



WEBINAR

The Research Behind Adaptive Selling



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Housekeeping Items

- 35-min topic discussion followed by Q&A
- Recording will be provided and slides will be shared in our follow-up email
- Feel free to submit questions through the chat feature
- Learn more by [requesting a demo](#)

Today's Agenda

- Introduction into Adaptive Selling
- Questions we'll answer
 - Does adaptive selling improve sales performance?
 - What are the most effective adaptive selling tactics?
 - In what selling situation is adaptive selling most beneficial?
 - How do I get my reps to start adaptively selling?
- Key Takeaways





INTRODUCTION INTO ADAPTIVE SELLING

INTRODUCTION: ADAPTIVE SELLING

QUESTIONS / RESEARCH

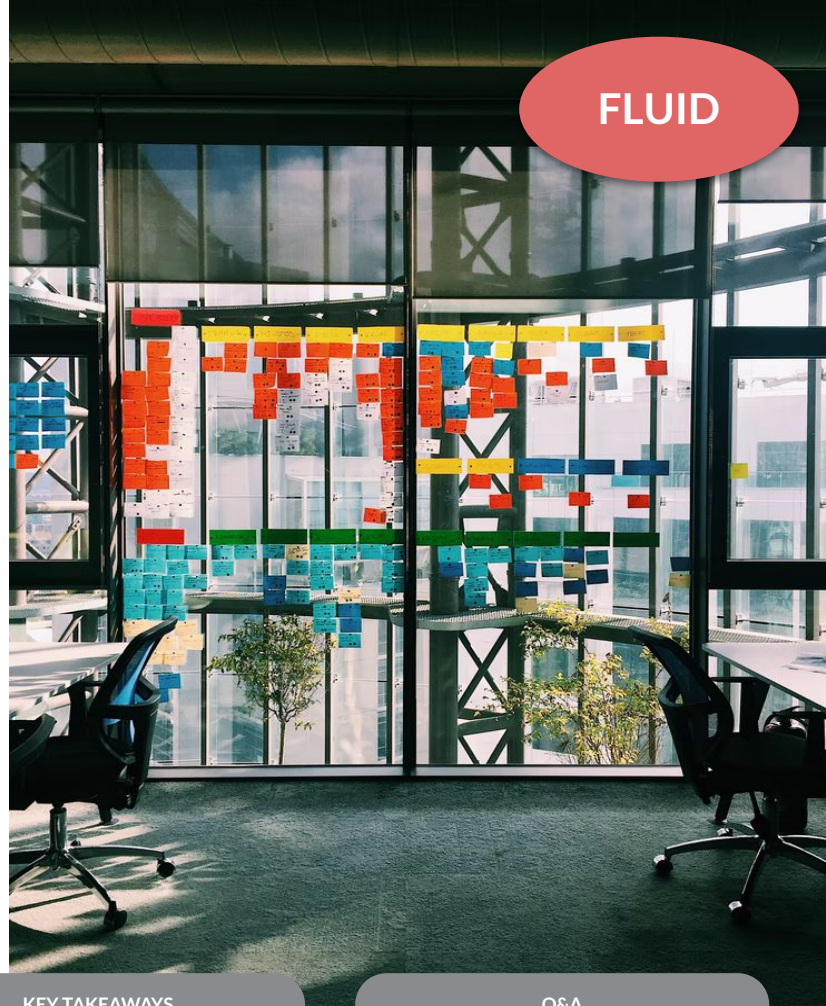
KEY TAKEAWAYS

Q&A

Some sales organizations take a **FLUID** approach to diversify their messaging and sales processes.

These organizations tend to become very *dependent on exceptionally talented reps* to overperform, but have **trouble replicating their success** among the rest of the team.

Over time, this results in an unpredictable, inefficient, and inconsistent buyer experience.





RIGID

Other sales organizations take a more **RIGID** approach, which turns the sales process into a “*numbers game*”.

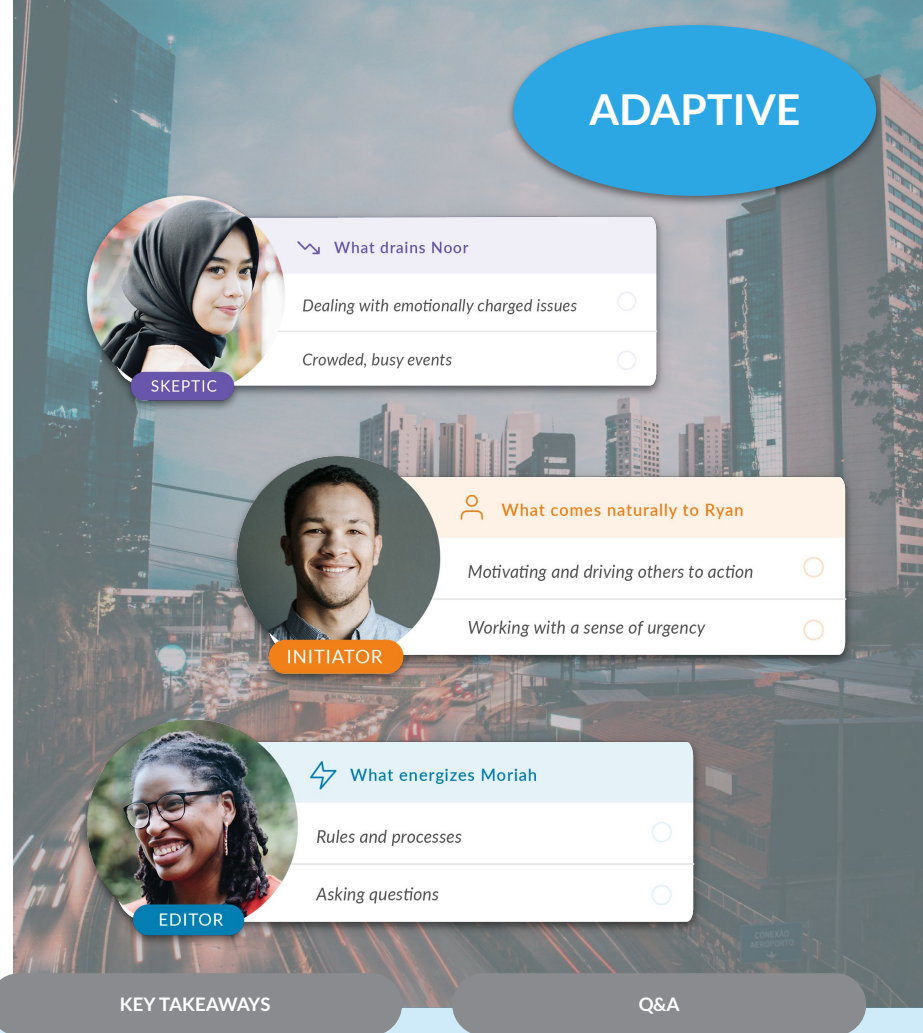
Reps are incentivized to **maximize quantity over quality** when it comes to messaging.

This results in high activity volume but low conversion where efficiency decreases over time as both the buyer (and seller) experience gradually deteriorates.


ADAPTIVE sales organizations train reps to use *efficient, repeatable personalization techniques*.

With *Adaptive Selling* skills, reps can **tailor the sales process** toward the unique needs and preferences of every buyer.

This results in improved rep performance without heavy dependence on charisma, manager intervention, or rigid processes.




ADAPTIVE


SKEPTIC


What drains Noor

- Dealing with emotionally charged issues
- Crowded, busy events


INITIATOR

What comes naturally to Ryan

- Motivating and driving others to action
- Working with a sense of urgency

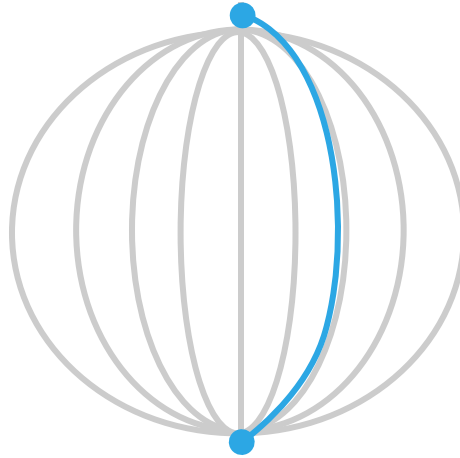

EDITOR

What energizes Moriah

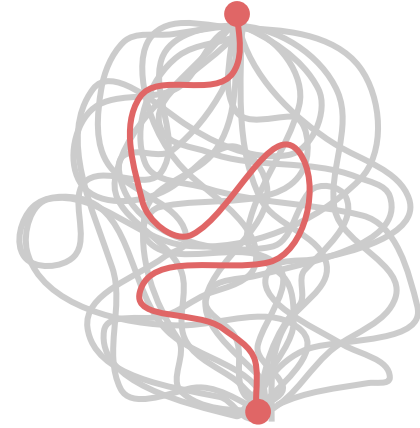
- Rules and processes
- Asking questions



Rigid sales orgs enforce one standardized pitch/process.



Adaptive sales orgs train their reps to use flexible, but repeatable techniques to optimize the pitch/process for every deal.



Fluid sales orgs rely on reps to develop their own pitches/processes.

Introduction into Adaptive Selling

Adaptive selling is the ability for sales reps to change their pitch, process, and communication style based on the needs and preferences of each buyer.

The *Research* Behind Adaptive Selling

Adaptive selling has been researched for decades with a countless number of studies conducted to support its validity.

Today we discuss key findings from 3 studies:



Study #1:
Journal of Marketing Research & AMA
(2006)



Study #2:
Journal of Marketing Research
(2006)



Study #3:
Journal of Business Research
(2003)



DOES ADAPTIVE SELLING IMPROVE SALES PERFORMANCE?

INTRODUCTION: ADAPTIVE SELLING

QUESTIONS / RESEARCH

KEY TAKEAWAYS

Q&A

METHOD

- Studied articles from 33 different journals, 48 dissertations & 6 conference proceedings
- Represents over 31,000 salespeople
- Studies drawn only from native English-speaking sales forces
- Covers numerous sales approaches on a wide variety of products and industries

RESULTS

Adaptive selling increases all measurements of sales performance.

RELATIONSHIP	TOTAL EFFECT (T-SCORE)	RESULT
Adaptive Selling Behavior > Self-rated Performance	9.66*	Highly Statistically Significant
Adaptive Selling Behavior > Manager-rated Performance	2.5*	Statistically Significant
Adaptive Selling Behavior > Objective Performance	4.65**	Highly Statistically Significant

* = $p < 0.05$ (which means the relationship is statistically significant)

** = $p < 0.01$ (which means the relationship is HIGHLY statistically significant)

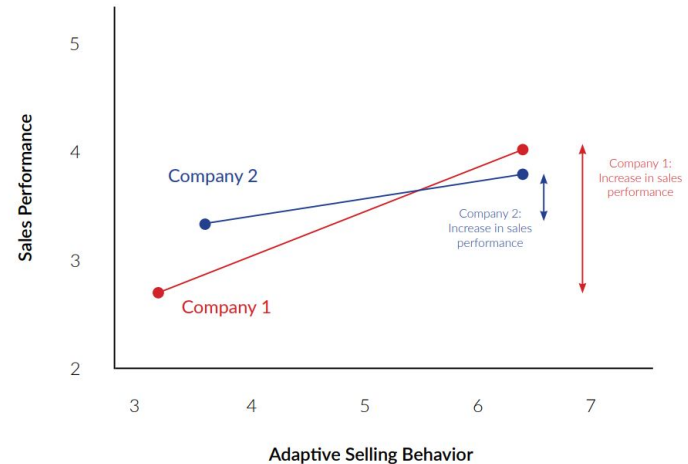
METHOD

Studied two companies representing maximally dissimilar selling situations:

1. **COMPANY 1:** Industrial and computerized electric motors producer
2. **COMPANY 2:** Large home improvement centers and independently owned hardware outlets

RESULTS

Adaptive selling increases sales performance across selling situations.





WHAT ARE THE MOST EFFECTIVE ADAPTIVE SELLING TACTICS?

INTRODUCTION: ADAPTIVE SELLING

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Journal of Marketing Research & AMA

Influence Tactics for Effective Adaptive Selling by Richard G. McFarland, Goutam N. Challagalla, & Tasadduq A. Shervani

METHOD

Studied an industrial reseller of agricultural equipment for a Fortune 500 company in a competitive environment.

The study consisted of two phases:

1. Customer questionnaire - to identify the sales representative they worked with and to respond to all questions about that sales representative (459 responses)
2. Sales rep questionnaire - to gather responses on questions about the customer that identified them (193 responses)

Customers reported on the influence tactics that sales representatives used, and sales representatives reported on which buyer orientation best fit the customer.

SELLER INFLUENCE TACTICS

1 Information Exchange

Involves the communication of information, including asking questions, without making any specific recommendations.

2 Recommendations

Arguments used to convince a customer that products or services purchased from the sales rep would be beneficial to the customer's firm.

3 Threats

Implied or stated negative sanctions that the sales rep asserts will be applied to the buyer's firm if the buyer does not comply with the seller's request.

4 Promises

A pledge to provide the target with a specific reward, contingent on the target's compliance with the source's request.

5 Ingratiation

The use of behaviors that are designed to enhance one's interpersonal attractiveness and improve rapport with the target of influence.

6 Inspirational Appeal

A request or proposal that arouses enthusiasm by appealing to a target's values, ideals, and aspirations.

BUYER ORIENTATIONS

Task-Oriented Buyers

- Focuses on the task at hand
- Values efficiency throughout buying process
- Highly goal-oriented

Interaction-Oriented Buyers

- Easy to talk to/enjoys engaging in conversation
- Enjoys building rapport during sales
- Interested in building connection with sales representatives

Self-Oriented Buyers

- Cares more about what they have to say, rather than the seller
- Typically dominates the conversation
- Speaks highly of themselves constantly to impress the seller

Journal of Marketing Research & AMA

Influence Tactics for Effective Adaptive Selling by Richard G. McFarland, Goutam N. Challagalla, & Tasadduq A. Shervani

RESULTS

The adaptive selling tactic that offers near-universal appeal is *information exchange*; followed by *recommendation*

BUYER ORIENTATIONS			
SELLER INFLUENCE TACTIC	TASK-ORIENTED BUYER	INTERACTION-ORIENTED BUYER	SELF-ORIENTED BUYER

INFORMATION EXCHANGE

**Extreme Statistical Significant

**Extreme Statistical Significant

*High Statistical Significant

* = $p < 0.01$ (which means the relationship is HIGHLY statistically significant)
 ** = $p < 0.001$ (which means the relationship is EXTREMELY statistically significant)



IN WHAT SELLING SITUATION IS ADAPTIVE SELLING MOST BENEFICIAL?

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Journal of Business Research

The moderating effect of selling situation on the adaptive selling strategy-selling effectiveness relationship by Stephen S. Porter, Joshua L. Wiener & Gary L. Frankwick

METHOD

Studied two companies representing **maximally dissimilar selling situations**:

1. Industrial and computerized electric motors;
2. Large home improvement centers and independently owned hardware outlets



Contingency Model of Salesperson Performance. Adapted from Weitz 1981).

Questionnaire - to measure sales rep's performance and predisposition to practice adaptive selling using self-reported evaluations (168 surveys)

Journal of Business Research

The moderating effect of selling situation on the adaptive selling strategy-selling effectiveness relationship by Stephen S. Porter, Joshua L. Wiener & Gary L. Frankwick

	SELLING SITUATION	DESCRIPTION
COMPANY 2	Straight Rebuy	A customer has purchased an item in the past and in all likelihood will reorder from the supplier in the future. This routine decision involves low levels of perceived risk and low information needs.
COMPANY 1	Modified Rebuy	A customer purchased similar items in the past; however, some aspects of the buying task has changed. For example, an original equipment manufacturer (OEM) may have redesigned a product for which the item is a component part. As a result, new information is required to reevaluate previous decisions regarding the component and the supplier and new solutions may be considered during this process.
	New Purchase	A customer is buying for the first time. Since buyers may have little experience with new vendors, and because they have little or no experience with the product/service itself, their information needs are very high.

Journal of Business Research

The moderating effect of selling situation on the adaptive selling strategy-selling effectiveness relationship by Stephen S. Porter, Joshua L. Wiener & Gary L. Frankwick

RESULTS

Sales teams focused on winning **NEW CLIENTS** will benefit most from adaptive selling.

SELLING SITUATION

ADAPTIVE SELLING REQUIREMENTS

Straight Rebuy

Requires a sales representative to be **MINIMALLY** adaptive

Modified Rebuy

Requires a sales representative to be **MODERATELY** adaptive

New Task Purchase

Requires a sales representative to be **HIGHLY** adaptive



HOW DO I GET MY REPS TO START ADAPTIVELY SELLING?

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What is DISC?

DISC measures 4 primary traits:



Dominance



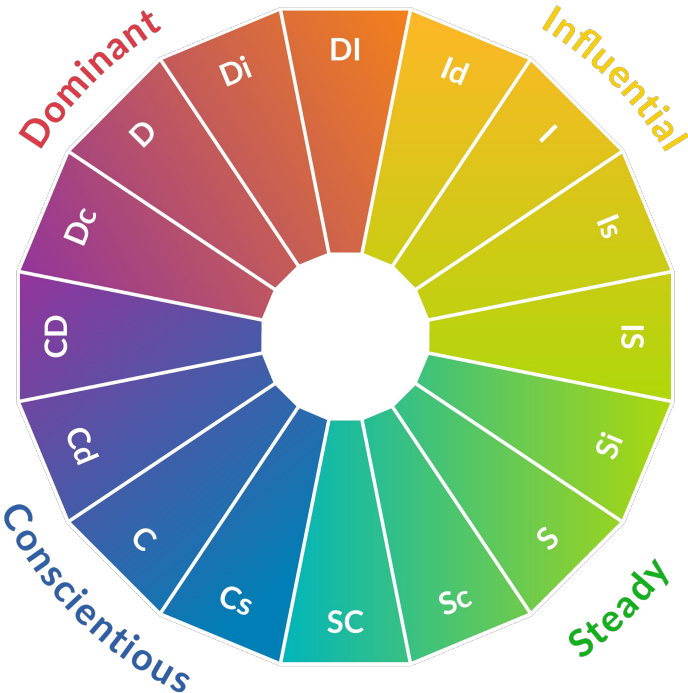
Influence



Conscientiousness



Steadiness



Crystal: The Adaptive Selling Platform

Crystal is the software platform for implementing, reinforcing, and scaling **adaptive sales practices**. We reveal any **prospect's natural personality** using the well-validated personality framework, **DISC**.

Once a prospect's personality is determined, our platform shares unique tips for **how to best communicate** with the prospect **across sales stages**.



PROSPECTING

Never start a sales conversation in the dark.



OUTREACH

Send every message in the natural style of your buyer.



DISCOVERY

Ensure a discovery call starts off the right foot.



QUALIFICATION

Better determine a serious buyer from a tire-kicker.



OBJECTIONS

Handle sales objections with confidence.



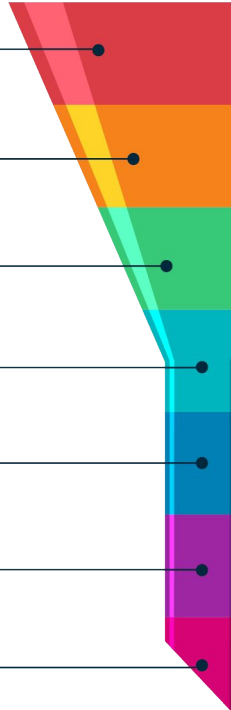
NEGOTIATIONS

Be prepared for every negotiation.



CLOSING

Shorten your sales cycle and close more deals.



Crystal: The Adaptive Selling Platform

Works with:

- *LinkedIn / Sales Navigator*
- *Gmail / Outlook*
- *Salesforce*
- *Hubspot*
- *...and more!*

REQUEST YOUR DEMO TODAY!

The screenshot displays the Crystal Adaptive Selling Platform interface. At the top, it identifies the contact as Brandon Salisbury, a Driver. The main section is titled "How to communicate" and provides the instruction: "Be direct and drive the conversation forward with high energy." Below this, there are "Do" and "Don't" lists. The "Do" list includes: "Use an energetic, assertive tone" and "Highlight competitive advantages of your product." The "Don't" list includes: "Don't be overly friendly; be assertive and push back when you need to" and "Don't sugarcoat or use vague, overly-optimistic language to describe the value of your product." To the right, there are sections for "QUICK TIPS" and "EMAILING". The "QUICK TIPS" section has two dropdown menus: "I need to..." with "Call Brandon" selected, and "So I can..." with "Make a sales pitch" selected. Below these is a list of actions: "Make a sales pitch" (highlighted in blue), "Negotiate", "Make a good impression", "Persuade to take action", "Schedule a meeting", "Discuss pricing", "Gather Information", and "Set Expectations". The "EMAILING" section lists tips: "Avoid being overly detailed", "Be concise and to the point", and "Write 3 sentences or less", with a "Show more" link. Below that is a "MEETING" section with tips: "Quickly address the purpose of the meeting", "Prepare for pushback", and "Keep it as short as possible", also with a "Show more" link. A vertical sidebar on the left contains navigation icons for home, search, and settings.



FREE EBOOK

DOES ADAPTIVE SELLING INCREASE SALES PERFORMANCE?

DOWNLOAD NOW



DOES ADAPTIVE SELLING INCREASE SALES PERFORMANCE?

Compelling Evidence for the Transformative Impact
of an Adaptive Sales Approach





KEY TAKEAWAYS

INTRODUCTION: ADAPTIVE SELLING

QUESTIONS / RESEARCH

KEY TAKEAWAYS

Q&A

Key Takeaways

1. Adaptive selling increases all measures of sales performance *(JMR & AMA, 2006)*
2. Adaptive selling increases sales performance across selling situations *(JBR, 2003)*
3. *Information exchange* is the adaptive selling tactic that offers near-universal appeal *(AMA, 2006)*
4. Sales teams focused on winning new customers will benefit most from adaptive selling *(JBR, 2003)*

Q&A



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