

**WHY?**

A COMPETE SALES STRATEGY

## Finding Your Competitive Advantage: **Product is Not Enough**



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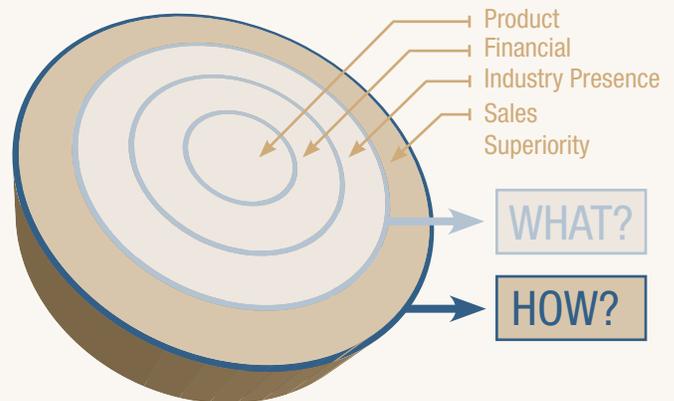
Is the product you sell “so good it sells itself”? Congratulations. Either you’re one of the few sellers remaining in the world who still enjoy such an advantage, or you’ve just awakened from a state of suspended animation. For the rest of you, today’s marketplace demands more—the advantage of Power Base® Compete Sales Strategy.

A decade or two ago, sellers could get away with simply presenting the information about their wares. If they offered a product that stood alone astride its category, such as Intel computer chips in the 1980s or Microsoft Office a decade later, that was often enough.

For most sellers, that success became the root of the problem. Even when their product advantage evaporated, sellers who had succeeded with the old ways had been lulled into a false confidence, still believing they had the necessary sales skills. But in the new world of international competition and freely available online information, most products now had viable competitors—and most customers, knowing they could simply visit the Internet for information, knew they no longer needed the salesperson as a data source.

Today, most products don’t sell themselves, but many are good enough that they don’t knock themselves out of consideration either. For this reason, most salespeople don’t lose the sale because their product’s deficiencies knocked them out of the running—they lose the sale because, quite simply, they are outsold.

## Sources of Competitive Advantage



The graph above illustrates the evolving role of the seller in this “post-product” era of selling.

The Product, represented here by the innermost ring, remains the core of any offering. The next ring, Financial, represents the product price point and the organization’s ongoing investment in research and development. The third ring is the ability to create a positive Industry Presence, like the one enjoyed for years by Microsoft and Intel.

These first three rings only constitute the “what” is being sold; a strong product at a competitive price point with a recognizable brand name. Today’s sellers must seek out additional sources of competitive advantage.

These advantages lie outside the Product itself. They can be found in a clinical analysis of the people doing

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## *“In sales as in life, change is vital to survival”*

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the buying: the Power Base® of influential people in your prospective customer’s organization, under the unofficial leadership of the influencer known as the Fox. A company can have multiple Foxes, even different ones for different occasions. What’s important to note here is that there are scientifically proven techniques for identifying these key influencers, so your selling efforts are spent delivering the right message to the right individuals. This discipline is at the heart of Holden International’s Power Base® Compete selling.

One example of Holden’s exhaustive research is a recently released, 12-year study across more than 28,000 enterprise sellers found that fewer than one in five sales professionals had begun to consistently apply these contemporary selling principles, while only four percent of those surveyed had achieved the level of Compete sales proficiency that merits the term Sales Superiority. Meanwhile, over half of all sellers were still relying on Product and Price to make the sale—and an additional 27% were still trusting their fate to their Product alone!

After three decades in the vanguard of sales knowledge, Holden International remains in the vanguard of strategic and tactical know-how to help sellers achieve Sales Superiority. With the development of Power Base® Compete sales methodology, Holden has advanced the state of the art for this ruthlessly competitive age—developing and teaching the strategies that are preparing sellers around the world to win in today’s evolving marketplace.

Your chance to achieve Sales Superiority depends on your willingness to embrace a lesson that most sellers have never learned: In sales as in life, change is vital to survival. Today’s sellers must change their focus, with new concentration on developing relationships and recognizing influence, in order to outfox the competition—the reason why a Compete sales strategy is essential to your success.

### About Holden International

Recognized as the pioneer of the sales methodology industry with the introduction of Power Base® Selling in 1979, Holden invented the category of “Compete Sales Strategy” and is uniquely able to provide insight into competitive deals with a coachable and sustainable approach that makes how you sell—rather than what you sell—a nontraditional competitive advantage. Holden has continued to innovate, and today offers B2B organizations and sellers its new Power Base® Compete Strategy model. This model makes Compete selling a management science that can be understood and replicated via an integrated platform of “competitive must win deal” coaching, advanced Compete sales training, sales manager coaching, and software and e-learning reinforcement. Holden’s approach helps clients defeat competitors to “take market share” in a way that not only improves customer loyalty but also drives higher revenue growth, increased profit margins, and shorter sales cycles. To learn how you can outsell your competition, go to [www.holdenintl.com](http://www.holdenintl.com).