

Selling Value in Health Care

How a \$1.5m Opportunity Became a \$7m Win



What is Command of the Message®?

Command of the Message® is a customized sales transformation methodology that enables sales organizations to consistently create and capture value for their customers.

As a result, B2B organizations build cross-functional alignment around the value they provide their customers. Sales teams improve their ability to articulate that value and differentiation in a way that elevates their business conversations to reach executive buyers.

The Client

In complex B2B sales, your solution is rarely in your prospect's budget. That's why finding the bottom-line relevancy of what you're selling is so important. For the Welch Allyn sales team, drilling down into the risk and impact that one hospital infection could have on the hospital elevated a \$1.5 million-dollar opportunity to a \$7 million-dollar closed deal.

"Without Command of the Message, I think this opportunity would've stayed at \$1.5m and frankly I don't think we would've gotten it," said Ian McCarthy, National Sales Manager for Acute Business, Canada. "I think we would have lost it to a competitor." Learn How the Welch Allyn Team:

- Uncovered Critical Business Issues
- Demonstrated the Bottom-Line Impact of their Solutions
- Effectively Articulated their Value and Differentiation
- Earned Trusted Advisor Status
- Turned an Average Opportunity into \$7M of Revenue

Behind the Win

Sales Methodology Prompts Focus on Customer Pain Points

Welch Allyn implemented Command of the Message® to enable its North American sales teams to better respond to the new challenges facing their health care customers. They wanted their high-performing sales team to excel at uncovering the bottom-line impact in a changing marketplace. During Welch Allyn's rep training session, teams

worked with real opportunities, zeroing in on the value their solutions provide for current prospects.

Many of Welch Allyn's solutions significantly reduce the risk of hospital infections, a costly problem for any hospital system. One MRSA infection for example can cost a hospital \$20,000. In Canada, it recently cost one hospital \$9m in legal fees alone.

It was that data point that resonated with Ian McCarthy, National Sales Manager for Acute Business Canada and his team member Colleen Thomson-Whall during their Force Management training session. So much so, that they decided to use it in an upcoming sales meeting with a large Canadian hospital, less than a week after training. The hospital was considering a purchase of vital signs monitors. In training, McCarthy and Thomson-Whall connected the hospital infection risk to the value of the right monitor purchase.

Demonstrating Impact When There's No Budget Allocation

"We really used The Command of the Message® structure as our template to approach the opportunity," said McCarthy.

The hospital expected to purchase a limited number of monitors that they planned to move from patient to patient. However, McCarthy and Thomson-Whall knew that there were important factors the hospital wasn't considering as part of their decision criteria. Rather than focusing their presentation on the benefits of the monitor and how it connects to an electronic medical record, the team focused on infection control.

“It’s always difficult to be aggressive and humble at the same time. However, one of the things that I’ve really challenged my team on after Command of the Message® is that you have to be a little bold with your proof points because on the other side of the spectrum our competitors are promising the world, but can’t necessarily deliver.”

Ian McCarthy,
Regional Sales Director

Demonstrate the Impact

As anyone selling in the health care industry knows, budget is a key consideration of any buying decision. McCarthy and his team knew that demonstrating the bottom-line impact of their solution would be critical to winning the opportunity.

“Our buyers are always under budget pressures,” said McCarthy. “But, I can promise you that ten patients with MRSA in the first quarter of the year is definitely not in the budget.”

McCarthy and Thomson-Whall thought the hospital infection risk would more than justify the cost of their solutions. In their presentation, they demonstrated how the right purchase with Welch Allyn could actually save the hospital millions.

Moving from Vendor to Trusted Advisor

A Constructive Tension

“Our session with Force Management focused specifically on how to make your customer stand in the pain of their current situation,” said McCarthy.

However, when the Welch Allyn team discussed the risk of patient infection in their presentation, the tension was palpable. The responses to their discovery questions were curt and troublesome.

“It wasn’t part of the scope of what they originally wanted to talk about,” he said.

In fact in the meeting debrief, the team was regretful, questioning whether they made the right move bringing up the topic.

Becoming a Trusted Advisor

Challenging their buyers was indeed the right choice. In fact, that constructive tension helped Welch Allyn’s sales reps earn trusted advisor status with the hospital executives. The week after their presentation, the hospital’s biomedical director called to ask for help in re-scoping the project. They needed the

revised proposal to account for the impact the vital sign monitors could have on mitigating the hospital’s infection control risk.

“The posture that we misread from them was actually their annoyance that they didn’t scope this project out deeply enough and that there were other factors they needed to consider if they were going to positively impact patient outcomes,” said McCarthy. “I saw them sitting on their own blisters. I thought they were annoyed with me that I wasn’t presenting information that was relevant.”

Building the Required Capabilities into the Decision Criteria

The team’s data on hospital infections combined with a proof point from a similar health center, helped elevate the deal from \$1.5 million to \$7 million, with the possibility of \$3m in renewal business over the next several years. The team has also been referred to other hospital systems.

In fact, the Welch Allyn team had been so influential in helping the team justify the cost, Welch Allyn was able to build their own differentiators into the hospital’s official Request for Proposal.

As a result, there were no price negotiations.

The Command of the Message® approach demanded a shift in mindset for the sales team. “Before Command of the Message® we would have had three or four slides highlighting features and benefits and a couple of slides on the software. We wouldn’t have asked a lot of questions,” he said.

The discovery process was the key to getting the hospital executives to (1) acknowledge the risk they were running with hospital infections and (2) to recognize the impact that “no action” could have on their business.



A Commitment to Results

Be Comfortable with Constructive Tension

“Discussing the impact our solution could have on this hospital’s outcomes was the catalyst that won the deal. Moving forward, our ability to understand and articulate the value we can provide will give us the ability to play at a level where the stakes are higher and the purchasing decisions can often be made faster,” McCarthy said. “If we’re not out there doing that, we’re not going to grow our business.”

McCarthy, a 25-year sales veteran, has been through several sales training initiatives and methodologies prior to Command of the Message®. “I actually think Command of the Message® was the most valuable sales training I’ve ever sat through.” He challenges his sales colleagues to consistently uncover the customer’s pain and articulate the critical business impact.

“Take every opportunity and look at it through your new Command of the Message® glasses. Ask the question, ‘Can I make this more than the stated opportunity? Can we turn this into a bigger deal?’” said McCarthy. “Do extra. Add in more. Challenge your customers and be comfortable with a constructive tension.”

Lead a Sales Organization That Breaks Records

A sales messaging framework can give an entire sales team the ability to articulate the value and differentiation of your product and service offerings. This leads to successful sales conversations that link customers’ high-priority needs to your business solutions throughout the customer engagement process.

Choose a Customized Solution That Drives Results

Is your sales team articulating your value in a way that differentiates your solutions?

Without a focus on consistent problem/pain/solution messaging, you may find your sales team experiencing lower sales volumes, confronting reduced margins, and struggling to meet goals.

If you wipe the slate clean every time you launch a new program, you’ll be left with one-off achievements rather than long-term successes. Our Command of the Message® methodology drafts into your best practices, while giving you the tools necessary to drive repeatable and measurable results.

Align your organization behind your value message. Drive bottom-line impact, including:

- Higher competitive win rates
- Higher average deal size
- Greater deal margins

Let’s get started. Contact us!