VIDEO 1: WHAT IS INBOUND SALES?

Hi there, this is Dave with HubSpot.

Welcome to the Inbound Sales class. In this class, we'll be covering how the sales process has transformed and how you can keep up with your customer's buying habits.

This class is a little different than the others. You might be thinking, "Inbound sales? Why? I'm not in sales!" And that's okay! To understand the world of Inbound, you should not only understand how inbound marketing works but also inbound sales. If you are a marketer, don't you want to know what happens to all of those leads that you've been converting?

Let's dive in and talk about what inbound sales means.

As you might have guessed, inbound sales fits into the Close section of the Inbound Methodology.

So how do inbound marketing and sales fit together? First, let's take a step back.

You're interested in inbound marketing because you are interested in transforming the way you market to your potential customers, right? And by transforming the way you market – you can transform the way you sell! But what does 'transform the way you sell' really mean?

Well, the sales process has changed quite dramatically and there's a good reason for that: consumer buying habits have changed.

The sales process needs to adjust in order to support the ever-changing buying process.

So what does that change look like?

Traditionally, a sales team used to do cold-calling day-in and day-out using a static pitch, no matter who they were talking to. Sales reps acted like information gatekeepers, holding power over the entire process. This method of sales is referred to as seller-centric.

Fortunately, inbound has transformed selling. You no longer need to spend your days cold-calling everyone. These days, the buyer has the power to research, so acting as an information gatekeeper doesn't help you win more sales.

Instead of that static pitch, you can tailor one based upon the buyer's situation. The inbound approach is very buyer-centric. Often times, the more information you share, the more credibility you earn with your prospects.

So, an even more relevant question is – what defines inbound sales?

Well, HubSpot's Co-Founder and CEO, Brian Halligan says: "Buyers have more information available to them and higher expectations for a relevant, personal experience when making a purchase. Giving them a relevant, personal, "delightful" experience, driven by their needs, on their timeline is what an inbound approach to sales is all about."

In fact – buyers have so much information available to them that they typically have already made 60% of their purchase decision before even talking to a sales rep.

This makes it even more important to evolve your selling in order to keep up with your customers buying habits.

Now that you understand what inbound sales is, you'll want to know you can transform the way you sell.

VIDEO 2: HOW CAN YOU TRANSFORM THE WAY YOU SELL?

So where do you start? How do you transform the way you sell?

There are 4 best practices that you need to keep in mind. These best practices will allow you to transform your sales process to support the way people are buying.

What should the sales team do when a new lead comes in, in an inbound company? Let's pretend you're the sales rep, for a moment. And if you are a sales rep, well, you're in the right place.

Let's start with transforming the way you target accounts.

It all comes back to staying focused on your buyer personas. You want to make sure you are targeting the right people. Content has been published, and it's content that your buyer personas are looking for – bringing in the right traffic. By transforming the way prospects find out about your brand, you ensure that the only people entering your sales process are the ones who are most qualified.

Something to keep in mind – not all leads are a good fit and not all leads will be ready to buy. Ideally, leads will be filtered before they get passed on to sales. This is why it's extremely important to understand your prospect's lifecycle stage, and where they fall in the buyer's journey.

Next, think about transforming the way you prospect accounts. Inbound leads and traditional cold leads are not created equal. In order to be effective at prospecting inbound leads, you need to understand more about who your prospects are. These days, calling your leads without any context is a waste of time.

The first thing you need to do is thoroughly research your leads, starting with company information.

Here you can see a list of things to look for as you begin researching your prospects. Look for company information, read about their industry, check social media, or even look at lead intelligence that you've collected. Understanding these key elements about your prospect will help you start preparing to give a personalized sales experience.

For example: if you're part of a B2B company, you'll want to gather as much information as you can about your contact's company, as well as their industry.

You should also consider their

- Company size
- Annual revenue
- What they sell
- Who they sell to
- Their role in the company
- And if there any other key players that may be involved

Understand what's going on in the company from a news perspective. Did they recently have any press releases? Did they just receive a series of funding, do they have any big upcoming events? All of this information will help you as you begin to understand your prospect. These pieces of information will allow you to build rapport and establish credibility.

Or check social media. In fact – studies have shown that 73% of salespeople using social media actually outperformed their colleagues who weren't using it. You can gather valuable intelligence by observing how your prospects post and interact on social media. Is your lead actively talking with other companies? Is your lead researching other needs? You can observe all of this on social media.

Lastly – lead intelligence.

You will want to monitor the lead's engagement with your company. What did they download? What pages are they looking at? What is really resonating with them? This information allows you to tailor each conversation for your different leads based on what their pain points are and how they have been engaging with your company.

This brings up another great tip. You'll want to determine the goal of the call before getting on the phone. Based on the information you've gathered in your research: what is the goal of the call? Is it pretty introductory in nature? Are you trying to get an internal or external referral, or are you trying to sell something to a decision maker?

The third best practice is to transform the way you connect with accounts. Now that we are ready to pick up the phone and connect with our leads, there are 4 guidelines we want to follow.

Our first guideline is to build rapport with our leads.

Right off the bat you want to establish trust by using the research you've done. Allow yourself to get on the same page with your prospect, be completely unbiased and try to put the education of your prospect before your own personal initiatives. They will really notice when you are trying to genuinely understand their goals and challenges through their eyes. Try to understand what keeps them up at night, what do they worry about? Eventually, this will allow them to build trust with you.

The few minutes you spend building rapport will pay off throughout the sales process and beyond. Keep this in mind, the tone of your call should always be about educating and providing help, not about making the sale. People don't remember the sales process – they remember the experience!

Which brings us to our second guideline - know your audience. Put your research into action. Most salespeople are trained to call C-level execs with an elevator pitch around what the C-suite cares about. When it comes to inbound, the point of contact is rarely the decision maker.

The decision maker has probably delegated the research to someone on their team. You'll want to tailor all of your conversations to who you're talking to and what they care about.

Next guideline is speaking the prospect's language.

From the moment you start speaking, the way you articulate information needs to resonate with your prospect. Make sure to weave in industry terms and relatable company names. As someone who talks to a lot of people in their industry, you bring an incredibly valuable perspective to the conversation. This is a perfect opportunity to teach your prospects and build credibility.

Lastly, be helpful.

Once you know your audience, put together some information that can educate them. Have a tip, educational offer, or other content to give to the prospect. This also helps build trust and credibility.

The last best practice for effectively transforming the way you sell is to transform the way your prospects perceive you as a salesperson.

The first thing we want to do is be known as a sales educator, not a sales bully. In order to put yourself in the position to educate your prospects, you need to become the ultimate listening machine and truly understand your prospect's pain points. Traditionally, salespeople have interrupted prospects, pitched their product, and closed hard. But that clearly doesn't work anymore.

Next, you'll want focus on making your sales organization human again. People buy from people. You don't want to come off as a static sales robot, no matter who you're talking to. Think about it this way: Do you think a doctor gives the same diagnosis to each of their patients? Of course not! They listen, take the time to understand what each of their patients are feeling and then they prescribe solutions, helping them in a way that is tailored to their specific case. That's how I want you to start thinking about your interactions with your prospects. The best way to ensure that the prospect is open and comfortable is to help them remember that you're just another normal human being on the other end of the line. Take that first step in making your sales organization human again.

As a salesperson, you need to become a trusted advisor. By putting yourself in your prospect's shoes, you can better understand their perspective. This will help you connect with the prospect when you eventually get in touch with them. Remember, people buy from people that they trust, and the only way to build that trust is through mutual understanding.

VIDEO 3: WHAT DOES A DAY IN THE LIFE OF AN INBOUND SALES REP LOOK LIKE?

Alright – now to the really fun part! Let's see what a day in the life of an inbound sales rep actually looks like.

Imagine you work for a software development company and this new inbound lead appears in your inbox.

Let's begin putting some inbound sales best practices into action. You have this new lead, now what do you do? Do you immediately pick up the phone? Absolutely not. First, you need to do some research.

As you pull up the company's website (and in this instance, it's HubSpot) what do you notice? Well, you see an "About" area in the main navigation, which includes a dropdown of several different options. You find company news and press releases, past or upcoming events, and access to the names of not only their management team but their directors and advisors! This is great information you can collect just from HubSpot's website to help you make every conversation personalized.

Next, check out their case studies page. What kind of information might this page provide you? Well you can see who they're working with. Who do they typically sell to? Do you share any common customers? This would make a great talking point to help build credibility.

The last place you look on HubSpot's website is way down in the footer, where you can navigate the entire website. You can see other locations they have, jobs they have posted, their industry, you can even read the entire company story! Not only does this research allow you to personalize your conversations but it also helps you narrow down whether or not this lead is a good fit for your company. The information is practically never ending as long as you know where to look.

Moving forward, google the company in the news. This allows you to stay up to date with the industry and see who else might be talking about them. In order to be interesting to talk to, you need to be interested in who you're talking to. If something jumps out at you – write it down and use it when you're engaging with your lead. Let your contact know that you're interested in them, individually, and in their company.

Now pull up HubSpot's LinkedIn profile where you can gather information like their company size, recent updates, jobs they've posted, and more. You can also see how you're personally connected to the company. Maybe you know one of their employees, or perhaps you have a great connection that you can leverage to find commonality.

You also want to take a look at the lead's individual Linkedin profile. You get to see what their exact title is, where they used to work, any recommendations they may have received, their hobbies, all sorts of stuff. This gives you a great idea of what kind of person he or she is before you even speak with them.

Going further, you want to check out both the lead's and the company's Twitter accounts. Do you have any of the same followers? Are you following any of the same people who might make for great talking points? What kind of content are they writing, sharing, and reading? As sales people, you want to learn to read what your buyers are reading. Put yourself in the buyer's shoes. These are all things to keep in mind as you continue to do your research!
On-camera

Now that you've got all of this information on your lead, you're ready to pick up the phone and call them. Let's go over a few soundbites you can use when beginning your connect call.

Always start with the lead's first name. You really want the person on the other end of the phone to be pushed back on their heels by your enthusiasm. When your lead, let's call them Andy, answers simply say,

"Andy, It's Dave… at Inbound Corporation. I saw that you recently downloaded our ebook on how to generate more business on Facebook. I actually had a chance to take a look at your Facebook page and website and I have a few suggestions on how you can get more business, but was there anything in particular that you were looking for help with?"

But what if they answer, "I haven't had a chance to look at it yet, so no."

Then you can take one of two paths. You can follow up your intro with a simple, "What are you looking for help with?" Or you can use what we call a positioning statement and say something like, "Ok. Well I have been talking a number of marketing agencies recently and I keep running across two issues that they are facing right now. First off, they are trying to figure out what is the best messaging to use on Social Media, and secondly, they are struggling to prove an ROI with Social Media to their clients. Have you and your team ever dealt with these issues?"

Either way you do it, the goal is to uncover their pain points and determine how you might be able to help them.

Let's break down this intro and understand the theory behind it.

It's very important to greet the prospect as if they are your best friend. Say "It's" to introduce yourself. Pause before you say your company name

"I saw that you recently downloaded our ebook on how to generate more business on Facebook." This is called the root. It helps the prospect gain context to why you are calling. This can't be overlooked.

Then you continue with “I actually had a chance to take a look at your Facebook page and website and I have a few suggestions on how you can get more business.” This is the open loop. It's an unfinished thought and gives you something you can always go back to if you get stuck later in the call

“But was there anything in particular that you were looking for help with?” This question is a throwaway question, meant to get the prospect to say no. Expect a no. And it is a set up for the next section: the thematic (in this case, social media/Facebook) positioning statement.

As mentioned, that second part is the positioning statement. This is the definition of a positioning statement. It’s an expression of how a given product, service, or brand fills a particular consumer need in a way that its competitors don’t. Focus on using a positioning statement when you want to create value around your phone call.

There are three parts to a positioning statement.
(1) The root which must contain a reference to talking to a bunch of people just like them... this adds 'social proof' to the statement.
(2) You need to separate 'positions' so that you have twice the chance that what you say will resonate with the prospect. You should pick to very widely appealing issues that your prospects have and that your company can help with.
(3) A question that asks them to elaborate on their experience with step (2).

If this goes well, you will continue to ask questions until you uncover some level of need and then suggest a more formal call.

So, now you might be wondering, what happens if they don’t pick up the phone?
Well, when you leave a voicemail with a prospect you’re connecting with for the first time, it’s vital that you follow up with a corresponding email, every time. Let’s go over what those first few contact sequences might look like.

Here you can see Voicemail and Email 1. This sequence is for you to introduce yourself and your company. You’ll want to explain why you’re reaching out while offering a general value statement. Remember: leave the voicemail first, then follow up with the email.

So Voicemail 1 will sound like this:

Hi Andy, You recently downloaded information on blogging for your business. I’ve researched your company and have suggestions on how blogging can actually help drive more traffic to your website. Please let me know when you have a few minutes to speak. My name is Dave, and I’m calling from Inbound Corporation

The email to follow will read something like this:

Subject Line: Blogging Ideas for Driving More Traffic to your website Hi Andy, per my message today – You recently downloaded information on blogging for your business. I've researched your company and have suggestions on how your blogging can actually help drive more traffic to your website. When do you have a few minutes to connect? Best, Dave

One thing to remember when writing emails: always include "per my message today" that way if they read your email first they'll have an understanding that you left them a voicemail earlier.

Alright, let's flash forward in time a little bit. At this point you haven't received a call back from your lead nor did you receive an email response from them. And that happens! Let's try giving them another call. Suppose they don't pick up this time, either. Naturally, you'll want to leave another voicemail followed up by another email. This time, however, you'll want to add some value and offer to set up a meeting in your preferred format.

For example, the voicemail will sound something like this…

Hi Andy, You've been to our website and utilized our resources. I've researched your company and have a couple of suggestions on how blogging can drive more traffic to your website. For example, you can help increase traffic to your website by including relevant keywords on your blogs that you want to get ranked for on search engines. I thought you might enjoy a 20 minute free assessment of your website where we can review more tips and suggestions that you can implement today. Please let me know when you have a few minutes to speak. My name is Dave, and I'm calling from Inbound Corporation

Following it up with an email that sounds like this…

Subject Line: Inbound Corporation Free Assessment
Hi Andy, per my message today – You've been to our website and utilized our resources. I've researched your company and have suggestions on how blogging can drive more traffic to your website. For example, you can help increase traffic to your website by including relevant keywords on your blogs that you want to get ranked for on search engines. Inbound Corporation offers a 20 minute assessment where we can review more tips and suggestions that you can implement today. When is the best time to connect? Best, Dave

Notice that both the voicemail and email get the same point across: delivering value in a helpful tip as well as offering to set up a meeting. You're still leaving the power in the buyer's hands.

Recognize that chasing your lead is never the solution. Let's say you've called for a fifth time and there's still no answer. At this point, it's probably time to break up with your prospect. Don't be afraid of this step. If they really want to engage with you, they won't let you break up with them! Leave it open-ended so that your prospect can always reach back out.

Your break up voicemail should sound something like this.

Hi Andy, I wanted to reach out to you one last time as I have suggestions on how your site can work harder for you. If I do not hear back from you, I'll assume the timing isn't right. Give me a call if you would like to speak further. It's Dave, from Inbound Corporation.

And the follow-up email should express that you're going to stop reaching out to them. The email also leaves the power in the buyer's hands, letting your lead know that he can always reach back out to you if he has any questions.

We call these voicemail/email sequences an 'attempt series'. What we just covered was a 6 attempt series: 3 voicemails, 3 emails. Now, this example can work well for you but there is a wide range of ways that might work for you and your industry, so understand that there isn't a one-size-fits-all solution.

Break up research - How many times do you reach out?

Always remember Brian Halligan's quote on Inbound Selling. You want to provide a relevant, personal, and delightful experience for each of your prospects from start to finish.

By following the 4 best practices and putting them into action – you'll be well on your way to taking your sales process inbound.