



How to get the most from your Sales Team

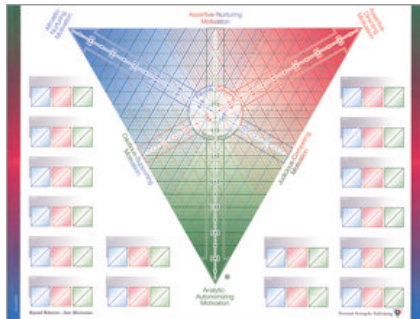
Lee Martin, MD of Toojays Training & HR Consultancy Ltd, examines how SDI® relationship awareness can enhance the performance of your sales team.

Understanding your customer is a crucial skill for any successful salesperson. After all, their buying need forms the start of the sales process. But how do you go about closing the sale and more importantly, build a lasting relationship at the same time? The key lies in communicating with your client in their language.

“In sales, the ability to match the benefits of a product or service to the values of a client is essential for success. Application of Relationship Awareness Theory increases the probability of accurately assessing the client’s basic values and inferring what the client will find rewarding or appealing. It follows from the theory that there is no one “best” sales strategy since what may reward one person may threaten another.”

Back in the 1970s, influential psychologist Elias Porter developed his theory which he called Relationship Awareness®. This theory incorporates four fundamental premises:

1. Behaviour is driven by motivation to achieve self-worth
2. Motivation changes in conflict
3. Strengths, when overdone or misapplied, can be perceived as weaknesses
4. Personal filters influence perceptions of self and others



The SDI® (Strength Deployment Inventory) tool examines the first two premises. As a self-scoring inventory, it demonstrates the underlying Motivational Value System (MVS)™ of an individual. It enables the individual to see their own preferences and motivations. By doing this, they are able to choose their own behaviours to accommodate their underlying values. At the same, it also allows them to appreciate the values of those people they deal with, and therefore improve their relationships with them (premise 4).

The theory highlights seven distinct MVS and describes them in terms of positive self-worth in relationships. These are determined by three colours, Red, Green and Blue to communicate the results of the tool. Each MVS has its own set of behavioural and environmental clues that distinguishes it from the others:

The table below sets out four of the seven MVS defined in the Relationship Awareness Theory:



Motivational Value System	Behavioural and Environmental Clues	Buyer Concerns and Motives
Blue	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Talks about feelings and shows appreciation • Will be sincere and trusting • Talks about benefits for other people • May have pictures of friends and family and colourful, personal, fun items in the office • Office space may feel very welcoming and comfortable 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Focused on others and how the product or service will benefit others • Wants a seller that is involved and genuinely interested • Does not want decision to be viewed as selfish or self-serving • Will be concerned about anything that affects people or benefits the company and relationships
Red	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Likely to be clear and direct; can be challenging • Gets to the point quickly, focuses on results • May look to move quickly on the decision • Office space may be focused on business and accomplishments • Look for things like name plates, awards, certifications and degrees • You may be sitting in an inferior position. This allows the Red buyer to direct the process 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Wants all relevant information in summary format • Seeks a confident sales consultant; values expert opinion • Wants to get things done quickly • Wants to see Return on Investment or value • Wants to be recognised for their accomplishments
Green	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Will be objective and logical; emphasises fairness • Keeps emotion in control; speaks in even voice tones • May ask for objective third-party analysis or supporting documentation • Wants to take time to consider the decision • Office space may be organised, quiet and full of reports, manuals, procedures and data 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Wanting to make an informed decision • Desires predictability and safe opportunities • Wants ample resources to complete the task • Benefiting the company with the logically correct and defensible decision • Desires a prepared seller with supporting facts
Hub	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Will be sociable, playful, open and flexible • Buyer may entertain seemingly unrelated topics • May switch from topic to topic without warning • Will focus on benefits to a group, team or company • Office may feel inviting and collaborative. Can be early adopters of new products and services • Office may include novelty or humorous items 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Wants to include other people and diverse points of view • Seeks the best for the company or the team • Dislikes strict or unyielding presentations • Wants to collaborate in the decision • Wants to maintain current and future flexibility



With each MVS, the concerns and motives of the customer are highlighted, giving insight into their buying decision. By knowing this, it will enable you to focus on them during and throughout the whole sales process.

To begin with, you won't know the MVS of the next customer to walk through your door. But by asking questions focused on their buying needs and listening carefully to their responses, you will gain clues as to what it could be. However, you must ensure that the questions you ask are open-ended i.e. they do not elicit a yes or no answer.

Some examples of open-ended questions could be:

- What specific features are needed in the product/service you wish to purchase?
- What budget has been established for this purchase?
- If you choose the right product/service, how will that impact you?

Listen carefully to the answers you receive, learning as much as possible about your customer is key to helping them make their purchase. By asking questions and finding solutions to their requirements, you will be viewed as someone who is helping them, rather than just selling to them.

To learn more about SDI and how it can benefit you and your sales team, visit www.toojays.co.uk or contact Toojays direct on 01733 367210 or by email info@toojays.co.uk

About Toojays

Toojays Training & HR Consultancy Ltd was established in 2003 by owner and MD Lee Martin. Based in Peterborough, the company delivers Leadership, Management and Team Development solutions to a range of international clients.

Focusing on practical, value adding, experiential learning, Toojays has assisted many large and small organisations with business development interventions. These have produced tangible ROI for all concerned and led to Toojays being an acclaimed and award-winning supplier of development initiatives.