

**THE COMPREHENSIVE SELLING GUIDE**

**GET INFOCUS™**  
**GET CASH**

**TO PUT MORE CASH INTO YOUR POCKET**



**BY**  
**JEFFREY J.**  
**BOWE**



**CAPTIVATE ATTENTION IN  
ONE SENTENCE  
TO  
BUILD PERSONAL BRANDING**

**TAKEN FROM THE BOOK  
GET INFOCUS™ GET CASH**

**BY**

**JEFFREY J. BOWE**

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## People Who Love INFOCUS Selling™!

“INFOCUS has introduced me to a new way of thinking about how to attract qualified clients and increase commitments from my prospects. I cannot think of a single day that I don’t use some portion of the program in business and in my personal life too.”

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“The sound business basis for Jeff’s methods has resulted in a significant ability to focus on sales issues in the right way for me. This has led directly to improved processes and a greater bottom line.”

Craig, Specialty Leasing and Financing

“I can’t begin to say how much Get INFOCUS, Get Cash has helped me! Once a mediocre salesperson, now I am a sales leader! **THIS BOOK WORKS**, and in every industry!!”

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“I sold our largest project ever after only two months into the series—and at a higher price than we expected. Not only did INFOCUS allow me to get comfortable while selling, we used the book as the basis for training our entire sales team.”

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“The book is a great tool! Now I actually have a sales goal, I push myself, and I accomplish the goal. It’s a great investment for yourself and your company.”

Kristie, Custom Embroidery

“Before I got a clear picture of how to sell to the right people, I was all over the place. Now I know what to say and who to say it to—and we can see the results in our sales!”

Gary, President of a Web Solutions Company

“Jeff Bowe and the ACTUM Group have put together a sure-fire way to increase not only your sales, but also confidence in your ability to sell anything to anyone. When I first started the course, I was a beginner/novice in sales and had no idea how much is involved in asking for people to trust you with their hard-earned money and corporate budgets. The INFOCUS system builds your customer relation skills, people skills, and knowledge of the client from their side of the table using practical exercises and sales scenarios I found most helpful. From day one, you are a salesperson attempting to gain the trust of your client and secure a final commitment.”

Steve, Promotional Products

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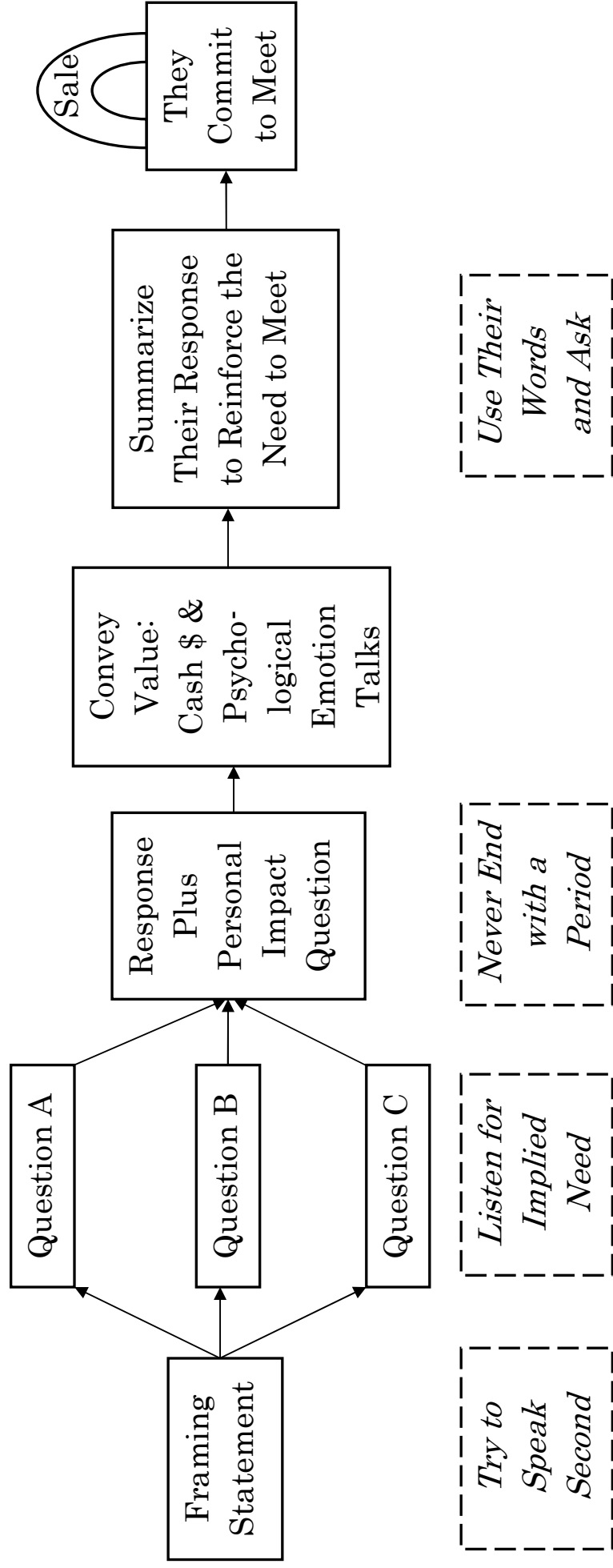
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# Using Your Framing Statement as a Focuser



The Process of Capturing Attention in One Sentence and Guaranteeing an Appointment when You Call



# CAPTIVATE ATTENTION IN ONE SENTENCE

*If someone walked up to you right now and said, “Hi, Jarrod, I’m Harold. What business are you in?”—what would you say?*

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**W**ere you able to fit your answer on the lines above? How many times have you asked someone who they are and what they do and been the recipient of a two minute monologue detailing the history, location, product line, pricing, current specials, and why they think their company is just the greatest company in the world? Their answer would not have fit in the above four lines. How many times have you heard nothing more than their name and their company’s name, as if that is supposed to wow you into homage and make you beg them to bestow upon you some of their esoteric knowledge? How many times has someone asked you who you are and what you do and you stutter and stammer and try to figure what to say and how to say it? How many times have you given your introduction and had the other person just look at you? How often do you give your introduction which captivates the other person and launches you into a conversation that counts?



Unfortunately, all of these situations—except the last one—happen way too often. In fact, if they happen even once, it is too often. Of all the questions someone might ask you in the first few minutes of meeting, this is the most single important answer you can give. Your answer to this critical opening question is your framing statement, and it will determine whether or not you will be asked into the buying/selling process by the person you just met.

## What is a Framing Statement?

A framing statement is a powerful and focused answer to the “what do you do/what business are you in” question. It has one goal—to get the other person to want to engage with you in a conversation that counts. It really is a pretty simple concept.

It is vitally important to talk about results in your framing statement. Too many framing statements talk about process. The problem is the clients pay you for results. People never buy what you do; they buy the results or effects of what you do. People buy what you give them, not how you get them there. We will talk more about this in the next section.



Keep in mind that you are trying to start a conversation, a dialogue, which is two people alternately talking and listening. Too many people try to make a one-sided sales pitch in this first opening statement, but that hard-core pitch does not make the other person want to engage in a conversation.

When asked who you are and what you do, you have been given the gift of an opportunity to start a sales process on your terms. How you answer this question determines if the person wants to talk with you or run away from you. How you answer this question will determine if you ever get beyond introductions to fact-finding and then to final commitment. How you answer this question *frames* the rest of this interaction and has a huge impact on whether or not there is any potential sales opportunity.

Ever listen to a politician respond to a reporter’s question? Most of the time, the politician reframes the question (if not completely ignoring it) and provides an answer on a topic that is of greater interest to the politician. While we don’t want to be so obnoxious or disrespectful, we are going to learn the lesson of reframing a bad introduction question into a good introduction question. So, if someone asks you a bad question, such as “Who do you work for?” or a vague question such as “What do you do?” (which could be answered with what you do while sitting alone at your desk) or even, “What business are you in?” we are going to reframe and redirect the question to “Why do people pay you money?”.



So the question is how to start a conversation that counts after you answering the question, “Why do people pay you money?” You begin with the end in mind, thinking about these three issues:

1. What do people really buy from you?
2. What would be the perfect initial conversation for you to have with a high value prospect?
3. What is the perfect question you would like to answer that will lead into a discussion of why people spend money with you?

## What Do People Really Buy From Me?

If you want to get your perfect question on the table, think about the one reason people buy from you. For your business to be properly focused so that it is efficient, maximizes profits, and establishes its own brand, you must address one *burning issue* in the marketplace. You should address one need, and own the market in solving that one need. It is much easier to create momentum and top of mind awareness if you have a highly focused message.

Every time someone in your market has that *burning issue* that you can solve, you should be the first solution provider that pops into mind. You want to be known for that *burning issue*, and (as we see in the next section) this will become your personal brand.

Apart from not addressing a burning issue in your framing statement, an even worse framing goes something like this:

*“I sell advertising for the Megapolis Sun, mostly to businesses but also to individuals who are having garage sales or trying to sell their house. We also have employment ads if someone is looking to add new employees and we’re the only daily paper that covers the entire metro area seven days a week. I also have my own business I’m really excited about. I sell Supergetchum Vista energy drink, an amazing product from Australia, which is great for helping people with allergies or lose weight or work long nights or get over being sick or just increase their overall health. And I’m looking for energetic and entrepreneurial business partners who want to join*



*my team to sell Supergetchum Vista energy drink all over the country.”*

Wow. What business is this person really in—advertising, energy drinks, or recruiting? If you heard this response after asking someone what they do—and if you’ve networked long enough, you’ve heard this type of framing statement—then there is no way for you to recall exactly what this person does and who this person needs to meet. There is no single *burning issue* for you to associate with this person. However, the next time you see this person you will recall that you don’t want to get cornered at this event nor do you want to meet with him or her because they did not create any value in your mind to justify a meeting.

Don’t get me wrong on broad offerings. There is nothing wrong with solving multiple needs or representing multiple lines. If you solve multiple needs, or you are involved in multiple businesses, you must make a choice and take a stand. You cannot be known for multiple things, and you cannot effectively sell in two different markets in the same sentence. If your company sells in two markets, you must either think of a way to define them as one market and get both markets to see that they are really one market, or you must make a choice. You must draw a line in the sand, stand on that line, and own that line so that your competitors dare not and cannot cross over it. You must be seen as the only choice for someone needing what is on the other side.



It is also important to focus on results over process as long as possible in the framing statement discussion. Your process is what you do to deliver the results and value to your client. Your process is the tool, which you most likely like to use. Most people enjoy what they do and if you don’t and are in sales, I suggest you get out now. Too many people confuse process with outcome. However, your prospect is thinking of paying you to do something he or she can’t or doesn’t want to do. If they wanted to do it and could do it, that person would not be a prospect or customer, they would be a competitor!

Your tools are probably very important to delivery, but they are not the right discussion at the very beginning of the process. People don’t really pay you for how you get them there, they pay you because you can (and did) get them there.



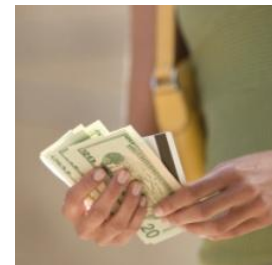


The tools you use are cool and fun to you because you like using them. If your client liked using your tools they wouldn't be your client, they'd be your competitor.

Here are some examples of tools and processes compared to results and outcomes.

It has long been said that people do not buy drills, they need holes. Along the same line, no one needs a financial planner who uses beta balancing portfolio analysis, but a lot of people want to improve the longest party of their life—retirement. No one wants to buy life insurance, but a lot of people want to protect their children's education. No one wants to buy plastic injected molded parts, but a lot of people need to order small quantities of custom parts for new product development. No one wants an attorney, but a lot of people want to make sure bad customers and vendors do not take everything they have worked so hard to build. No one likes to think about taxes, but a lot of people want to put more cash in their bank account. No one likes to buy tires, but no one wants to get stuck in the snow or have a blowout during rush hour. No one wants to think about spending more money on advertising, but almost everyone wants to be visible and get noticed. No one wants to think about the expense of keeping a web site up-to-date, but a lot of people would be thrilled if they could turn their website into an asset. See the difference? Unlike the bad examples at the beginning of this chapter, these examples focus on results, not process.

Think about what makes a prospect dig deep into his or her pocket and pull out some of that hard-earned cash, and give it to you instead of your competition. Think about what your customers get from you that your prospects have not yet received from anyone else. Think about the tangible results that your clients receive from your offering. If you cannot think of a tangible result, think deeper. Any intangible result can be made tangible by word choice and by focusing on the loss that is occurring or will occur if your offering is not purchased.<sup>1</sup>



To get top-of-mind awareness, every networking opportunity and opening conversation you have must reflect that one Burning Issue that drives your business so that the market is not confused about the value

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<sup>1</sup> For more on using loss in creating urgency, see the chapter *C is for Crystallizing Gains and Losses* in the book *GET INFOCUS® Get Cash*.

you bring to the table. You must know what the single Burning Issue is so you can create a framing statement around that need. In other words, your framing statement must address the question:



Why do people really reach into their pocket and give you some of their hard-earned money?

The most profitable businesses, just like the highest income doctors and attorneys, specialize and are known for that specialization. Sure, some plastic surgeons could fix that scar on your elbow, but is that what they are really known for and what they are paid the most per hour to fix or change? Create the image, build the brand, and own the market. Jerry Garcia, marketing genius behind the Grateful Dead once said,

“It is not enough to be the best at what you do, you must be perceived as the only one who does what you do.”

When you own the market in this manner, you are poised for incredible success.

*Why do people really reach into their pocket and give you money?*

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## What Conversation Do Need to Get Into?

After you have figured out what people really buy from you, you must focus on what framing statement conversation would include that reality. This conversation is going to include results, emotion, and differentiation through branding.

Branding, the process of creating an image in the mind of the prospect, is based on this process of creating an emotional tie between the customer and the offering. A brand is a promise or expectation in the mind of the buyer. The company wants to create a promise that the image, delivery and performance of the product will always be valid for those who buy it. Nike has one of the strongest brands in the world, and they work hard to make sure that every purchase made supports the

brand image that they spend hundreds of millions of dollars to burn into your mind. The brand promises something to the buyer.

Company branding is a core part of marketing. What we are talking about here is personal branding. In local to regional selling and/or where networking is part of the prospecting and sales process, personal branding is more important than company branding. In fact, company branding in the context of name recognition—which is part of but not the totality of brand recognition—may work against you in networking and prospecting because strong name recognition does not necessarily imply or indicate a correct understanding of the value of what a company delivers. Other times, a person you meet may have a negative opinion of your company which will be brought into the discussion if you use your company name and brand before your personal brand. In that case, you definitely want to some positive personal branding and value to occur before the company name gets in the way of you developing a strong favorable first impression. Personal branding in the context here is about walking into a room and being known as *the person* who solves a specific want, need, or *burning issue*—making our friend Jerry Garcia proud.

In developing our personal brand, we take from the prior section of this chapter the *burning issue* or key offering. We next look to the emotion involved in buying our offering. Every buying decision involves emotion, including mundane purchases made every day. People buy specific brands because of the way the brand makes them feel. If everyone bought solely on price, there would be only one of each product on the market. Black & Decker® sells irons because they have created the image of toughness in the market for all of their tools, and to some people buying an iron, it is nothing more than a tool used inside the home instead of inside the garage.

The promise of some purchases is to gain a benefit or to gain an advantage that the purchaser does not currently have—they want the promise from the brand. These are positive buys, where the buyer wants newer, better, and bigger, and is looking to add something to some aspect of his or her life or situation. The goal of a positive purchase is to get more.



The promise of other purchases is to avoid the loss of something, to prevent some negative situation or occurrence where the buyer wants to minimize risk. This is still part of the branding process because the promise is



that this purchase will minimize, avoid, or eliminate something. These negative buys protect the buyer or prevent a loss in some aspect of his or her life or situation.

Marketing done correctly identifies why people in the market spend money on this offering, and they use that information in creating advertising messages to the target market. Most offerings are bought for the same reason time after time. Target markets are made up of similar people with similar needs and similar abilities to buy a solution to that need. Your framing statement message is a function of your target market which is builds your brand. Your advertising message defines your target market by both word choice and focusing on results that are only of interest to your narrowly defined market.

For example, life insurance can be bought to provide your family with a great lifestyle in the event of your premature death so that your spouse can quit working and stay at home with the children, or it can be bought to protect the availability of college for your children in the event of your premature death so that your children do not lose the opportunity for a great education. Here is the same product, with two completely opposite reasons to purchase. Health insurance is purchased to avoid bankruptcy in the event of a major illness. A new HDTV is bought to gain the advantage of new technology and to show off to your friends—a positive purchase. Car insurance is bought for neither—it is required to maintain a driver’s license in most states. Whether your offering tends to be a positive or negative buy, it is important to know so that you can include the right high-impact emotional words in your framing statement.

As you look at your customers, what emotion did they use or experience in coming to the decision to make a purchase from you? If you don’t know, ask them. Emotions range from happiness, joy, and celebration to fear, terror, and panic. If you sell custom-built homes, your buyers probably buy due to the thrill and joy of seeing their unique dream come to life. If you sell high-dollar sports cars, the emotion might be envy, or it might be passion if one is a true driving enthusiast. If you sell jewelry, it might be bought out of love for the person receiving the gift. If you sell industrial products, the emotion could be security or peace of mind for the purchasing or engineering department knowing that your products will always be there on time and will never fail to perform to specification. Knowing the emotion attached to your offering allows you to capture that emotion earlier in the sales process, and the earlier you get to the emotion, the sooner you will have a paying customer.

Many people will be consistent in that they tend to make all purchases for either positive or negative reasons. If you have repeat purchases from a person, it can help to know why they buy. However, even people who are predominantly positive or negative buyers will from time to time purchase for the other reason. For example, you are a successful wage earner who tends to be a positive buyer in that you typically buy to gain something. You love your family, so you buy a dream vacation every summer to have fun and share time together. One year you buy a long-term disability insurance policy so that the family you love will not suffer if you are unable to work every day. In this case, you were a negative buyer, looking to prevent the loss of what you work hard to provide.

*Do people tend to buy your product or service to gain the benefit and joy of something or to avoid the loss of something?*

POSITIVE/GAIN BENEFIT

NEGATIVE/AVOID LOSS

I DON'T KNOW

*What emotions and/or responses must you get during your sales process to eventually turn that contact into a prospect?*

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## What Question will Start that Conversation?

To make the other person want to engage in a conversation with you, they must be prompted to ask you a question. The other person must want more information. You must respond in a fashion that makes them want to continue the dialogue, and preferably continue it in a more engaged fashion—with a higher interest level than they expected to have when they first approached you. To make this happen, you are going to combine both of the key issues just listed—why do people spend their hard earned money with you and what emotion is tied to your offering.

To create your perfect question, don't think about what you do away from the client or who you work for and certainly not your title or degree. No one cares what you do or who you work for, and congratulations on your recent promotion, but no one outside your family cares about your title. All of the supposed framing statements listed in the last section are focused on the salesperson and ignore the prospect. When was the last time a stranger made a comment about him- or herself and you really cared?

Think of the introductions you have heard in the past.

"I'm in sales." (Gee, that's surprising since this is a networking event.)

"I'm with Max Dollar Real Estate."<sup>2</sup>

"I'm with Southcentral Life Insurance."

"I work for Megafee Bank."

"I'm an accountant."

"I'm an attorney."

"I build web sites."

"I'm a financial planner."

"I'm in marketing."

"I'm a graphic designer."

"I'm VP of Sales for Tire Care Unlimited." (Sometimes ego is tough to hide.)

"I'm Director of Marketing for Retired Lifestyles Village."

"I work for AJ Plastics." (As if everyone will recognize the name of your two-person start-up company.)

"I sell newspaper advertising."

"I'm an IT consultant."

"I sell cars for Mr. Bigshot Fordodgeolet."

"I remodel houses."

Do any of these answers increase your excitement? Do any of these prompt you to ask a question? Do any of these even make you want to continue the conversation? Unfortunately, the answer to all of these questions is, "No!" These are not framing statements—these are death knells for the networker. If the person using one of these gets a question after launching one of these bombs, it will most likely be either, "Where is the food?" or "Where is the restroom?" Another problem is with all of these is that they are focused on the person using the introduction, not the person hearing it.

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<sup>2</sup> Company names used as examples are intended to be false and fictitious and do not refer to any actual company which might use such a name in a different market than the author resides.



If you are going to give out information, think about the absolute best question you would like them to ask you to start the conversation so that it is good for you. In other words, other than, “Do you take VISA?” what is the best question that someone could ask you after you give your opening statement? For many people, the best responses are questions like:

How do you do that?  
 Can you do that for me?  
 How are you different from competitor X?  
 What do you mean by ...?  
 Where were you last week?

Sometimes a declaratory sentence in response to your framing statement is equally good, such as, “I need some of that” or “I wish I had met you six months ago” or “My company needs that in the worst way.” Any of these responses show interest in what you do and recognition that they need or needed your offering with an implied question in their response. Your new contact is doing mental gymnastics on how your offering would make their life different tomorrow. When you hear such a statement or question, especially, “How do you do that?” you will be tempted to launch into a detailed process discussion of exactly what you do away from your client. (Note: some offerings such as chiropractics and beauty are done in the presence of the client, but I think you get the idea.) Instead of going to process, redirect the question or statement and ask for a clarification or explanation of their comment so that you bring that person into a dialogue about what he or she is thinking about.

*“Oh? What would you have done with it?”*  
*“Really? What happened six months ago?”*  
*“What makes you say that?”*  
*“How would you like me to do it?”*  
*“When would you like me to do it?”*  
*“How come you haven’t done it before?”*

These questions focus the conversation back to your new contact and bring that contact into the conversation. How many times have you listened to someone tell you about what they do, and you wondered if they would ever stop talking? This happens because that person did not make you want to engage; they failed to capture your attention, probably did not include you as an active participant, and failed to create in you any desire for dialogue. Their goal was to tell instead of prompting you

to ask. Your new contact would rather talk about himself over hearing about you, so make that part of your plan. When you hear the other person respond about your product, ask them to go into more detail and listen for the next key words to continue the digging process.

Your goal is to be able to predict the question that you will receive so that you are prepared for the dialogue. Because of the range of backgrounds, personalities, interests, and sense of humor in the world, you cannot predict with certainty the one question that you will get. As you give your framing statement, listen to the questions you get and you will most likely hear two or three questions phrased in slightly different fashions. That's great—you can now predict with better accuracy what will happen and narrow down the possible second volley in the dialogue between you and your new contact.

In some cases, you will need to think two or more sentences ahead to get your contact to ask what you want to answer. In other words, you may not be able to get to the right question in one statement. You may need to set the stage and draw the person into your so that he can understand what you do. This approach uses an opening question to get a response you will use in either forming a second question or sets the stage for the value represented in your framing statement. The question is designed to get the contact to put him or herself into the role of a user or to experience a specific emotion that will help move the conversation forward. At that point, you are three exchanges into a conversation that counts. A sample exchange might look like this:

Contact: "What do you do?"

Seller: "Let me ask you a question. How many miles a year do you drive your car?"

Contact: "About 25,000."

Seller: "How would you like to expose your company brand and contact information to 750,000 people?"

Contact: "I would love to do that! How?"

Seller: "We make your car the least expensive part of your marketing campaign." (This is his twelve word framing statement.)

Again, the idea is to get into the dialogue that you want. Each time you get your contact to ask a question you are ready to answer, you can suck him deeper into the value of your offering.

For example, a computer consultant might ask,

*“What makes you hate your computer?” or  
“Have you ever felt like throwing your computer out the window?”*

The computer consultant is trying to get the contact to imagine the frustrations of a troublesome computer—and who isn’t familiar with that feeling—so the consultant can then respond with a follow up statement that captures his value in helping the contact go from hating a computer to loving a computer.<sup>3</sup> Someone who sells embroidered attire might ask,

*“What would you think about having the IRS pay for 30% of your clothes?”*

Your goal is to narrow down the responses you get by delivering a statement which will lead to a shorter list of possible responses. When you create your statement with the intention of generating specific questions, it is much easier to get those desired questions.

*What is the absolute best question someone could ask you after you deliver your framing statement to lead to a conversation that counts?*

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*What is another good question that would also work?*

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## Selecting Your Impact Words

Once you have identified why people buy from you, it is time to start crafting a very short yet very powerful framing statement that will make anyone who hears it sit up and take notice—and want to hear more. The purpose of a framing statement is to capture attention, and to make the other person want to engage in a dialogue with you. Your statement must be short so that the other person can hear and easily comprehend it—it cannot be too long, poorly worded, or full of technical terms someone outside your industry would never understand.

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<sup>3</sup> Loving our computers might be a stretch for me but there are some out there who love their computers. The variety in the population is an amazing thing.

The following list includes some of the most powerful words from the fields of psychology of marketing and communications that you can use in framing the purpose and focus of your business, as well as a few useless words that should never appear in a framing statement. Many of these words are used heavily in advertising because they create or evoke strong visual or emotion images. As you listen to or read advertisements over the next few days, you will become more conscious of their use. Other words are on the list due to the specific positive or negative emotions that they engender.



Which words from the list below most fit the reason for, and lead to the emotions that are required for, the purchase of your product or service? Think about how each one of these words creates instantly in your mind a mental image or an emotion. That mental image or emotion is the same mental image or emotion that will be created in your contact if that word is used in your

framing statement. Circle no more than three to five words to use in creating your new framing statement.

You  
Guarantee  
Cheap  
Expert  
Never  
Health  
Easy  
Hate  
Eliminate  
Life  
Competitive  
Sky  
Destroy

Proven  
Immediate  
Love  
Connect  
Fortify  
Save  
Discover  
Structure  
Tension  
Money  
Faith  
Expertise  
Ruin

Security  
Results  
Need  
Safe  
Cash  
Children  
Stress  
Located  
New  
Threat  
Success  
Dream  
Ugly

Confidence  
Kill  
Armor  
Crystallize  
Achieve  
Secure  
Deny  
Accelerate  
Stop  
Growth  
Grow  
Failure  
Fast

If you selected “located” you better be a retail store. Otherwise, you are telling your prospects that they must come to you and that is making their lives more difficult. You should also avoid “cheap” unless it is part of your company name.

## FRAME the Message in your Statement

A perfect framing statement has no more than thirteen words in it, not counting your name and your company’s name which are not part of your framing statement. Why only thirteen and why should you not include your name and company name?

First, a person can only comprehend one thought at a time and if you use more than thirteen words, you are most likely trying to convey too much information and more than one thought. Your framing statement is designed to start a conversation and if you say too much, there is no reason for them to ask you a question. The fewer words you use, the fewer words your contact has to process and the less chance that he or she will get stuck on a word and miss the *burning issue* in your framing statement.



Second, you don’t need to give your name and company name because most of the time you are wearing a nametag. If you do give your name, do not give your company name, as the other person may have a preconceived idea of your company and you want to engage their interest before their preconceived notion kicks in. Too many times a company name will prompt a response that your contact has heard of the company, but not an inquiry as to what you do for that company. Some guy named Hutton used to think that his name was all that was needed to engage people in interesting conversations. Contrary to the wildly popular ad series from years ago, apparently everyone was not listening since his company got swallowed up by a larger company. He was apparently wrong about the impact of his name.

Use your thirteen words to describe the results of your offering and if your contact is interested he will ask for your company name later. Recognition is not the same as intrigue and engagement. If you receive recognition without intrigue, you have to offer up something else to get the conversation going, and you are in a one down position.

For example, if you work for a large bank, your new contact might hear the bank name and assume you're a loan officer, but you might instead be the person in charge of marketing or human resources. Or, you might work for a large health club, which makes your contact think you are a personal trainer, when in fact you arrange fundraisers for children's programs at local schools. As you will see later in this book, a prospect buys from you the person and not your company, so keep your company as low-profile as possible at this part of the interaction. This is not to say that company name recognition cannot help in your sales process. It can help a lot. However, a company name alone will not get anyone to ask, "How do you do that?" or "Can you do that for me?"

Keeping your framing statement to thirteen words is also important because you want to say enough to get the other person interested but keep it short enough that he can replay the entire statement in his head in two to three seconds as he prepares a response. If your statement is well-crafted, it will stick in his head, and he will immediately replay it mentally as he gives his response—the response you desire and used in crafting a statement that would prompt that response.

As a side note, the rapid rise of Twitter—which came around nearly a decade after I started preaching the need for short framing statements—has made the ability to be concise even more important. Thirteen words is approximately 140 characters. If you are a Twitter user, think of how you convey big thoughts in short sentences, and apply that to your framing statement. You can't use abbreviations in your framing statement like you do in Twitter but the need to be focused and short is good practice in developing a hard hitting, concise, powerful message.

So, you have thirteen words to describe why people buy from you and to engage the interest of the other person. Creating a powerful thirteen-word message is not easy, but it is much easier if you keep the acronym FRAME in mind:

**F**ocus. Your framing statement must focus on only one *burning issue* in your target market so that your contact can process a single message and you do not confuse your contact about what you do. Clarity is very important. If your prospect cannot identify the one issue you solve, the one primary value you bring to your clients, then you will not get into a conversation that counts. Take a stand and brand yourself as solving one *burning issue* so that every time someone sees you, they know exactly what problem you solve.

**Results.** You must talk about the results from using your offering, the benefits gained or losses prevented, not about the process you use to deliver those results. No one cares at this point how you do it, just that it is done. Talking about the process focuses on you and technology and things that you like to do, but these are boring to your contact. Talking about the results focuses on the contact and is much more interesting to your contact. People buy *what* they get, not *how* they get there.

**Ask.** Keep in mind that the goal of your framing statement is to get that person to ask you the perfect set-up question to start a conversation that counts. Start with the end in mind and know the question you want to answer next.

**Magical.** What you do must seem nearly impossible to the other person, like a huge need that almost certainly can't be filled even it's been a long search. If your results do not seem hard to get, then there will be no interest in discussing them. If anyone can deliver the results, then why should they talk with you? You must present your results in such a staggering and unexpected way that your contact's intrigue, interest, and curiosity go off the chart.

**Energetic.** You must be highly charged about what you do if you want your prospect to be even slightly interested. Your prospects will never be more excited than you are. You must exude energy and passion for what you do, and this energy must be contagious. You can give off energy with rapid high volume speech, or you can give off just as much energy with paced measured speaking. Think of the great speakers you have heard. They combine fast and loud with slow and low to make you anticipate and evaluate every single word. If you have ever been the recipient of a flat line, monotone framing statement, you know how boring it can be and how unlikely you were to want to get into a deep conversation.





To create the perfect framing statement, look at all of the elements discussed in this chapter.

- What single burning issue do you address?
- What question do you want someone to ask you in response to your framing statement?
- What conversation do you want to have right now?
- Do people buy to gain a benefit or prevent a loss?
- What emotions are in play when purchasing your offering?
- What impact words will bring all of these to the mind of your contact?

Regardless of you plan to get there, take your power words and create one possible framing statement in 13 words or less. (On the following page are some additional lines to help with this process.)

“ \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_ .”

From here on out, you should use this framing statement to introduce yourself while networking or anytime someone asks you what you do. When someone asks “Who do you work for?” or “What do you do?”, answer the question you want to answer which is “Why do people pay you money?”

At first, it will seem weird to give such a short response to people you don’t know. However, listen to their responses. If you are getting your perfect question, then you are on the right track. If it is close, then look at changing one or two words and look at how you are delivering the statement.

If you are getting responses that are not even close to your perfect question, most likely you are saying something about process and not results. Be sure that you are focused on results, and go back through the FRAME acronym and create a better framing statement.



Lastly, this new statement must become part of who you are. It must be such a part of you that it can roll off your tongue any time of the day or night. It should be ready to go all the time, as soon as you are prompted. If someone asks you what you do—bang, here comes your framing statement.

This fluidity and ease of presentation will take time and repetition. The more often you deliver your framing statement, the smoother it will get. There is no hard and fast rule on how many times you will need to deliver it for it to become smooth and second nature. However, as a general rule, it is probably over 100. Like a professional actor, the more you rehearse the more natural it becomes.

When you deliver it, make it sound like you just created it on the fly. Where are you pausing, where is your inflection up and where is it down? Add some pauses or hesitations in your framing statement so that it sounds off the cuff. Place your pauses right before or after the most important words so that they stick out. Pausing just after a key word allows the other person to process that word without missing the next word(s). You can also emphasize key words with voice strength by stressing specific words that you want your contact to think about the most. Be consistent and repeat the same message over and over—be known for your framing statement.

Option 2: “ \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_.”

## ABOUT THE AUTHOR

**J**eff Bowe is *Principal and Chief Strategist* of ACTUM Group. Jeff specializes in working with people who sell to business owners. He conducts professional development and training programs for sales strategy and tactics, and strategic thinking and business planning. Jeff's diverse experience allows him to transcend industry lines to assist organizations in finding and crystallizing solutions to the problems of growth and succession. He has worked with numerous start-up entrepreneurial ventures, small to medium sized service and manufacturing entities, not-for-profits, as well as international chemical, research, and game and toy companies.



Jeff started his career in 1985 in customer service at Benham Press. After progressing through estimating, accounting, sales, finance, and operations, and having responsibilities in human resources, environmental compliance, marketing, and capital acquisitions, he acquired Benham Press in 1995. He then acquired a commercial photography studio in 1996. In 1997, he sold the printing company to publicly held Disc Graphics in New York. Jeff served Disc Graphics for three years as Midwest General Manager, expanding the company's presence in the entertainment and software packaging markets. After leaving Disc Graphics, Jeff was Regional Vice President and Partner of The Resource Development Group LLC, Indiana affiliate of an international leadership development organization.

Jeff is currently working on a Doctor of Business Administration in Marketing at Anderson University, with interests in sales process and market differentiation strategies for emerging business. His prior academic credentials include a B.A. with honors from DePauw University with majors in Psychology and Religion—both studies of people, motivation, attitude, and relationships. He continued his studies with an M.B.A. from Indiana University. Jeff is a graduate of the Executive Development Program at Center for Creative Leadership, as well as being an Achievement Seminars International Certified Trainer in Sales and Leadership. Jeff continued his professional development by attending 10 days annually of advanced training from 2001-2005 at Resource Associates Corporation in Mohnton, PA, as well as a variety of

other seminars throughout the year. Jeff was also a regular member of the national training team for Resource Associates Corporation.

Jeff is past president of the *Printing Industries of Indiana*, the state's primary trade association for the printing industry. Jeff is on the boards of *IMASERV, Inc.*, a subsidiary of the *Indiana Manufacturers Association*, and *Campus Classics, Inc.*, a licensed sportswear, embroidery and silkscreen manufacturer and distributor in Indianapolis. He has been active in state and national lobbying efforts on behalf of industry, and remains on the *Scholarship Committee of PII* that benefits *Vincennes University*. He was appointed by the governor to the *Indiana Air Pollution Control Board* and also served on the *Clean Air Act Advisory Committee* which wrote the State Implementation Plan for the Clean Air Act Amendments of 1990—the first major rewrite of the original Clean Air Act. Jeff has been active as a mentor in his fraternity, *Sigma Alpha Epsilon*, including being Chairman of an Alumni Commission at DePauw University, and conducts several workshops annually for DePauw students on networking and interviewing skills. He has been a proud member of Rotary, and is currently a member of the Fishers Chamber of Commerce, where he serves as head of the Membership Council. Jeff serves on the President's Advisory Board for Rainmakers, and was selected as 2005 Finalist for *Rainmaker of the Year*.

Along with being an Adjunct Faculty of Psychology at Oakland City University and Adjunct Faculty of Finance at Anderson University, Jeff is an active public speaker and author on the buying/selling process, strategic planning, mergers and acquisitions, leadership, and personal and organizational focus. He spends his best time with his family including Trey, Jordan, and Chandler, and his boat, appropriately named for his marine passion, "Raging Fever."

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