

So, why not four? If three is good, four is better, right? Not so much. At four, the details and issues can get lost. You have made your point at three; if you go on to four, you can lose your customer's attention.

What if you cannot come up with three advantages or three ways you solve a need? My first piece of advice would be to think harder and find three. That is not always possible, so if you can only come up with one or two, they should be very good, very powerful and buttressed by customer testimonials (and if you can come up with three great testimonials, so much the better).

What all of this requires from your salespeople is mental agility. For many years, I have been presenting a session at conferences called "Smart Sales Hiring." That title has always meant that you should be smart (using your head) when hiring salespeople. Now it means more. It also means that you absolutely must hire smart salespeople. Ed who goes and talks

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football for half an hour and picks up the weekly order is obsolete. Today's customers want salespeople who not only provide value through the products and services they sell, but also through the conversations they have.

Basically, in today's sales environment, you must hire smart salespeople and then constantly train and develop them. This exercise is a great way to make your salespeople the best presenters in your market. ■

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