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Roadmap to Revenue: How to Sell the Way Your Customers Want to Buy

Kristin Zhivago
Bristol and Shipley Press (Mar 1, 2011)
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Zhivago offers companies a no-nonsense, detailed action plan for increasing revenue.

In *Roadmap to Revenue*, longtime marketing and sales guru Kristin Zhivago does what few experts in the field dare to do: tell the unvarnished truth about selling to customers. Rather than write the typical sales book, filled with generalizations, platitudes, and clever phrases, Zhivago takes a no-nonsense approach. She lays out a specific plan that takes advantage of field-tested experience, one any company's management can follow. She makes it clear, however, that the plan requires a big change (she calls it "the Shift") in the way most managers think about revenue.

Zhivago's "roadmap" is a logical, reality-based process focusing on one key idea: managers must listen, really listen, to their customers, and then structure their products and services around their customers' needs. The author offers three steps for making this happen: Discover (interviewing customers), Debate (analyzing customer input and matching up what they want to buy with what a company has to sell), and Deploy (building a buying process for every product and service). Zhivago walks the reader through each step, leaving little to the imagination. In her description of the Discover phase, for example, she suggests how many customers to interview, how to make interview appointments (including specific email copy), exactly what questions to ask, how to conduct interview calls, how to record and transcribe conversations, how to turn those conversations into conversation reports, and how to create an executive summary and recommendations report.

Zhivago demonstrates her keen awareness of the selling environment by including a thorough description of what she calls "the four levels of buyer scrutiny:" Light, Medium, Heavy, and Intense. These levels are based on the buying process associated with a type of product or service; Light Scrutiny, for example, refers to customers who see a product, ask a few questions, and then buy it. The author details the perspective of customers and the actions that need to be taken by the seller for each of these four scenarios. Each level is meticulously described with a great deal of precision in its own separate chapter. This section of the book should prove to be remarkably valuable for managers who want real insight into the buying process associated with their own company's type of selling environment.

The author's writing is clear and her style is professional. She is unabashedly passionate about her subject. Zhivago has done a masterful job of sharing her knowledge and paying off her promise: she truly does provide an action-oriented plan for managers so they understand that a company's source of increasing revenue must come from being customer-centric, not company-centric. Now if readers only have the courage and wisdom to implement it.
BARRY SILVERSTEIN (February 10, 2014)

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