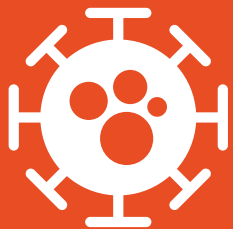




# PROACTIVE SELLING IN A PANDEMIC

Essential Tips to Keep Focused & Secure  
Prospects During Uncertain Times



# COVID-19 IS CHANGING ALL SALES IN 2020. WHAT CAN YOU DO?

## BUYERS HATE CHANGE

This hiccup is going to change a lot in sales. Now. Sales people can't make sales calls. Buyer's budgets are frozen. Panic and fear in the marketplace. Throw away your forecasts and pipeline guessing. It's all changing.

In this market now, you need to get to the C-Suite (Above the Line ATL buyer). Answer the question, "Why would the ATL Buyer want to talk to me?"

## HERE ARE THE 5 THINGS YOU NEED TO DO:

- 1 Get to the ATL (Above the Line) buyer. The C-suite has problems and questions. Get to the ATL buyer and offer help, don't pitch. What can you do to help the CMO, CEO, CRO, CIO, etc...deal with 2020 second half disruptions. Everyone has to change their plans, their initiatives (Trains). Ask the ATL buyer what are they thinking about changing and how can you help them.
- 2 Normal prospecting tactics for new business is probably on hold for 30 days. Want to fill the funnel? Offer help. Go social. Acknowledge the buyer needs to make changes and doesn't have all the answers. Be proactive rather than wait for an inbound lead. You are talking to many prospects and can feel what people are trying and what they are discarding.
 

*Example #1: A customer has offered to help a prospect re-allocate their digital marketing budget for the 2nd half of the year, based on assumptions and demands.*

*Example #2: Another customer is holding a series of web events for its customers on what other ATL buyers are doing to re-adjust for 2020.*
- 3 Qualify. Stick with dates. There are many deals that have to go on due to committed dates. Construction, auto, seasonal items. Make sure your forecast has committed implementation dates (I-Dates). If there is no committed I-Dates with Dragons (Commitments/ Critical events made to support the I-Dates), your deal will slip. Really work on the deals that have I-Dates.
- 4 Do not stay with just your BTL buyer. They are "waiting to hear" from their bosses. Decisions are being made and you are not in the room. Why?
- 5 Breathe. Panic reactions are usually never any good. Just 3 weeks ago, all the numbers were pointing to a good 2020. They still do. It will take some time. Start planning for June and beyond. No one is going to be "taking the summer off" with all these changes. What can you do now to help your prospects and customers through the changes?



## UPDATE: WEEK OF MARCH 16, 2020

*As this gets crazier and crazier, let's hope we all can get tested and get on the road to recovery. The numbers once the testing ramps will probably get bigger. Be safe and be smart.*

On a business side, an update from a sales perspective.

1. Start planning for the second half of the year. Q1 is over and Q2 will be from companies that can weather the storm. (mid-market and enterprise).
  2. SMB will slow way down. They are the quickest to react. They will probably churn more than usual. Plan on it.
  3. It will be all about cutting costs and getting revenue. Restarting. Maybe even getting new revenue streams to cover some costs. Prospect and Outbound with this in mind.
  4. Enterprise accounts will stay the course. They still need to function, find ways to do things better, solve problems, and make money. With 0% interest, look for them to make new capital expenditures.
  5. Be helpful. People still have to keep the doors open and pay for things. Really do some research and find out what changes your customers are having to make. Use **ValueStar\*** and **Gaps\*** to really find out where they heading.
  6. Don't forget **3-1-2\***. You don't want to show up and throw up.
  7. It will probably get scarier before it gets better. Now is the time to really get busy and find new business. It's out there. Look at your outbound cadences, sequences and messaging. No talking about the dog!
- \*For your Free Workshop Exercise showing how to use ValueStar, GAPS and 3-1-2 on your next sales call, send an e-mail to [tom@m3learning.com](mailto:tom@m3learning.com) with the subject line "Emergency Value Star Guidelines."*

Three weeks ago, life was good. It still will be. The latest predictions are 2% growth for the US for 2020, which means an improved second half of the year. Talk to your current customers, and plan with them. Reach out and offer help to your prospects. Be specific. Talk about ATL outcomes of what your stuff can do, not about better features and benefits (WOOF).

**“Look to solve some of the questions...the rest will take care of itself. Be a part of the solution, don't just feed the flames of panic.”**



## UPDATE: WEEK OF MARCH 30, 2020

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*Another week to be safe and smart. On lockdown until May 1. Interesting things to remember.*

1. It's the end of the quarter. Plans are being made to kick off Q2. How are you involving yourself in those conversations? Are you:
  - a. Giving them feedback on what other customers are doing?
  - b. Giving them some information they don't have?
  - c. Reminding them what they did this time last year.
  - d. Allowing them to do something they usually can't do?
  - e. Asking them for their current ideas (hunting for trains) so you might offer some ideas?

There are some tough decisions coming. Companies cannot keep the cost of their employees for much longer. They must speed up GTM and revenue! What can you do to start the conversation going with customers/prospects, rather than just "offer to help?"

2. The top 2 LinkedIn posts are now:
  - a. How can I help?
  - b. Here's an opinion....you have to be more proactive than that.

3. Right now, the three scenarios are:
  - a. Back to 80% normal by June 1.
  - b. Summer V-shape. June is the bottom of the V and September will start roaring.
  - c. Recovery starts in Oct, gets moving in 2021.

I have no idea which theory is accurate, but I do know your ATL buyers are going through these scenarios and more. What are you doing to mitigate their risks? What can you do to delay, speed up, improve, add-on?

4. Everyone likes to look at upsell opportunities. What is it they could upsell for free and pay in Q4? Think out of the box, but start with their needs, their outcome gaps, not your products. Now is not the time to just think, "What can I sell them." Question and listen first. What's keeping the train in the station? Time Travel.

5. Once again, don't forget **3-1-2**. You don't want to show up and throw up.

6. You are working from home, and experts say the #1 productivity tool is to write down your goals for the day week first thing, and they have to be quantified. It will separate important from urgent. Everything is urgent, but are you working on important stuff? Write it down. Give it a number.

If you want to chat about what other sales teams and leaders are doing to get through this, give me a call. Happy to help. Be safe, be informed, and be Proactive.

Looking forward...

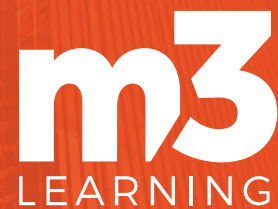
**Tom**






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“It is not the critic who counts; not the man who points out how the strong man stumbles, or where the doer of deeds could have done them better. The credit belongs to the man who is actually in the arena, whose face is marred by dust and sweat and blood; who strives valiantly; who errs, who comes short again and again, because there is no effort without error and shortcoming; but who does actually strive to do the deeds; who knows great enthusiasms, the great devotions; who spends himself in a worthy cause; who at the best knows in the end the triumph of high achievement, and who at the worst, if he fails, at least fails while daring greatly, so that his place shall never be with those cold and timid souls who neither know victory nor defeat.”

— Theodore Roosevelt



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