

# BMKT 114: Psychology of Selling

## Unit 5 Course Materials – Benefits *NOT* Features



As part of your assignment for Unit 5, you will be writing a discovery agreement for each case study. This discovery agreement consists of playback of information relevant to the problem(s), and a request for agreement. As discussed in Unit 4, this is a critical component of the sales process to be certain you understand your prospects position.

### Benefits *NOT* Features

*(Brian Larson)*

Now we come down to the business of presenting solutions. The "selling" part of sales. I hesitate using the word *selling* since it has connotations of manipulation. It is not manipulation, it is - presenting the best solution in the best interest of your prospect based upon the information provided. Think of it like the remedy a doctor would recommend based upon the symptoms a patient displays. You should look at your role as one of a doctor or counselor helping your client solve their needs. It is *NOT* selling someone something they would not ordinarily need at a price more than they can afford. Your role is a facilitating one, a partnership in the clients life that provides expertise and advice they don't possess. You are a professional specializing in solutions to problems. Be proud of that. You are a vital part of the success of the world economy.

OK, lets get to the meat of the business of making effective presentations. *How* you present information is key to getting the prospect to understand how your solution will solve the problem. It is also where most salespeople are the weakest in their sales skills. Once you get it, it seems so simple. But as you think about it, you will see the mistake being made all of the time. Evaluate its use, or lack of when you are out shopping or talking to a knowledgeable sales representative.

Let me illustrate first. When I was young and in High School, I was in the market for a new turntable for my albums. Now I know this is old school technology, but I trust you know what a turntable is. (My son once found my old records and brought one up to me and asked me where I got the giant CD's. Now I am feeling old....) In any case, I am in a specialty electronic store. The salesperson is showing me one of the latest advancements in turntable technology - laser guided stylus tracking. The turntable was made by a company called Bang & Olufsen built in Denmark. The salesperson did an exhaustive presentation demonstrating the ability for the turntable to be set on its side without the needle losing its tracking on the record. Very cool.....except I couldn't get out of my mind my cynical thoughts. In my head I was thinking..."So what? What am I going to do, hang it on the wall?" ~ "How can a turntable that does tricks be worth the extra money?" And it was substantial.....especially to a kid in High School. Now.....had the salesperson explained how this feature would save my albums from serious scratches during my next beer party when everyone was dancing, stomping their feet and basically being out of control, I would have understood. If I would have had kids and he said something similar in response to the kids playing....I would have understood. He didn't, and he lost a sale. Not because I didn't have the money....because I didn't see the benefit of laser guided tracking on a turntable. He failed to sell me the benefits and focused on the features instead.

*Tattoo this into your brain:*

**People don't buy features, they buy the benefits they *perceive* the features will provide them.**

Another example. Several years back I was in the market to buy a new boat. I went to several boat shows and listened to salesperson after salesperson. Each one selling me on a brand of engine, jet Vs prop, ski Vs, fish, dual prop Vs single, mid-engine Vs outboard,.....feature after feature after feature. Finally, one salesperson asked me a pivotal question. He asked me, "What do you want to buy a boat for?" I told him, "

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I spend 9 months of the year speaking to hundreds of people, training them, motivating them, offering consultations and from time to time.....I just want to get away. Away from my cell phone, away from noise, email...away from it all. Then the salesperson did a funny thing. He reached in his drawer, pulled out a map of Flathead Lake in Montana, drew a line to a small secluded island and said..."Here is where you can get away.....and by the way.....I have a boat I can sell you that will get you there."

I bought the boat.

People don't buy features, they buy the benefits the features provide.

Next point. The benefits may be different from one person to the next for the same feature.

For example, a woman may buy a watch to:

tell time  
or  
match a new outfit  
or  
because it is a prestigious brand  
or  
because it is like her friend's

All different benefits for the same feature...the watch. Now you might think of features as a button, an automatic timer, a color, a warranty or anything else. But a feature may be the entire product, ease of use, the prestige provided by a brand name.....things not easily identified, yet still provide benefits.

Let me give you some examples.

People don't buy bed mattresses, they buy a good night sleep, or sweet dreams

People don't buy shoes, they buy comfort or prestige

People don't buy soap, they buy a feeling of cleanliness

You get the idea. Just remember to sell the benefit not the feature. And they buy features they understand in layman terms. Don't confuse a customer with jargon that is unique to an industry, yet not to the consumer. I see this all the time in electronic stores. A salesperson is so eager to show off their knowledge to a perspective buyer that they use words that are meaningless to a consumer.

I heard one salesperson say to a perspective customer interested in a new home theater system something about the curvature of the molecular structural buildup of the signal to noise ratio compensation of the frequency response. Huh? The customer simply wanted to know if it sounded good. (I exaggerated a bit on that example - sorry)

People don't buy features, they buy the benefits the features provide.

People don't buy antilock brakes they buy safety for their families

People don't buy power steering, they buy ease of entry into a parallel parking space

People don't buy a Mercedes Benz, they buy quality, reliability or the little windshield wipers on the headlights.

You get the idea.

Next week we will cover exactly how to present the benefits of the features in a Solution Advantage Benefit format. A powerful skill.