



Aalto University  
School of Science

23E50010

# INDIVIDUAL SELLING SKILLS

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## ARTICLE PREREADING & PRESENTATION

Adamson, B., Dixon, M., &  
Toman, N. (2012). "The End of  
Solution Sales". *Harvard Business  
Review*.

# The End of Solution Sales

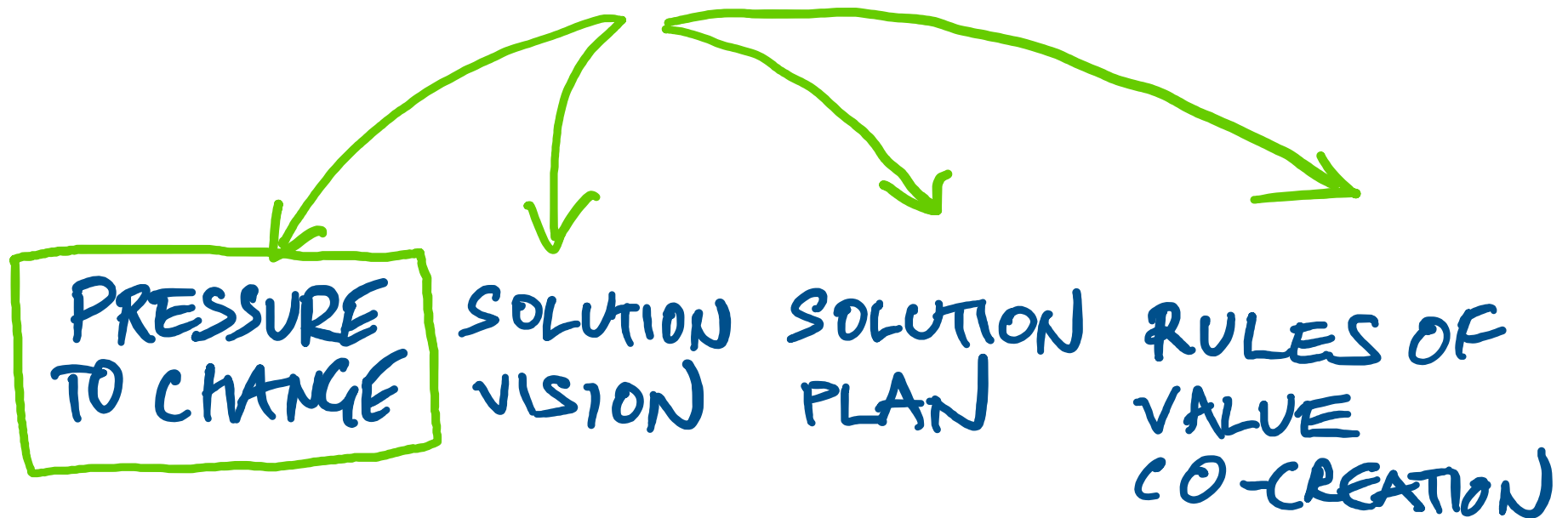
***The old playbook  
no longer works.  
Star salespeople now  
seek to upend the  
customer's current  
approach to doing  
business.*** by Brent  
Adamson, Matthew Dixon,  
and Nicholas Toman

1 TRUST

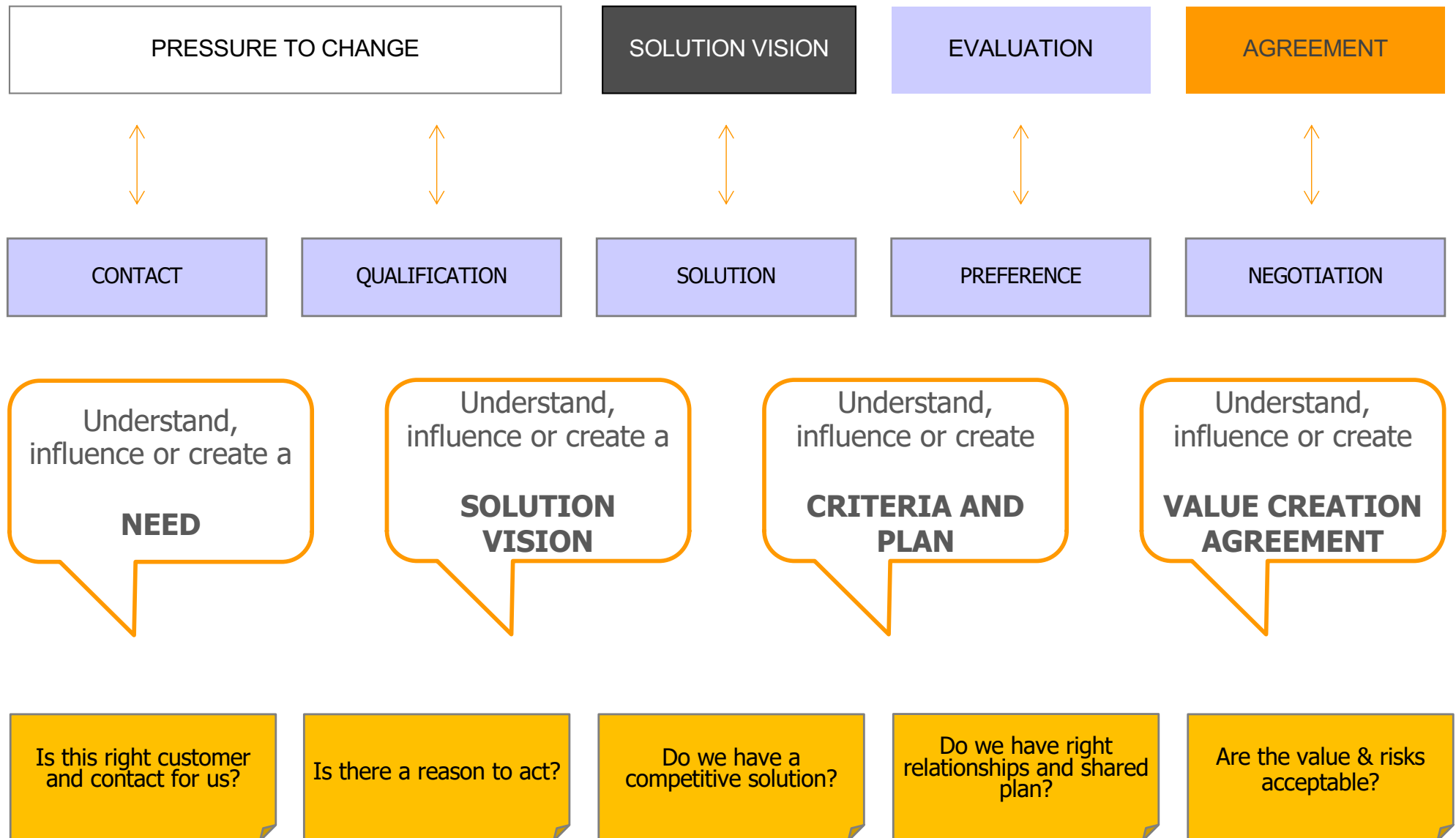
2 INFLUENCING WITH QUESTIONS

3 PSYCHOLOGY OF INFLUENCE

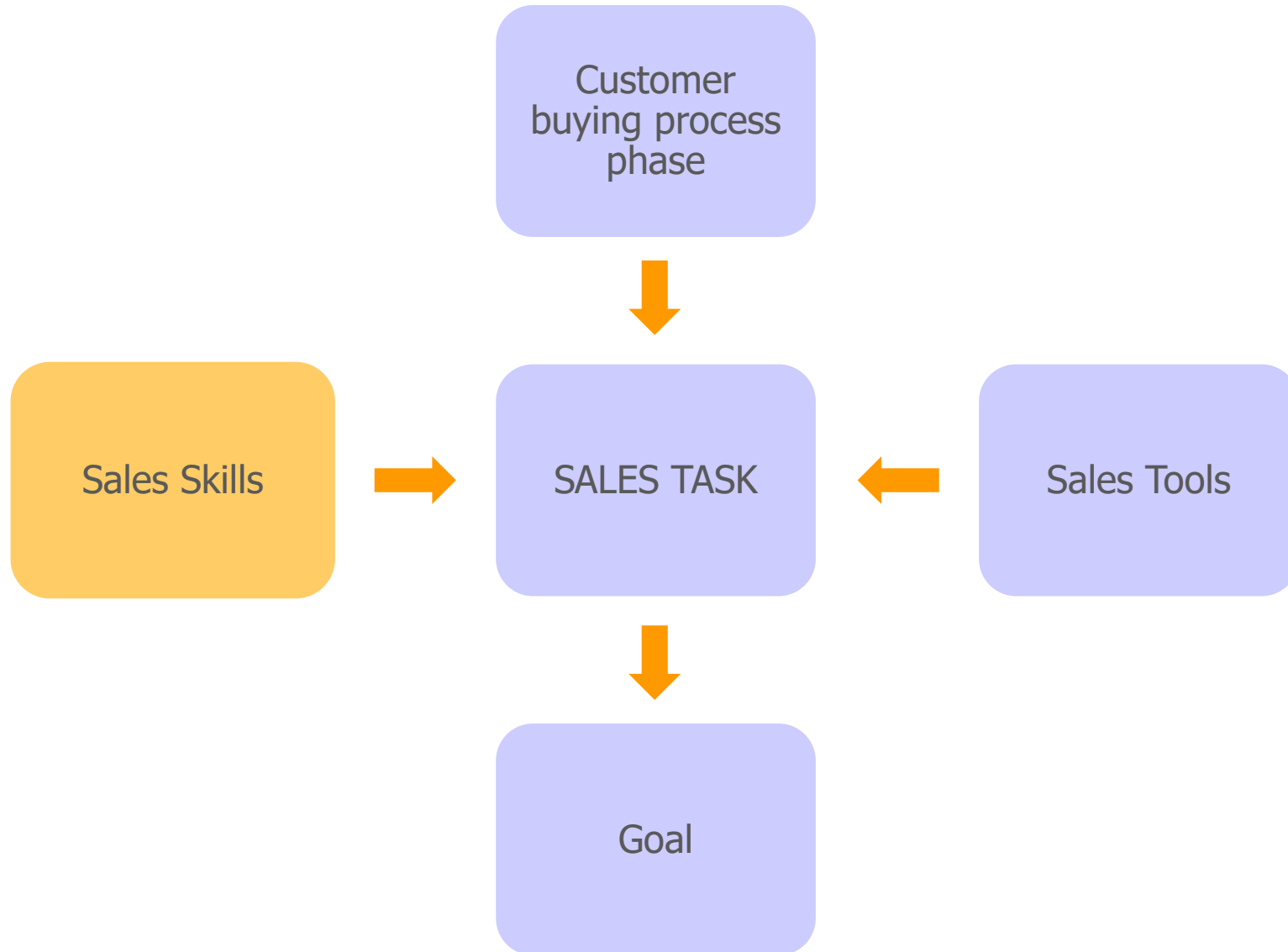
# 4 BUSINESS CONVERSATIONS



# BUYING AND SELLING CONNECTED



# INDIVIDUAL SELLING SKILLS



# DISCUSSION

Discuss the following question in your groups for 10 mins:

*What are individual sales skills?*

Prepare to share your findings with the rest of the group.



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TRUST

Understanding the elements of trust and building trust based on these is a corner stone of interactive communication. This is broadly understood but poorly mastered.

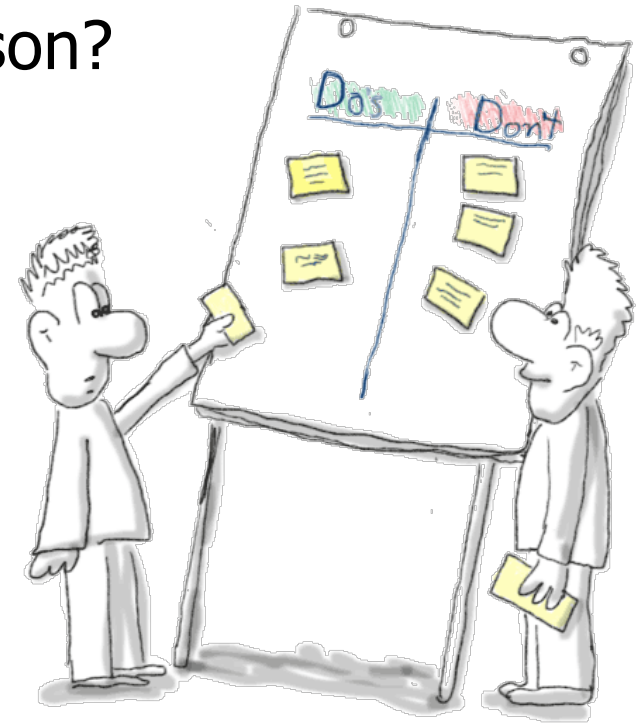


# BUILDING TRUST

Discuss in teams...

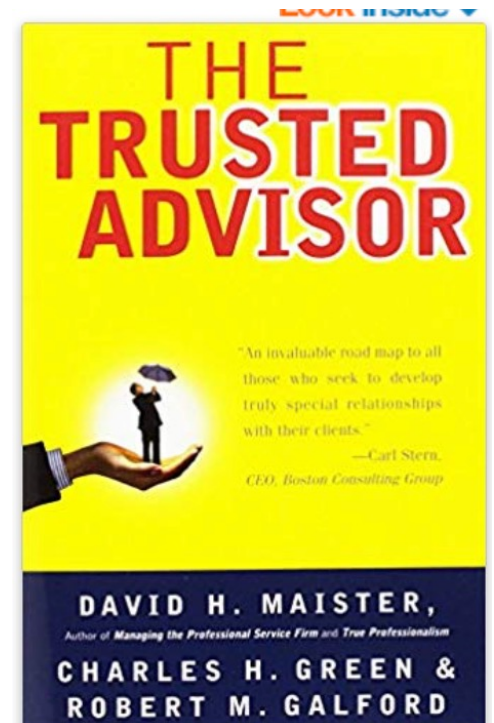
- What is trust?
- How can trust be created or lost?
- What makes you trust another person?

Prepare to share your observation with others.



# THE EQUATION OF TRUST

$$\text{TRUST} = \frac{\text{CREDIBILITY} * \text{RELIABILITY} * \text{RAPPORT}}{\text{SELFISHNESS}}$$



# TRUST IN YOUR ORGANIZATION

## ELEVATOR SPEECH

- What do we do?
- Who are our customers? (industries we serve)
- What value do we create for our customers?
- How do we differentiate from others? (in a way that's relevant to the customer)

## CUSTOMER RELATIONSHIPS

- Selected customer references

## REFERENCE STORY

- Situation before
- Business issue
- Solution
- Business benefits



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# INFLUENCING WITH QUESTIONS

Appreciative inquiry with well-planned questions is the  
primary personal sales tool

# DISCUSSION

Discuss the following question in groups for 5 mins:

*You are a sales person about to meet a customer for the first time.  
What would you like to ask, what information would you like to give?*

Prepare to share your findings with the rest of the group.

FUTURE  
PERFORMANCE



} EXTERNAL KNOWLEDGE

} SELLER INNOVATIONS

} CUSTOMER NEEDS

CURRENT  
SITUATION

- 1 SELECT BUSINESS CONVERSATION TOPIC
- 2 ESTABLISH TRUST
- 3 EXPLORE KNOWN NEEDS
- 4 EVALUATE IMPROVEMENT OPPORTUNITIES
- 5 AGREE ON NEXT STEP

NEXT STEP  
↑

EVIDENCE  
REASONS

VALUE

SELLER  
INNOVATIONS

"We have found that we have been able to improve <business topic> by <describe innovation>

"I would like to share some examples of how <innovation> has impacted <business topic>

"On average, the <innovation> has improved <business topic> by <impact on goal>"

CUSTOMER  
NEEDS

"Is there anything that you are unhappy with or see an opportunity to improve?"

"What do you think are the reasons for <challenge>?"

"What do you think would be the impact of solving <challenge>?"

SITUATION

"Could you please describe how are you doing <business topic> now?"

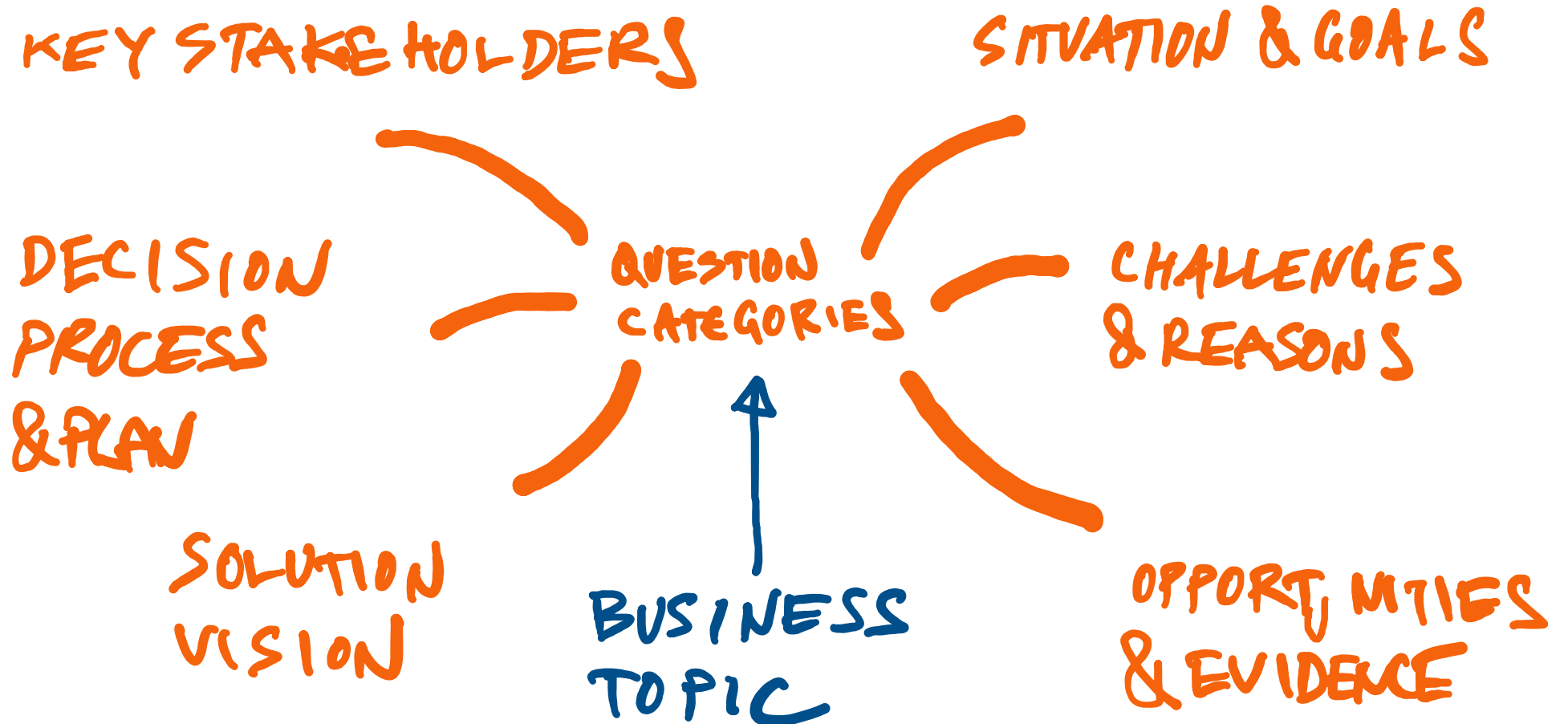
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BUSINESS TOPIC



# INFLUENCING WITH QUESTIONS

<b>Select business conversation topic</b>	Introduce the business conversation topic		
<b>Explore current situation</b>	Explore the "business conversation topic" situation " <i>How are you doing &lt;topic&gt; now?</i> "		
<b>Explore known challenges</b>	Identify and known challenge " <i>what are you dissatisfied in your current situation with &lt;topic&gt;?</i> "	<i>"What are the reasons for the challenge?"</i>	Why is the challenge important? " <i>what are the consequences, if nothing is done?</i> "
<b>Explore improvement opportunities</b>	Describe the opportunity to improve by value proposition and success stories " <i>Could I share some of our recent research findings about &lt;topic&gt;?</i> "	Explain and discuss the reasons for the opportunity	Evaluate the value creation potential of the opportunity " <i>how important would these opportunities be in your situation?</i> "
<b>Conclude</b>	Summarize the gap and agree on next steps (by a <b>meeting summary</b> template)		

# SALES CONVERSION TOPICS



# ACTIVE LISTENING



- Maintain natural eye-contact
- Do not look past the other person (watch, phone, ...)
- If you break the eye contact, look down (like asian people often do)
- Listen actively and show interest.
- Take notes, but stay focused on the customer
- Don't guess what the speaker is about to say
- Interrupt with deliberation
- Ask follow-up questions and encourage the the other person to continue
- Summarize the outcome of the conversation to make sure you have understood the topic correctly
- Pay attention to the body language of the speaker

# EXPLORE BUSINESS IMPACT MEETING MODEL



● Personal trust & credibility

● Corporate credibility

● Need for change: understand, influence

● Solution concept: understand, influence

● Agreeing on next step

● Writing summary

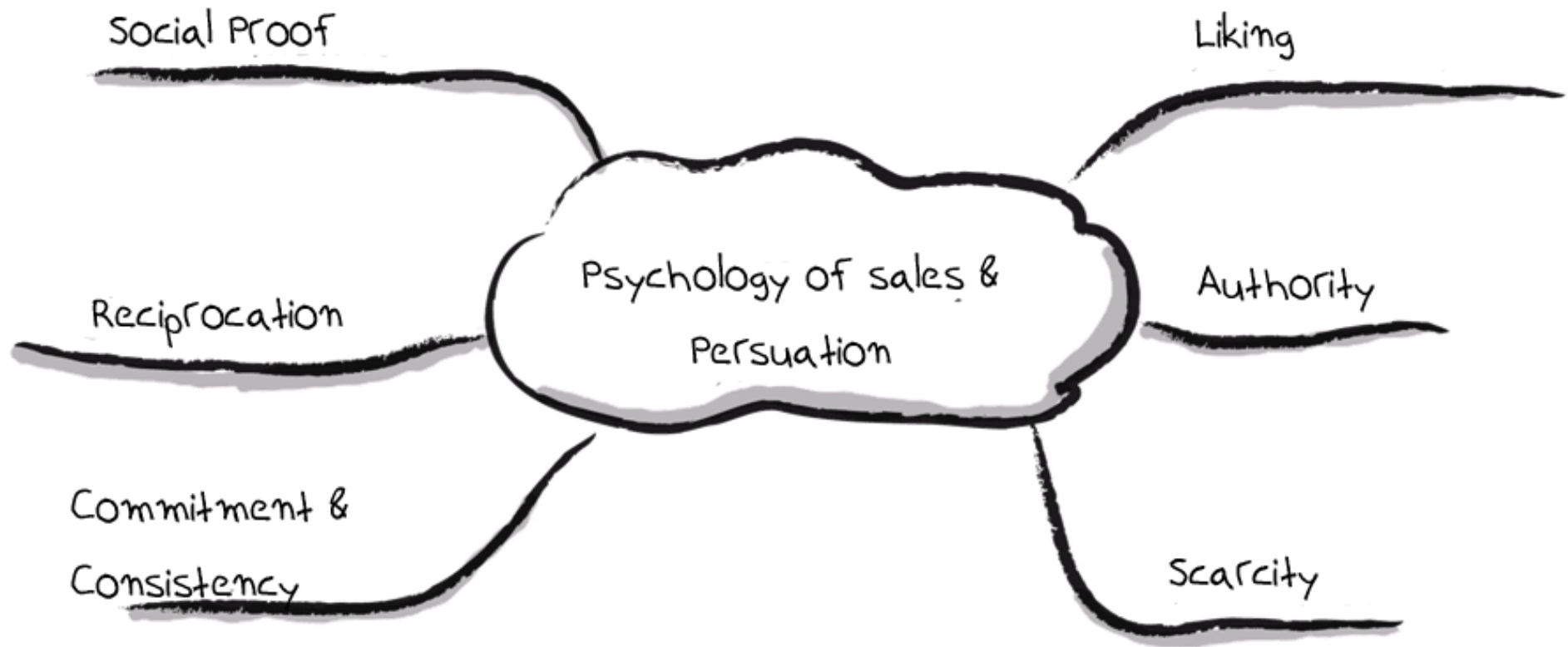


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# THE PSYCHOLOGY OF INFLUENCE

There a large number of different cognitive biases affecting decision making

# Psychology of Persuasion

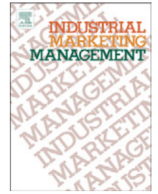


# ARTICLE REVIEW



Contents lists available at [ScienceDirect](#)

## Industrial Marketing Management



### Value-based selling: An organizational capability perspective



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Töytäri, P., Rajala, R. (2015)  
“Value-Based Selling: An  
organizational capability  
perspective”. *Industrial Marketing  
Management*.