Customer-Centric Selling Training Course: Buyer Outcomes, Discovery Standards and Pipeline Coaching

26 – 30 April 2027
Amsterdam

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Programme Summary

Customer-centric selling is the subject of this one-week training course for sales directors, commercial leaders and heads of key accounts, ending in a selling standards and coaching plan for one sales team. Sales teams often present products before they learn what the buyer must achieve, and managers review pipeline by value rather than by evidence of need. The programme moves from buyer outcomes to discovery standards, value conversations, opportunity qualification and pipeline coaching. Mars Training Centre UK delivers this programme on customer-centric selling to mixed-organisation cohorts.

The Business Case

Equipment suppliers, financial services firms, technology vendors and professional service providers all compete for buyers who compare options before they speak to a salesperson. When selling starts with the product, conversations turn on price and forecasts rest on hope. Leaders who set discovery standards, ask for evidence of buyer need and coach real conversations can plan capacity with more confidence and protect margin.

- Forecast Reliability: Improves when opportunities are qualified on stated buyer outcomes and not on optimism.
- Discounting: Falls when value is agreed with the buyer before price is discussed.
- Conversion Quality: Rises when managers coach discovery and next steps in live opportunities.

Principles and Evidence Base

- Consultative Selling: Treats the salesperson as an adviser on the buyer's problem, applied in Sessions 1 and 3 to buyer outcome statements and value conversations.
- Discovery Questioning: Draws out need, impact and decision process through planned questions, applied in Session 2 to discovery standards and call guides.
- Opportunity Qualification: Tests whether a buyer has need, authority and a path to decision, applied in Session 4 to pipeline rules.
- Pipeline Review: Examines opportunities by evidence and next step, applied in Sessions 4 and 5 to coaching routines.

Intended Participants

- Sales directors who set the selling standard across several teams.
- Commercial leaders who own forecasts, pricing discipline and key relationships.
- Sales managers who coach representatives and review opportunities each week.
- Sales enablement leaders who design the guides and tools that teams use in buyer meetings.

Typical settings include industrial equipment, financial services, technology and professional services.

Learning Outcomes

1. Participants will be able to evaluate how their teams currently open buyer conversations and where product talk replaces discovery.
2. Participants will be able to construct buyer outcome statements that link a need to a measurable result.
3. Participants will be able to design discovery standards and question guides for different buyer roles.
4. Participants will be able to prioritise opportunities by evidence of need and a credible path to decision.
5. Participants will be able to diagnose coaching gaps from recorded conversations and pipeline reviews.
6. Participants will be able to justify a selling standards and coaching plan to a senior sponsor.

Programme Structure

Day 1: Customer-Centric Selling and Buyer Outcomes

What does the buyer need to achieve, and how does the team currently sell?

- Current Selling Conversation Audit
- Buyer Outcome Statement Template
- Buyer Role and Concern Map
- Product Talk Versus Need Talk Review
- Selling Principles Charter

Day 2: Discovery Standards and Question Design

How does a salesperson learn the need before offering a solution?

- Discovery Question Ladder
- Need and Impact Question Bank
- Decision Process Mapping Sheet
- Meeting Preparation Guide
- Discovery Quality Checklist

Day 3: Value Conversations and Objections

How is value agreed with the buyer before price is discussed?

- Value Statement Builder
- Evidence and Reference Selection Grid
- Price Conversation Sequence
- Concern Handling Script
- Mutual Next Step Agreement

Day 4: Opportunity Qualification and Pipeline Review

Which opportunities deserve effort, and what evidence supports them?

- Qualification Criteria Sheet
- Opportunity Evidence Scorecard
- Stage Exit Rules
- Weekly Pipeline Review Agenda
- Forecast Challenge Questions

Day 5: Selling Standards and Coaching Plan for One Sales Team

Do the earlier tools join into a plan that a sponsor can approve?

- Applying the Session 1 Outcome Statement Template
- Testing the Session 2 Discovery Quality Checklist
- Rehearsing the Session 3 Price Conversation Sequence
- Checking the Session 4 Evidence Scorecard
- Completing the Selling Standards and Coaching Plan

Methodology

The programme uses simulation supported by prepared cases from an industrial equipment supplier and a business bank. Participants play buyers and salespeople, observe recorded conversations, score them against written standards and give coaching feedback to peers. Managers practise the coaching conversation as often as the buyer conversation.

- Suggested activity: Rewriting an opening pitch as five discovery questions tied to one buyer outcome.
- Suggested activity: Scoring ten sample opportunities on evidence and removing those without a decision path.
- Suggested activity: Role-playing a pipeline review in which the manager asks questions instead of giving answers.

Capstone Output

Each participant completes a selling standards and coaching plan for one sales team. It holds buyer outcome statements, discovery standards, a value conversation guide, qualification criteria and a weekly review routine. At work it guides the first quarter of team coaching and gives the sponsor a clearer view of the forecast.

Frequently Asked Questions

Is a customer-centric selling programme suitable for managers who have not coached before?

Yes. Customer-centric selling is taught through prepared cases, scripts and templates. The programme assumes responsibility for a sales team or key accounts, but no earlier experience of formal coaching or pipeline review design.

Which models does customer-centric selling rest on in this programme?

Customer-centric selling rests on consultative selling, discovery questioning, opportunity qualification and evidence-based pipeline review. No single branded method is used.

How is the plan from customer-centric selling used at work?

You use the customer-centric selling plan to brief a sponsor, introduce discovery standards, start weekly evidence-based reviews and coach representatives on live opportunities.

How does customer-centric selling differ from a programme on negotiation skills?

Customer-centric selling concentrates on buyer outcomes, discovery, qualification and coaching before agreement, while a negotiation skills programme concentrates on bargaining positions, concessions and closing terms.