

## B2B IS MORE THAN BUSINESS-2-BUSINESS—IT IS BACK-2-BASICS

Why do we hear the term “back to the basics” so frequently?

Because it works. Regardless of the arena, “back to basics” is in everyone’s playbook.

In the military, recruits begin with basic training. Athletes in a slump go “back to basics.” In politics leaders preach “back to basics.” The message applies everywhere, particularly in business. Why are basics so important in business?

Basics provide the foundation for all business success. Witnessing the success of great companies, we wonder “How’d they do it?” We see the success but not how it was achieved. It may appear their success is luck, twist-of-fate, or a rare combination of chance and opportunity. Success is more than circumstance. Success does not just happen. It begins with the basics.

Basic concepts guide businesses to succeed. Focusing on basics is more than executing a how-to strategy; it is a philosophy rooted in a company’s culture. For example, the world’s largest auto manufacturer developed the JIT inventory system. JIT is built upon the basic concept of eliminating waste. This basic concept helped Toyota achieve their number one ranking. For years, Toyota allowed other organizations to tour their facilities and learn from their system. Few could mirror their success. They would match the process but not the passion for the concept. Toyota held a deeper belief in the basic concept of eliminating waste. Toyota exemplifies that a deep-rooted belief is more important than simply executing steps in a process. Execution is a natural by-product of a deeply rooted belief. Belief in a concept naturally inspires execution.

Basics provide simplicity in our complex world. We live in a complex world: e-mails, voicemails, text messages, meetings, more e-mails, more meetings, work pressures, and personal pressures. We crave simplicity in our complex world. Complexity obscures our vision and distracts us. Our vision becomes so cloudy we cannot see the starting line, let alone the finish line. How often have we heard the phrase “I don’t know where to start”? Start with the basics. Getting back to the basics is the quickest way to reach clarity.

Basics are the universal language of business people. We are asked to give “basic ideas,” “basic info,” or “explain it to me like I’m a third grader.” We break down our world into basic, bite-size chunks, so it makes sense to train and develop in the same manner. Business people must learn the basics. Applying the basics allow ordinary people to do extraordinary things. They believe in the basics, they execute the basics, and they succeed with the basics.

The generational landscape is shifting. Baby Boomers are retiring with their basic skills. Millennials are replacing Boomers, but they need to develop their basic skills. The skills void is happening for a few reasons. Millennials are faced with higher unemployment, which means they are not developing basic skills. Millennials are not working the part-time summer jobs previous generations did, the platform for learning basics skills. By 2025, Millennials will represent 75% of the workforce. Companies must shift their focus to more basic training methods to ramp-up Millennials.

The Great Recession has created record levels of job-switching, unemployment, and underemployment. The once-unemployed, have “ended-up” in their line of work, rather than choosing it. This trend is most noticeable in sales and service professions. Sales and service jobs have been the only positions available through this Great Recession. There is an entire generation of

sales and service professionals who lack sales and service basics. Companies must recognize the importance of teaching and reinforcing the basics throughout an employee's career, regardless of tenure.

According to a recent survey, conducted by Tom Reilly Training, the top six skills B2B that salespeople want to develop are...

- Handling price resistance
- Becoming more efficient and effective
- Selling to high level decision-makers
- Follow-up strategies
- Account planning and strategy
- Presenting your solution

These are basic B2B sales skills. B2B selling has evolved from Business-2-Business selling to Back-2-Basics selling. Companies become more successful by focusing on sales and service basics. Sales and service basics are simple and universal. Regardless of language, culture, generation, product, or industry, sales and service basics are the key to any successful business. Sales and service professionals need these basic skills.

We brand these basic business skills as Sales and Service 101. Sales and Service 101 is about getting back to your basics of business. Regardless of the industry, product, or service, your company sells a solution and serves a customer. The 101 message is simple and easy to execute. Sales and Service 101 is designed for the field, not just the classroom. Everything you learn can be applied from day one.

In Service 101, the focus is on delivering service the customer wants. The customer service process is simple, but it takes commitment. We all serve customers, directly or indirectly. In Service 101, you learn the ten tactics to serve your customers better.

The Sales and Service 101 philosophy is to sell customers the solution they need and give them the service they want. In order to sell customer's what they need, we need to understand their needs. In Sales 101, we discover customer needs through the 2-Dimensional Needs Analysis<sup>®</sup>. Customer needs exist on two levels, business and personal. Business needs answer the question, "What's in it for the Company?" Personal needs answer the question, "What's in it for me?" In Sales 101, you learn how to present a solution based upon the customer's 2-Dimensional Needs.

Does your company's playbook focus on the basics? Are there too many trick plays? Trick plays occasionally work. A trick-play strategy is built upon a façade, not fundamentals. It is time to get "back to basics" and stick with what works. Re-focus your effort toward the Sales and Service 101 philosophy, sell customer's the solution they need and give them the service they want.

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Author byline: Paul Reilly

For more information on Sales and Service 101 contact Tom Reilly Training at 636-537-3360 or visit [www.tomreillytraining.com](http://www.tomreillytraining.com)