



# Personal Effectiveness in a Hard Market – business and soft skills

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# Introduction

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**Welcome and thank you!**

**Nick Thomas**

- Background in Insurance Broking Sector. Sales and Sales Leadership specialist
- Widely qualified coach and personal development specialist
- Coaching, training and consulting – Insurance M&A



**Nick Thomas & Associates**

- Specialist training coaching and consulting to the UK Insurance Sector
- Incorporating technical insurance, sales, business/soft skills and regulatory compliance training

# Housekeeping

- Webinar format – muted and video off.
- Interactive features – polls, Q&A
- Duration - 60 minutes including short period of Q&A



# Objectives

*‘Begin with the end in mind’*  
Stephen R. Covey, *The 7 Habits of Highly Effective People*

- To develop a range of soft and business skills to enable brokers to maximise their delivery of the trading strategies
- Tailoring these skills to address typical hard market challenges
- Build personal effectiveness in a hard market
- **Best practice skills and methodologies – relevant to broker and insurer, and across industry groups**



POLL!  
Who is on the call?



# Broker Trading Strategies - overview

Strategy/skill	Commentary
Manage client expectations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Tackle lack of understanding</li> <li>• Early conversations – control dialogue</li> <li>• Ongoing information exchange</li> </ul>
Provide early budget	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Involve Insurers</li> <li>• Accuracy</li> </ul>
Maximise available spend	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Understand client – what do they REALLY need</li> <li>• Understand market and cover available</li> <li>• Understand how cover relates to individual client</li> <li>• Only buy what is required – no shopping lists</li> </ul>
Provide Options and Innovation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Including programme structuring and placement strategies</li> </ul>
Differentiate Risk with Insurers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• High quality detailed information</li> <li>• High quality presentation – easy to read</li> </ul>
Market – build engagement and investment in risk. Wider market	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Tripartite approach incl. use of online media</li> <li>• Ongoing dialogue – emphasise quality and positive aspects</li> <li>• Help insurer to say ‘YES’</li> </ul>
Building Broker Effectiveness. Include:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Managing time pressures – focus on profitable clients</li> <li>• New business – avoid time wasters! Best opportunities...</li> </ul>

# Pre-requisites to achieving trading strategies

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Pre-requisite	Commentary
Client Trust and Rapport	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Believe broker - state of the market</li> <li>• Willing to follow Broker advice – changes in strategy. Go on the journey</li> <li>• Trust Broker to provide solutions and not involve competitors</li> </ul>
Ability to move conversation away from purely price	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• See the Broker as a solution provider who adds value to the business</li> <li>• Not just the vendor of a commodity product</li> </ul>
Client Intimacy – business and people	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Access to the business and its people</li> <li>• Full real-time information</li> <li>• Understanding all buying influences, their needs, wins/objections – protect the account from competition</li> </ul>
Market knowledge, understanding, trust and rapport	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Understand different markets – offering, specialities</li> </ul>
Negotiation skills	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Negotiate with client and market – tough commercial conversations without ‘losing’ trading relationship</li> </ul>
Selective and focused approach – clients and prospects	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Established Ideal Client Profile – well documented and understood. Include ‘wider’ description – e.g. buying style</li> <li>• Robust and ongoing prospect qualification</li> </ul>

# Key Methodologies & Skills

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## WHAT DO WE NEED TO ACHIEVE?

- Trust of our client
- Move conversation away from purely price
- Client ‘intimacy’ and relationship
- Ability to influence and achieve our outcomes
- Robust trading conversations without ‘losing’ wider relationships

## SKILLS AND METHODOLOGIES

- Consultative Selling
  - Trusted adviser and solution provider status
  - Move conversation away from price
- Blue-sheeting – decision making dynamic
- Rapport building
- Negotiation skills for non-zero sum outcomes



# Consultative Sales – Why?

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## Mack Hanan, ‘Consultative Selling’

- If you compete on product...you compete on price.
- ...Your service is commoditized, and your price driven down = Vendor
- Consultative Sales – you sell on Value. Reposition price as an investment to add value
- Understand Client Value Proposition – meet them in their world
- Deliver Business Benefits - aligned to their value proposition
- **Relentless focus on client needs, challenges and solution without ‘pushing’ your product – builds trusted adviser, and solution provider status**



# Consultative Sales - practice

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- Gathering valuable information and intelligence
- Specific client/prospect
  - Industry knowledge (common problems etc.)
  - Similar clients?



- Skilled questioning to uncover critical needs and challenges
- SPIN Selling
  - Open and closed questions



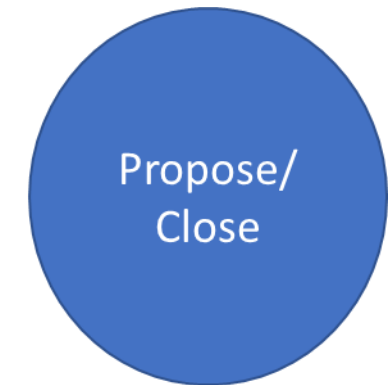
- Active listening
- shows interest
  - builds rapport
  - gain greater insight



- Do not market your services
- Continue to position as a solution provider
  - How you can help the client overcome their challenges?
  - Displaying your knowledge in a way that relates to them



- The pre-sell
- Minimizes objections
  - Project a future state where problems are solved
  - Monitor response, dig deeper, adapt solution



- Natural process if previous steps done well
- Do not rush timing important
  - Anticipate objections and find true issue behind the objection

# The Decision Making Dynamic

- How to build long term relationships. Only 'win-win' is viable
- In any 'Complex' sale, there will be multiple buyer types (can be more than one of each)
  - **Economic Buyer** – holds the purse strings. Ultimately can say 'yes' or 'no'
  - **User Buyer** – the person who uses the solution after purchase. Rarely the same person as economic buyer. Example – Insurance Manager. Claims administrator?
  - **Technical Buyer** – making sure the solution adheres to technical, regulatory and compliance requirements. Often the purchasing manager
  - **Coach** – wants you to win, and can provide insight to give you inside track. Can be any of the above or not directly involved



**Take a moment:** identify a current prospect or client and jot down the names and positions for each of the different buyer types. Is it possible there are more buyers you have not identified? How will you do this?

# The Decision Making Dynamic

**Four Response Modes** should be defined for each of the Buying Influences:

- **Growth:** wishes to improve on the current situation in some way. Ready to invest in a solution that improves this
- **Trouble:** have a problem that is causing results to deteriorate and looking for a solution that will fix or avoid a crisis.
- **Even Keel:** content with the current situation; does not see a need for change.
- **Overconfident:** has an inaccurate understanding of the current situation and therefore believes that results are even better than expectations.



**Take a moment:** Define the response modes for each of the buyers you have identified

# The Decision Making Dynamic

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## ‘Win-Result’

- To gain support of any Buying Influence, you need to satisfy their needs as both a representative of their company and as an individual.
- The latter could be that by appointing you to solve their problems, they can achieve enhanced bonus, career progression etc.
- Understanding which of the Response Modes applies to each of the Buying Influences allows you to assess the difficulty of achieving a Win-Result for that buyer. The last two Response Modes (Overconfident and Even Keel) are more difficult



**Take a moment:** to jot down the individual and company needs for each buying influence

# The Decision Making Dynamic

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**Red Flags** - highlight obstacles to obtaining Win-Results for Buying Influences. The use of Red Flags helps in tracking one's progress in working with the Buying Influences



**Take a moment:** Can you think of any Red Flags for the Buying Influences you have identified?

If you have time, consider how you might address these in order to move that Buyer towards a win-result.

# Rapport

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## WHY?

*‘Rapport is the ultimate tool for producing results...if you can develop rapport with the right people, you'll be able to fill their needs, and they will be able to fill yours’*

**Tony Robbins**

## WHAT IS RAPPORT?

- Rapport is the quality of a relationship of mutual influence and respect
- There are degrees of rapport
- It is not friendship – you can have rapport and mutual respect without being friends
- It is not agreement – you can be in rapport and disagree, you can agree but not be in rapport
- It can be built quickly and lost quickly – the quicker it is built, the quicker it can be lost

# Rapport – in a hard market

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## Examples:

- **Broker**
  - Ability to have tough conversations with client but retain relationship
  - Easier to take the client on a journey – capability report
- **Insurer**
  - Ability to have tough conversations with Broker but retain relationship
- **Key aspect in negotiation**
  - Ability to see the world from the other's perspective/in their shoes
  - Creating Win-Win scenarios or at least avoiding Win-Lose!
  - Ability to influence others and achieve your outcomes





# Rapport – how do we build it?

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By ‘standing in their shoes’. By being willing to understand the person from their point of view.

**Pace** - enter the other person’s model of the world. ‘Walk’ at the same pace

**Leading** – having built some rapport from pacing, use this influence to lead them. Start to move towards your pace...

**Matching and Mismatching** – this is how you pace and build rapport

Mirror and complement another aspect of a person

Not copying – more like a dance

Showing that you are willing to enter that person’s model of the world

# Rapport – levels

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**Environment** - fairly superficial, correct business attire in a meeting, right office environment

**Behaviour** - matching another without losing your own identity. 3 aspects at behavioural level:

- **Body language** – breathing pattern, posture, gestures, eye contact
- **Voice tone** – speed of speech, volume, rhythm, coughs/hesitations etc.
- **Language** - match key words and phrases – show how a person is thinking or feeling

*Be careful – requires practice. To start, just avoid mismatching e.g. do not talk fast if the other person talks slowly*



# Rapport – levels

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## Capabilities - shared skills and interests

- Personal level – hobbies and interests
- Professional – demonstrating competency/expertise

## Beliefs and Values

- Respecting and understanding - builds powerful rapport
- Do not have to agree but do not challenge without good rapport

## Identity

- Genuine interest in the other as an individual not part of a group. Willing to share your own beliefs and values. No room for manipulation

## Beyond Identity – shared culture

**Notice:** how very good friends naturally match body language e.g. eye contact as they have developed rapport at a 'higher' level

# A 'sustainable' model for negotiation

Key Skill	Commentary
Perceptual positions	Consider position from multiple perspectives: Own position, Other (emotional and intellectual), third position – objective. Adjust approach
Rapport Building	Removes confrontation - see you as more human. More Receptive. Pace and Lead. You cannot influence without rapport
Active Listening	Maintains Rapport. Shows interest, understanding and empathy. Elicits more information. More deeply establish needs build solutions.
Match and Mirroring	Match and mirror though the meeting – behaviour, capability, values. Rapport building – builds trust at unconscious level
Emotional Objectivity	Displaying emotions during negotiation reveals vulnerability. Hinders rational decision making – 'fight or flight response'. Stay calm
Establish Outcome – top and bottom line Establish BATNA	Know your minimum acceptable offer when the deal is no longer worth it. Do not go straight there.  BATNA - Best Alternative to Negotiated Agreement (what will you do if you cannot reach agreement). Practice polite 'walk away' (can do safely with rapport)
Establish Common Ground	Establish area of common ground – move up from specifics of disagreement. Essential. Move back down to smaller areas of disagreement Seek congruent agreement – manipulation and deception is not a long term strategy
Creativity	Create non-zero outcome. Even 'win-win'. (Zero sum outcome is win-lose, where one party has to lose if the other wins). For win-win, may have to redefine what 'win' means. Reframe. Deep understanding Broker/client (see consultative approach and perceptual positions). Move conversation away from price.



# Thankyou!

## Q&A

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