

Chapter 2 - The Authority Arc

Using the Authority Arc:

Why Authority Matters

As the market in which companies compete becomes more complex, executive buyers are looking for insight that provides them an advantage in the marketplace. This industry-wide perspective comes, not from a consultant or expert, but from an industry authority. Authority selling is the approach that moves you to the top of the food chain because it creates unique courses of action that help executives gain market position. Industry authorities do not talk in terms of improving internal metrics; they talk in terms of advancing market position.

An authority understands where an industry is going and what the pains of the future will be. Industry authorities are validated by the industry through consistent coverage in industry publications, as well as frequent speaking engagements. Industry authorities are also respected in the area of providing original research that is often cited by various organizations. Being seen as the authority in your industry gets your company invited to the buying executive's office, while your competition is trying to sneak in through the back door.

A consultant asks, "What is your pain?" An expert says, "Here is your pain," but an authority identifies, "This is the pain of your industry and how you can uniquely overcome it." If you want your sales team to thrive in life after the death of sales as we know it, it is time to ditch consultative selling in favor of an approach that more closely aligns with the executive decision making process.

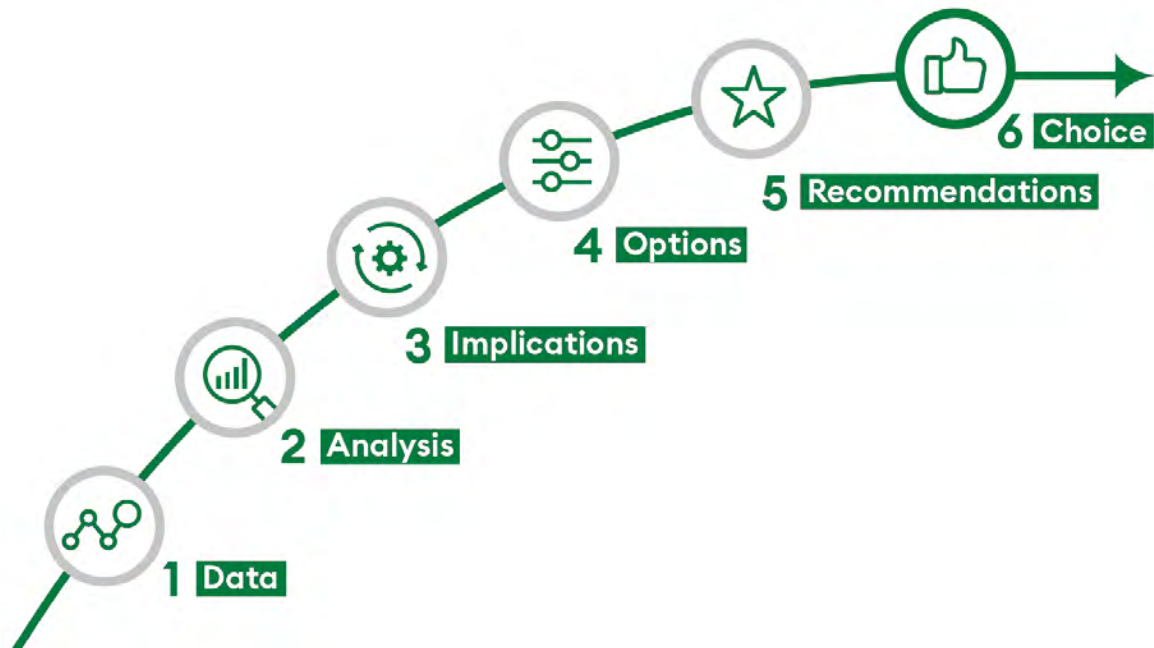
Success in this new world of sales depends on your sales team's ability to offer insight, not as a consultant or even an expert, but as an industry authority.



Chapter 2 - The Authority Arc

“What do you recommend, Johnson?”

Your boss (or your client’s boss’ boss) is looking to you for a solid solution to a sticky problem. How do you build your answer with authority?



Why Authority Matters

Each layer of the Authority Path builds to the next, creating and proving strategic thinking.

The first few times you give a recommendation to a new decision-maker, you may want to “show your work.” Let him or her see the quality and thoroughness of your thinking and recognize that you explored several possible solutions before making your recommendation. This demonstrates your authority.

After you have a reputation as an authority, you can make recommendations without all the detail because the audience knows you have done the legwork.

Common Pitfall

Perhaps because we observe a trusted authority give respected and accepted recommendations without all the steps, we might assume he or she is jumping directly from data to recommendation.

Trusted Authority: “Sales are down 15% YTD. I recommend we offer free shipping in Q3.”

Boss: “I agree, I’ll talk to the CFO later today.”

Chapter 2 - The Authority Arc

Problem...solution; it looks so simple! But if you don't have the detail behind your recommendation, you will find yourself falling backward on the Authority Path.

Unprepared Exec: "Sales are down 15% YTD. I recommend we offer free shipping in Q3."

Boss: "The East coast warehouse can't handle that! Did you consider the impact on production?"

Unprepared Exec: "Well, no. But I can talk to Joe and ask him about volume."

Boss: "What makes you think free shipping is the best idea? What about our new ad campaign?"

Unprepared Exec: "Oh...I...I can put some numbers together"

Boss: "Yeah, give me a report tomorrow on the sources of the sales loss and some alternatives."

By jumping too quickly to recommendation, the unprepared executive found himself falling all the way back to Data and Analysis on the Authority Path.

Your turn! Try it out below!

Data

Options

Analysis

Recommendations

Implications

Choice

