

# The post-Covid world of sales has changed, have you?

 By Dylan Bowen

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The world has changed drastically in the last two years, and understanding the sales landscape represents a huge challenge for those companies who want to remain competitive over the next decade.



Source: [www.unsplash.com](https://www.unsplash.com)

Although companies are aware that change has taken place, very few understand how to decipher the change and how to equip their sales teams to feel confident to drive their sales going forward.

In many ways, the changes in customer behaviour are an acceleration of digital trends that were already in motion prior to the pandemic.

So, what does the new normal look like in this post-Covid sales landscape and what skills are going to be critical to developing in salespeople in order to ensure your success?

## Virtual selling

Salespeople have had to embrace virtual selling techniques in some way or another, either through prospecting, or initial first-round meetings via Zoom, MS Teams or Google Hangouts.

Being able to use both synchronous communications such as video calls and telephone calls and asynchronous communication such as text messages, emails, and voice mail form the perfect opportunity to take a blended approach to virtual communication.



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Buyers crave human-to-human contact, so balancing the communication types to your advantage using predominantly synchronous communication channels is the best. We should be actively mapping our communication channels to the sales process, buying channels and sales cycle. The key is to speak to your clients as often as possible through synchronous channels and use asynchronous channels to build as many touchpoints as possible.

## Sales is both an art and a science

It's an art because of the understanding of human behaviour needed to influence prospects to close sales. It's a science because the application of the art of sales can be applied to laws of human behaviour, psychology with the use of learned skills to effect a consistent and predictable outcome.



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Emotional intelligence is the next frontier of sales success. The ability to connect with individuals in a meaningful and intelligent way to solve their problems particularly in a virtual world is essential. A salesperson's ability to understand the client's mental and emotional space, read their body language and connect with them in a deep and meaningful way to influence them in a positive direction towards sales is important.

The saying goes: "People buy with emotion and justify their purchase with logic", which means that it needs to feel right or people don't buy.

Simultaneously, when we ask a client to buy, what we are actually doing is asking them to change. By asking them to change we are throwing them into a state of discomfort which invokes emotional resistance which quickly halts their willingness to proceed in a sale.



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## Advanced problem-solving abilities

Ninety-nine percent (99%) of what we are paid to do in sales is solving problems for our clients. That mostly entails helping our clients get better results. Problem-solving involves both experience, a commercial mindset, creative thinking and the ability to think outside of the box, and then an analytical approach - to be able to understand the complexity of all issues, weigh up all options and be able to make a decision about what is best.

## Demonstrating expertise

Show your prospect that you've built and how you understand the challenges they're facing and how your product or service will help solve this problem. Do the research up-front and use your knowledge about your prospect's business to take control of the conversation in your sales pitch by teaching, fine-tuning your message and not being afraid to share controversial views if they're ultimately in the best interest of your potential customer. Ultimately, you are there to challenge their way of thinking and help them get results.

Demonstrate a track record of success by referring to case studies and success stories of other clients in the same or similar industry. When prospects see that you have a demonstrated track record of success then they start to believe that you can do the same thing for them. It builds massive credibility and trust.



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Help the client think out of the box; do your research on their industry and company and provide insights that demonstrate a depth of thought and an understanding of the commercial intricacies of their business and the problems they face and how to solve those problems. Establish yourself as an industry expert and leader who can help them navigate the way forward.

Handling objections in sales is one of the aspects of the sales cycle that frightens most salespeople. However, when you understand that an objection is really a client's attempt to understand more, either how you can solve their problem better, what could potentially be a problem down the line, where they will get results, then it's easier to take a more productive approach to deal with objections.

## ABOUT DYLAN BOWEN

CEO at Salesrindset

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