



Executive Speak™ Workbook

Welcome

Executive Speak™ takes the conversational principles you learned from the ValueSelling Framework® and applies concepts to help you become better business partners. Some might call this having business acumen. What it really comes down to is understanding how your buyer's organization makes money, and then anchoring your valuable solutions to their business objectives. You must demonstrate that you have the domain expertise and credibility to gain and maintain access to the corner office.

Whether you're selling to corporations, nonprofits or government agencies, in all cases, you need to demonstrate business acumen and conversational skills with executives. Every organization needs cash to operate and the ongoing ability to bring in more than they spend.

We created Executive Speak to help you stay competitive in a world where your customers expect the people selling to them to speak their language and understand their world to help them make good decisions. If you speak the language of business, your credibility will increase. And as your credibility increases, you'll be a better salesperson and consultative partner.

So here's the big picture of what we'll be covering in Executive Speak:

- First, we'll show you how to **INVESTIGATE** and predict a target company's business issues, problems and possible solution capabilities by analyzing market research, industry news and their own website and social media posts. This research and analysis will give you the basis for creating a VisionMatch with your buyer when you set up an initial call with them.
- You will create a company profile, using a tool we provide called the 360° Profile Builder™. Any Internet search yields a ton of information. But the Profile Builder will laser-focus your research and analysis on the most critical details and show you what you can confidently ignore. You'll learn how to quickly scan income statements, balance sheets and cash flow documents to discern valuable data. You'll get a good grasp of how the financials spotlight business drivers, such as cash, assets, and profit. This will allow you to have conversations with key decision-makers in the language they prefer--the language of money.
- Next, you'll **PREDICT** your customer's business issues and problems, based on the results of your investigations.
- Finally, you'll **PREPARE** for conversations with key decision-makers, the people who can say yes or no to your solutions. You'll learn how to gain access to these key decision-makers and keep access to them active and frequent. Even if you don't have a reference or introduction, we'll show you a foolproof way to make executives pay attention to you with our AIM technique.

The first few moments of your sales call are critical. Will you know what to say to keep them interested? You'll learn how to get their attention with credibility stories.

Then, as final preparation for your call, you will complete a pre-call **ValuePrompter®** that prompts you to ask compelling open-ended, probing, and anxiety questions.

We encourage you to engage and make the most of what you learn in Executive Speak. Start using the process, language and tools right away for your next important calls. Let's begin!

Table of Contents

Module 1: Learn to Speak to Executives	3
Module 2: Think Like an Executive	5
Module 3: Investigate Your Buyer's Company and Industry	7
Module 4: Investigate Your Buyer's Health	8
Module 5: Investigate Your Buyer's Key People	13
Module 6: Predict	15
Module 7: Prepare to Gain Access	16
Module 8: Prepare to Establish Credibility	20
Module 9: Prepare Questions	22
The 360° Profile Builder™	24

MODULE 1:

Learn to speak to executives

In this course, you will learn how to:

- Scan the current business landscape and identify opportunities and threats
- Determine whether it's more important to solve problems than business issues
- Research your client's' industry, company, people and finances
- Compare your buyer's company with their competitors
- Easily spot converging and diverging industry trends that affect your client
- Determine if your buyer's company is financially healthy
- Identify and read the financial statements that tells you how money flows through your buyer's company
- Calculate how much revenue a company generated in the current year
- Calculate the percentage of gross margins in a company's current fiscal year
- Find net profits on a company's income statement
- Analyze if your client's company has enough cash on hand
- Predict a company's business issues and problems
- Make accurate guesses about which of your solution capabilities will interest your customer
- Plan to call on the highest level of executives in your buyer's organization
- Encourage people in influential positions, who have never met you, to return your calls
- Ask the right questions to encourage your buyer to talk to you

YOUR ACTION PLAN:

- Think about one of your buyers. Imagine what it's like to be in their shoes. What can you do to help them reach their goals?
- Pay close attention to the Executive Speak modules that cover your areas of improvement
- Each upcoming module has a companion workbook. Make it a habit of downloading and printing each workbook to reinforce what you will learn and take notes.
- Look at your calendar and identify times that you will set aside to study the Executive Speak modules

MODULE 2:

Think like an executive

KEY CONCEPTS

Your customers have business objectives they must meet and strategies they must implement to maintain and grow their business. The business issues are the high-level barriers they need to address and resolve in order to achieve their business objectives.

- Using your knowledge of how the relationship between business objectives, business issues, problems and value are connected with your solution capabilities is a good way to build your business acumen skills
- A business objective is what a company needs to do to maintain and grow their revenues and profits
- Business objectives are met by trying different strategies
- Business issues are the high-level barriers that a company needs to solve to achieve their business objectives
- Business issues affect people in your buyer's organization differently
- Problems are those challenges that make the business issue difficult to overcome. They are underlying combinations of people, processes, and technologies.
- Connecting your solution capabilities to the business issue will improve your chances of quickly getting funded
- Uncovering problems leads to conversations about the value, or impact, of solving those problems
- Uncover problems with skillful and deliberate open-ended and probing questions
- Your role is to translate the value of your solution into their language, based on their role and what each person is measured on

MODULE 2: THINK LIKE AN EXECUTIVE

YOUR ACTION PLAN:

- Consider one of your customers. What is their business objective? What is their strategy for achieving it? What business issue is their number one challenge? What problems make it difficult to overcome that challenge? What is the value of solving those problems?
- Download a blank ValuePrompter and in each of the boxes, record your responses to these questions. Rate each response on a scale of “guess” or “fact.”
- If you are not sure what their business issue is but know what their problems are, can you reverse-engineer what the business issue might be?
- Optional: Share your ValuePrompter with your manager or interested team members. Ask them to help you fill in any missing information they know about your customer or prospect.

Notes:

MODULE 3:

Investigate Your Buyer's Company/Industry

KEY CONCEPTS:

**Investigate**

Answer questions that cover your buyer's company, industry, financial health, and key people.

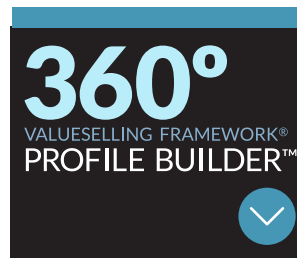
**Predict**

You will be analyzing your summaries to predict your buyer's business issue, problems, the impact your solutions will have on their business and key people with whom you should be meeting.

**Prepare**

Each ValuePrompter® section will show your predictions and offer some suggested Open, Probe and Anxiety questions stems.

YOUR ACTION PLAN



This week, download the 360° Profile Builder™ and focus on these simple actions to strengthen research skills.

- Choose an opportunity you're currently pursuing
- Do the research on your buyer by answering the company and industry questions in the 360° Profile Builder™
- Practice synthesizing what you gather down to the shortest possible statements that still retain the most important details
- Think about drivers and trends in your buyer's industry and how they relate to your products or solutions
- Share your completed 360° Profile Builder™ sections with your manager or one of your team members for feedback and insights

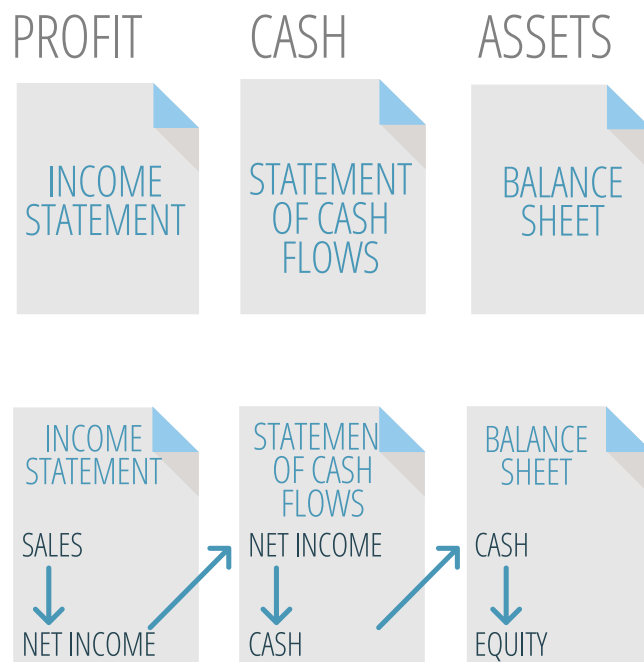
Notes:

MODULE 4:

Investigate Your Buyer's Finances

KEY CONCEPTS

Your ability to confirm how your client responds to “is it worth it?” is a key part of the qualification process. That impact or value is revealed in one or more areas of their financial statements. Therefore, you should know how their business is measured and managed before you have the meeting.



Three Key Financial Statements:

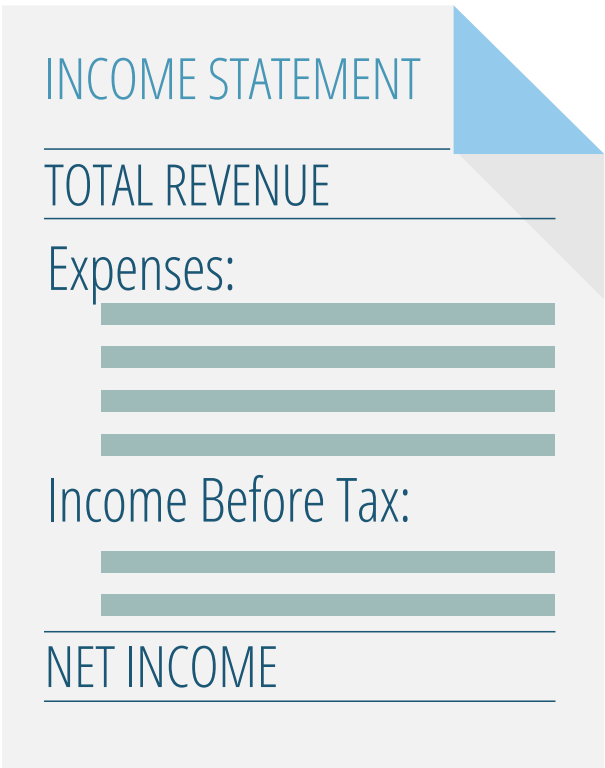
The **Income Statement** reveals the ability to generate profit. The **Statement of Cash Flows** focuses solely on changes in cash inflows and outflows. The **Balance Sheet** focuses on assets and liabilities and shows the amount of investment needed to support the sales and profits shown on the Income Statement.

Taken together, these three statements will tell you how a company's revenues benefits their shareholders:

- The **Income Statement**, or P&L, starts with sales at the top. After subtracting all expenses, it ends with profit, or Net Income.
- The **Statement of Cash Flows** starts at the top with Net Income. After subtracting how cash is generated and used, it ends with how much cash is on hand.
- The **Balance Sheet** starts with how much cash is on hand. After subtracting liabilities from assets, it ends with Shareholder's Equity. Equity is what is left over after subtracting liabilities from assets.

Income Statement

An Income Statement reports a company's net profit or loss for a particular accounting period such as a month, a quarter, or a year. It is sometimes called the profit and loss statement, or "P & L." It typically provides two to three years of historical data for comparison, which is helpful for spotting trends.



Notes:

PRIMARY EQUATION:
Sales minus Costs = Profit

How it's organized

- At the top, the statement starts with sales, or revenue, and flows down to net income and earnings per share, or EPS. The revenue line is called the "top line" and the net profit line is called the "bottom line."
- After the revenue top line, expenses are divided into two parts: operating and non-operating. The operating expense part of the income statement shows information about expenses that are a direct result of regular business operations.
- When a company wants to become more profitable, they generally try to cut operating costs.
- The non-operating section shows expense information about activities that aren't part of a company's regular operations.

What to look for

A quick way to analyze the P&L is to look at year over year (YOY):

- Total revenue growth rate
- Net income growth rate
- Profit margin growth rate

Statement of Cash Flows

The Statement of Cash Flows provides the information for how much actual cash a company is generating. The ability to generate cash flow is the most important task a company has.

STATEMENT OF CASH FLOWS
for the year ended Dec 31
NET INCOME
...
CASH FLOWS FROM OPERATING ACTIVITIES
...
CASH FLOWS FROM INVESTING ACTIVITIES
...
CASH FLOWS FROM FINANCING ACTIVITIES
...
CASH AND CASH EQUIVALENTS

Notes:

PRIMARY EQUATION:

$$\begin{aligned} &\text{Cash from Operating Activities} + \\ &\text{Cash from Investing Activities} + \\ &\text{Cash from Financing Activities} \\ &= \text{Change in Cash} \end{aligned}$$

How it's organized

- In the middle of the statement is Net Cash Provided by Operating Activities. This section measures the cash used or provided by normal operations.
- Next is Net Cash Used in Investing Activities. This area lists all the cash used or provided by the purchase and sale of income-producing assets.
- Last is Net Cash Used from Financing Activities. This section measures the flow of cash between a firm and its owners and creditors.

What to look for

- A healthy company will show Net Cash Provided by Operating Activities as increasing over time.
- Look at Net Cash from Financing Activities, and consider the age of the company you're researching to analyze how they borrow cash.
- Generally, they should have at least 10% of their overall money in cash, but check what is typical for the industry.

Balance Sheet

A balance sheet is a financial statement that summarizes a company's assets, liabilities and shareholders' equity at a specific point in time. These three balance sheet segments give investors an idea as to what the company owns and owes, as well as the amount invested by shareholders.

BALANCE SHEET	
(in thousands, except per-share amounts) as of December 31	
ASSETS	
...	
TOTAL ASSETS	
LIABILITIES	
...	
TOTAL LIABILITIES	
SHAREHOLDER'S EQUITY	
...	
TOTAL SHAREHOLDER'S EQUITY	

PRIMARY EQUATION:
Equity plus Liabilities = Assets

How it's organized

- This statement is called the balance sheet because the two sides of it ALWAYS add up to the same amount.
- The balance sheet lets you know exactly what items of value a company controls or owns, otherwise known as assets. Assets are cash and cash equivalents.
- Above the total current assets line are items that can be turned to cash quickly.
- Below the line are items that are harder to quickly convert to cash, such as property and equipment.
- Goodwill is an intangible asset that is made up of brand image, employee know how, and so on.
- Liabilities are arranged at the top by what's due first to what's due last.
- Equity is what is owned by the business that is paid in full.

What to look for

- Look at assets to sales trends. If sales grow, assets should grow. If sales are down, assets should also be down.
- Look at liabilities to sales trends. If sales grow, liabilities grow. If sales are down, liabilities should also decrease.

Notes:

Ratios

Ratios can tell you how profitable a company is. A ratio simply says how much of one thing is compared to another thing. In all of these ratios, the higher the percentage, the better. You will have to seek out the normal ratio amounts in your buyer's industries.

- **Equity Ratio > 30%** For example, an Equity Ratio divides the equity number by the total assets. The resulting percentage should be 30% or greater. Check comparable companies in your buyer's industry.
- **Current Ratio > 1%** Another useful ratio is to divide Current Assets by Current Liabilities. The result should be greater than 1, meaning trends are good and growing.
- **Asset Utilization Ratios** Asset Utilization is a category of ratios used by business analysts to determine how well a company is using its available assets to generate a profit. Some examples are:
 - **Inventory Turnover** = Cost of Goods Sold divided by Inventories
 - **Return on Assets, or ROA**, is Net Income divided by Assets
 - **Return on Equity, or ROE**, is Net Income divided by Total Shareholder's Equity.

YOUR ACTION PLAN

To prepare for high-level business conversation, practice reading financial statements. Even if your buyer's company is privately held and doesn't publish financial information, you can still benefit from this practice.

- Choose an opportunity you're currently pursuing.
- If the company is publicly held, look at their Investor Relations section on their website. Listen to the audio recordings of investor calls. What topics are discussed?
- Locate their annual report and read it. What topics does the Chief Executive Officer mention in the opening message?
- Compare the financial information you find on your buyer's company with other companies similar to theirs. How is your target company performing by comparison?
- Optional: Share your completed 360° Profile Builder™ sections with your manager or one of your team members for feedback and insights.

MODULE 5:

Investigate Your Buyer's People

KEY CONCEPTS

One of the ValueSelling Framework® foundational principles is “you can’t sell to someone who can’t buy.” This means that you can only sell to someone who is qualified. In the ValueSelling Framework, a qualified prospect is a person who believes that your solution has the capabilities to solve a problem connected to an agreed-upon business issue, or what we call a “VisionMatch”; sees value in taking action now; has the power, or the financial ability, to make a decision; and agrees on a plan and a timeline with you.

Identifying the right person who can buy is one of the biggest challenges that you will encounter. Sometimes it’s hard to figure out where you can find the right individual and how you’re going to gain access to them.

Research is the key to gaining access

- Connect how each person’s role is related to their possible business issue
- Knowledge of the corporate structure and the reporting relationships will lend credibility
- Gain insights into how decisions are made in their company.
- Reveal the path of authorization for purchases and who can approve projects.
- Gain access to your prospect’s company wherever you can

Notes:

Typical Corporate Roles

Chief Executive Officer

Reports to: Board of Directors

Key Responsibilities:

- Sets corporate strategy
- Defines company mission
- Sets corporate objectives
- Key decision-maker

Issues:

- Sales growth
- Market share
- Net income
- Cash flow

Chief Operating Officer

Reports to: CEO

Key Responsibilities:

- Sets Business Unit objectives/budgets
- Sets capital spending plans
- Leads Research & Development
- Leads Manufacturing
- Leads Facilities Management

Issues:

- Operating expenses
- Operating efficiencies
- Supply chain management

Chief Financial Officer

Reports to: CEO

Key Responsibilities:

- Acquires money
- Sets budgets
- Manages cash flow
- Acquires capital equipment
- Prepares financial reports

Issues:

- Operating expenses
- Capital investments
- Cash flow
- Inventory levels
- Cost of capital
- Gross Margins

Chief Information Officer

Reports to: CFO or CEO

Key Responsibilities:

- Enables information flow
- Develops/maintains applications

Issues:

- Uptime/availability
- Information security
- Capital expenses
- Maintenance costs

VP, Research & Development

Reports to: COO or CEO

Key Responsibilities:

- Develops new products
- Manages product quality

Issues:

- New product time to market
- Manufacturability
- Product cost
- Product quality

VP, Manufacturing

Reports to: COO

Key Responsibilities:

- Runs factory
- Manages inventory
- Manages capital expenses
- Manages suppliers
- Logistics

Issues:

- Product/unit costs
- Equipment costs
- Inventory levels

VP, Sales

Reports to: COO or CEO

Key Responsibilities:

- Manages sales organization
- Develops sales forecasts
- Sets sales quotas

Issues:

- Revenue targets
- Gross margins
- Product mix

VP, Human Resources

Reports to: CEO or COO

Key Responsibilities:

- Implements compensation plans
- Develops employees
- Hires and fires
- Administers benefits

Issues:

- Right skill mix
- Productivity
- Employee retention
- Compensation/benefits cost

MODULE 6:

Predict

KEY CONCEPTS

Predict to engage, not tell them what you know

- The purpose of making predictions isn't to walk into a meeting and assume you know all the answers. It's to create a conversation that will draw your customer out and get them to talk about their business. Then, you will be able to map your solution to their point of view, using their words. Prediction is a method to engage and get to the heart of the matter sooner.
- Since creating a VisionMatch is one of the top priorities to achieve early in the sales process, you will want to walk into the meeting with predictions about their business issue and problems. A VisionMatch occurs when both the buyer and seller agree on the number of business issues and problems.

YOUR ACTION PLAN

- Read the summaries on each of the Predict section pages and write predictions in the text fields. These predictions will carry over to the Prepare section.
- Whenever you come across new industry information, pause and consider how it affects your buyer's business. Add it to your 360° Profile Builder™.
- Test your predictions by sharing them with your team or manager. They may have perspectives you haven't yet considered.

Notes:

MODULE 7:

Prepare to gain access

KEY CONCEPTS

An AIM (Anxiety-Influence-Motivation) campaign is an individualized, multi-channel, communication campaign designed to target specific people with the intent to gain access to the executive decision-maker.



ANXIETY

- What may cause a buyer to pause and reflect.
- Consider that there may be a different way to solve their problems.
- Ask what areas might cause each team member anxiety:
Are they concerned with deadlines, falling profits, or growing market share?



INFLUENCE

- Who might influence your executive?
- Include them in the message you are crafting.
- Have you partnered with businesses in similar situations? What success stories can you share that will impact each person in your campaign? What data can you provide that demonstrates your track record?



MOTIVATION

- Examples may be credibility you have from solving similar problems with other organizations.
- It might be the potential value or impact that you can bring to their business.
- What concerns each person? Are they worried about protecting their reputation? Are there dynamics at play in their business unit? Are they meeting their personal objectives?

Notes:

Best Practices

- **Research company, industry, finances and people.** An AIM campaign requires examining all of the people you're going to contact. Do they have a LinkedIn page, a bio on their company's website, or do you know anyone in your network who might have experience working with them? Ask yourself how you can design a message that will get their attention, create anxiety, exert influence, and motivate them.
- **Target each person.** An AIM message can be an email, letter, or voicemail. Create a template that targets multiple people using similar messaging. Be transparent about the fact that you're contacting each of them, but tailor each letter to the specific individual. By including more than one person, you may motivate one or more of them to "step up" and respond to your communication.
- **Include quantifiable data.** Make the message about them. Your AIM message doesn't focus on YOU, but on how other companies realized improvements by using your solutions. Mention clients you've partnered with they will recognize. Address business problems and provide specific examples of how you partnered to help solve challenges. Include quantifiable data to back up your assertions.

The AIM Letter Template

Hello <recipient name>,

I'm sending <mention the other people who are also part of the campaign> a similar email to <other team members>. Who else at <your company> would have the most interest in the work <we> have done to <capabilities list> such as <name-drop another company>?

<We> focus on delivering <capabilities list>. I have successfully achieved results on projects ranging from:

<Quantify results relevant to the message recipient> Increased Shareholder Value by 13%.

<Other company> share prices increased by <quantify amount> in the last fiscal year.

Their CEO said in their annual report that "With the move to <your capability>, we were able to <result>. This increased our share value dramatically from the previous year's growth." <Other company> implemented <our capability> in all of their <locations>.

We are now focusing on the <name> industry, so I will be contacting several companies in your segment. I will be in your area on <specific dates>. May I schedule an appointment with you or someone else at <your company>?

Sincerely,

<you>

The AIM Campaign Worksheet

For each person in your AIM Campaign, list Anxiety, Influence and Motivation messages.

	Person 1 Name	Person 2 Name	Person 3 Name
	Title	Title	Title
ANXIETY <ul style="list-style-type: none"> What may cause them to pause and reflect? Is there a different way to solve their problems? 			
INFLUENCE <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Who might influence them? Should the Influencer be included in the messaging? Have you partnered in a similar situation? 			
MOTIVATION <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Have you solved similar problems for another client? What was the value of that solution? What concerns each person you are messaging? 			

MODULE 7: PREPARE TO GAIN ACCESS

YOUR ACTION PLAN

- Use AIM campaigns for when you don't have a personal connection to your target buyer and the people on their team.
- Use the blank AIM Campaign template in your workbook for each of your ongoing opportunities.
- Populate your campaign with details from the research you gathered in your 360° Profile Builder™
- Customize your messaging for each person included in the campaign
- Be transparent and mention all of the people to whom you are also sending a message. It might motivate them to answer you if they know you included other peers.

Notes:

MODULE 8:

Prepare to establish credibility

KEY CONCEPTS

A “been there, solved that” story describes how your company overcame another similar company’s problems. The story also quantifies the VALUE of your solution. It reframes you in your customer’s mind as someone with which they can work. The buyers you’re targeting aren’t sitting around with nothing to do. You need to get their attention and not waste their time by using very targeted and selective stories that focus on them, not you.

The Credibility Story Formula

1. Describe your business in terms that your buyer will recognize.

2. Tell them about problems, challenges, or opportunities that created the need for your solution.

3. Quantify the impact or value of solving, improving, or changing what you identified in step 2.

4. Transition to your customer’s business issue.

MODULE 8: PREPARE TO ESTABLISH CREDIBILITY

BEST PRACTICES

- **Differentiate.** Choose a success that differentiated you. What is something unique about what your company does, or about your product or services?
- **Edit.** Make your message quick, come to the point, and don't waste their time. As long as your story is honest, has substance, and connects with the executive, it doesn't need to be long or oversold.
- **Rehearse.** Your 30-second message should be carefully scripted out, rehearsed and timed, so that you can use it as an email, a voicemail script, or a quick impromptu conversation starter. Nearly everyone has access to a recording device, whether it's in their phone or on their desktop computer. Practice reading your 30-second credibility story out loud. Time yourself.
- **ValuePrompter®.** Use a ValuePrompter to create your story. Flesh out the Business Issue, Problem and Value boxes. When you first meet someone, your focus should not be on Solution, until they have a chance to tell you their views.
- **Context.** Tell the story in a context that's relative to your customer. Use similar organizations, similar situations, and the value you brought through partnerships.
- **Transition.** Once you've shared your story, find the right time to transition to their business issue.

YOUR ACTION PLAN

- Think about past successes you, your team or your company have had. Using the ValuePrompter, create storylines around the business issues and problems you solved with your differentiated solution and the metrics, impact or fiscal value you helped your customers achieve.
- Now, survey your prospects and opportunities. Think about the individuals represented there. What success stories would resonate with each person?
- Using the credibility story formula, practice telling each story on video, using your smartphone or camera. Play it back and see where you are effective and where you need more practice.
- When you think you have your stories well-rehearsed, try them on your team members or manager and get their feedback. Offer to hear their credibility stories.

MODULE 9:

Prepare questions

KEY CONCEPTS

People buy from people. A successful sales relationship hinges on your ability to establish trust and rapport. Trust and rapport are essential in encouraging potential buyers to share their challenges and allow you to explore different solutions. The greater the trust and rapport, the easier it is to get the client to share their perspective, including their personal motivations, and to listen to how your products can create value for them.

At the root of the ValueSelling Framework® is the ability to skillfully ask the right questions and actively listen to the responses.

For pre-call planning, reserve your focus on questions that will help you create a VisionMatch* with your buyer. What's a VisionMatch? A VisionMatch occurs when a buyer sees that the solution you propose will solve their problems and resolve their business issue.



OPEN-ENDED QUESTIONS

An open-ended question is one designed to bring to the surface your buyer's view of their current situation and encourage them to talk more. They are objective, non-leading, and usually start with "what," "why," or "how." Open questions demonstrate that you're interested.



PROBING QUESTIONS

Probing questions expand the conversation to include information the buyer wouldn't have shared otherwise, or to gain a deeper understanding of information revealed by Open questions. They are typically a "yes" or "no" question.



ANXIETY QUESTIONS

Anxiety Questions cause a Buyer to experience the consequences of not having your Solution. They create a sense of urgency when none exists. Anxiety Questions are provocative in nature. They challenge a Buyer's way of thinking.

YOUR ACTION PLAN

- ### Notes:

The 360° Profile Builder™

INVESTIGATE

Open the 360° Profile Builder™ and go to the Investigate tab

Step 1: Gather information for each question about company and industry

- Each question page has suggestions for where you should look for information
- Answer these questions:
 - Describe the company's business
 - What are their products and services?
 - How do they go to market?
 - Who are their customers?
 - Any drivers or trends about them in the press?
 - Describe their movement in the market
 - Any recent changes in the industry or for your buyer?
 - Any notable mergers or acquisitions?
 - Any notable challenges or problems in their industry?
 - Any notable opportunities or threats in their industry?

Step 2: Summarize your research

- Read what you've put in the text area for each question
- Start deleting out any extra words or repetitions
- Study what's left and write a synopsis that is 200 characters or less
- Type this synopsis into the bottom text field. You will see this text again on the Profile Summary page with all of the other question summaries.

Step 3: Gather financial statements

- Locate your buyer's income statement on their company website. This is generally located under Investor Relations, or within their annual reports.
- Answer these questions:
 - How have their revenues changed over the past few years?
 - How have their profit margins changed over the past few years?
 - How have their net profits changed over the past few years?
- Record the revenue numbers and calculate the percentages for profit margins and net income.

Step 4: Calculate revenue, profit margins and net income

- As you analyze the revenue, profit margins and net income, what do the numbers suggest to you about how the company is doing financially?
- Write your observations into the Notes section. You will see this text again on the Profile Summary page with all of the other question summaries.

Step 5: Gather information about key people

- Using your buyer's corporate web site or social media, look for biographies and profiles of the key people that fit your ideal target profile. This is generally located under About Us.
- Answer these questions:
 - Who is in management and how are they organized?
 - Who is your ideal contact in the company?
 - What part of the business do they manage or own?
- Record the names and titles, pertinent biography details, phone numbers, email addresses for each person who is related to your ideal target profile.

Step 6: Identify the key people in your target company

- As you gather research on key people, what have you discovered about their roles and responsibilities?
- Write your observations in the Notes section. Then summarize your notes into short statements. Your summaries will be used to build a profile, predict business issues and problems, and write questions for your initial meetings with the people you target.

PREDICT

Open the 360° Profile Builder™ and go to the Predict tab

Step 1: Analyze information that will help you predict your client's business issue.

- When you answered all of the questions in the Investigate section, you gathered detailed information that is relevant to your buyer's business issue. Now, analyze the information and make predictions:
- Advance to the Business Issue page. Your answers to eight questions that pertain to business issues are listed on this page.
- Read the summaries, then ask yourself "What does your buyer need to address and resolve to achieve their business objectives?"
- Write your answer in the text field below this question. The information entered here will be used in the Prepare section to create open, probe and anxiety questions to use when you meet with your buyer.

Step 2: Analyze information that will help you predict your client's problems.

- Advance to the Problem page. Your answers to nine questions that pertain to problems are listed on this page
- Read the summaries, then ask yourself "What might be difficulties that prevent your buyer from being able to address satisfactorily or resolve their business issues?"
- Write your answer in the text field below this question. The information entered here will be used in the Prepare section to create open, probe and anxiety questions to use when you meet with your buyer.

Step 3: Analyze information that will help you predict solutions you have in which they might be interested.

- Advance to the Solution page. Your answers to five questions that pertain to the capabilities of your solutions are listed on this page
- Read the summaries, then ask yourself "What capabilities do your solutions have that may solve your buyer's business issues or problems?"
- Write your answer in the text field below this question. The information entered here will be used in the Prepare section to create open, probe and anxiety questions to use when you meet with your buyer.

PREPARE

Open the 360° Profile Builder™ and go to the Prepare tab

Step 1: Create questions based on your predictions

- As you analyze the predictions you made about your buyer's business issues, problems, solutions, value, and power, use your details to craft open-ended, probing and anxiety questions to use during your call:
- For each topic in the Prepare section, write some questions:
 - Open-ended questions often start with "what," "how," and "why."
 - Probing questions deliberately ask your buyer to focus in on an aspect of their thoughts
 - Anxiety questions cause your buyer to momentarily experience what it would be like to not have your product or solution
- Write as many questions as you can think of in each category, without editing or overthinking.
- When you can't think of any more questions, read back through your list and prune it by taking out poor questions and editing weak ones. You don't need to use all of the questions in your call.

Step 2: Prepare your pre-call ValuePrompter®

- The ValuePrompter® is a tool that helps plan your sales calls and prepare questions so that you can refer to, and "prompt" during a sales call. Each section of the tool, or "box," has room for you to record questions and answers.
- The top half of the ValuePrompter® is related to the VisionMatch. The boxes for Business Issue, Problem and Solution are the main components of a VisionMatch.

Executive Speak™ Workbook