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A Letter from the CEO

In today's competitive sales landscape, the difference between winning and losing a deal often comes down to subtle nuances. Sales teams need every advantage, and that's where expert insights make all the difference. Through my keynotes and trainings with organizations worldwide, I've seen firsthand the power of trust-based negotiation in driving measurable success. My goal is to equip you with actionable tools that empower you to close deals with confidence.

In my keynotes, I share not only what I've learned from my experience as a lawyer, mediator, and CEO, but also unique insights from hosting *Negotiate Anything*—the world's leading negotiation podcast. Through over 1,300 conversations with the world's top negotiators, I've identified three core secrets that all elite negotiators put into action to drive results, even if they express them in different ways. Building on these insights, we developed the Compassionate Curiosity Framework, a novel approach that makes trust a sustainable competitive advantage.

It was incredibly validating to partner with Mike Lander, a seasoned entrepreneur and negotiation expert with over 20 years of experience in high-stakes sales and procurement in the UK. As CEO of Piscari, Mike has led deals worth over £470 million, bringing a depth of experience that perfectly complements our work. After studying over 200 elite sales professionals, his findings reinforced the lessons we uncovered on the podcast. Together, we've created a report that blends hard data with practical insights to give you an edge this sales season.

This isn't just another research paper. It's a strategic toolkit for those who understand that trust is the foundation of sustainable success in sales. As you read through, I encourage you to see these findings as tactical advantages that set you apart. For those ready to dive deeper, I invite you to bring these insights into your organization through a keynote designed to transform your team's approach to negotiation and trust-building.

Thank you for engaging with this work. I'm excited to share these strategies with you and look forward to helping you unlock their potential.

Warm regards,

Kwame Christian

Kwame Christian, Esq., M.A

Keynote Speaker and CEO of the American
Negotiation Institute





Navigating High-Stakes B2B Sales:

The Power of Trust-Building in a Shifting Economic Landscape

In the world of B2B sales, negotiations are often a challenging, high-stakes dance between multiple parties, each with distinct goals, pressures, and priorities. For sales professionals, the stakes are high, with outcomes that directly impact revenue, client satisfaction, and long-term business relationships.

Key Findings:



Four Negotiator Profiles Emerge:

Sales Negotiators fall into one of our distinct profiles - Analyser, Preparer, Commander and Trust Builder - each with unique strengths and approaches to negotiation.



Trust Builders Stand Out:

Trust Builders consistently outperform other profiles in key sales outcomes such as win rate, achievement of business objectives and driving upsells/renewals.



Effective Trust Builder Skills:

Key traits of Trust Builders include empathetic listening, flexibility, problem-solving, and a focus on creating mutually beneficial outcomes.



Developing Trust-Builder Skills:

To become more effective, negotiators should focus on engineering win-win outcomes by maintaining transparency, using active listening, avoiding manipulation tactics, and maintaining a flexible approach.



[Download the full report](#)

Today, these negotiations are more complex than ever, as recent economic and political shifts have added new layers of pressure and uncertainty to the sales process. Inflation and rising interest rates, for example, have tightened budgets and sharpened client demands for value, making it difficult for sales teams to balance competitive pricing with profitability. Geopolitical tensions and supply chain disruptions have also forced sales professionals to address issues of availability, sourcing, and timelines more rigorously, all while navigating clients' heightened concerns over reliability and risk.

Unlike simpler, one-off transactions, high-stakes sales negotiations are often characterized by complex dynamics, as both sides seek to extract maximum value while protecting their own interests.

Tension can arise from the push-pull of pricing concerns, service levels, and future commitments, often compounded by time pressures,

market competition, and the need to adapt swiftly to changing economic conditions.

In these situations, sales professionals face a dual challenge: not only must they advocate effectively for their product or service, but they must also build a relationship that fosters mutual respect and trust. While the primary focus may seem to be on closing the deal, top negotiators know that the true measure of success goes beyond immediate gains. Building trust throughout the negotiation process transforms interactions from purely transactional exchanges to collaborative partnerships—a necessity in today's high-pressure, rapidly evolving sales environment.

A new report from [Piscari](#), based on data from over 200 sales negotiators across industries and geographies, found that out of four presented negotiation archetypes (commander, trust-builder, analyzer, and preparer), trust-builders see the highest sales performance, highlighting the value of investing in this particular skill development.

The Trust Advantage:

Why Trust-Builders Dominate in Sales



Mike Lander, negotiation expert, former procurement director, successful entrepreneur, and founder of the Piscari Sales Negotiation Skills Diagnostic has recently launched a new research report highlighting the data that points to trust-builders as the highest performers in sales.

The Piscari Sales Negotiation Skills Diagnostic is a survey-based assessment where participants rate their effectiveness at 37 negotiating skills and approaches in categories such as preparation and planning, relationship management and strategic thinking. To date, nearly 200 sales negotiators across industries and geographies have participated in the diagnostic. As part of the exercise, participants also provide information on critical negotiating outcomes such as deal win rate and the achievement of gross margin and other business outcomes.

Defining Traits of Top Sales Performers

What makes trust-builders high performers?

According to the report, Trust Builders place a strong emphasis on relationship-building, listening and mutually beneficial outcomes. Not only does this help to cultivate a stronger rapport, but being creative and collaborative in the process creates space for more creative deals to be discovered.

Some of the key characteristics of trust-builders include:

- ✓ Creating more value in the deal for both parties using creative problem solving and solution design techniques
- ✓ Moving negotiations forward by reframing a challenge/problem into a series of options to be explored mutually
- ✓ Keeping an open mind, and being ready to adapt to the situation during negotiations
- ✓ Educating their counter-party about the implications of a particular negotiation path

Building Trust:

Five Key Tactics for Lasting Relationships

*Successfully building trust can be more difficult than it seems, especially in B2B business scenarios where your counterparty may be intentionally guarded or skeptical. According to the report, to effectively build trust salespeople should focus on **five key tactics**.*

- 01 Become the Trusted Advisor:** Position yourself as a respected, highly informed, insightful industry leader. They won't be asking for your advice during the negotiations, but they may well do so before and afterwards.
- 02 Communicate transparently:** Clearly convey the value proposition and address concerns openly to foster credibility.
- 03 Use active listening and empathy:** Show genuine interest in the buyer's needs and challenges to build rapport and understanding. Ask genuinely insightful questions to drive creative problem solving.
- 04 Avoid manipulative tactics at all costs:** Use evidence-based arguments, logic, and be willing to accommodate minor concessions to build trust. Tune into the buyer's emotional, political, and rational concerns.
- 05 Commit to mutual benefit:** Focus on achieving mutually beneficial outcomes to establish long-term, trust-based relationships. Move negotiations forward by reframing a challenge/problem into a series of options to be explored mutually.

The Trust Advantage:

Building Lasting Success in Sales

Sales is undoubtedly a challenging industry, and recent global factors have intensified the complexities of closing deals. Despite these obstacles, the top performers in this field excel by mastering a single, pivotal skill: building relationships through trust. By prioritizing empathy, creativity, and collaborative problem-solving, these high achievers not only close more deals but also forge lasting partnerships that set the stage for sustained success.

While there's no one-size-fits-all approach in sales, those looking to elevate their performance—both now and in the future—should invest in honing their trust-building abilities. Focusing on genuinely understanding and connecting with their counterparts is key. For the highest-performing sales professionals, trust is more than a tactic; it's the foundation of their success.

Ready to Elevate your sales conversations?

Contact us now to book a keynote or workshop for your sales team!



Related Resources:

Mike Lander on Negotiate Anything
piscari.com
americannegotiationinstitute.com

