RAIN Selling: How to Lead Masterful Sales Conversations [MASTER COPY] - 25 Questions

Number of questions: 25

Description

RAIN Selling is our core consultative sales training program for our sales training system. Focusing on how to lead masterful sales conversations, this program introduces the strategies and tactics that are the foundation of successful selling, and provides you with the skills needed to become a top-performing seller.

Syllabus

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(Multiple Choice): Rapport

You just started a telephone call with a new prospect. He says, "I'd like to give you a sense of what we're trying to do to see if you can help. I sure could have used some help coaching basketball this weekend! Thankfully, I'm back to work now." What do you say?

Choices:

✗ "Okay. It would be great if you could start off with an overview. I might have some questions along the way. By the time we're done, we'll know if there's a potential fit."
✓ "Sounds good. We can certainly do that. Wish I could have helped with the basketball situation. Now I'm curious to know what happened."
✗ "Before we get started with you sharing what you're trying to accomplish, do you mind if I ask a few questions?"

Explanation:

Not every buyer wants to begin a conversation with talk about their personal life, but this buyer opened the door by mentioning basketball. If a buyer indicates they might like to connect on a personal level, it's a good idea to do that.

Click here to read a short article discussing the 7 ways to build rapport and connect with people.

Question Topics: Rapport

(Multiple Choice): Aspirations and Afflictions

You just received a call from a new prospect. She tells you what captured her interest on your website and says one of the offerings on the website seems like a perfect fit. What do you say?
Choices:

❌ "Before we get started, do you mind if I ask how you found our website?"

❌ "It sounds like you've become quite knowledgeable about us and our offerings. I don't want to cover ground that you already know. What questions do you have that I might be able to help with?"

✔️ "I can share more about the offering you’re interested in if you’d like, but do you mind if I ask a few questions to understand why it piqued your interest and what you want to accomplish?"

Explanation:

Even if a buyer shows interest in an offering, it's always best to understand them before they understand you. It's also common that buyers believe they need one offering when they need another (or a number of others). By asking questions about needs (Aspirations and Afflictions) and outcomes (Impact and New Reality), you're employing the core concepts of consultative selling.

Click here to read a short article that discusses how focusing on Aspirations as well as Afflictions can help increase sales.

Question Topics: Aspirations and Afflictions

(Multiple Choice): Rational and Emotional Impact

You've worked with a buyer to understand their needs, craft a solution, and are working on creating an impact case. The ROI of buying—and advantages of buying from you—seem compelling. The buyer says, "The ROI makes sense and the fit seems right." What is your response?

Choices:

❌ "What needs to happen from your side for us to move the process forward?"

✔️ "I’m curious, what difference do you think this will make for you and your team personally if we move forward?"

❌ "We can put a proposal together now for moving forward."

Explanation:

People tend to justify purchases to themselves and their colleagues by using the ROI case, but they are inspired to take action because of their emotions—what moving forward will mean to them personally. Exploring the emotional reward, as well as the rational rewards, increases buyer desire to move the sale forward.

Click here to view a short video that discusses the role of emotion in sales.

Watch a short video below that discusses the role of emotion in sales:
Question Topics: Rational and Emotional Impact

(Multiple Choice): New Reality

You've been speaking with a prospect for 45 minutes. You understand their needs and why they're interested in potentially working with you. However, you haven't talked about your company, your offerings, or the impact you can have. You say, "It's clear why we're talking and I think we can help. Now, I'd like to share with you..."

Choices:

✓ “…some big picture thoughts about how we might approach your challenges, and outcomes we often achieve for people in your situation.”

✗ “…a bit about our company so you get a sense of who we are and what we stand for.”

✗ “…some information about our offerings that I think might serve you best, and how we stand out against the competition.”

Explanation:

It's appropriate to speak about all of the various areas, but each in their own time. Before you talk about your company and offerings, it's best to maximize buyer desire to move forward by sharing with them their possible New Reality.

Click here to read a short article on the critical role of new reality in sales.

Question Topics: New Reality

(Multiple Choice): Advocacy and Inquiry
What is the best way to approach sales conversations?

**Choices:**

- ✔️ Read the situation.
- ✗ Lead with asking question.
- ✗ Share ideas and insights.

**Explanation:**

The best approach is to read the situation and respond by balancing advocacy and inquiry. If the premise of a conversation is educational (advocacy focused), it's still helpful to ask a lot of questions. On the flip side, if the premise of a conversation is to understand need (inquiry focused), buyers still want ideas, insights, and advice from sellers.

Click here to read a short article on balancing advocacy and inquiry.

**Question Topics:** Advocacy & Inquiry

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**(Multiple Choice): Trust**

A buyer is considering buying something from you that could have a big impact for them. The buyer is worried about risk. You face this head on and ask about his fears. What do you do next?

**Choices:**

- ✔️ Start exploring in detail what the risks are, including why some engagements like these succeed and others fail.
- ✗ Focus the conversation on case studies and stories of your past successes.
- ✗ Assure the buyer that the odds of success are great based on your past experiences.

**Explanation:**

Sellers that gloss over risks build buyer skepticism. Sellers that win sell with high integrity (one of the 4 components of trust). Also, sellers that win are much more likely than others to be candid with buyers about potential risks and pitfalls. If you want buyers to trust your advice, they have to believe it's your intent to do the right thing.

Click here to read a short article on the power of trust in sales.

**Question Topics:** Trust

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**(Multi-correct answer): Buyer Personas**
You are fairly confident that the main buyer in a sale is a Decisive Danielle. What are the best strategies for working with her?

**Choices:**

- ✔ Demonstrate decisiveness.
- ✗ Recognize hard work and service to the company.
- ✔ Substantiate all claims and give evidence of success likelihood.
- ✗ Focus on building consensus.
- ✔ Show her you can help take care of the details.

**Explanation:**

Consensus Claires focus on service to the company by building bridges and coalitions. They also have a much stronger need for consensus. Decisive Danielles don't gravitate towards coalitions and committees, and prefer to make decisions fast.


**Question Topics:** Buyer Personas

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**(Multiple Choice): Qualification**

A new prospect who is a high-ranking executive from a large company calls because they are interested in buying a major offering of your company. You speak for 45 minutes, and it's clear that you are a good choice to help them. The buyer wants to share a proposal with his team to get them on board with the process. What do you do next?

**Choices:**

- ✗ Get them a proposal so the buyer can share the idea with the team and build energy for moving forward.
- ✗ Get them a proposal, but suggest an in-person meeting with the key players so you can help the buyer share the idea with the team.
- ✔ Ask who the key players are, whether they agree there is a need, and if there's a priority to solve the need.

**Explanation:**

Before you start writing proposals and visiting your prospect's office, you should get a sense of the buying team and what their buying stage is. If buyers don't agree there is a need (aspiration and/or affliction) to solve and a priority to move forward, writing a proposal is premature.


**Question Topics:** Qualification

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**(Multiple Choice): Decision Roles**
Assuming there are multiple buyers in a sale, what would you ask your primary contact in order to uncover the other buyers and their roles in the decision making process?

Choices:

- ✗ Can you give me a sense of who the decision makers and influencers are?
- ✗ Can you let me know who will approve funds and if anyone will be brought in to evaluate the offering?
- ✓ If we agree to move forward, who on your side will be involved in the process, if even just to sign off?

Explanation:

Buyers tend to miss people if you simply ask them about decision makers and influencers that are involved in a sale. If you ask them specifically about the approver, business driver, and evaluator all at once it can be very overwhelming. It’s best to ask who will be involved in the process in any way, and then follow up one-by-one to make sure all the roles are covered.

Click here to read a short article on the decision roles involved in every sale.

Question Topics: Decision Roles

(Multiple Choice): Reversing Direction

A new prospect was fairly interactive with you for several months. After you sent a proposal, the sale slowed down. You've called, emailed, and sent LinkedIn messages with no response. What do you do?

Choices:

- ✓ Respectfully email or call to say you assume something has changed and you’ll wait to hear from them.
- ✗ Keep reaching out until you hear a "no."
- ✗ Keep trying until you catch them so you can keep the conversation going.
- ✗ Cut your losses and move on to other prospects in your pipeline.

Explanation:

Disengaging communications with the prospect and checking with them to confirm that’s where they want to go can often inspire a response. Either the prospect says they’ve moved on, or they show signs of life. This is called "reversing direction," and changes the flow and tone of the conversation. If they don't respond to your "last chance," you can move on. If you just keep chasing them, it's likely you'll be wasting time.

Question Topics: Reversing Direction

(Multiple Choice): Objections
A buyer says, "I think this is something that could help us, but I’m worried your company lacks experience in our industry." What do you say?

**Choices:**

- ✗ Share your company’s experience, but draw comparisons to other industries to show that industry focus in this area isn't a big concern.
- ✗ Ask if that's the only concern that's keeping them from moving forward.
- ✓ Ask why that's a concern so that you can find out more.

**Explanation:**

Before responding to an objection or asking if there are other objections, you want to understand it fully. It may be that another “industry outsider” burned them in the past, or something else. You can only respond well when you understand an objection fully.


**Question Topics:** objections

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**(Multiple Choice): Objections**

A buyer says, "I'm just not sure this is going to work, so I'm not really interested in investing the money to move forward." What kind of objection is this?

**Choices:**

- ✗ Money
- ✓ Trust
- ✗ Urgency
- ✗ Need

**Explanation:**

At its heart, it's a trust issue. The buyer doesn't trust that you'll be able to achieve the desired results, so is unwilling to spend the money. The unwillingness to spend is because of perception of risk, which is trust related at its core.
Click here to read a short article on the 4 objection types.

**Question Topics:** objections

### (Multi-correct answer): Objections

A buyer says, "I'm certainly interested in moving forward, but price is an issue. Can we do it for less?" What kind of money objection is this? (Select all that could apply)

**Choices:**

- ✔ Honest pushback
- ✔ Bluffing
- ✔ Value challenge
- ✔ Budget pushback
- ✔ Competitor pressure

**Explanation:**

Generally pushing back on money could mean anything. It's up to you to ferret out what's really behind the money objection by following the 5 step objection handling process.

Click here to read a short article on overcoming objections.

**Question Topics:** objections

### (Multiple Choice): Rational and Emotional Impact

You're crafting your final messaging for a sale. The proposal is very strong, with excellent rational benefits such as saving production time, increasing speed to market, and lower maintenance costs. You know the buyer is frustrated by fixing problems on the weekend and by losing ground to his competitors.

Which benefits do you focus on in your proposal to increase your chances of winning the sale?

**Choices:**

- ✔ Rational
- ✗ Emotional
- ✔ Personal

**Explanation:**

Balancing both rational and emotional benefits is key. Overemphasizing the emotional benefits often comes across oddly. Only focusing on return-on-investment is an incomplete story. Emotional benefits such as saving frustration, building excitement for a strong culture, and pride in accomplishments...
round out the case nicely and increase your chances of winning.

Click here to read a short article on 6 ways to communicate impact.

**Question Topics:** Rational and Emotional Impact

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**(Multiple Choice): Value Propositions**

How do you respond when a prospect asks early on in the sale, "What makes you different?"

**Choices:**

- ✗ Know your Unique Selling Proposition and deliver it clearly and concisely.
- ✔ Let the prospect know you can share what your clients say about how you’re different, but ask them first to share their overall impression of companies like yours.
- ✗ Mention that you have a number of competitors, all of which have different company histories and offerings. Ask if they have a specific competitor in mind, and tell them you'd be happy to share how you’re different.

**Explanation:**

Early on in the sale, buyers want a general story of how you’re different from others. A one minute pitch on “how you’re unique” tends to come across canned and flat. Even though describing how you’re different through the lens of your customers is genuine, it's best to first ask what their mental model is of “companies like yours.” When you do this, you can share how you stand out in ways that are important to the buyer, which helps you stay relevant and be more genuine.

Click here to read a short article on the three building blocks of value propositions.

Watch the short video below to learn more about differentiation in sales:

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**Unique vs. Distinct: Differentiation in B2B Sales**

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**Question Topics:** Value Propositions

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**(Multi-correct answer): Value Propositions**
Which of the following areas do you need to substantiate to reduce a buyer's perception of risk while maximizing their trust? (Select all that apply)

**Choices:**

- ✔️ You, the seller
- ✗ Your competitors
- ✔️ The results you can help the buyer achieve
- ✔️ The company
- ✔️ The offering itself

**Explanation:**

Reducing a buyer's perception of risk across all 4 of these areas (you, the offering, the company, and results) is essential for building trust and moving sales opportunities forward. Gaps in any of them create uncertainty and doubt, and can stall your sale or send your buyer to a competitor.

Watch the short video below to learn how to reduce risk for your buyers:

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**Question Topics:** Value Propositions

**(Multiple Choice): Value Proposition**

A value proposition is:

**Choices:**
A compelling, tangible statement about how a company or individual will benefit from buying from you.

The collection of reasons why a buyer buys.

A concise statement that contains an overview of how buyers benefit from you, including your unique selling proposition (USP).

The monetary worth of something.

**Explanation:**

At the end of every purchase, a buyer will make a case for why they want to buy something, why it’s going to be successful, and why a particular seller or vendor is the best choice. This argument they make (to themselves or whoever), is the value proposition, or the collection of reasons they are buying. Value proposition positioning statements and elevator pitches are fine for when you meet new people, but you need to go well beyond them to drive new revenue proactively at accounts.


[Click here](https://contentlibrary.qstream.com/tara-calihman/courses/22720-RAIN-Selling-How-to-Lead-Masterful-Sales-Conversations-MASTER-COPY-25-Questions/edit) for the article 4 Questions Sellers Must Ask to Build a Value Proposition

**Question Topics:** Value Propositions

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**(Multiple Choice): Buyer Personas**

![Image of buyer personas](image)

Your buyer prefers one-on-one interactions, may not be too friendly too fast, and might not share much at meetings. Who is this buyer?

**Choices:**

- ✔ Skeptical Steve
- ✗ Relationship Renee
- ✗ Consensus Claire
- ✗ Analytical Al

**Explanation:**

Skeptical Steve is the opposite of Relationship Renee, who makes fast friends, is typically vocal, and enjoys group settings. Analytical Al’s greatest concerns are data and detail, while Consensus Claire wants to make sure everyone is on the same page.


**Question Topics:** Buyer Personas

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**(Multi-correct answer): Buyer Personas**

![Image of buyer persona](image)
Your core buyer is an Analytical Al. Good sales strategies for you include which of the following?

**Choices:**

- Brainstorm and capture his imagination with innovative ideas. **X**
- Lay out the process and expectations very clearly. **✓**
- Have a firm, defensible analysis of statements or facts. **✓**
- Heed the concerns of all players and contribute to a collaborative process. **X**

**Explanation:**

Analytical AIs like data, likes to follow protocol, and is exacting. They may challenge anything you assert and will expect a data-backed response.


**Question Topics:** Buyer Personas

**(Multi-correct answer): Buyer Personas**

Sellers can upset an Innovator Irene by doing which of the following?

**Choices:**

- Glossing over information and details. **X**
- Being too rigid with the agenda. **✓**
- Being overly enthusiastic. **X**
- Shutting down creative talk. **✓**

**Explanation:**

Innovator Irenes like to think about the future, be creative, and drive new ideas. Shutting down creative talk and not being allowed to meander away from an agenda when it suits them can shut them off.


**Question Topics:** Buyer Personas

**(Multiple Choice): Questioning**

True or False? It's better to ask open-ended questions when selling than closed-ended questions.

False, because both kinds of questions have their place in selling. Closed-ended questions help to get background information and figure out what's important to the buyer. Asking closed-ended questions make the conversation flow more naturally. If someone say "yes" or "no" or "I don't know" to a closed-ended question, you can easily ask "can you tell me a little more about that?" to elicit an open-ended response.

Click here for a list of 21 powerful open-ended questions.

Question Topics: questioning

(Multiple Choice): Questioning

A buyer says, "We tried to tackle this issue before and failed both times. We're not exactly sure what happened." How do you respond?

Choices:

✓ Ask questions, including why, to get to the heart of the issues and understand what happened.

✗ Share stories of companies that failed in the same way and others that tackled the issues differently and succeeded.

✗ Ask about the new reality they'd like to achieve to inspire them to take action.

Explanation:

In this situation, digging deep into the buyer’s needs and history will give you a strong understanding of what happened. Once you get to the heart of the issue, you’ll be able to share ideas of how to do things differently and get better results in the future. By seeking to understand first, you will also help the buyer see you have their best interests in mind, and build the foundation for a strong relationship.

Click here to read a short article on the power of “why?” in needs discovery.

Question Topics: questioning

(Multiple Choice): Qualification

You're nearing the end of a first conversation with a new prospect. They have the need, the ROI case is strong, and they seem interested, but they've never bought anything like this before. You haven't discussed price. What’s your next step?

Choices:

✗ Ask whether they have a budget so you’ll know what’s plausible for moving forward.

✗ Maximize dissatisfaction with the current state and desire for the possible new reality.
∑ Summarize what you heard, what the solution might be, and then give a general range of cost.

Explanation:
You need to qualify the sale, and investment norming is a good start. Investment norming is giving buyers the overall sense of how much something is likely to cost. If you ask for a budget, the buyer will often come in low, which gives them the chance to set the starting point (or anchor the price). More often than not, it's best for the seller to go first with setting price expectations.

Click here to read a short article on how to use investment norming in negotiations.

Question Topics: Qualification

(Multiple Choice): Qualification

The "F" in FAINT, RAIN Group's qualification acronym, stands for which of the following?

Choices:
- ✗ Focus
- ✔ Funds
- ✗ Future seeking
- ✗ Fit

Explanation:
FAINT stands for Funds (or financial capacity), authority, interest, need, and timeframe.

Click here to read a short article on the FAINT qualification framework.

Question Topics: Qualification

(Multiple Choice): Leading Meetings

You're meeting for the first time with a prospective buyer’s team. You open with: “It's great to be here. As we previously set up, our agenda is to cover A, B, and C today.” What do you say next?

Choices:
- ✗ Unless anyone thinks something has changed, shall we dive right in with A?
- ✗ Before we get started, I'd like to start with a brief introduction of my company. Is that okay with everyone?
- ✔ I'd like to know, what will make this a successful meeting for all and what else do we need to talk about so we can get there?

Explanation:
Asking what will make the meeting successful, and making it clear you really want to know, will often get buyers to share important buying criteria over-and-above your meeting agenda. It may also be appropriate to introduce yourself and your company, but getting meeting objectives on the table is the key to success.

**Question Topics:** Leading Meetings