



Bridgeway to Success™

March 2008

**DON'T SELL.
ENABLE THE
CLIENTS TO BUY.**

Three Levels of Need

I never sell anything. I've consulted to organizational leaders for almost 15 years and have never sold a thing. So why don't I starve?

Like many professional service providers I've learned that an engagement happens not when I sell, but when a client *buys*. And a client only buys services when three levels of need are met:

- 1) **A recognized and compelling need.** It's one thing for an organization to need a service and another for its leaders to recognize that need. It's another still for that need to stand out as compelling amongst the multitude of needs felt by every organization.
- 2) **A need for outside expertise.** Many organizations mistakenly believe they can do it all. If they are willing to stumble along then the chance they will engage outside expertise is slim. If they *recognize their limitations*, however, they will secure the resources necessary to overcome them.
- 3) **A need for you.** There are many firms that provide the same services as you. So why pick you? Like any business you have to be *distinct in a desirable way* if you're going to compete and win. And you'd better be *top-of-mind* when the client decides to act.

Your challenge isn't selling your services. It's enabling the three levels of need to crystallize in the minds of potential clients. And once they do, don't forget to deliver. Or the next need that emerges may be the one not to use you again.

Michael Canic