

# LEVEL UP



## LEVEL 3, A NEW COMMERCIAL ORDER.

In today's reality, the buying behaviour of customers has changed. Customers have informed themselves online about the products and services they want to acquire before even meeting with a sales rep. The decision-making unit is more complex, and customers are demanding more and expect a total solution and the best buying experience. What is the impact of all of this on the sales professional?

In addition to this change in buying behaviour, you have to deal with the current economic situation. Until recently the sky was the limit and there was enough demand for almost every supplier in a specific market. But now there is intense competition again. And the market demand will barely grow in many sectors in the near future. The average customer is, therefore, more careful when spending his euros, without proof of direct added value he will not spend it. Only the suppliers who can deliver the most tangible and convincing added value will win in this competitive situation.

Only the winner gets the deal! So, you're either a hero or a zero. With an old school approach to sales, you will not win. This requires the next level on- and offline sales: LEVEL 3.

### WILL THE REAL LEVEL 3 SALES PROFESSIONAL RAISE TO THE OCCASION?

Sales has changed more in the last few years than in all decades before. In response to these changes, new sales methods in selling complex products and services have been developed. Who has not been trained in solution sales, consultative selling or challenger sales?

None of these old school skills training is, however, a real response to technological developments in for example social selling. The sales professional who has not yet incorporated social selling into his daily routine has already missed out on the opportunity even before it was on the market. Due to the lack of growth ambition, entrepreneurship and a clear vision for the future, the focus in most companies is on cost savings to satisfy shareholders in the short term. This has also an impact on the way companies sell to their customers. Customers will feel the consequences immediately as they will get less for an equal or even higher price.

So, the question is, how long can you sustain this? Your original future-proof and distinctive proposition, growth plan and energy in the sales team, will disappear quickly. And suddenly you find yourself and your sales team in a company with no growth plan, no soul and no energy.



# "GROWTH IS POSSIBLE, EVEN IN A SHRINKING MARKET."

Growth is possible, even in a shrinking market. This requires however a different commercial philosophy and approach. The million-dollar question is how you make customers buy from you rather than from your competitors? We distinguish between three levels of sales:

## LEVEL

1

Reactive to customer demand. The customer has a need and you respond to this need with your product or service. You act in a reactive way even when you meet a customer to understand what he needs. The customer will compare you with other providers and you probably will end in a situation where it's all about price – the one with the lowest price will win. However, the winner will feel disappointed because the customer does not see any added value to reward financially.

## LEVEL

2

More added value by asking some clever questions, for example using techniques from the solution sales, consultative selling or challenger sales. You focus on the 'question behind the question' and you will deliver a better technical solution and/or you will do a bit of cross- and upsell. This solution will be based on your products and services. You will do this probably in an original and fun way. You apply tools and principles from management philosophies like the WOW, the customer journey with impact point or the 9+ principles). Buying from you becomes fun and you can ask a fairly higher price compared to Level 1.

## LEVEL

3

LEVEL 3 is a different playfield. As a team you have a commercial philosophy with the following definition: You know the organizational ambitions and the personal dreams of all decision-makers and influencers. You contribute to these structurally and measurably, by making something active that is still latent for the future buyer. And you do it in a way that is fun for your customer.

With Level 3 you will exceed the expectations of your customer and you will surprise him in terms of energy, content and added value. The solutions you offer are far better and broader than your competitors' solutions. You also work closely together with partners – the customer's dream solution is more than your products and services.

Key is to contribute to the personal dream or ambition of your (future) customer. This is an area that is often overlooked by marketers and salespeople. So, the question is:

***TO WHAT EXTENT DOES YOUR ORGANISATION KNOW THE PERSONAL DREAMS OF YOUR CUSTOMERS? AND HOW DO YOU MEASURABLY CONTRIBUTE TO THESE?***

With on- and offline LEVEL 3 sales you create the most added value and you do structurally so with both your new and existing customers. In fact, you become part of your customer's dream and ambition – you can't get closer to their heart. Price is less important. LEVEL 3 companies grow in revenue with much higher margins even in difficult times.

The LEVEL 3 philosophy is a philosophy for the entire organization. Not only for Sales but also for Marketing, Operations, Finance and other departments in the entire value chain. Sales is no longer just for sales, Marketing is no longer just for leads ... no, every function is Sales on LEVEL 3.

Many organizations still operate on LEVEL 1 or maybe a bit on LEVEL 2. Marketing and Sales typically structurally overestimate themselves ...

What would it mean for your customers and your employees if at least 75% of your revenue comes from customer interaction at LEVEL 3? This will go beyond a few playful marketing actions with top 10 tips or paid advertorials with hired in experts with your name and logo.

***HOW MUCH PERCENT OF YOUR CURRENT REVENUE COMES FROM LEVEL 1, 2, OR 3?***

## **A NEW STANDARD FOR EVERY ON- AND OFFLINE CONTACT MOMENT.**

For those who embrace LEVEL 3 sales and therefore mainly want to work for their dream customers, there is a new standard for every (sales)-contact moment.

No matter how short the contact is, the new on- and offline standard is always characterized by making sure your contact moment is the most energetic and fun one in the week. And, creates the most added value on the 'latent needs' by measurably contributing to the personal dream and/or organizational ambition of your (future) customer.

***IF YOU DON'T SCORE AT LEAST AN 8 ON THESE POINTS, THERE IS SOMETHING TO IMPROVE AND YOU HAVE TO GET STARTED TO WORK IN THIS.***

With this new standard, what does your sales call look like, or your marketing campaign or your website? What are you going to do to surprise others in a significant way? Even your emails and invoices will support this. If we manage this process completely, every customer will be surprised and will be a big fan. He is no longer a customer, but a member of the club. You deal with club members differently. A member will not only give you a high Net Promoter Score or customer satisfaction score but will also bring you at least two new customers every year.

## **CHOOSE YOUR DREAM CUSTOMERS.**

Characteristics of LEVEL 1 and LEVEL 2 customers are: they ask for a discount, they regularly switch suppliers, they put pressure on your organization, and they don't go for a partnership. Does every customer want to be challenged on LEVEL 3? No. Characteristics of a LEVEL 3 customer relationship are regular contact, an open and warm relationship, equality and respect, space for sharp and challenging questions, being reflective on both sides, wanting the best solution together and being part of each other's dream or ambition.



Often organizations and sales teams seize simply every opportunity, doing everything for everyone and not having their so-called dream customer characteristics list ready and available.

***WHAT CHARACTERISTICS DO YOUR DREAM CUSTOMERS HAVE?***

## CREATE YOUR OWN HYPE.

What we see is that a lot of companies are buying a training session or single elements to improve their way of working in sales. Is this not a good idea? No, but it will not strengthen your commercial philosophy and ambition.

Sometimes short-term management hypes are followed, in some companies' managers just go from hype-to-hype. The task of a manager is, however, to create their hype with his customers and employees! When is your company the leader in its sector?"

We need managers who want to win and show guts! And that's different than having managers that are avoiding risks and protect their job. To win, guts, creativity and making choices are needed.

You have a distinctive 1 paragraph commercial philosophy, capture it in a commercial Blueprint and you make sure it is implemented in your day-to-day routines. Each and everyone in your organization is acting accordingly and as management, you don't make any concessions to work in line with the Blueprint. This will make your organization future proof.



## PUSHING BOUNDARIES IN SALES?

Many managers think that their commercial organization is distinctive and that they are of significance to their customers. But is this true?

Do you want to know where you stand with your team and organization with a distinctive, modern on- and offline smart sales routine? And what you need to do to make a difference on LEVEL 3?

Then do 'The Commercial Revolution Inspiration Session' with your team or read the book 'The Commercial Revolution' and make a difference.

## RESPOND, BE CHALLENGED WITH YOUR TEAM OR THINK ABOUT COMMERCE NEXT LEVEL

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**DE COMMERCIELE REVOLUTIE LEF-SCAN**  
HOE MAKEN JULLIE ON- EN OFFLINE COMMERCIEEL HET VERSCHIL?  
LEES HET BOEK DE COMMERCIELE REVOLUTIE

**DOEL DE COMMERCIELE REVOLUTIE LEF-SCAN**  
Wat is het doel van de Commercial Revolution? (1 of meer antwoorden)

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**DE COMMERCIELE REVOLUTIE**  
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