

User's Guide The Sales Strategy Fundamentals

Center For Advantage™



**The Sales
Strategy
Fundamentals**



Robert L. Cantrell

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Introduction

What are *The Sales Strategy Fundamentals* cards?

- *The Sales Strategy Fundamentals* is a card set of winning sales strategies designed to sharpen the selling skills of any professional with a product or idea to sell.

It is also a playing card deck made from casino grade card stock



Qualifications

- *The Sales Strategy Fundamentals* has been rigorously reviewed by sales professionals to include former creators and trainers of the vaunted IBM Sales Training School, and is certified compliant by the United Professional Sales Association (UPSA)



Why were *The Sales Strategy Fundamentals* written?

- The ability to sell is the most important skill in every profession that involves person to person interaction



No one does anything until someone sells something

Who are *The Sales Strategy Fundamentals* for?

- Sales Professionals
- Sales Managers
- Entrepreneurs
- Marketers
- Executives



They are also an excellent tool for personal and team sales training

Who else are *The Sales Strategy Fundamentals* for?

- *The Sales Strategy Fundamentals* is also written for customers
- Salespeople who know how to execute the fundamentals of sales can better help customers buy what they want and need
- A salesperson that can genuinely help a customer is a prized asset of that customer



Why should I use *The Sales Strategy Fundamentals*?

- The better you are at sales, the more people you can help, and the more money you can make
- Leaders in sales, just like in any other profession, succeed by practicing and mastering the fundamentals





As the famous football coach,
Vince Lombardi, said:

■ **“Excellence is achieved by the mastery
of fundamentals.”**

- Vince Lombardi

*Even the greatest professional
football teams spend most of their
time practicing blocking, tackling,
and handling the ball*



Practice



- The key to using the fundamentals of sales naturally is to practice, practice, and practice
 - Review the cards in training
 - Review the cards before sales calls
 - Review the cards after sales calls to improve your performance next time
- Use the cards in your weekend card games; your unconscious mind will process the ideas while you have fun



The Sales Strategy Fundamentals
makes practice easy and fun...

*...and as rigorous as you want your
practice to be*



Card Set Description

**The Sales
Strategy
Fundamentals**

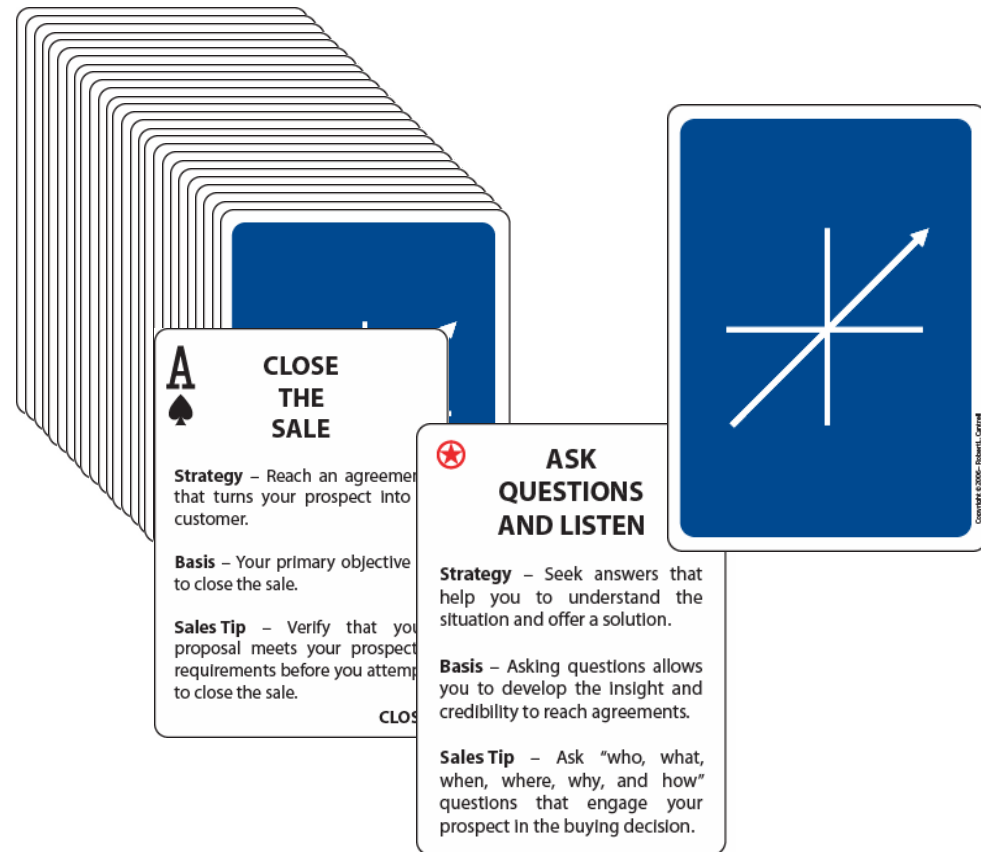
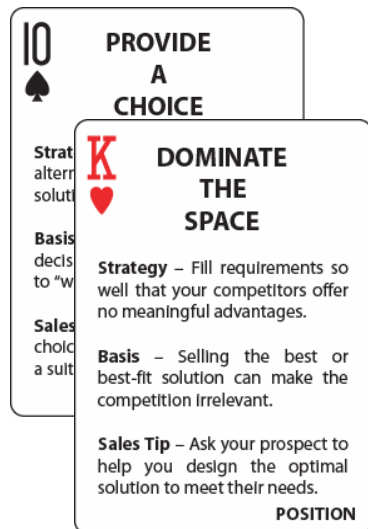


Robert L. Cantrell

54 Cards: 54 Fundamentals of Sales

4 points of advice
per card

216 points of advice
In total



Card Layout

- **Title** – Name of the strategy
- **Strategy** – Definition of the strategy
- **Basis** – Why the strategy works
- **Sales Tip** – How to make best use of the strategy

Traditional number & suit



Category
(See next slide)



Four Categories

- Each suit has a category noted on the lower right corner of the card (*See previous page*)
- All sales involve an interplay and progression of the categories as follows:



Position - Set yourself apart



Shape - Influence the evaluation



Bridge - Link needs to solutions



Close - Convert interest into a sale

Mutually Supportive

- Each card offers advice
- You may or may not know how to enact that advice
- If you do not know how to enact advice from one card, you can find an answer on another card



Example of Mutual Support

- For example, the answer for how to do the sales tip “Recommend a choice of A or B, either of which is a suitable commitment,” from the 10 of Spades, could be executed by “Selling the best or best-fit solution can make the competition irrelevant,” from the King of Hearts.

10
♠

**PROVIDE
A
CHOICE**

Strategy – Offer selected alternatives to the evaluated solution.

Basis – Choices can change decisions from “whether to buy” to “which or how much to buy.”

Sales Tip – Recommend a choice of A or B, either of which is a suitable commitment.

CLOSE

K
♥

**DOMINATE
THE
SPACE**

Strategy – Fill requirements so well that your competitors offer no meaningful advantages.

Basis – Selling the best or best-fit solution can make the competition irrelevant.

Sales Tip – Ask your prospect to help you design the optimal solution to meet their needs.

POSITION



Example Mutual Support

- Choice A for a rising young executive might be the best car in the showroom – *for example, the BMW M3, top of the BMW 3 series line*
- Choice B might be the best-fit car – *for example, the BMW 330i, that performs almost as well as the M3 but is less demanding to buy, insure, and maintain*

Winning Solutions: Best, Best-Fit, or Cheapest

- This example leverages the fact that winning solutions in sales are either:
 - ☐ The best
 - ☐ The best-fit
 - ☐ The cheapest



Masters of the sales fundamentals know they should offer just one or two of these three to any given prospect



Card Use

*Structured yet flexible
approach that models
real life*

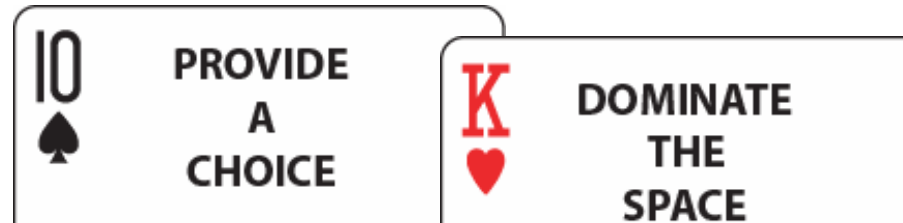
Review tool

- A simple but effective way to use the cards is to just read them and think through them
- There are only 2,400 words in the entire card set, so you can read it in under twenty minutes
- Do this a few times, and your sales performance will improve



Like any art form, repetition of the fundamentals leads to improved performance

Card Logic



- For more sophisticated use, you can use other aspects of the cards as well
- The cards are organized logically, but unlike a book, the cards can also be arranged in any fashion suitable to a situation
- This flexibility helps with opportunity management



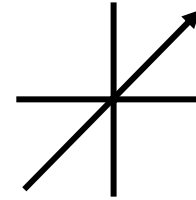


Rank: The Suits and Numbers

- Higher ranked cards tend to denote stronger fundamentals than lower ranked cards
- However any fundamental, no matter the rank, could be part of the right and strong strategy for a given sales situation

All fundamentals need to be a part of you so you use them naturally, without thinking about them too much

Opportunity Management

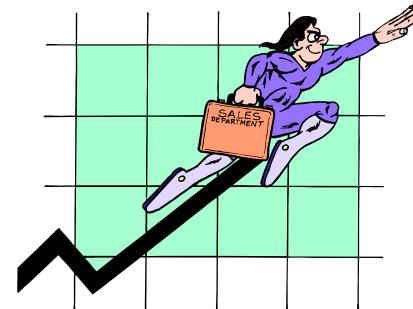


- As you manage the sale, you seek to rely on fundamentals described in *The Sales Strategy Fundamentals* from higher and higher ranks
 - If your strategy is grounded on fundamentals at the top, for example the four aces, you are in a great position to win with high profits
 - If your strategy is grounded on the fundamentals of low ranked cards, for example the threes, you want to improve your position for that opportunity
 - If your rank is low in any one or two of the four suits, even if you are high in the others, you have a weakness you need to address

Card Rank as a Forecasting Tool

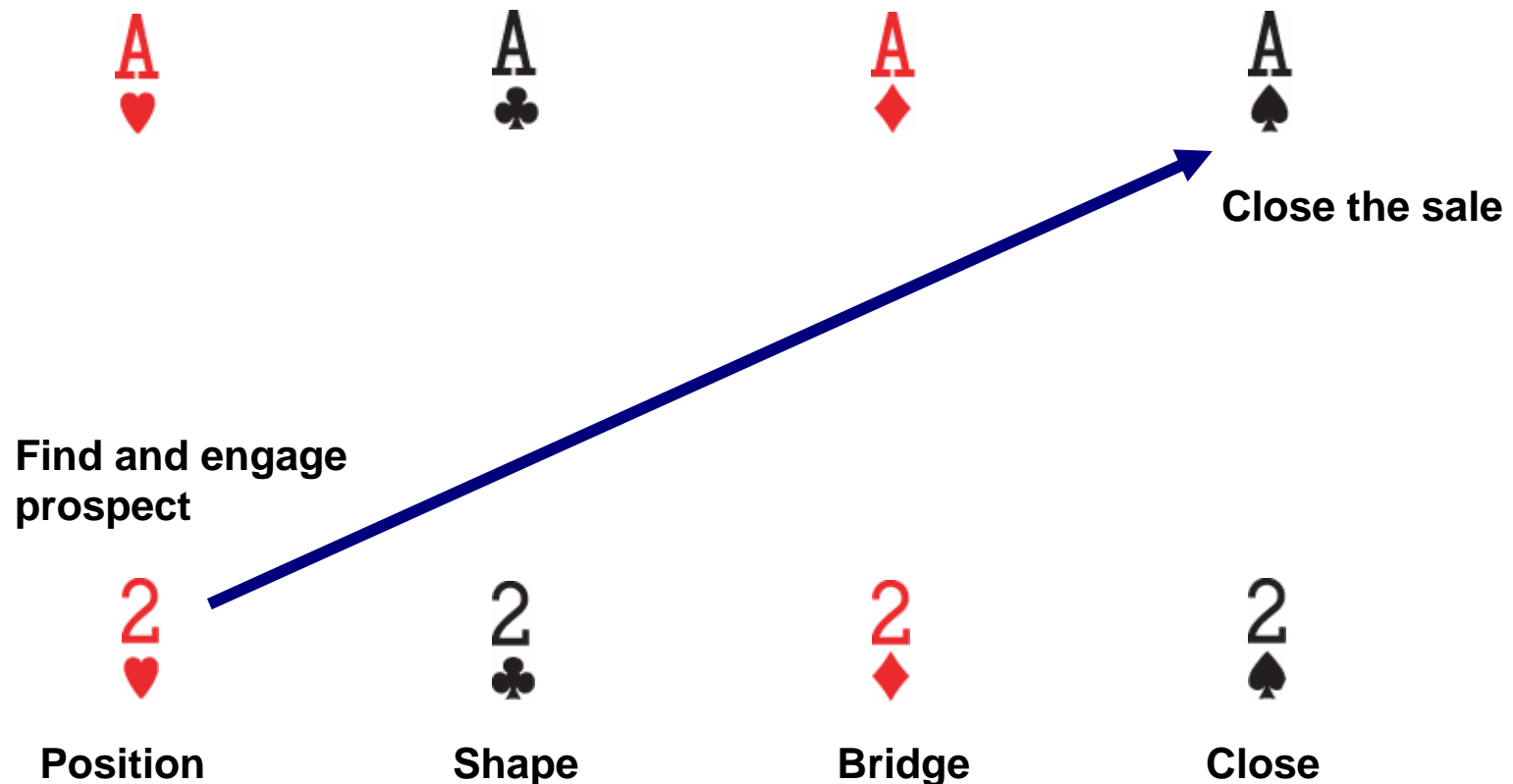
- If the success of your sales effort depends upon higher ranking fundamentals, you generally have a better chance of winning
- That can be represented in your forecasts

Steadily progress sales upwards through the ranks from initial contact – 2 of Hearts and Clubs – to close – Ace of Spades



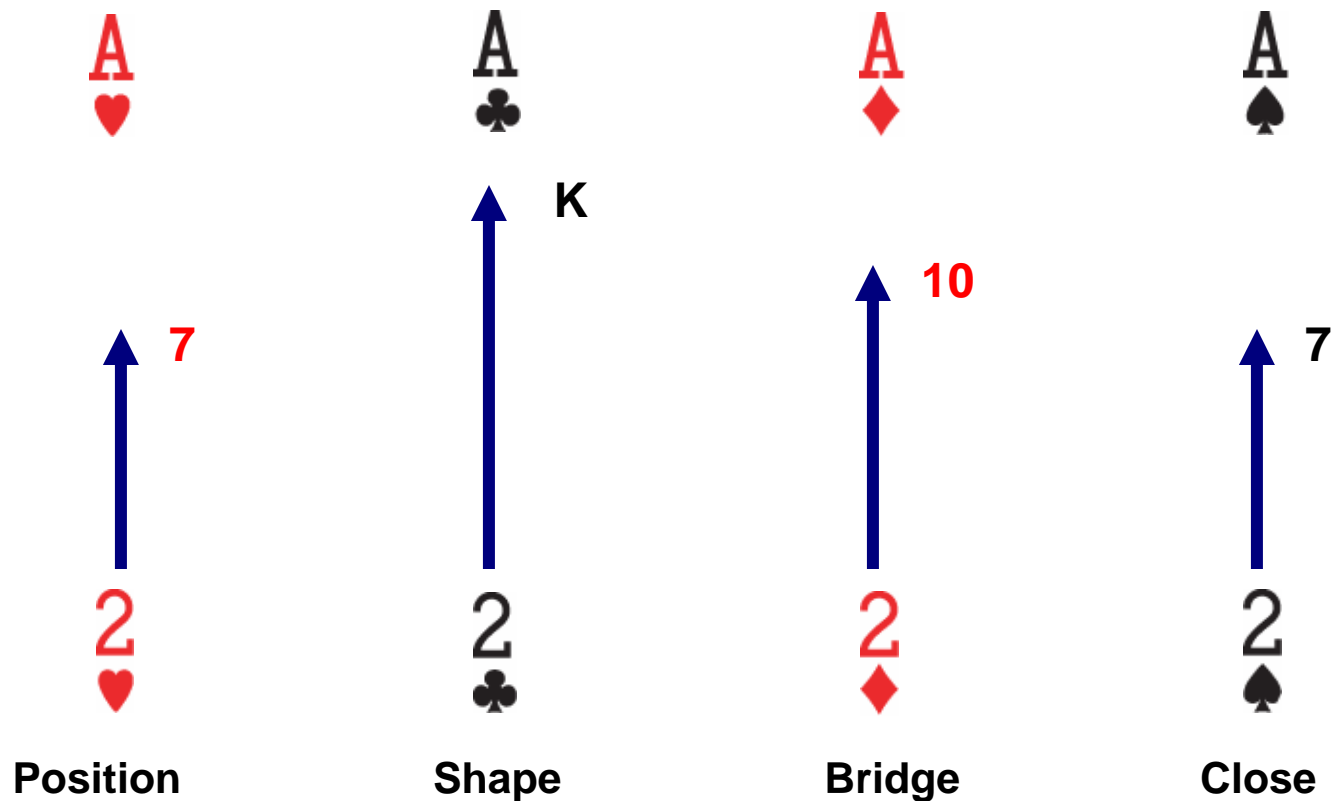
Go from Contact to Close

Seek to progress the sale from left, “Find and engage prospect,” to right and up, “Close the sale”



Steadily Advance the Sale

Seek to rely on fundamentals from cards with higher ranks





Gray Division



- Strength by rank is a gray division, not black and white
- **Any fundamental could win a particular sale**

*With the structure of a sales process in mind,
have the flexibility to use whichever fundamental
makes sense at the time*



Best/Worst Situation

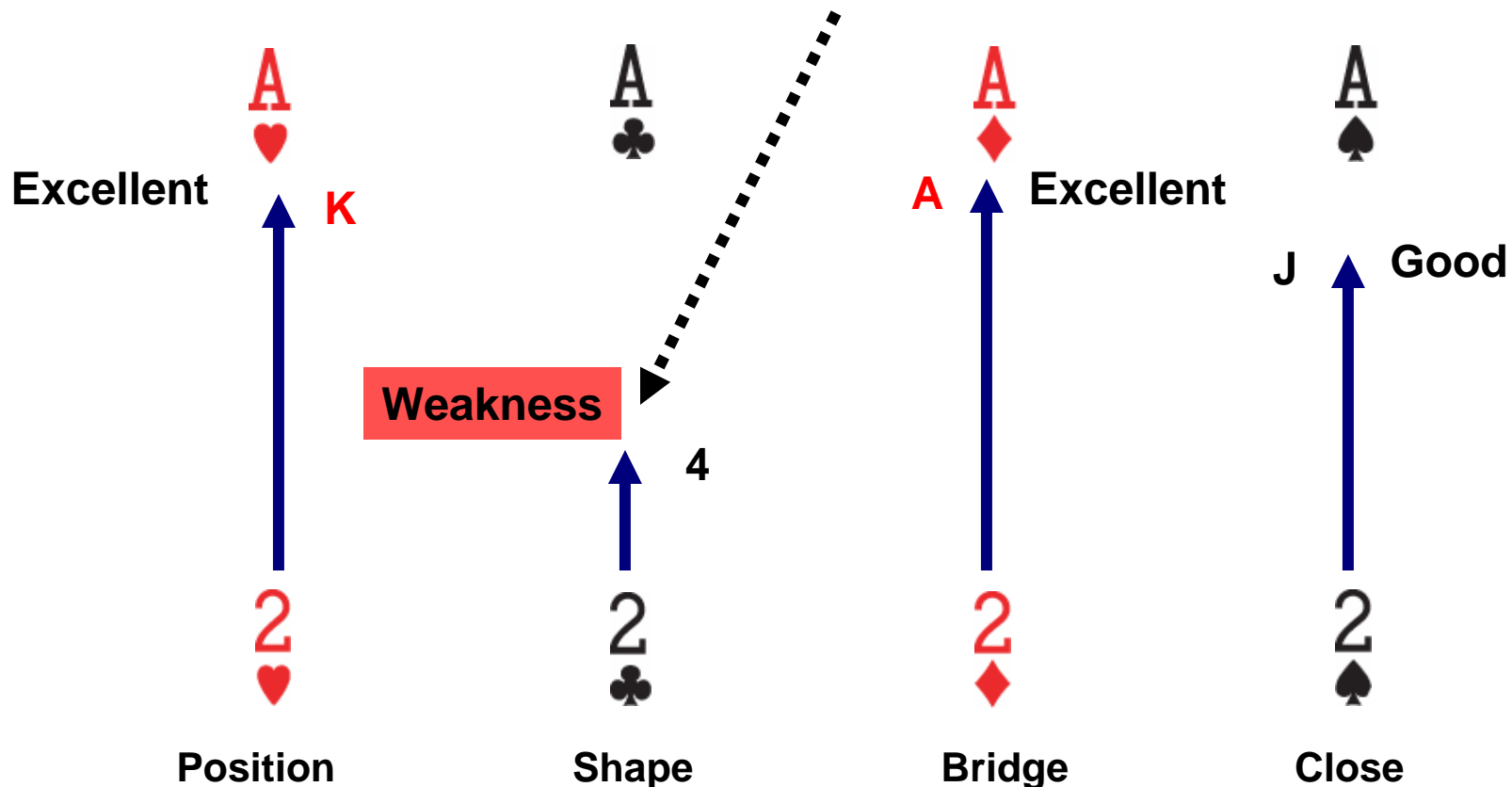


- Your best situation is straight aces which together means you are ready to close a qualified sale that fills a need for a referred buyer who has contacted you
- Your least favorable position is straight twos because you are cold calling people who might not know you, and might have no need, interest, or qualification to buy





Identify Critical Weakness

If your rank is low in one suit, even if you are high in another, you have a weakness you need to shore up



Command the Whole Process

The longest path to “Close the Sale”  starts at “Play the Numbers Game”  where you must actively seek new prospects

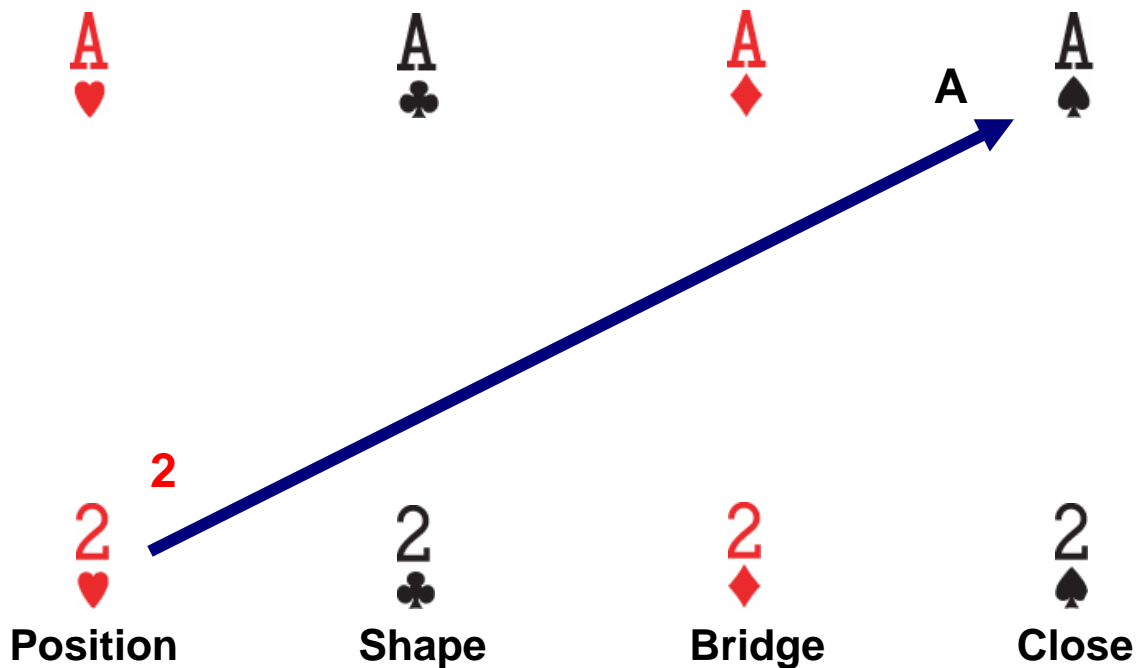
 **PLAY THE NUMBERS GAME**

Strategy – Sell where prospects are, and ask more of them to consider your solution.

Basis – Results tend to improve when you increase the number of opportunities you develop.

Sales Tip – Increase activities that create opportunities; decrease activities that do not.

POSITION



 **CLOSE THE SALE**

Strategy – Reach an agreement that turns your prospect into a customer.

Basis – Your primary objective is to close the sale.

Sales Tip – Verify that your proposal meets your prospect's requirements before you attempt to close the sale.

CLOSE

Then Seek Accelerators

The shortest path to “Close the Sale”^{A♠} starts at “Reverse Roles of Buyer and Seller”^{A♥} where prospects actively pursue you

A♥ REVERSE ROLES OF BUYER AND SELLER

Strategy – Require your prospect to qualify or compete to secure your solution.

Basis – People will sacrifice more for solutions they want but might not otherwise have.

Sales Tip – Seek legitimate ways to raise the demand, limit the supply, or both.

POSITION



A♠ CLOSE THE SALE

Strategy – Reach an agreement that turns your prospect into a customer.

Basis – Your primary objective is to close the sale.

Sales Tip – Verify that your proposal meets your prospect's requirements before you attempt to close the sale.

CLOSE

2♥
Position

2♣
Shape

2♦
Bridge

2♠
Close

Deuces Wild



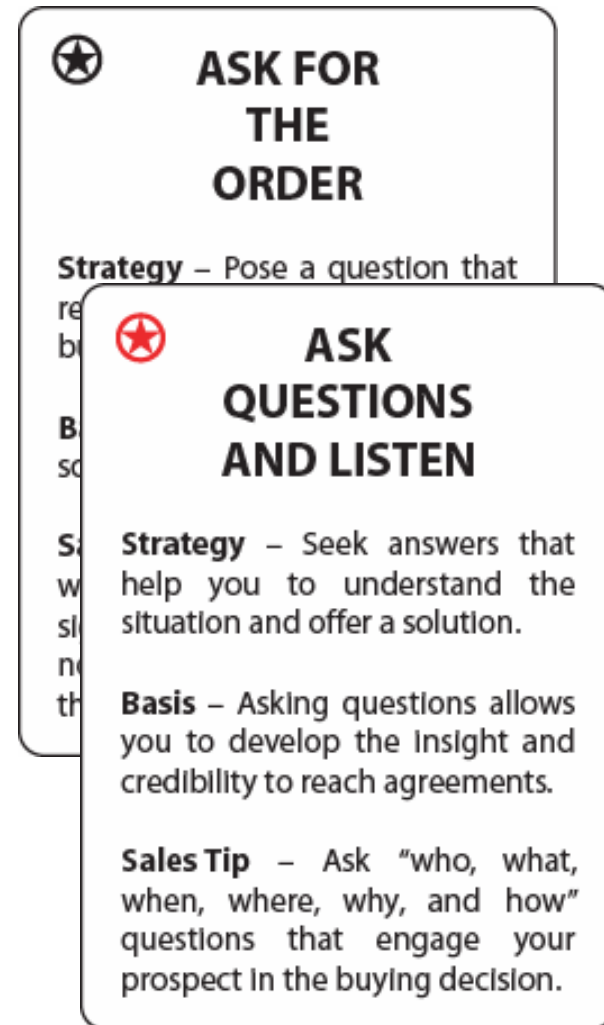
- **Keep in mind that you make a given fundamental a winner or loser!!!**

- ☐ A cold calling expert might be able to take a new contact straight to close in one call – a win from a weak position
- ☐ Closing the wrong sale might cost you other better sales – a loss from a strong position

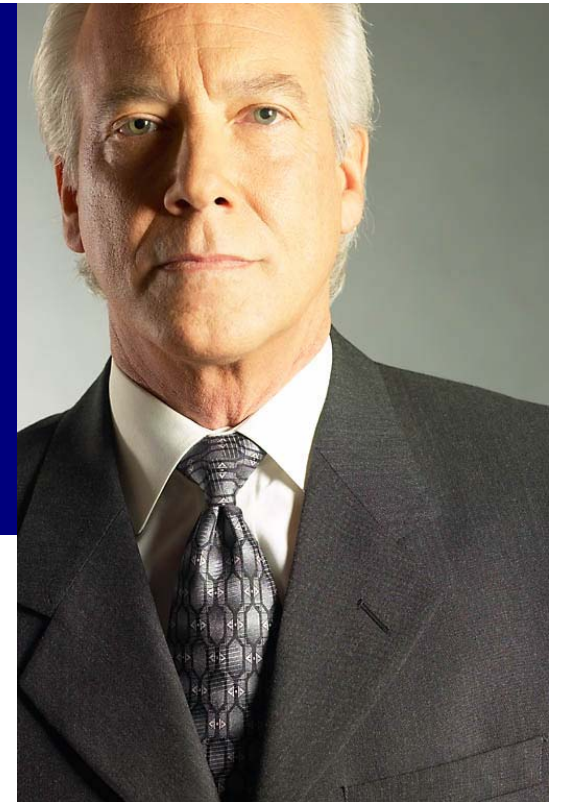


Questions Cards

- Questions serve as the universal link between fundamentals that move the sales process forward:
 - At any point in the sales process, you can ask a question
 - When you receive a buying signal, you ask for the order

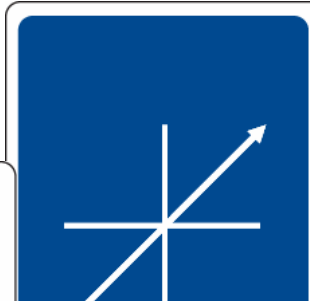
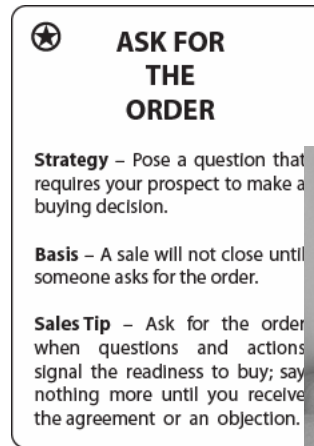


For Sales
Manager



Training Tool



- *The Sales Strategy Fundamentals* is a ready made training tool you can employ anywhere and anytime
- Select a card, or pull one at random, and you have material to discuss
- Use the cards to critique post sales call results

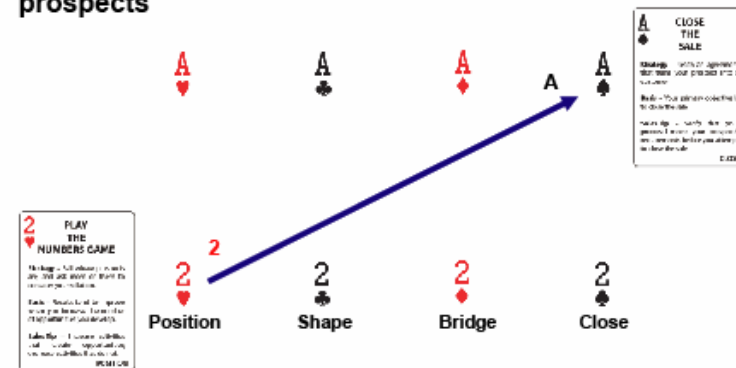


Opportunity Management

- As per the “Card Use” section, you can track the progress of your sales representatives through the sales cycle from the lower left first engagement to the upper right closed sale

Command the Whole Process

The longest path to “Close the Sale”  is through “Play the Numbers Game”  where you must actively seek new prospects



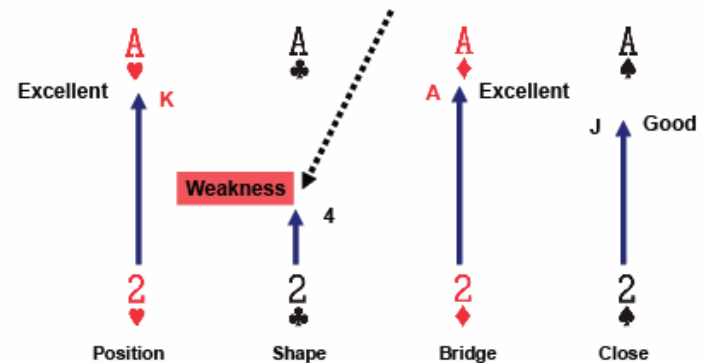
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Forecast Verification

- Challenge the estimates of your sales representatives in order to attain more accurate forecasts and shore up weakness before you lose the opportunity

Identify Critical Weakness

If your rank is low in one suit, even if you are high in another, you have a weakness you need to shore up



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Other Advantages

- Salespeople, by and large, are doers that prefer to get out there and make things happen
- The cards are geared toward the doer mentality; salespeople will actually read them
- Results are immediate; if salespeople read just one card before a sales call, they will likely make a better sales call



Sales Training



Teaching Points

- Each card has four points you can talk to
- There are 216 teaching points in total within all 54 cards



Group Discussion

- Shuffle the cards
- Have a participant draw a card at random
- Discuss the strategy
- Each card tends to produce at least seven minutes of discussion



This is a very simple technique, but extremely effective

Sales Practice Review

- Tape a sales exec through a practice sales call
- Play the tape and stop when you or a student identifies a fundamental in action
- Discuss the fundamental and the success of its execution on the tape

An entire sales call can be broken down into sales fundamental segments

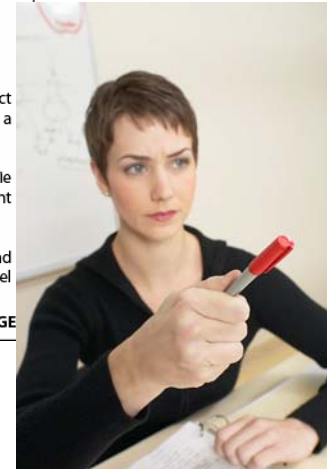
A
♦ **BRIDGE
THE
GAP**

Strategy – Take your prospect from the actual situation to a desired possibility.

Basis – All needs and desires lie between what is and what might be.

Sales Tip – Ask questions and make assumptions that compel people to reveal any gaps.

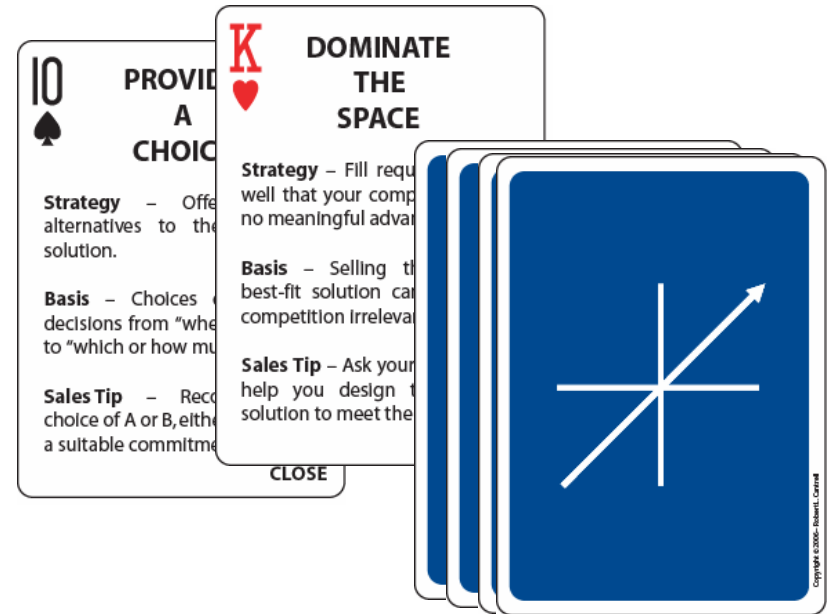
BRIDGE



Scenario Play

- Shuffle cards and draw until you have one card from each suit – 4 cards in total
- Use the combination to describe a situation and ask sales representatives what they should do to advance the sale

This requires some creativity on your part as a trainer



Virtual Classrooms

- *The Sales Strategy Fundamentals* cards are well suited for distance learning
- The physical cards provide a tangible component to an otherwise visual or audio experience and are immune to technical difficulties
- They provide a superior way for sales leadership to keep salespeople performing at their highest level even when in the remotest locations



Post Sales Training Continuity

- Unlike most sales training material, *The Sales Strategy Fundamentals* is so compact it should never end up on the shelf
- Salespeople can review the deck in a few minutes just about anytime and anywhere they have a few moments to spare



Further Details on the Sales Profession

- If you want to know more about the sales profession, consider downloading the United Professional Sales Association (UPSA) Compendium of Professional Selling which is available at www.upsa-intl.org
- Or contact Center For Advantage at info@centerforadvantage.com



Good Luck and Good Selling!!!



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- Art of War: Sun Tzu Strategy Card Deck
www.artofwarcards.com
- Innovation Planner Cards
www.innovationplannercards.com
- The Sales Strategy Fundamentals
www.fundamentalsales.com

Book by Robert Cantrell

www.artofwarsuntzu.com

Heartland Reviews

As a retired military intelligence professional and conflict theorist, I must say this is the best interpretation of Sun Tzu's classic work I have read. The author focuses on the meanings behind this ancient Chinese war philosopher's writings. He puts them into a modern context, making them easy to understand. Apparently the Department of Defense agrees with me on this, since they have selected Mr. Cantrell's book as a text for the National War College in Washington DC. This is a must read for all military officers and business leaders. It rated a perfect five hearts.

Bob Spear

*Publisher and Chief Reviewer for
Heartland Reviews, Leavenworth, KS*

