

Understand my business. No, REALLY understand my business.

You can't influence if you don't understand.

A cornerstone of great selling is the ability to deeply and broadly understand your customer's business. But too often, sales teams believe they understand their customer because they've had a good meeting with the Buyer. True customer understanding goes far deeper, and it's one of the biggest differentiators in competitive markets.

In our view, great sellers build insight at three levels.

The Corporate Big Picture

What the organisation is trying to achieve, its strategic priorities, financial pressures, and long-term direction.

Category or Functional Priorities

How those corporate goals translate into the category you operate in – growth agendas, role of the category, operational challenges, margin expectations.

Individual KPIs and Success Measures

What key stakeholders are personally accountable for – their objectives, incentives, risks, and what 'success' looks like for them.

When sellers understand all three, they stop selling products and start delivering relevance. They speak to what matters, tailor their plans to the customer's reality, and show up as partners.

And in today's environment, where growth is hard to find, this depth of understanding is what enables high impact, customer centric solutions.

The three things you can do this month to understand your customer better:

01

Map the three levels of customer needs.

Take one key account and write down:

- » Their top three corporate KPIs and the strategies to deliver them.
- » Their top three category or functional priorities.
- » The top three personal measures for each stakeholder you influence.

If you can't fully answer the above, set up a fact-finding call to explore with your key contacts.

02

Build two new cross functional relationships.

Grow your understanding outside the Buyer's office.

Speak to:

- » Supply Chain.
- » Stores.
- » Finance.
- » Operations.
- » Merchandising.

These teams will give you insight into constraints, risks, and opportunities the Buyer never mentions.

03

Start each selling story with their world, not yours.

Before presenting anything, summarise what you understand about their current priorities, challenges and opportunities. This signals credibility and dramatically increases receptivity.



QUICK WIN

Ask your main customer contact: "What's one thing your leadership team is under most pressure to deliver this quarter? How could we help?"

You'll be amazed at what this unlocks.