

A Process For Client Meetings

When you find yourself in a face-to-face meeting with a client and you are hoping to motivate the client towards buying your solution or service, it helps to have a model that you can use to make sure you cover the key areas that support motivation to act.

SPIL is a simple model that provides a logical process for a sequence of questions that will help you uncover the level of need arousal and will help you to develop your client's motivation to buy.

SPIL is an acronym that stands for:

- **S**ituation
- **P**roblems
- **I**mplications
- **L**ink

Situation

Identify the specific and priority goals for the client. Knowing your client's goals is crucial, because later in the application of this model you need to show a linkage between your solution and the achievement of their goals.

Ask questions to understand the client's current situation – in the context of your solution. For example, if you provide solutions for improving a company's finance functions then you want to understand how the company currently structures their finance department, what data they collect and how they report, how they measure their own performance, etc.

Problems

Identify the problems that are preventing the client from reaching their goals.

Implications

Find out what the implications are from the problems they are experiencing.

Are they financial implications? Is there an implication for team morale? Is customer service being impacted? Don't be scared to keep probing – try to find out the quantified cost of any implications. You want to be able to put a number on any implications if you can, so that later you can demonstrate the value of your solution.

You can prompt the client by mentioning typical implications arising from similar situations faced by other clients. It also reinforces your credibility.

Link

Link your solutions for the problems back to the client's goals. Ideally the client will also articulate the link.

Talk about how you have solved similar problems for other clients – and emphasise the results those clients have enjoyed.

Provide a clear pathway to implement the solution.

The key take-away's for you from this lesson should be:

1. The SPIL model provides a structure for a solution-focussed discussion with a client.