



Leadership Barometer 197 Selling Ideas Robert T. Whipple, MBA CPTD



Successful leaders are experts at selling ideas. This article focuses on some techniques that can help. The first tip is to not think of the concept as “selling.”

If you have generated the idea in a collaborative process, little selling is required. By focusing on a culture of trust, people will be more likely to embrace the ideas. They will feel a sense of ownership from the start.

Here are several other ideas that can help get people on board.

Know your people

Successful leaders know that different groups have different needs, interests, and concerns. They take the time to understand their audience and tailor the message to meet specific group needs.

Use stories and examples

People are more likely to remember and relate to a story or example. Stay away from theory or a dry list of facts and figures. Do not create a list of things on a PowerPoint slide and read it to your audience.

Create a sense of urgency

Successful leaders create a sense of urgency by highlighting the benefits of the idea. They also point out the risks of not implementing the idea.

Build a coalition

Successful leaders understand that they can't sell their ideas alone. They work to build a coalition of supporters by engaging key stakeholders. When people help invent a concept, they usually are willing to help implement it.

Use data and evidence

Successful leaders use data and evidence to support their ideas. They present compelling statistics and research that demonstrate the benefits of the ideas.

Use positive language

Successful leaders use persuasive language to sell their ideas. They use words and phrases that inspire confidence and create a sense of excitement and possibility.

Anticipate objections

Successful leaders anticipate objections and address them proactively. They acknowledge potential concerns and provide solutions or alternatives to overcome them.

Be authentic and passionate

Successful leaders are authentic and passionate about their ideas. They communicate their vision with conviction and enthusiasm. This action inspires others to get on board.

Acknowledge and consider alternatives

Part of having a culture of high trust means being willing to listen to alternate views.

Overall, successful leaders understand that selling ideas is not just about the idea itself. They also need to communicate it well. By using these techniques, they persuade and inspire others to support their ideas. Keep the focus on achieving a common goal.

Bob Whipple, MBA, CPTD, is a consultant, trainer, speaker, and author in the areas of leadership and trust. He is the author of: *The Trust Factor: Advanced Leadership for Professionals*, *Understanding E-Body Language: Building Trust Online*, and *Leading with Trust is Like Sailing Downwind*. Bob has many years as a senior executive with a Fortune 500 Company and with non-profit organizations.