



HYBRID SELLING

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Welcome to Hybrid Selling

We are inviting you to take 15 minutes of your time to see how you can enable your sales force to succeed in the new hybrid world of sales after the pandemic.

The lights are dimmed, and the "After-Covid Sales Show" is about to start. We are curious and excited. We don't know exactly what to expect and we can't wait until the curtain falls. So let's steal a glance at what is going on behind the curtain:

After almost one year of lockdowns and remote selling, it's becoming more and more obvious what will be the long-term effect of Covid-19 on B2B Marketing & Sales.

According to recent studies from McKinsey & Company, Gartner and others

- Buyers are spending an increasing part of their customer journey online at their convenience and speed without seeing a salesperson.
- 70-80% of B2B decision makers prefer these remote human interactions and digital self-services due to higher speed and convenience.
- 96% of B2B sales teams have fully or partially shifted to remote selling.
- And only 20% of B2B buyers in the future hope to return to in-person sales.

No doubt, that digital and remote selling are here to stay. And after the pandemic, the role of Sales will not be the same as before Covid-19 hit us hard.

But it's also clear that as soon as we will be allowed to travel and meet customers in person, we will hit the road again. Just not as much as before.

So, you better take the bull by the horns and make sure that you star in the After-Covid-Sales-Hybrid-Show, instead of sitting in the audience and waiting for others to act and pave the way for you. Especially, as smart competitors will already be in the starting blocks to take the lead in delivering customer value after the pandemic.

Obviously, the future of Sales will be hybrid.

This is what we recommend you do now and what we will elaborate on in this article:

WHAT TO DO NOW

1. **Rethink your customer journeys:** Make it easier for your customers buying from you including all digital and analogue touchpoints. Decide where and how to increase sales efficiency by digitalized customer interactions, by optimizing your channels to market and redefining your customer portfolio.
2. **Further develop your Remote Selling skills:** Remote selling skills go beyond just using online meeting platforms properly. And Remote Selling is here to stay.
3. **Fully apply the potential of online workshop technologies** for remote collaboration and co-creation: Internally and with your customers.
4. **Improve your Value Selling capabilities:** Modern buyers expect you to reveal how your products and services will drive their business outcome. Make sure that your Value Selling works just as well remotely as in-person. If you want to sell value remotely it has to be well prepared and to the point.
5. **Invest into a thorough preparation of your hybrid customer interactions,** especially as



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it's all about people and value

remote meetings offer less room for improvisation. This is why preparation is even more important when you are remote.

6. As long as it is still people selling to people: **Learn how to deal with different personalities** in different Hybrid Selling situations: in-person and remotely.
7. **Prepare for mean negotiation tactics** and learn how to act and react when it gets rough in a negotiation, especially when buyers try to take advantage of being remote from you.
8. **Make sure that digitalization also reaches your customer services.** Investigate remote and digital service options for your business, including hybrid and remote technical service.

To be successful across all 8 factors you have to make sure to **replace silo thinking by a value driven collaboration** between Marketing, Sales, Technology and all other value creators in the engine room of your business. This will in many cases require **adjusting your roles and responsibilities** accordingly.

On the following pages, we will share some ideas with you on what you can do to prepare your sales force for Hybrid Selling.



1. RETHINK YOUR CUSTOMERS' JOURNEYS



Do you still believe that after the pandemic, the role of Sales will still be the same as before Covid-19 hit us hard? Never ever.

Hybrid Selling means designing, orchestrating and implementing the optimal mix of digital, analog, and in-person interactions with your potential and actual customers.

This all starts with your customers and their journey from exploration over screening, testing, approving, ordering, and delivery to finally using your products and hopefully rebuying them.

Digitalization has changed and is changing these journeys. This has been significantly propelled by Covid-19.

According to a recent Gartner study, today's B2B buyers are only spending 17% of their time meeting with potential suppliers and twice as much time researching independently. Mostly online.¹

So you have to appreciate the post-Covid customer journeys and the different digital and analog touchpoints for the different segments and / or personas.

'Being where your customers are' is the new maxim for customer relationship management and for acquiring new customers. This will by the way teach you where and how to adjust the roles and responsibilities in Marketing and Sales on your way from lead generation to turning leads into offers, offers into business, and business into repeat business. Because it simply doesn't work in silos and will require new ways of collaboration to create positive customer experiences.

Another rationale of hybrid customer journey design is that you should make it easier for your customers buying from you. This may include social media, third party platforms, customer centric webpages or digital tools like online product finders, product search and filter tools, download areas for product data sheets and other information, online ordering options for samples, online order tracking or even online price information and online shopping opportunities.

Be where your customers are. Put yourself into their shoes and make it easy for them buying from you across all digital and analog interactions.

All the digital tools will not only make life easier for your customers. They will also free up a lot of time internally to focus even more on those things which are at the core of a sales role: prospecting, qualifying leads, turning them into business, creating value for customers, communicating value, preparing

negotiations, selling value and capturing value with your prices. Together with Marketing.

Helping your customers becoming more successful and making money with that will still be at the core of the sales role. So getting more digital and hybrid does not mean, that Sales is becoming less important. Quite the contrary.

Sales is no more THE sales channel. It is A sales channel.

Options for optimizing and automating your marketing campaigns and lead generation may be an additional outcome of your customer journey mapping.

In spite of the focus on customer centricity, you should however remain at the wheel and **decide purposely how to interact with the different customers in your customer portfolio**. Which customers prefer what kind of interaction? Which customers should be served 100% remotely to increase sales efficiency and to reduce travel time and costs? What kind of meeting should be done in-person? Which meetings would be better done online?

Pro-actively deciding on this will hike your sales efficiency.

Boost your sales efficiency by pro-actively deciding how to interact with the different customers in your portfolio in a Hybrid Selling approach.

Furthermore, customer journey redesign will tell you, how digital tools, media and interactions can improve your stakeholder mapping. And in some cases, you may also discover digitally driven opportunities for business model innovation.

Covid-19 has obviously significantly accelerated digitalization and change in marketing and sales. Challenging but exciting times! Make something of it.

2. STRIVING FOR EXCELLENCE IN REMOTE SELLING



Again, Remote Selling is here to stay. Which is great, as it comes with many advantages and opportunities:

You can easily **triple the number of 'customer visits'**, which increases your active selling time. And Remote Selling **saves travel costs**. All in all, it will boost your sales efficiency, if you do it right.

Involving your company's experts from other functions and locations or integrating different buying center members from

your customer's organization in digital meetings is much easier and less effort, as people don't have to travel anymore. They just log into a Zoom-, MS Teams- or Webex meeting for 30 or 60 minutes. Thereby **Remote Selling may even enhance, broaden and deepen your customer relationship**.

Digital tools and social media also provide great additional opportunities for networking and preparing for your customer interactions. But of course, all this all has to be **well orchestrated and controlled by your salespeople**, which requires new skills that go beyond meeting tools and technology.

Remote customer interactions are more to the point and straightforward. This will put **more pressure on your sales force**: Cross-functional value communication has to be well prepared, aligned and to the point, as in remote meetings it is much harder to read the body language and there is no room for improvising or side talks to convince your customer.

This will even be a challenge for seasoned sales reps who have so far relied on their relationship selling skills.

Remote meetings offer little room for relationship selling, as they are straightforward and to the point. Selling value and being well prepared will be the key success factors for remote customer interactions, as well as remotely creating trust.

This is what is required to achieve Remote Selling excellence:

- Professional use of **online meeting technologies**, like Webex, Microsoft Teams, Zoom, GoTo Meeting etc. including all functions for having smooth, engaging and really interactive meetings. This is simply the basics.
- Professional use of **online workshop and collaboration tools**, like digital whiteboards, breakouts, online feedback tools or files sharing to prepare and collaborate remotely with your customers or internally across functions and locations during your preparation.
- Appreciating **the purchasers' perspective on remote buying** to better understand their strategies, objectives, preferences, pain points and tactics. This will help a lot to be better prepared and to stay relaxed during the meeting.
- **Online presentation skills** including slide design, visualization and value communication to provide interactive and really engaging presentations online, which is essential for successful online pitches.
- **Building trust** in online meetings: Against all prejudices you will be surprised how much you can do to create trust in remote interactions.
- Understand **how to deal with mean negotiation tactics**, which may start with a purchaser who is reluctant to turn on his camera. Make sure that you don't get overwhelmed, trapped, frustrated or too emotional when it gets rough and tough and when purchasers try to take advantage of being remote.
- **Preparing for remote negotiations**: Preparation is key. The negotiation and its success or failure starts with its preparation. This is even more essential when you are remote from your customers, because there is no time for improvisation, and you can't hedge around a subject anymore.

¹ Source: Adamson, B. / Toman, N.: 5 ways the future of B2B buying will rewrite the rules of effective selling. Gartner for Sales 2020.

- **Applying value selling online**, because this is what modern buyers want, as we will see in more detail in the next chapter.

All this is necessary to cope with the **challenges your people are encountering in remote meetings and negotiations**, such as:

- Less engagement, more distractions and shorter attention spans,
- Less control,
- Limited use of body language,
- Less feedback, which makes it more difficult to sense customers' reactions,
- Hyper-rational character of more direct and to-the-point online meetings,
- Maintaining customer intimacy,
- Less time and more focus,
- Less opportunities for side talks,
- Little room for improvising, and
- Less opportunities for relationship building, as you won't have dinner or a beer with your prospects.

With remote selling excellence you can overcome these challenges and differentiate from competitors who are not yet willing to invest into digital sales enablement.

Remote selling excellence won't just happen! Specific training in all aspects of remote selling will significantly increase the confidence and effectiveness of your sales force.

3. USING ONLINE WORKSHOPS FOR COLLABORATION AND CO-CREATION



There are many opportunities for optimizing your remote customer interactions. When it comes to online collaboration or co-creation, you should be professional in facilitating interactive online workshops.

Moving from online meetings or online presentations to online workshops, requires the use of **online collaboration tools**. Digital whiteboards, such as Collaboard, Miro, Limnu, Sketchboard, Stormboard, Conceptboard or Mural or file sharing tools like Dropbox, OneDrive or Google Drive and other collaboration tools

like Evernote are a great help if you want to co-create and collaborate remotely.

Expertise in using these tools may well need some skill development and training. But it is a precondition for remote cross-functional collaboration and remote co-creation with your customers. And once you have discovered the power of digital collaboration tools, you can't do without them!

Moving from successful online meetings to remote co-creation and collaboration is simply the next step. It's not rocket science. You just have to 'pull yourselves together', get started, train and exercise.

4. HYBRID VALUE SELLING IS KING

If you cannot sell value you will have to sell by price, which is the worst option for your profitability and which does not provide any differentiation from the competition.

This is not new, and it didn't change with COVID.

The good news is that many recent studies confirm that **value is exactly what modern buyers are looking for.**

Due to recent studies from Forrester and the Rain Group,

- 68% of buyers want sellers to show them what's possible to solve a problem²,
- 75% of B2B buyers want sellers to show how their products and services drive business value outcomes³, and
- 81% of buyers expect vendors to even quantify the value of proposed solutions⁴.

This is, because 2/3rds of buyers don't have the time, knowledge, or tools needed to make business value assessments and calculations⁵.

Modern buyers want you to reveal the value you are bringing to the table.

The bad news is that B2B sellers are still doing a bad job here: According to buyers' feedback, 80% of sellers still predominantly pitch products and services.



And only 20% of sellers are focused on what buyers really care about: their challenges, potential improvements, and the business value outcome of proposed solutions⁶.

According to buyers' feedback, sellers are doing a poor job in selling value.

Another study, provided by CSO Insights, has revealed that 90% of buyers would meet with sellers earlier on their journey, but are delaying these engagements because sellers don't take the time to understand their client's business and how to add value to the assessment⁷.

These studies confirm the ongoing trend to buyers wanting and needing to see how sellers can deliver value for them. And this is where Hybrid Selling comes in, where you decide which parts of the Value Selling process are best managed remotely and which aspects require the additional investment into face to face meetings.

So, you have to invest time and resources into defining your **Value Selling strategy** and make it hybrid. You have to outline the value you can sell to different customers or customer segments for your specialties, semi-specialties and your commodities.

For your specialty product applications, it may be worth applying more complex tools like **Value Cards**, which have to be developed in cross-functional workshops with Technology, Sales and Marketing. Value Cards reveal the added value of your offering by systematically translating technical product features into true customer value for a specific product application, based on cause-and-effect relationships.

Value quantifications and quantified business cases may then help your buyers to appreciate the value, defend your prices inside their organization and thereby support you capturing a fair share of the value.

For more commoditized product applications your value selling will refer more to your services. The more the business becomes commoditized, the more it will for example be about logistic services, market information and relationship.

This is also not new, but even more essential today: Selling value remotely needs even more Value Selling skills and tools and more thorough preparation, as you

² Source: Schultz / Shaby / Springer (2020): Virtual Selling skills & challenges.

³ Source: Forrester – <https://www.evolvedselling.com/forrester-advancing-beyond-powerpoints-to-value-selling/>

⁴ Source: Virtual Selling Skills and Challenges Report 2020 – The Rain Group IDC – <https://www.evolvedselling.com/buyers-expect-you-to-provide-a-business-case/>

⁵ Source: Virtual Selling Skills and Challenges Report 2020 – The Rain Group IDC – <https://www.evolvedselling.com/buyers-expect-you-to-provide-a-business-case/>

⁶ Source: Forrester – Advancing Beyond PowerPoints to Value Selling – <https://www.evolvedselling.com/forrester-advancing-beyond-powerpoints-to-value-selling/>

⁷ Source: 2018 Buyer's Preferences Survey – CSO Insights, <https://www.csoinsights.com>

won't have the time to improvise. And you may not have a second chance if you don't make it with your first try.

So better make sure that you develop and deliver engaging and tailored Value Selling pitches without overwhelming people with too many technical details..

The hurdle is higher for selling value remotely: It has to be crystal clear, to the point and it has to be shared in an engaging way.

5. PREPARING FOR HYBRID CUSTOMER INTERACTIONS



There is not a big difference in what you should prepare before you provide a sales pitch or take your seat at the negotiation table.

According to our "Value Touchdown" method for preparing negotiations you should develop answers to questions like:

- What will most probably be **your customer's negotiation strategy**? What goal might they have?
- Where are they in their **decision-making process**? And what does it look like?
- What is their **BATNA**? What is their 'Best Alternative To a Negotiated Agreement' and what is ours? What does that mean for our **negotiation power**?
- What **stakeholders** at the customer are directly or indirectly involved in decision making? What are their needs, their pain points and their attitude towards us and our competitors? Who has what influence?
- What **value arguments** do we have? And how can we tailor them to meet the different needs and personalities of the different stakeholders?
- What can be possible **concessions** when we come under pressure or when we have a poor BATNA?
- What do we want to learn from our customer during the meeting? **What information are we lacking**?
- What kind of **behavioral pricing tactics** should we apply in a price negotiation?
- What kind of **mean negotiation tactics** can we expect? And how should we react?

The answers to these questions should lead you to a sound **negotiation choreography**, which tells you how to walk through the different steps of the negotiation, including realistic what-if scenarios.

This is true for all hybrid negotiation processes, no matter whether they are remote or in-person. The difference is simply that because of their 'hyper-rational' and straightforward character, **remote negotiations require even more preparation than in-person meetings.**

A good customer relationship and a skill for improvisation is not enough to meet the value driven expectations of

modern buyers. Not being well prepared for your Value Selling pitches seems to be the most common mistake, which is especially true for Remote Selling meetings with your customers.

The difference between preparing for a remote negotiation and an in-person negotiation is not WHAT you should prepare, it's the required INTENSITY of preparation which is much higher for remote meetings.

6. PERSONALITY & HYBRID SELLING

Different sales personalities will encounter different challenges in Hybrid Selling.

With the MBTI® we support sales forces in understanding and adapting to different personalities and their preferences.

The MBTI® analyzes 4 different dimensions of perceiving and judging which are highly relevant for Sales:

MBTI® DIMENSIONS

Extraversion vs. Introversion

Sensing vs. Intuition

Thinking vs. Feeling

Judging vs. Perceiving

For example, you can expect that remote selling will for two reasons be a bigger challenge for E-types (extraverted people) than for I-types (introverted people):

First of all, extraverted people prefer to talk to other people to develop reasonable thoughts and ideas. Due to their tight schedules, remote customer interactions offer less room for this than in-person meetings.

Secondly, extraverted people are energized by social interactions with other people. Remote meetings will therefore put more pressure on them, as they offer less input than in-person meetings. E-types with an additional N-preference for intuition, patterns and the big picture, will especially have a hard time, as the character of remote meetings is much more against their preferences, compared to introverted people with an S-preference.

Furthermore, the MBTI® application will teach you, what puts you under stress and how to deal with that. And this will again be different in remote meetings compared to in-person negotiations.



And, maybe even more important, the MBTI® helps you **better understand your buyers' personalities** and teaches you **how to deal with the different stakeholders** in your buyers' organization. When for example dealing with a N-type buyer, you better refer to the 'big picture', options and patterns instead of presenting masses of details.

The MBTI® helps you understand different personalities and preferences in perceiving and judging, which is key to successful negotiation. Therefore the MBTI® will boost your performance in both in-person and remote negotiations.

Besides helping you to understand your own behavioral patterns and blind spots, the MBTI® application for Hybrid Selling will help you to appreciate the different personalities you are dealing with in a remote or in-person negotiation.

7. WHEN IT GETS TOUGH IN HYBRID SELLING



In remote meetings as well as in in-person negotiations you will encounter people who are difficult to deal with. The challenges are the same.

And competitive purchasers will of course try to use remote meeting technology to their advantage: They may be reluctant to turn their camera on, thereby further limiting your chances to read their body language. Or they may artificially increase the time pressure.

Furthermore, it takes less effort for them to remotely connect with more potential suppliers to put more pressure on you.

Remote meetings offer less opportunities for a deep dive into the buyers' motives for their competitive and stonewalling behavior. Therefore, separating people from their positions and interests from positions may be more challenging in remote meetings.

However, **many reasonable tactics for successfully dealing with difficult people are also valid in remote negotiations**, such as active listening, questioning, going to the balcony, taking the pressure off, stepping at their side, building golden bridges, reframing the issue, sharing your feelings, offering concessions, building coalitions or finally, being ready to walk away.

Also here, the MBTI® will provide valuable insight, as it will tell you how different personalities tend to act and react when they are under stress.

But **dealing with mean negotiation tactics remotely requires a thorough preparation** including realistic what-if scenarios. You should prepare carefully how to react, when exposed to a mean negotiation tactic. When your opponent for example refuses to use the camera, you should politely ask for their reason and broach how nice it would be to get as close as possible to a real in-person meeting by seeing each other's faces. If they pretend that they don't use the camera due to their internet connection, you could also turn off your camera to even things out.

Also, decide prior to the meeting what to do in case the other party for example starts applying "The Chicken"⁸ or "Russian Front"⁹ tactics.

Finally leaving the negotiation table is a bit easier in remote meetings, as it is less effort to arrange another meeting for solving the issue.

In remote negotiations you can expect the same and even more mean negotiation tactics. How to deal with them is in principle not that different from in-person meetings. But it requires more intense preparation.

8. TECHNICAL HYBRIDS



Being remote with your customers will go beyond remote meetings, negotiations and workshops. The question in Hybrid Selling will be how to provide additional value remotely.

In many B2B businesses **remote technical services are on the rise, including**

- Digitalized after sales services,
- Predictive maintenance,

- Remote condition monitoring (incl. remote eyes, smart glasses, cameras, and headsets),
- Remote trouble shooting and assistance from technical experts to the worker in the field,
- Remote inspections,
- Digital file sharing, document management systems or service ticketing systems, and
- Augmented reality (AR) applications in technical trainings.

The options you may encounter here will depend very much on the specific business. For example, introducing new products or product applications will be more challenging when the look and feel of your products cannot be shared by using your camera and screen, for example in case of new surface technologies or colors.

Remote technical service including AR technologies will offer new ways of providing value to your customers and may also lead to digitally and data driven business model innovations. What we can expect here will however differ from business to business.

∞ WRAP-UP & SUPPORT ∞

Hybrid selling is more than just doing some of your negotiations online.

COVID will have a long lasting effect on your customer interactions. Therefore, Hybrid Selling has to involve digitalization across marketing, sales and technical service.

Now is the time to

- rethink your customer journey,
- digitalize your value creation for your customers and
- ensuring value capture in well balanced remote and in-person customer interactions.

Doing a better job here still offers great potential for differentiating from competition and strategically reinvesting the sales efficiency gains you will encounter.

To support you on your way to B2B Hybrid Selling excellence, we have developed a series of workshops and additional measures:



BUILDING MOMENTUM FOR HYBRID SELLING

A two-days live event to prepare your salesforce for Hybrid Selling after a time of lockdowns and travel restrictions.

The Myers-Briggs Type Indicator for Sales (MBTI®) will create a momentum in your sales force and will open them up for the new ways of working.

By applying the MBTI®, your salespeople will appreciate their own behavioral preferences when dealing with customers and understand the reasons for their negotiation successes and failures. They will learn how to recognize different people's preferences in judging and perceiving and how to deal with them in their remote and in-person customer interactions and negotiations.

In the workshop the MBTI® will specifically apply to Sales and sales negotiations. Urgent key topics can be additionally covered.

The Building Momentum workshop is insightful and a lot of fun, even for seasoned sales rep



⁸ 'The Chicken' tactics: Combining a huge bluff with a threat of action. See <http://www.edgenegotiation.com/2010/01/negotiating-tactics/>.

⁹ 'Russian Front' tactics: Presenting 2 options, A and B, one worse than the other. Designed to pressure you into choosing the lesser of two evils. See <http://www.edgenegotiation.com/2010/01/negotiating-tactics/>.

HYBRID SELLING BASICS WEBINAR

A ½-day online workshop to **make people understand what they can expect** in the hybrid world of sales after Covid-19.

People will learn about digitalization in B2B Marketing & Sales and customer journey design. They will appreciate the full potential of remote meeting technologies including the dos and don'ts of remote selling. Finally, they will understand the full potential of Remote and Hybrid Selling and improve their digital fitness.



HYBRID SELLING ADVANCED WORKSHOP

The Advanced Hybrid Selling Workshop comprises two half day online webinar sessions, 3.5 hours each.

It provides a **deeper dive into selected challenges of Remote and Hybrid Selling** and how to cope with them, such as

- Building trust and relationship online,
- Understanding the purchasers' perspective in negotiations and remote buying,
- Engaging presentation techniques with a special focus on remote presentations,
- Preparing for in-person and remote meetings,
- Coping with mean negotiation tactics, or
- Dealing with hybrid account planning.

The final program and the focus of the webinar sessions will of course be adjusted to your specific needs.



HYBRID SELLING FOCUS WORKSHOP

The Hybrid Selling Focus Workshops can be provided as live events or online workshops. The content will be designed according to your specific needs and requirements and may cover a selection of different topics, such as

- Omni channels to market design,
- Stakeholder mapping 2.0 incl. stakeholder constellation,
- Hybrid Value Selling,
- Visual selling,
- Dealing with difficult people and mean negotiation tactics,
- Remote sales and account team collaboration or
- Price execution.



ADDITIONAL BUSINESS SPECIFIC HYBRID SELLING TRAINING OFFERS AND INDIVIDUAL COACHING AND CONSULTANCY:

We are more than happy to develop dedicated specific sales enablement initiatives for your business.

Training and coaching can be provided in-person and / or online.

Besides providing trainings on the topics mentioned above, we offer individual or team coaching and consultancy to support your salespeople in preparing for important negotiations and to develop solutions to real life challenges in your business.



DIGISEP: DIGITALIZED SALES ENABLEMENT PLATFORM

In addition to our live trainings, coaching and consultancy, we can **digitalize all training content** and make it available to your people on a Digitalized Sales Development Platform (DigiSEP) 24/7.

Independent from time and location your salespeople can learn or refresh what they have learned previously.

The platform will be tailored to your needs and may comprise

- Customized self-guided and interactive online training courses,
- Training videos,
- Negotiation videos,
- Training presentations,
- Technical product presentations,
- Flipbooks,
- Webinars,
- Digital coaching sessions,
- Quizzes and
- Many more features for providing a unique and effective training experience.

With our Digital Sales Enablement Platform you can also digitalize significant parts of the **onboarding of new sales team members** to quickly get them up to speed.



GET IN TOUCH

Simply get in touch with us and make your sales force fit for hybrid.

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