

**Jim Cathcart**

# **Sales Psychology:**

**Understanding the  
Mind of the Buyer**



**The Relationship Selling™ Series**

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There is an old saying that “knowledge is power.” But while a little knowledge may go a long way, this motto is no longer completely accurate when it comes to the world of Relationship Selling™. In the 21st Century world of sales, it is all about trust.

### Trust is power.

Being able to trust a person or company to do what they say they will do is pure gold in today’s marketplace.

*When was the last time you wasted a big portion of your day just trying to get people to do what they said they would do and do it well?*

In any situation where two equally qualified options exist, the person or product that is most trusted will always win. When two people attempt to win an account, the one who appears to be most trustworthy will have the edge.

The quickest way to win people to your point of view is to earn their trust first.

Even con artists (criminals) understand this. (The word “con” comes from “confidence.” These crooks are skilled at gaining people’s confidence before they betray them.) Look at email and telemarketing scams that trap unsuspecting or overly trusting people. Victims always lament, “They seemed so nice. I thought for sure I could trust them.” Sad but true: Trust can even be abused and used to manipulate others.

To defend against these tricksters, we have developed a layer of skepticism toward any stranger and even toward unexpected sales offers from people we know.

In today’s hyper-connected world, trust is more powerful than ever, and it is harder to come by.

So how do you effectively win somebody’s trust? The answer lies in understanding the mindset of each customer. But sales psychology is not about manipulating the character traits and values of your customer. It is about recognizing details not only in how your customer thinks and views the world, but also in knowing the type of person you are. If you are not deserving of the other person’s trust, then you won’t have it for long.

The more you notice about yourself and others, the more you know. The more you know, the more options you see. And the salesperson with the most options is usually the one making the sale when all is said and done.

What if I could show you how to notice the following and more in each person you meet, as well as in yourself?

- **Natural Values**—the intrinsic motives behind someone’s interests and choices. What do your prospects care about?
- **Personal Velocity**—the pace and intensity at which someone performs best. What is your customer’s “zone” of optimal performance?
- **Multiple Intelligences**—the unique and varied ways in which a person is smart. How are they smart?
- **Thinking Style (Intellectual Bandwidth)**—whether someone tends to think conceptually, strategically, or operationally most of the time. How much information can they effectively process at one time?
- **Behavioral Style**—the predictable patterns within a person’s behavior in both positive and negative situations. How do they come across to others?

If you knew that much about anyone you would have a tremendous advantage in dealing with them. You could predict what they’d like or dislike, how they would approach a new product, what they’d do under pressure, how they might interpret your behavior . . . and more.

## Natural Values

Each of us has a unique set of values. *Value* denotes the importance of something relative to other alternatives. *Values* are what you care about, the qualities you find desirable. Values are not attitudes or behaviors, though they form the basis of our attitudes and behaviors. Every decision we make is based on our own set of values.

For example, some personal values might be loyalty, wisdom, love, honesty, justice, or many more. When we make a decision or when we act, we usually do so in accordance with our personal value system. Now, I don’t want you to confuse values with virtues. Virtues are standards of excellence, morally the *right*, *best* action to take. With values, however, we look at what you care about most, right or wrong, good or bad.

In my book, *The Acorn Principle*, I described a Natural Values model that is a useful tool for salespeople trying to define their own value set. In researching this model, I found seven values that are common to everyone. These aren't values we've learned, but rather they are a part of who we are. These seven natural values are with you at birth and stay with you throughout your life. These values are part of your very nature. They are:

- **Sensuality**—the relative importance of one's physical experience
- **Empathy**—the relative importance of feeling connected to other people
- **Wealth**—the relative importance of ownership and worth
- **Power**—the relative importance of control and recognition
- **Aesthetics**—the relative importance of beauty, balance, order, and symmetry
- **Commitment**—the relative importance of being committed to something; having a cause or mission; and doing the "right" thing
- **Knowledge**—the relative importance of learning and understanding

Everybody possesses, in one way or another, all seven of these values. But if we were to rank which ones were most important to each of us, your top values may be different from mine. If my top value is power and yours is knowledge, we will respond to certain situations in different ways.

For example, a man with a keen aesthetic value earns a \$10,000 sales bonus based on his exceptional quarterly performance. After ensuring his family's finances are in order, he decides to spend the entire amount of his "found" money on an expensive piece of artwork. He gleefully admires the new, beautiful painting he has just purchased as it is being installed in his living room. (You don't just hang expensive artwork, you *install* it.) When his wife comes home and realizes he has spent such a huge sum of money on this one painting, she hits the ceiling. His wife, as it turns out, values wealth highly while aesthetics rank at the bottom of her spectrum of life's essentials. *Why couldn't he have bought a cheap knockoff for a few hundred dollars?* She asks herself.

The husband and wife seem to be at a crucial impasse. His naturally relaxed view of the importance of wealth led him to spend a lot of money on something his wife would not have deemed a prudent expenditure. So how can the husband "sell" his purchase as something other than completely irresponsible to his alarmed wife? How can he get her off the ceiling? By appealing to her natural values.

"Notice the artist's name?" he asks her. "That artist's work has been appreciating at 30 percent a year for the last three years, and she was just featured on the cover of *ARTnews* magazine." His wife looks at the painting, pauses briefly, floats calmly back to the floor and says, "Notice how it brings out the colors of the couch."

Did he change her values? No, he didn't change her values, he merely understood her values and showed her how what he cared about—the painting—related to what she cared about, the money. And the minute she saw that the money side of the equation was handled, all of a sudden her lower value of aesthetics could be appreciated.

In the world of buyers and sellers, what the customer cares about most drives their interest and their criteria for making decisions. Their highest values cause them to focus on certain aspects of a situation and naturally overlook others. Only when their highest values are met will they effectively focus on other areas of concern. The better the job you do as a salesperson at understanding what's important to others, the more effectively you can gear the information in your sales presentation to their top values.

## Seeing and Hearing the Values

People show their values all the time through what they say and don't say; what they do and don't do; what they approach and what they avoid. Here are some indicators to watch for to identify a client or potential client's main values.

**Sensuality**—Customers with a high sensuality value show an interest in and affinity for physical experience: taste, touch, smell, fit, comfort, temperature, texture, humidity, sound, volume, light, etc. There's sensitivity to the physical aspects of a product or the experience that a product offers which stands out. Someone might choose a certain restaurant for the feel of its dinnerware or its seating comfort as well as for its food.

**Empathy**—People with a high empathy value need to be around other people they care about. The helping impulse is very strong in these folks. They're drawn to the needs of others and are sensitive to their reactions and experiences. They may buy a product as much for their sense of connection with the salesperson as for their actual need for the product.

**Wealth**—People with a high wealth value find that the worth of a product or its fair market value matters a great deal. They may wear an expensive ring even though they don't particularly care for how it looks. The sincerity of one's words is often evaluated by these people through looking at what they do with their money. "Do you put your money where your mouth is?" they ask. A person who values wealth highly really cares about accumulating things, because that's how they evaluate their success. It's not greed to them; it's just putting value on acquiring or owning things of quality. They believe the profit motive is a perfectly legitimate basis for any business.

**Power**—Someone with a high power value finds acknowledgment, praise, special privileges, honors, titles, and prestigious things of prime consideration. Position and control matter a lot. These people evaluate information by its source, the title, and the position the person holds. They may find the fact that they were seated in the VIP section even more pleasing than the concert itself. High power value people love to be in charge.

**Aesthetics**—Someone with a high aesthetic value would find beautiful sunsets, organized systems, certain color combinations, paintings, landscapes, and architecture of strong appeal. The look or graphic layout of your sales proposal may carry as much impact as its contents from their point of view. They may feel a meeting would have been much more productive if it weren't in such a dull-looking room. Someone with a high aesthetic value truly cares how things look and feel. They want to make their lives aesthetically pleasing—whether that means reorganizing things or increasing the beauty of their surroundings.

**Commitment**—A person with a high commitment value has strong convictions. Beliefs and affiliations are at the center of their attention. Working to advance a cause, crusading, and campaigning feel good to them. These people do things because it's what they feel is the right thing to do. They like being part of an organization or a group that they believe in. As a matter of fact, to them, it's critical they believe in it. They make statements like, "I trust her because she walks her talk, and she demonstrates her com-

mitment. If she says it, you can take it to the bank." They willingly make sacrifices in other areas to do what they feel is right.

**Knowledge**—A person with a high knowledge value loves to learn. Knowledge is valued as an end in and of itself for these people, who typically enjoy books, seminars, discussions, and problem solving. When they are on the move, they may tend to listen to books on tapes or radio talk shows rather than music stations. They seem to have an endless curiosity, being constantly amazed at how little they know on each subject. Their motto may be "So many books, so little time." Someone with a high knowledge value considers going to a seminar a benefit in and of itself whereas someone with a lower knowledge value might find it to be a burden or an inconvenience.

*To order other eBooks in the Relationship Selling™ series, visit [http://cathcart.com/products\\_relationship\\_selling.aspx#intro\\_relationship\\_selling](http://cathcart.com/products_relationship_selling.aspx#intro_relationship_selling).*

## Cater Your Sales Presentation To Your Customer's Values

The quickest way to someone's heart is through his or her values. Once you become a pro at noticing someone's values, tailoring your sales presentations to the individual values of your customers will become natural to you.

**Remember: A prospect will be more likely to follow your sales presentation if your sales presentation follows their values.**

For your purposes of selling to a customer, all you really need to notice is their top few values. If you know the top two or three, you've got enough to understand how you can appeal to them with whatever product you may be trying to sell. Here is how to shape your sales propositions in a way that will massage the values your customer prizes most.

**Sensuality value**—Highlight the physical experience of using your product with as much attention to detail as possible using sight, feel, sound, taste, and smell. For example, imagine you are a Harley Davidson salesman trying to impart the experience of what it is like to ride a Hog.



You might talk about the rumble of the engine, the feel of the leather, the rush of the wind in the rider's face, and the responsiveness of the suspension. On another hand, if you were an agent for a financial services company, massaging a customer's sensuality would take a very different tack. You would assure that your presentation materials are pleasing to the eye and well assembled and that you have a comfortable place to meet with your customer. You may offer refreshments if appropriate. No matter what you are selling, remember that your customer's physical comfort directly affects his or her ability to focus on you and your message.

**Empathy value**—Make sure you present your product in a way that addresses the customer's need to feel connected to those around him. Appealing to empathy value customers can be tricky depending on what you are selling. The Harley sales presentation would sure look a lot different from the what a financial advisor may use when meeting with a client. How could you connect to a customer with a tendency toward empathy if you were trying to sell a motorcycle? You might ask, "Will you be mostly riding alone or with others?" (They will definitely say "with others.") Then you might explore whether they will ride with or without a passenger and how important a comfortable back seat will be, ideally. If you were trying to sell your financial services, you might show your list of clients and talk about the experiences others have had working with your company. Tell stories and use quotes that have a personal feeling to them. And speak with respect when talking about others. You can instantly lose someone with a high empathy value if you spend too much time disparaging your competition.

**Wealth value**—While empathy value is all about appealing to the customers' hearts, wealth is all about the wallet. Show these customers the money: They want to know what your product or service will do for them financially. Will it appreciate in value? Save them money later? Help them avoid unnecessary expenses? Compare it to their other options from a pure monetary perspective. For the Harley salesperson, describe the resale value of the motorcycle and the ability to get 35 to 45 miles per gallon of gas. As a financial manager, chart how a client's assets will increase or their estate's value will be protected if they work with you.

**Power value**—The sort of things that would appeal to these people would be whatever they perceive as a mark of power. Power is a straightforward sell for a Harley dealer because the motorcycle has power, yet it also exudes power. It expresses independence, freedom, and "bad-ness" all at once. It gets recognition, too. That chrome and those loud pipes are not there to make it run better. For financial planning customers, power lies in the ability to control assets and wealth distribution options. They want to know the reputation of your company or product. They need to feel secure about where their money is invested and like owning or doing business with "the best." They also want to know that they are important to you, so show them the respect they deserve, and the attention they expect.

**Aesthetic value**—Be well organized and tidy in what you present and follow a logical flow. Customers evaluate you as much by how you, your materials, and your product look as by the offer itself. Talk about the look of your product or the elegance of your approach to solving problems. It doesn't have to be physical aesthetics; it could also be conceptual. A motorcycle dealer would make sure to highlight the design and engineering of the bike. Special models appeal to special tastes and there is a style for just about every taste. The same is true for paint, leather, and accessories. In a sense, the bike becomes a palette for the artistic impulses of the buyer. Aesthetics in the field of financial services is addressed by conceptual organization as well as visual presentation. Make sure your workspace is well organized and that pamphlets, brochures, and other literature have a crisp, understandable synopsis of what you do.

**Commitment value**—Connect your offer to a cause or standard your customer cares about. Show how doing business with you will contribute to the cause they are working toward. With Harleys, you are often talking to buyers who care a lot about the marquee, the brand of Harley Davidson. There is a special subculture around this brand like no other—tattoos, stickers, clothing. A customer with a high commitment value may purchase a Harley simply because of brand loyalty. In a financial services setting, commitment matters in both meanings of the word. Clients will want your commitment to them as a customer, and to the safety of their account. And they will also want to feel that they are committing to a financial plan that matters. Show how they are doing the right thing. Document your

claims and talk about subjects like personal responsibility and integrity. In selling insurance, you might highlight the ethical and moral value of taking care of others via insurance.

**Knowledge value**—Give prospects a chance to learn by telling them how they can become an expert on a given product. Help the person understand the riding experience if they are interested in purchasing a motorcycle. Sign them up for the Rider Course to sharpen their skills. Give them the owner's manual and show them the Harley Owners Group (HOG) website so your customer can learn more about your product and the culture behind it. Financial services customers often buy based on how knowledgeable you appear to be. Don't flaunt your knowledge, but show clearly that you have done and will continue to do your homework for them. Provide answers and sources for more answers. They don't expect you to know everything, but they expect and demand that you know where to go for the answers you don't have.

At the end of the day, you could conceivably spend the same amount of money on a sales incentive for each of seven different people but provide a different reward for every one of them. What appeals to one may leave another cold. So listen for your prospect's values and then appeal to them.

Understanding natural values is an invaluable skill for salespeople aiming to create a meaningful connection with their customers. But recognizing an individual's core values and knowing how to appeal to a buyer's motives is not a simple, 60-second process. No customer is going to come right out and say, "Hello, my name is Bill and I have a high sensuality value and a low wealth value." Most of the time, identifying someone's values will require some intuitive work on your end. You will need to put in the time getting to know the person.

## Reading People through Behavioral Style

People will teach you how they would like to be dealt with if you learn to observe their personality patterns. My friend, Dr. Tony Alessandra, author of *The Platinum Rule*, says that we should practice the Platinum Rule: "Do unto others as they would like to be done unto." It's a play on the Golden Rule, "Treat other people the way they would like to be treated." Many years ago, Tony and I worked together as partners in the creation of a program called "Relationship Strategies", which is based on understanding different personality types, and relating to each using different strategies. "Relationship Strategies" is comprised of adapting to either or both of two dimensions: openness and directness.

**Openness.** With any person you meet, it's pretty easy to determine whether they're being open or not. Someone who is not open is "guarded." They tend to play their cards close to the vest and not show their feelings. They're more thinking oriented. They tend to be a little bit more fact focused, more formal, and more proper. People who are guarded do not readily share information.

The other end of the spectrum is someone who is open, relaxed, and warm. They're supportive and flexible about time. They tend to focus on the relationship before the task. They tend to share their feelings freely. They tend to be a little bit more sensitive, or at least show their sensitivity a bit more.

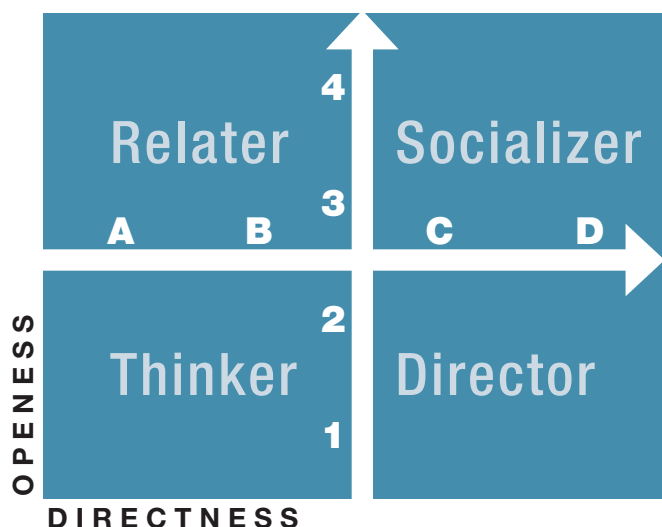
The first thing to notice with each person is his or her level of openness. With open people, *you* can be more open. With guarded people, your candidness might be seen as irritating, awkward, or inappropriate. Learn to recognize and understand the other person's level of openness.

**Directness.** Does your client or sales prospect tend to get directly to the point or take their time getting there? Being direct or indirect comes down to a matter of pace.

The indirect person tends to be a slow decision maker and somewhat passive in his behavior. He's easy going and listens well, but is more reserved and shy. Indirect people keep their *opinions* to themselves even though they may be showing their *feelings* sometimes. The indirect person tends to avoid risk.

On the other hand, direct people are outgoing. They speak up and get to the point. They take risks and they make swift decisions. They're aggressive, impatient, sometimes talkative, and you almost always know where you stand with them.

When you combine their openness with their directness, you get four modes of behavior, or Behavioral Styles.



The **socializer** is someone who is **open and direct**. The socializer is the outgoing individual who will tell you what she's thinking at any given moment. You can read her like a book.

The **open person who's indirect and slower paced** is the **relater**. The relater is a people person, a team player—more soft and easy going about things.

The **indirect person who is guarded** is what we call the **thinker**. The thinker is someone who is more task oriented. They will analyze and take time to study the details before making a decision.

The **guarded person who is direct** is a fast-paced person that we call the **director**. The director is a person who gets right to the point. They want something done, they want it done right, and they want it done now. They are very assertive people.

When you learn to recognize these four types—the **director**, the **socializer**, the **relater**, and the **thinker**—you'll be more effective in selling because each type requires a different approach to reduce the tension and increase the cooperation to generate more sales.

## The Four Behavioral Styles In Action

Imagine white water rafting down a river in the northern part of the United States. On the raft are four people: a **relater**, a **socializer**, a **thinker**, and a **director**. They're rowing along, and everything's going pretty smoothly until all of a sudden there is a rumbling in the distance. This sound is coming from the next rapids—it's an enormous white water rapids with rocks sticking up all over the place!

They look ahead in stark terror. The first one on the raft to speak is the **director**, who grabs an oar, leans directly toward the oncoming rapids, starts paddling, then says, "All right, let's go!"

About that time, the **relater** says, "Wait a minute! We've all got to work together as a team!"

The **socializer** says, "Hold it! Hold it! Let me get my camera! I've got to capture this thing on film!"

And the **thinker** is turned a little bit away from the group, punching on a calculator. The **director** says, "What are you doing?"

The **thinker** says, "Well, I'm trying to figure the odds of us coming out of this alive."

## Identifying the Four Behavioral Styles\*

If you are having trouble figuring out where somebody falls in the Behavioral Style model, here is some expanded explanation of the different behavioral styles—the **relater**, the **thinker**, the **director**, and the **socializer**.

*\*For more information on this model, go to <https://platinumrule.com/assessmentorder.asp>.*



The **relater** works at a slow and relaxed pace. They put the priority on relationships. Their appearance is casual, they tend to conform and dress like those around them. Their workplace is personal, relaxed, and friendly. They get their security from friendship and often rely on other people. One of the things they fear is sudden, abrupt change. They measure their personal worth by their compatibility with others and the depth of their relationships. They're internally motivated by involvement—they have a need to be needed by others. Their strengths are listening, teamwork, and follow through. Their weaknesses are that they are a little overly sensitive, sometimes slow to start and they tend to set easily attainable goals. They are irritated by insensitivity and impatience and under stress will become submissive or maybe indecisive. When they make decisions, they make the decisions with other people, typically, and what they're seeking from you is a sense of acceptance.

The **thinker** is slow and systematic with their priorities resting firmly on completing the task. Their focus is on the process and their appearance is a little more formal, often times even reserved. Their workplace is structured and functional. Their source of security is preparation and thoroughness. Fearing criticism of their work or potential embarrassment, they measure their personal worth with their relative precision and accuracy. Their internal motivation is the process: They love following detailed procedures and they believe in personal competence. Planning and organization are also chief strengths of the thinker. Their weaknesses tend to be perfectionism, as they are a bit hypercritical and slow to make decisions. Under stress, thinkers tend to withdraw or become very headstrong about the facts and figures that they're working on. Their decisions are very thorough and well thought out. In you, the salesperson, they are seeking accuracy and reliable information that will help them make that "perfect" choice. They want to know that they can not only rely on you, but rely on your research, data, claims, and warranty that comes with whatever you're offering them.

The **director** is fast and decisive. They focus on the task and want to get results. They're businesslike and powerful. Their workplace is busy, efficient, structured, while they tend to exert control and leadership in order to gain security. They feel most secure when they're in charge. What they fear is being taken advantage of or wasting time. They measure their personal worth by the results they get, the track record they've built, and the progress they're making. Their internal motivation is winning and being in charge. Strengths include delegating, leadership, and in-

spiring others. A director's weaknesses typically include impatience, insensitivity, and distaste for details. They're irritated by inefficiency and indecision. Under stress, they get highly critical and become dictatorial. Their decisions are decisive and quick and they seek from you bottom-line results. They want to see some productivity. They want an outcome, so they like you to show them that you're going to make things happen.

Finally, there's the **socializer**. These people are open and at the same time very direct. They're fast, they're spontaneous, and they focus on interactions and relationships with other people. Their appearance is more bold and stylish. Their workplace is personal and tends to be a little cluttered. Socializers derive security from flexibility, playfulness, and gaining the approval of other people. They fear loss of prestige and boredom. They measure their personal worth by the recognition they've achieved, status, the number of friends, and the kind of attention they're drawing to themselves. They are motivated by being involved in a team. And they love the chase—not just catching what they're going after, but the chase itself is fun for them. They're strong at persuading, they're enthusiastic, and they're entertaining. Their weaknesses are that they tend to be poor at time management, they ignore details, and sometimes they appear restless. Two of the things that irritate them are routines and perfectionism. They tend to become sarcastic under stress and sometimes they come across as being superficial. They make their decisions quickly and spontaneously, seeking quick outcomes. They want recognition, they want to have fun, they want things to happen, but they want to be involved in what's happening.

When you learn to understand and recognize the **relater**, the **thinker**, the **director**, and the **socializer**, you'll recognize which type is strongest in you. You'll notice which type is strongest in the other person, and you'll know more about how to appeal to personality traits to make more sales.

# How To Be Flexible With Each Style

If all you did was notice the behavioral style of yourself and your prospect, then not much would happen ultimately. I guess you could say, “Well, at least I understand why I didn’t make that sale—he’s a director and I’m more of a thinker.” But when you learn to adapt to style differences by altering your sales appeal to fit the customer’s buying patterns, you will generate more sales.

## Here are some prescriptions for flexibility with the relater, the thinker, the director, and the socializer:

With the **relater**, they need to know how what you’re suggesting will affect their personal situation. Do what you do with warmth and save them conflict. Facilitate their decision making by giving them personal service, assurances, and guarantees. They want you to be pleasant and be supportive of their feelings and their concerns. Create a personal environment for the dialogue. Go at a slow and relaxed pace. Make sure that your priority is on the relationship with them and the communication. When you’re at play, be casual and cooperative with them. Use your time with the relater to develop the relationship. In writing to them, be warm and friendly. On the phone, be warm and pleasant.

For the **thinker**, they need to know how they can justify what you’re talking about logically. They want to be able to explain it, they want to know how it works. So give them your sales proposition with a keen attention to accuracy—save them from being embarrassed. Help them with data and documentation to make a decision. They want you to be precise and to support their thought process and business procedures. Create a serious, thoughtful environment. Maintain a slow and systematic pace and put the priority on the task and following the process. Be structured and play by the rules. Use your time with a thinker to ensure accuracy. Write to them in a detailed and precise way; spelling counts—so does format. And on the telephone, be business-like, precise, and efficient.

The **director** wants to know what your product or service does, how long it will take, and what it costs. In other words, get to the point and give them the bottom line. Do what you do with conviction. Stand up for yourself, stand up for what you do, stand behind your product, and save them time and effort. Help them make decisions by giv-

ing them options with supporting documentation or analysis. But don’t go into all the documentation, just have it there. They want you to get to the point, support the goals they’re trying to achieve, and create a business-like atmosphere for the dialogue. Keep to a fast and decisive pace. The priority ought to be on the results of the task at hand. At play, the director is going to be competitive and aggressive, so expect that and respond to it. Use your time with a director to act efficiently. Your writing should be short and to the point. On the phone, conversation should also be short and to the point.

For the **socializer**, what they want to know is how’s this going to work for them? How’s it going to make them look? How’s it going to help them get the results they want to get? How’s it going to save them time, and how’s it going to make life more fun? Do what you do with a socializer with a little bit of flair, a little creativity. Save them effort. To facilitate their decision, give them testimonials and incentives—testimonials from people they admire and incentives that they will personally benefit from. They want you to be stimulating, so support their ideas and what they care about. Create an enthusiastic atmosphere. Be fast and spontaneous. The priority for them is the relationship and the interaction, so put the focus on the dialogue and get them involved.

If they’re not talking, then they’re not listening, either, so let them lead the conversation. Use your time with them in business or in social settings to enjoy the interaction. When you write to them, be informal and a little dramatic. On the phone, be conversational, flexible, and playful.

Flexibility in dealing with the four dominant behavioral styles is a key to any good salesperson. Relating to your customer and his or her personality traits will not only give you an edge in the competitive world of sales, but it will also help you build relationships that will lead to future sales and referrals. If you understand these styles and practice these strategies, you will cultivate your skills in Relationship Selling™. However, these four behavioral styles are not the sole factors that go into your customer’s demeanor. The natural intensity—or what I like to call “personal velocity”—of an individual also affects the way your buyer thinks.

# Understanding Personal Velocity Differences

Every individual has a *personal* velocity. It's the natural pace or intensity with which they live. Some people naturally operate at a highly intense pace, others at a slower pace.

Our modern society tends to reward the people with the higher velocity. Sales contests, sporting events, and other games, all acknowledge those who give it an all-out effort. But each velocity is valid, whether it is low, moderate, or high. Plenty of people who operate at a slower pace make large contributions to the advancement of business or society.

Velocity is a combination of two things—your energy and your drive. Each of us has a natural range of energy that is enhanced or limited by our nutrition, our fitness level, the amount of rest that we get, the way we manage stress, and the attitude we carry into each day. This determines the amount of that energy available to us on a given day. We also have a natural degree of drive or self-motivation, which is affected by things like our self-esteem, our clarity of purpose, the goals that we've set, and our awareness of the possibilities available to us.

Energy and drive are both manageable within a certain range, and both of them combine naturally to determine your velocity. *What's your velocity?*

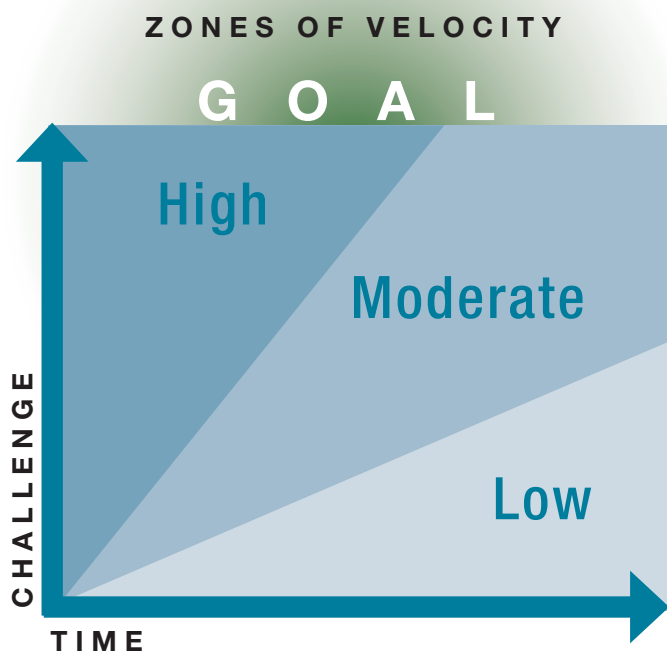
**High velocity** – those who are genuinely self-motivated, who love to work toward goals. They prefer long hours, they like those hours filled with a variety of activity. They use even their leisure time to advance toward their goals. They set challenging goals for themselves, have high aspirations, and hold themselves to high standards. They enjoy competition and find inactivity frustrating. Simply stated, they expect a lot from themselves.

**Moderate velocity** – people who are somewhat self-motivated. They balance their work and their leisure evenly. They prefer a standard workday with a moderate mix of activities. They use leisure time to complete chores and socialize. They set goals that are generally reachable, not highly challenging, and they have moderate aspirations. They accept competition but they don't thrive on it. They sometimes find inactivity relaxing and have relatively mild expectations of themselves compared to those people operating at high velocity.

**Low velocity** – those who are motivated primarily by others, or by needs, rather than inner desires. They often find working alone to be a nuisance and prefer being a team player rather than a leader. They don't want to be the one who has to initiate activity. Low velocity people use their leisure time to pursue personal or casual, non-business interests and they tend to take things as they come. They seldom set firm goals that they're going to go after and their aspirations are rather mild. They don't like competition; it makes them uncomfortable. They even enjoy occasional inactivity, quiet time, and they don't expect a great deal from themselves.

Now, with these three definitions for personal velocities, it is quite clear our society pays more money and rewards the higher-velocity people. But our society is structured in such a way that there are thousands upon thousands of different jobs and roles and levels of responsibility within those jobs. Many of these occupations call for lower velocity—those that are not positions of leadership, initiative, or competition. And, there's a place in just about every role, every sales position, and every company for lower, moderate, and higher velocity workers. It's all a matter of what kind of standards you're going to be measured by, what kind of goals you're trying to achieve, what kind of marketplace you're dealing with, and your intentions.

Once you understand your own velocity and embrace it you will become more adept at recognizing your prospect's velocity. When you go into a sales situation and you bring, let's say, high velocity, and you're calling on some-



one with low velocity, your approach is going to be much too intense and overwhelming for them. So you need to learn to slow down and match your pace to their pace, and match your drive and your ambition level to that of your customer.

Now, if your style is lower velocity and your prospect's is higher, then when you call on them, you need to push the envelope a little bit. You need to reach higher, increase your expectation, let them take the initiative, let them drive the size of the discussion or the sales challenge that's in front of you.

With moderate velocity, mediation between the two extremes is the best approach when dealing with the potential customer. Learn to recognize velocity when you see it and also to recognize it in yourself. You need to know yourself before you can truly know others. The better you know yourself, the better you can know others. The better you know others, the more sales you make.

## How Are You Smart?

How are you smart? Notice I didn't ask you how smart you are, I asked you how you are smart. Our society, for many years, has been fascinated by how smart people are. We've developed things like intelligence quotient (IQ) tests to measure mental aptitude. It typically produces an implied contest amongst test-takers—the one with the highest IQ wins.

It is far more useful to know how someone is smart than to attach a subjective numerical score to intelligence. Everybody has certain smarts that are dominant over their other smarts. It's helpful if you classify intelligence into specific categories. Understanding your own feelings, thoughts, concepts, and philosophies requires a savvy that cannot be measured by any standardized test.

According to the book *7 Kinds of Smart: Identifying and Developing Your Multiple Intelligences* by Thomas Armstrong (Plume, 1999), these are the **basic categorizations of intelligence**:

### Verbal (Word)

People with verbal smarts are good at explaining things by choosing the right words and articulating their thoughts well in conversation. They use puns, employ creative phrasing, and enjoy expanding their vocabulary, writing, and reading.

### Visual (Picture)

Visual learners use charts and symbols in their mind to make points and see things clearly. They have the ability to turn something around, take it apart, and put it back together in their head effectively.

### Physical (Body)

People with physical intelligence learn best by doing something hands on and getting personal, physical contact with the subject. They feel a need to move while learning and favorite pastimes probably involve activities that involve manipulating things with their hands or dancing or moving in such a way that they achieve things physically that others find more difficult.

### Musical (Music)

Some people are very good with music and can remember notes and melodies easily. They use music as a frame of reference or filing system and think of things in relation to a tune or a song. A natural sense of timing and rhythm helps these people enjoy all types of sounds.

### Math/Logical (Logic)

Mathematical intelligence entails knowing how to put things in order, how to calculate, how to find patterns, and being good at analysis.

### Introspective (Self)

These pensive people rarely make rash decisions and analyze nearly every aspect of their life. They may not always express themselves well verbally, yet they possess a great amount of intelligence beneath the surface.

### Interpersonal (People)

Interpersonal intelligence (people smarts) is about knowing other people and how to respond to them, how to stimulate a conversation, how to mediate arguments, how to connect with someone else, how to be sensitive to what's going on with them, and knowing the right thing to say.

By recognizing *how* you are smart, you will have a better understanding as to why certain ways of selling are easier for you and other ways are more awkward. The way you're smart is the way you're most effective in expressing something. But sometimes the way your customer is smart is not compatible with the way you're smart. Don't just rely on your natural strengths. Develop resources, tools, connections, illustrations, video recordings, or some other kind of resource that helps you better communicate with your customers.



# Intellectual Bandwidth

Have you ever heard of the concept of bandwidth? Bandwidth is a term that's used when referring to telephone services. They talk about a particular type of telephone line, whether it's a fiber optic cable, or whether it's coaxial cable, as having a certain bandwidth. A *bandwidth* indicates the amount of information that can be processed at a given time, efficiently.

For example, the "plain old telephone service" (POTS, they call it) can accommodate a few conversations on one copper wire, at one time, but there's a limit to how much it can handle. If you change that to another type of cable, you increase the bandwidth and it can handle lots more information at one time. If you go to fiber optic, you can expand greatly the bandwidth and increase the number of communications that can efficiently go over that cable at that time.

People also have *bandwidths*. Most people have what I call **operational bandwidth**. Their intellectual capacity may be potentially able to handle all the information in the world, but not all at once. Someone with operational bandwidth can handle a few ideas at a time, efficiently. However, if you start presenting several different ideas at once, they get confused and frustrated.

The next level, what I call, **strategic bandwidth**, can handle more information, but there's still an upper limit to how much they can handle.

The highest level, for our purposes, is **conceptual bandwidth**. Conceptual bandwidth would be the broadband, top speed operators, and make up about two percent of the population. These are people who have an enormous capacity for processing different ideas at the same time and doing so efficiently. These are people who can juggle a lot of different tasks at once, "keep all the plates spinning on the poles," and keep these ideas clearly separated in their mind. They can shift from one to the other without any real confusion.

**Strategic bandwidth** represents about eighteen percent of the population. When they look at something, they look at it, not in terms of the overall concepts, they look at it strategically and they think, "How can this be used, what are some other options or alternatives?" Typically, these are the people who are drawn towards sales, management, or leadership positions. This is not always true of people with strategic bandwidths, but typically, it is the case.

**Operational bandwidths** constitute the remaining eighty percent of the population. The vast majority of people have operational bandwidth. That means that they are plenty intelligent to do all that they need to do in their life, but that their intellectual capacity, at a certain point, gets overloaded and they get confused or frustrated beyond that point. With them, the best way to operate is one or two ideas at a time, keep focused on those, get closure on those ideas, and then go on to the next step. An operational bandwidth person would look at function first.

## INTELLECTUAL BANDWIDTH



Here's an example. Let's say you take a ballpoint pen, a gold ballpoint pen. You hand it to the person and you say, "What is this; tell me about this." The operational person would say to you, "It's a ball-point pen." You'd say, "Tell me more." "Well, it's a gold ballpoint pen. What else?" "What do you want to know?" "How could it be used?" "It could be used for writing, for marking, illustrating." "Any other uses?" "Of course." In other words, it would all ultimately occur to them, but they won't just instantly start thinking of all these possibilities. They see the function and that's where they stop. Unless prompted to go beyond it. Again, about eighty percent of the people you will deal with as a salesperson tend to think this way.

When you're presenting a sales idea, present it simply, clearly, and focus on that idea. Let them understand that one.

Think of ideas like a pearl. The idea is the pearl and you're dropping it into a bottle of thick shampoo. Let the pearl sink slowly but surely to the bottom of the bottle before you put another idea into the top. With operational people, it's best to present one idea at a time with a clear focus, provide closure, and then present the next concept.

**Strategic thinkers** look at that pen that you had presented to them and they say, "This is a writing instrument, but it's more than that." You say, "What do you mean?" They respond, "It could also be used to scratch your ear, it could be used to prop open a window, it could be used as business jewelry, you can put it in your pocket or purse or portfolio and it would go along with the other things you had that were similar in design." There are a lot of uses



apparent to the strategic thinker. With strategic thinkers, present your idea, but explore some of the options. Think with them about the possibilities that are represented there.

Next, you go to a **conceptual thinker** and you hand them the pen, “What is this?” They’ll look at you, they’ll get a little reflective, as they look off in the distance and they say, “What you have here is a symbol of mankind’s ability to transcend space and time.” Excuse me? “Yes, this pen represents mankind’s ability to create a tool for its own use. And it allows us to make markings that have similar meaning to different people. It allows us to write stories and draw images, which over time can communicate with people who haven’t even been born yet.” And you say, “Wait a minute, I really didn’t want to know quite that much...” Recognize that about two percent of the people you call on are going to be conceptual thinkers. They’re going to be racing way ahead of where you are in presenting your information. Allow the conceptual thinker to explore a bit, sell him on the main concept or idea and why you two should talk about a buying or selling opportunity, why he should consider this form of investment, and why he should consider your product versus another. Sell the why, explore the how—and then commit to finalizing the sale that’s at hand.

With the **operational person**, their first focus is not on the “why,” it’s on the “how.” The strategic person can kind of vacillate between the two. Learn to recognize whether the person you’re talking with is more conceptual, more strategic, or more operational. When you do, you don’t have to be a scientist to become better at noticing which kind of bandwidth you’re dealing with in a sales situation. That will help you adapt your selling to their buying.

*For more information on Multiple Intellects, Personal Velocity, Behavioral Styles, and Intellectual Bandwidth; get Jim Cathcart’s best-seller The Acorn Principle. Visit [http://www.cathcart.com/products\\_acorn\\_principle.aspx](http://www.cathcart.com/products_acorn_principle.aspx)*

## Notice More

At this point, you may be thinking, *This is fascinating, but there is so much to remember!* But fear not: I have a way to make it easier. Just open the files in your own mind and start “Noticing More” about each person you meet. Don’t stress over whether you have the right response to their high empathy value, moderate velocity, director behavioral style, or mathematical intellect. Just notice it.

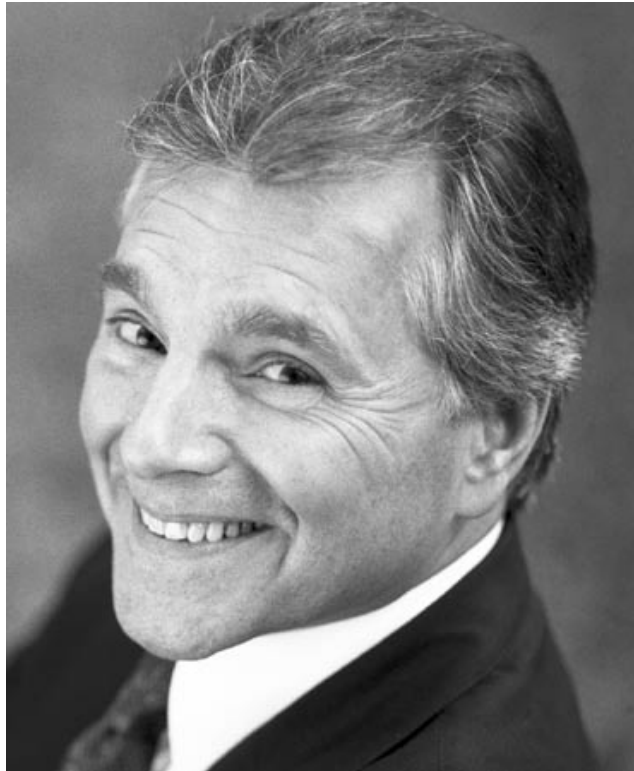
The beginning of learning is awareness. Once you realize that there is such a thing as Personal Velocity, you will immediately begin to notice velocity differences among people. Take your time and casually reflect on the velocity of many of your customers, coworkers, and family members. Don’t worry about getting it right. You can save that for later. For now, just notice it. What you’ll find is that by the simple act of noticing velocities you will start adapting to them. The longer you do this, the better you will become.

The same is true for Intellectual Bandwidth and the other dimensions of our personalities. The more you notice and reflect on what you see, the better you will become at adapting to these differences.

Reading the mind of your buyer isn’t weird science, it is simply intelligent observation. People give off thousands of clues as to what they care about, how they think, the pace they feel most comfortable with, what makes them feel secure, and countless other details that will factor into your interaction with them. Sales Psychology is the study of how people think and act when in a sales situation. You will learn much more about what makes people buy simply by noticing the many messages they are already sending to you. Read and reread this book until you become fluent in reading people’s messages.

You will also find that people start opening up to you more and trusting you more readily. The reason for this is that you are aligning yourself with them in ways that reduce their tension and allow trust to grow. People buy from people they trust. Make sure that includes buying from *you*.

*To order other eBooks in the Relationship Selling™ series, visit [http://cathcart.com/products\\_relationship\\_selling.aspx#intro\\_relationship\\_selling](http://cathcart.com/products_relationship_selling.aspx#intro_relationship_selling).*



## About the Author

### Jim Cathcart

High achievers from around the world credit the advice and inspiration of Jim Cathcart as keys to their personal advancement. As the author of thirteen books on business and psychology including two best sellers, *The Acorn Principle* and *Relationship Selling*, Jim Cathcart's works are in use by businesses and universities worldwide.

CEO and founder of Cathcart Institute, Inc., Jim sits on several corporate boards plus the Board of Visitors of Pepperdine University's Graziadio School of Business and Management.

He is one of the world's top professional speakers and business authors and has been inducted into the Speaker Hall Of Fame, received the Golden Gavel Award from Toastmasters International, and the Cavett Award from the National Speakers Association. Jim became a member of Speakers Roundtable, 20 of the top professional speakers in the world, in 1986.

Cathcart Institute, Inc., founded in 1977, is a network of highly qualified business advisors who teach Jim Cathcart's concepts and strategies for Relationship Selling and personal advancement. The Relationship Selling Sales Excellence System is built upon the principles of personal accountability and structured to utilize all of an organization's learning resources, not just the material in this book. Business leaders and top salespeople turn to Cathcart Institute, Inc. for training, inspiration and personal advice in their quest to reach the top one percent of their field.

With over 2,500 speeches delivered to more than 1,500 different clients worldwide, Jim Cathcart has reached hundreds of thousands of business professionals in person.

To contact Cathcart Institute, Inc. at their California Headquarters visit <http://www.cathcart.com> or call 800 222 4883.