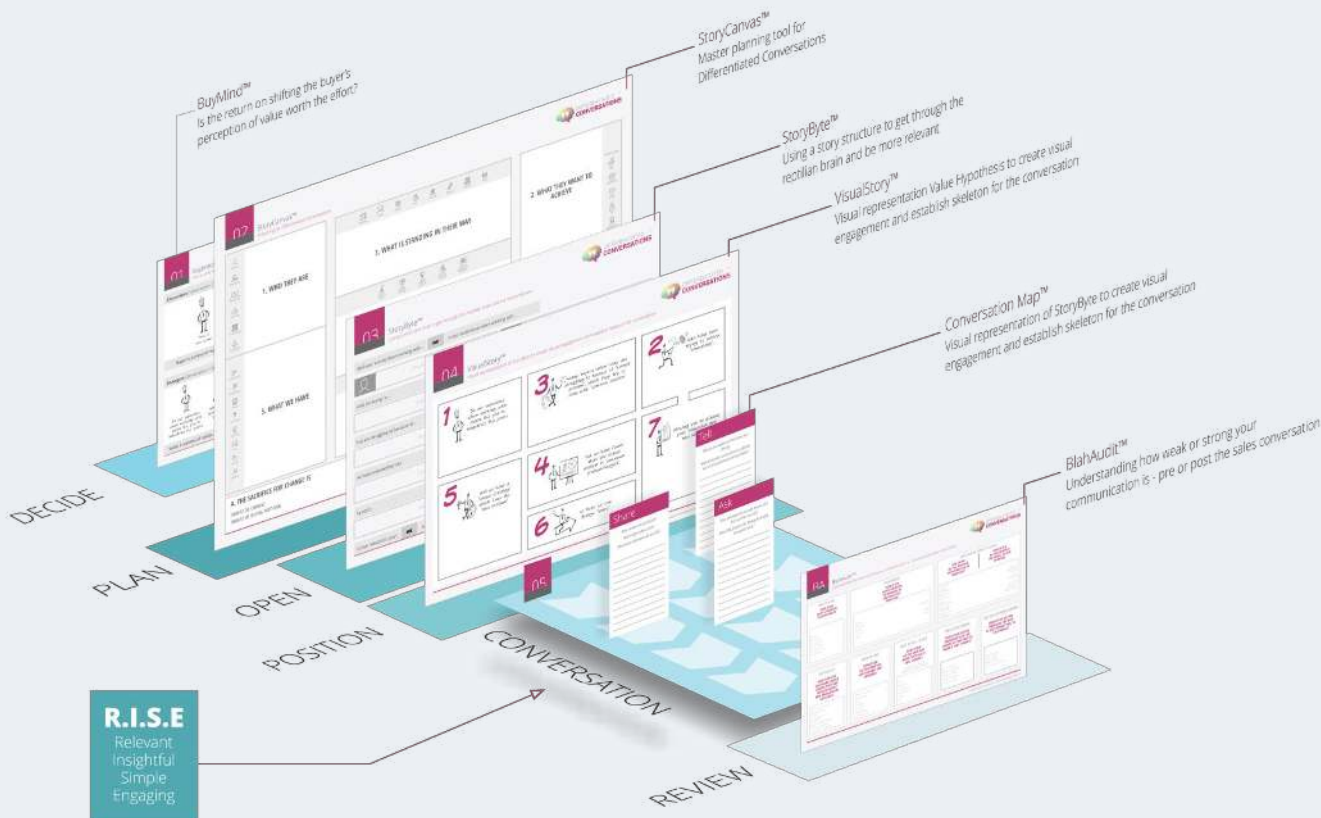


# Frameworks over Content.

Leveraging frameworks to engineer relevant sales conversations.



## The Differentiated Conversations Framework



“It is futile to teach a child the floorplan of every shopping centre they come into contact with – because 1. it is hard to recall, and 2. It doesn’t respond to change well. It would be better to teach a child the concepts of signage and navigation – as this is easier to recall and more adaptable to change.

In much the same way, frameworks offer the most effective way of changing how people think, to change how they feel, which will ultimately change how they behave. All behaviour is grounded in thinking – and frameworks alter thinking.

**Teach your salespeople to think better so that they can sell better.**

Don't teach them to sell”.