Feb 11, 2022,08:15am EST|98 views

How To Draft A Script For Sales Pitches That Won't Sound Canned

Expert Panel®
Forbes Councils Member
Forbes Communications Council

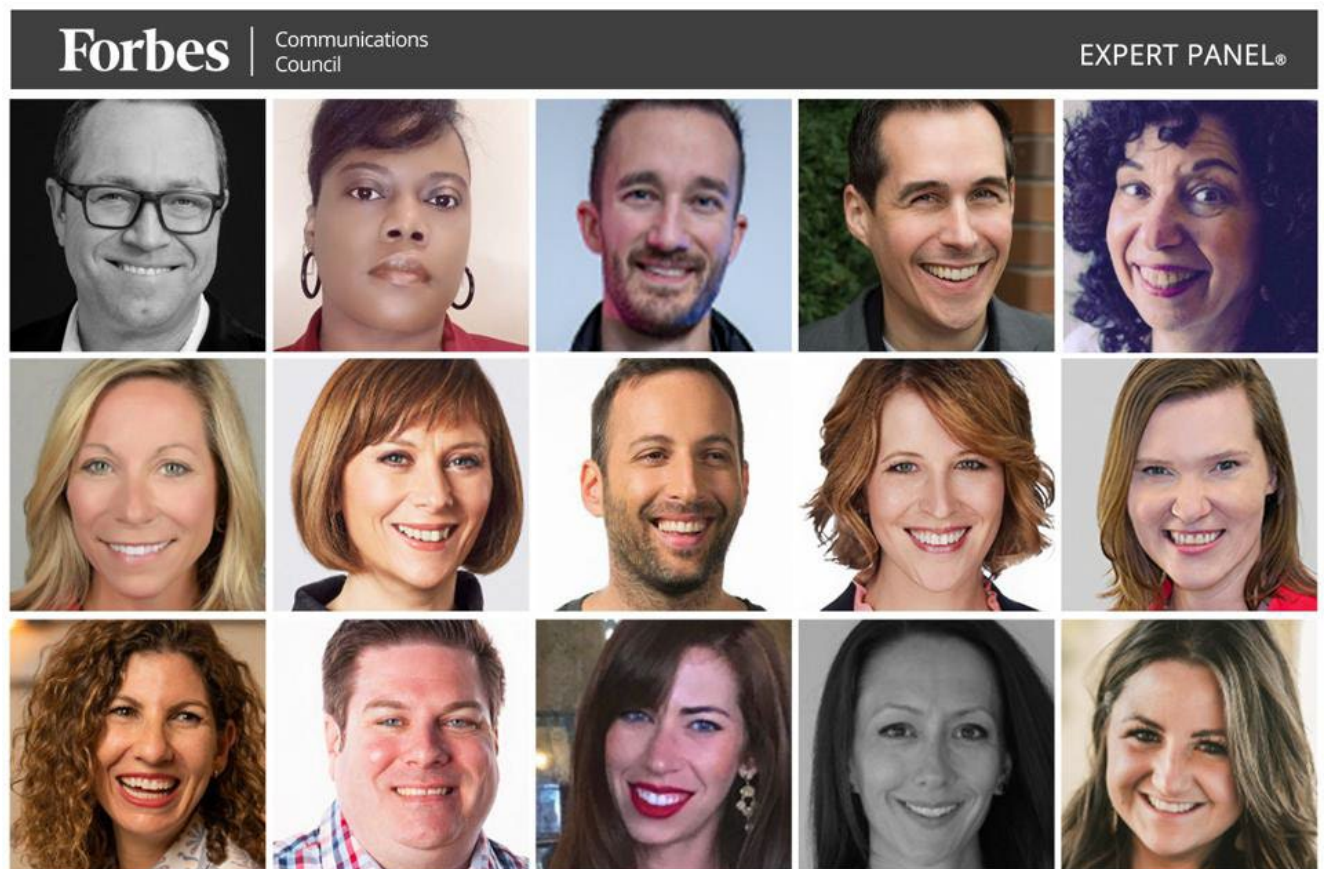COUNCIL POST| Membership (Fee-Based)

Leadership

Many sales teams will develop a loose "script" to follow as a foundation for their pitch to new prospects. While it's smart to have a basic script as a jumping-off point, it's crucial to ensure that the language used in any communications with potential clients or customers doesn't come off as scripted or generic. Consumers can be turned off by canned pitches, sense dishonesty and end up taking their business elsewhere. Instead, a sales team should strive to always be perceived as open, helpful and informative.

The members of Forbes Communication Council know the best ways to pitch your company's true value in an effective and authentic way that will resonate

with prospects, making them feel connected and more open to hearing about the solutions you can offer. Read on to see 15 members weigh in with rules of thumb you and your team can use to avoid overly salesy, rehearsed-sounding language in your pitches.

Forbes Communications Council members share ways to draft a script for sales pitches that sounds less canned.

1. Tell A Genuine Story

The best way to make your script come alive for sales teams is to ensure your script is a genuine story. It should involve a real customer case. It should present a big trend and a challenge your prospects can relate to. You must

present a compelling resolution and then a happy outcome. If it's an inspiring story, your salespeople will make it their own and authentically express and embody it. - Max Kalehoff, Realeyes

2. Provide 'Guardrails' Instead

Gone are the days when marketing worked in a vacuum. So, it's no longer about providing scripts but rather guardrails. Marketers should be leveraging their customer, product and channel insights to provide direction and speaking points for the sales team. Then the salesperson owns the language used and the story told to obtain the sale based on the customer's state of need. - Deetricha Younger, Deetricha Younger, LLC

3. Flip The Script

Instead of writing something that tries to hard-sell your products or services right out of the gate, try earning the right to deliver that messaging by offering something of value first. Provide some market insight or other educational value to open the conversation. If nothing else, you are providing value, a relief to the barrage of traditional pitches, and you will be remembered. - Scott Schoeneberger, Bluewater Technologies Group, Inc.

4. Give High-Level Talking Points

I recommend treating this process like you are training a spokesperson. Don't give your team a defined script. Give them high-level bullet points/talking points and then set aside plenty of time for them to practice the different talk tracks. If they feel confident in the key points, the content will come out naturally and not feel scripted because it's not scripted. - Colby Reade, M.J. Murdock Charitable Trust

[Forbes Communications Council](#) is an invitation-only community for executives in successful public relations, media strategy, creative and advertising agencies. *Do I qualify?*

5. Allow Your Team To Tailor Their Scripts

A "hard" script will never provide the authenticity that works best when making a sales call. Start with three or four different ways to get to the "meat" of the pitch and make some suggestions on how the team can tailor it to their individual styles. The balance of the "script" can tie back to those beginnings and feel more organic. - Hope Neiman, Tillster

6. Center The Script Around The Customer

Scripting is dangerous, as you want your pitch to be 100% authentic and about the customer. The first thing to do is put in place a template that would be around the industry and the customer challenges and then end with the company. Starting any presentation about who you are and how long you have been in business is selfish and the prospect will not be impressed. It has to be about them. - Wendi Sabo, ECI Software Solutions

7. Focus On Learning

Sales pitches need to be about the client, their needs and hitting their goals. The script needs to be light and focused on learning. Once the client needs are understood, have a broad enough sales template to customize and show clients that you have listened, researched and are providing a thoughtful response. - Sarah Whipp, Callsign

8. Don't Be A Salesperson

Don't be a salesperson; be a helpful person. Prospects are tired of the yes-to-all, know-it-all approach. So, lose the PowerPoint and don't talk as much—the best insights are born out of silence. Yes, prospects still want to be wowed, but in equal parts by the product, your pitch and you. And they want to trust that when they're in need, you'll be there. If one of these is off, you're in a losing position. - Pini Yakuel, Optimove

9. Focus On Key Messaging

Allowing everyone to deliver the message in a style that feels natural to them—focusing on key messages versus a formal script—is going to be your organization's greatest chance for success. And follow the rule of three: Focus on the three most important messages and three supporting points for each. Then, work with the sales team to build confidence in the messaging so they can best deliver it. - Emily Negrin, Inari

10. Do A Practice Run With An Outsider

Deliver the pitch to someone who doesn't work for your company or even in your area of expertise, such as a friend or family member. They'll be easily able to point out parts that sound too salesy, jargony or inauthentic. (And they are often more than happy to give a straight opinion!) - Kathy Sucich, Dimensional Insight

11. Ditch The Script

Selling is storytelling. People remember gossip for a reason: It has a hook, characters and is relatable. Provide a framework for sales reps to leverage with key messages, specific examples and results, but give them space to build the

story and make it relevant/memorable to the buyer. - Erica
Morgenstern, Welltok

12. Don't Memorize The Script

I'm against scripts in general, but I definitely think common language and strategies should be used in telling the story of a product and brand. Stay away from memorizing it. Know the key differentiating words, but don't sound like a rehearsed robot. Use common language and your own words and, most importantly, *listen* first. Wait until the prospect has shared their perspective and then tailor what you share with them. - Corey Morris, Voltage

13. Provide Sound Bites

One way to avoid making a script sound too "salesy" is to not script it. If you're worried about a script becoming too jargony, provide sound bites and high-level points that a sales team member should address during the pitch, then let them use their gift of persuasion and communication to fill in the blanks. The end result will always be more natural, authentic and real. - Melissa Kandel, little word studio

14. Train Your Team

The goal of the script is to provide a bold and consistent foundation for sales representatives' conversations. The key to making the text sound authentic lies in the training of the sales team. It cannot simply be provided; it requires training and dialogue. Reps need to feel confident with the material so they can make it their own and translate it into an authentic and engaging customer experience. - Kelly Grover, Acoustic

15. Include Success Stories

Your pitch should include a personalized success story your company is proud to share. Start with understanding your audience and what they care about, then choose something you're proud to share and include it in your pitch. This signals to your listener that you have accomplished something impactful before and are focused on continuing that momentum in the future, this time with them by your side. - Victoria Zelefsky, The Menkiti Group