



A CUSTOMER STATE OF MIND

# THE MOTION5 CORE MODEL

## A Powerful Influence Method for Effective Sales Conversations

Motion5 developed the CORE Model as a highly effective structure for driving sales conversations. Initially designed to help sales professionals influence decisions, CORE has since evolved into a versatile method applied in complex negotiations, leadership development, and coaching programs. The model is about influencing, reframing ideas, providing insights, and helping people make informed decisions. This adaptability and decision-focused design have allowed CORE to thrive across various fields while still achieving its original goal of guiding impactful, mutually beneficial conversations.

This white paper focuses on applying the CORE Model in selling, where it has been continually refined and proven over the last 22 years. Developed in collaboration with psychologists and tested against best practices, CORE is grounded in scientific principles but transformed into a highly practical, easy-to-apply method for real-world scenarios.



### CORE Model in Today's Reality

Though developed over two decades ago, the CORE Model aligns seamlessly with today's most effective selling techniques, particularly Sense-Making, a concept promoted by Gartner and McKinsey. Sense-making emphasizes helping customers navigate overwhelming information to make informed decisions—precisely what CORE facilitates. According to Gartner, 77% of B2B buyers found their last purchase complex, highlighting the importance of guiding customers through decision-making. McKinsey's research shows that sellers using insight-driven approaches like Sense-Making increase their likelihood of closing sales by up to 50%.

## Scope at the Core

At the heart of CORE is Scope, which refers to the customer's explicit needs. However, the Scope is not one-dimensional; it reflects how the customer perceives the value of solutions, spanning five distinct layers. These layers range from basic commodity needs, where value is linked to availability and price, to high-level strategic objectives, where solutions contribute to business growth or drive innovation.

Motion5's value framework defines value across five layers:

1. **Commodity Value** - determined by availability and price.
2. **Portfolio Value** - linked to product or service differentiators.
3. **Business Value** - contributes to the customer's business drivers.
4. **Innovation Value** - seen in working with an innovation partner to drive new solutions.
5. **Enterprise Value** - contributes to the company's long-term strategy and growth.



A key aspect of CORE's effectiveness is the **one-level-up strategy**, which involves shifting the conversation to a higher value level to align with the selling company's goal of improving profitability. For example, suppose the company competes in a highly price-sensitive market and aims to **increase profitability** by securing better-priced deals or maintaining price levels. In that case, CORE helps sales professionals reframe the customer's focus from **Portfolio** to **Business Value**. This strategic shift moves the conversation away from product features (which can often lead to price comparisons) toward the **business outcomes** that the solution delivers, such as improved efficiency or business impact.

## The Importance of Context

**Context** is vital because it frames customer needs within their broader business environment, ensuring a deep understanding of their challenges. Data can be misinterpreted or undervalued without proper context, leading to assumptions misaligning solutions with actual customer needs.

Salespeople must avoid **jumping to conclusions**, assuming they understand what the customer wants based on superficial information, or mentally reshaping customer needs to fit the products they are selling. Assumptions are often the enemy of effective selling—by not fully exploring the customer's situation, salespeople risk missing key insights that would lead to a more tailored, impactful solution.

It's not only sellers who make assumptions—buyers do the same. These faulty assumptions often lead to misaligned decisions. Gartner found that **83% of business strategies fail due to faulty assumptions**, underscoring the importance of thoroughly understanding customer needs and the broader business environment to avoid costly mistakes.

### Example:

Consider a CCO struggling with **forecast predictability**—a common challenge today. While this issue might seem straightforward, **Context** can shift the focus and reframe the solution:

- **Accurate Information for Shareholders:** Predictability ensures consistent, reliable data for stakeholders, enhancing trust.
- **Monitoring Business Performance:** The focus shifts to providing real-time analytics and data tracking for quicker decision-making.



- **Managing the Sales Funnel:** Predictability enhances pipeline visibility and conversion rates, driving improvements in sales forecasting.
- **Supply Chain Planning:** Predictability is critical for aligning inventory, production, and distribution, optimizing processes, and reducing inefficiencies.

By fully understanding the **Context**, the sales professional avoids making assumptions and delivers a solution that addresses the customer's broader business challenges, not just the immediate problem.



**Deliberate reframing** can also be an effective strategy, using Context to shift the customer's focus to a broader or more strategic view. For example, if a CFO primarily focuses on ensuring reliable data for stakeholders, a sales professional could use Context to demonstrate that having a reliable sales funnel is fundamental to improving predictability. By shifting the conversation frame, the sales professional introduces a more profound need for which their solution is well-suited. This **reframing** leverages a more holistic understanding of the customer's business, allowing salespeople to present solutions that address both immediate and underlying challenges, helping the seller and buyer make better-informed decisions—**Sense-Making**.

### **Outcome: Creating a Sense of Urgency**

Once the **Context** of the customer's challenges is understood, the focus naturally shifts to **Outcome**—the potential results of action or inaction. This stage is crucial for generating urgency and prompting the customer to move beyond merely acknowledging the problem to recognizing that something must be done.



From a sales perspective, **Outcome** highlights the **cost of inaction** versus the **benefits of acting now**. It shifts the conversation from discussing challenges in abstract terms to exploring the concrete effects of addressing—or failing to address—those challenges. By doing this, sales professionals can help customers see the direct and indirect consequences (Outcome) of their decisions on their business.

For example, the challenge is around improving forecast predictability. In that case, the sales professional should illustrate the potential outcomes of improving this (e.g., increased profitability, operational efficiency) versus the risks of doing nothing (e.g., lost revenue, supply chain disruptions).

Drawing from behavioral economics, the concept of **loss aversion**—where people fear losing something more than they value gaining something new—plays an important role here. By framing the **cost of inaction**, sales professionals can effectively tap into this psychological trigger to motivate decision-making.

In today's complex sales environment, customers are often overloaded with information, making it harder for them to move from interest to action.

**Outcome** is where the seller's ability to clarify the stakes, simplify decision-making, and guide the customer toward action becomes most critical. This stage should conclude with clear takeaways that push the customer toward urgency, ensuring they see both the upside of action and the downside of delay.

### Recognition: Aligning Your Solution with Customer Needs

As **Outcome** increases the customer's sense of urgency to act, they become more open to considering a solution. You may notice signals like "I need to do something about this," or they might ask specific questions about your solution's work. These signals indicate that the customer is moving from urgency to actively seeking a solution. Now is the time to help the customer **Recognize** that your solution is the right fit for their specific challenges.

**"EVERY SUCCESS STORY IS A TALE OF  
CONSTANT ADAPTION, REVISION AND CHANGE"**

**— Richard Branson -**



Once the customer understands the outcomes of their choices, **Recognition** ensures they explicitly see your solution as the right one to address their needs. This stage goes beyond merely offering a solution—it ensures that the customer **recognizes** how your offering directly resolves the challenges they've identified in a way that resonates within their organization and (not unimportant) with their personal drivers.

### Recognition involves two key elements:

1. **Tailoring the Solution:** Use the customer's language and highlight how your solution is uniquely positioned to solve their specific challenges. Personalize your pitch by reflecting on their pain points and showing how your solution delivers measurable benefits that address those issues.

2. **Customer Engagement and Validation:** Encourage the customer's engagement and validation by asking confirming questions, such as "Do you see how this approach resolves the issues we discussed?" or "Can you envision how this will positively impact your operations?" These questions reinforce the solution's relevance and promote a sense of **ownership** in the decision-making process (known as the **Endowment Effect**).

Recognition is about aligning expectations with the proposed solution and ensuring that the customer fully understands how your product or service is not just a solution but THE solution. The goal is to move the customer from mere interest to belief—from understanding the value of your solution to being convinced that it's the perfect fit for their needs.



**Premature Pitching** is a common mistake that can undermine sales efforts by failing to build the necessary **Context** or establish the sense of urgency that comes with exploring the customer's challenges through **Outcome**. Research from **Gartner** shows that **77% of B2B buyers** feel overwhelmed during the buying process, and when salespeople pitch too soon, it can lead to **misalignment** with the customer's actual needs. Without first developing the Context and building a sense of urgency through **Outcome**, the pitch often feels rushed and generic, significantly reducing its impact.

### **Effect: Visualizing the Impact**

The final element of the CORE Model is **Effect**, which measures the broader impact of the solution once it's implemented. This stage is critical in helping the customer understand both immediate results and long-term benefits. **Effect** shifts the conversation from potential benefits to **tangible outcomes**, showing how the decision will positively impact their business, teams, and personal objectives.

At this stage, the sales professional should ask the powerful question: "*How will your business change once this solution is implemented?*" This prompts the customer to consider specific improvements, such as increased operational efficiency, higher revenue, or personal benefits like reduced stress or increased leadership confidence.



Research shows that **visualization** reduces **cognitive load**, helping decision-makers process complex information more easily and make more confident decisions. By encouraging the customer to **visualize** the solution's impact, they begin to see it as a transformative change, activating the **endowment effect**, which makes them value the benefits more highly as they imagine owning them.

For instance, our example of improving **forecast predictability** could enhance shareholder confidence or offer decision-makers peace of mind by stabilizing business performance. These impacts help engrain the solution in the customer's mind as not just a fix for a current issue but a **strategic decision** with long-term implications (leveraging from Business to Enterprise value).



**"IT'S IN YOUR MOMENTS  
OF DECISION THAT YOUR DESTINY IS SHAPED"**  
**- Anthony Robbins -**

By emphasizing the Effect of the solution, sales professionals ensure that the customer fully understands the significance of the decision, motivating them to move forward with implementation. The effect helps mobilize the customer by making your solution integral to their long-term success and growth.

### **When is a Proposal Appropriate?**

If a customer asks for a proposal, refusing can be counterproductive. In some cases—especially when the request is straightforward, or you've entered the buying process late—it may be entirely appropriate to deliver a proposal without hesitation. In such instances, it's best to provide the offer and move forward without overcomplicating the situation.

CORE is not a rigid step-by-step process; it's an **influencing framework** designed to provide a structured way to think about influencing behavior and clarifying decision-making. The framework is flexible and adaptable to the unique dynamics of each sales process. It helps sales professionals understand and navigate the customer's needs and motivations, making it highly applicable to various negotiation, decision-making, and relationship-building phases.

While you can agree to send a proposal after the **Recognition** stage—when the customer acknowledges that your solution fits their needs—CORE encourages a more impactful approach. By utilizing the **Effect** principles, you can continue influencing the customer by helping visualize the broader impact of your solution, even after a proposal is sent.

The key is to make a conscious decision when delivering a proposal. Whether it's after **Recognition** or at any other moment in the process, ensure that sending a proposal aligns with the customer's readiness to act and is timed to reinforce the long-term value of your solution. The proposal should feel like a natural next step, grounded in a comprehensive understanding of their needs and the benefits of implementation.

### Conclusion: The Complete CORE Model

The CORE Model—**Context, Outcome, Recognition, and Effect**—provides a structured approach to sales conversations that move beyond transactional interactions into meaningful, customer-focused dialogue.

- **Context** sets the stage by exploring the customer's challenges within their broader business landscape, ensuring a complete understanding of their needs or repositioning them in a different framework.
- **Outcome** drives urgency by emphasizing the consequences of action versus inaction, motivating the customer to see the importance of addressing their problem.
- **Recognition** ensures that the customer understands and sees your solution as the best fit for solving their unique challenges, solidifying confidence in moving forward.
- **Effect** highlights the broader, long-term impact of implementing the solution, helping the customer visualize the tangible results.

Together, these elements guide sales professionals through a consultative process that helps customers make confident, informed decisions. This structured approach builds trust, alignment, and long-lasting relationships.



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