

Social Selling Mastery®:

Scaling up your sales and marketing machine for the digital buyer

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Dedications

This book would not exist without my beautiful wife Rebecca Shanks. Her contributions go well beyond this publication, as I wouldn't have a business without her. Rebecca ensured my survival as an entrepreneur in both the household matriarch and financial sense.

We're blessed with two incredible children – Hunter and Henley Shanks. I can't fully articulate how much of what I do is to better serve them. I once read that a parent's job is to become series of positive memories for his or her children. This is what excites me about this book. My children (4 and 2 at the time of publication) will only know the successes that entrepreneurship has brought our family, but this book serves as a memory of how hard Rebecca and I worked to achieve that success.

The foundation to my work ethic is from my parents. While they're not entrepreneurs themselves, they work harder than anyone I know. They also supported me in every hare-brained business idea I've ever had. The lesson I've learned is that you must allow your children to freely choose their own path, no matter how different from your own. My parents let me experiment, and they let me fall down. I believe entrepreneurs can be grown and cultivated from a very young age. I was one of those lucky people.

My closest friends, Mitch, Travis, George and my brother Casey and sister Shannon have been through the entrepreneurship battle with me for decades. They are incredible sounding boards, and I love them for it.

Finally, this book is fueled by Sales for Life®, and the amazing culture that George Albert and I have helped create. Our fast-growing team is committed to owning Social and Digital Selling globally, and that all starts with fostering a culture that helps innovation thrive.

Preface

My life changed forever on April 18, 2012, in Dallas, Texas. On that particular day, I was a first-time attendee to the AA-ISP (American Association of Inside Sales Professionals) annual Leadership Summit. I was the Toronto AA-ISP chapter president at the time, yet hadn't been able to attend the 2011 event because I had absolutely no money. That year was a disastrous one for my business, which you'll feel a true appreciation for by the end of this preface. At the 2012 AA-ISP Leadership Summit, I felt like a fish out of water. There, at this event, were all the big names of inside sales – Anneke Seley, Trish Bertuzzi, Ken Krogue, Jill Konrath and hundreds more. Then there was me, from Canada, a 33-year-old absolute nobody to the industry. I remember feeling really awkward at the event because I was there to learn, but I also was very star struck. My heroes have always been business leaders, and now I was in a room with the top sales minds in the world. I kept saying to myself “I'm meeting the people whose books are on my book shelf at home.” I just wanted someone to pay attention to me.

To better understand my sense of desperation at the time, I'll paint you a picture of my financial dire straits. I'll take the story back three more years, to the summer of 2009. In that year, I was a self-proclaimed, hot-shit sales leader who every time I picked up the phone to make a sales call, magic happened. I was convinced that I was wasting my talents leading one sales team as an employee, when I could be consulting to ten at the same time as an entrepreneur. On January 4, 2010, I quit my job as the Director of Sales at Firmex (a SaaS software start-up in Toronto) and became a “consultant.” The first thing I learned about consulting is that there are zero barriers to entry, but 99 reasons why you'll fall flat on your face! I convinced myself that local Toronto technology companies would flock to my greatness. I'll spare you 18 months of terrible stories, but suffice it to say, I had a failing business that couldn't seem to turn a profit. I kept asking myself “Why was my business such a disaster?” The answers to my problematic start was only clear to me years later:

1. As a self-proclaimed “sales expert,” I didn't eat my own dog food. I didn't develop my sales pipeline every single day.
2. I had no idea how to properly manage cash flow for a business. I must have slept through cash flow analysis in MBA school!
3. I didn't create a personal brand. The telephone is great for quick hits, but by 2011, business leaders were already taking to the Internet to answer questions to their problems. I was nowhere to be found!

Nearly two years after starting my business, in March 2011, I was teetering on the edge of bankruptcy. Then, like a slap in the face from “sales karma,” three days before my wedding, the bomb dropped! I went to visit my top billing client at the company’s office, and the doors were locked. I came to find out that certain executives of this company had committed fraud by illegally sucking money out of the corporation. All non-equity owning C-level executives, the employees and unsecured contractors got screwed – overnight! My business, as an unsecured contractor, was never going to get paid. My business was owed \$35,000, but with the state of my financial affairs, it might as well have been \$100,000,000. I was dead! I had little backfill of clients to support this mounting debt, and I was leaving for Costa Rica for my wedding, and then to Paris, France, for our honeymoon in just three...freaking...days! There was no way I was telling my soon-to-be wife what had just happened, or I assumed, “this marriage thing is over before it even begins.”

After returning home from an amazing, but very expensive, wedding and honeymoon, reality sunk in. I came back to a rainy Toronto in late March 2011 only to fully grasp the devastation to my business. I was faced with laying off all my employees, not paying myself for two months and no real prospects to help my family survive. I was scared, so scared that I felt like vomiting nearly every day. I was in desperation mode, one of several moments that will define what kind of person you are. Many entrepreneurs around the world have had very similar moments like mine, and many times, their best “eureka” moments are sparked from desperation. My eureka moment ignited a second-half comeback that warrants me telling you this story to help set the stage for this book.

Throughout the summer of 2011, I worked to support my few remaining clients, but was preoccupied with thinking about new business development for myself. At night, every night, many times at 3 a.m., I would be in our spare bedroom, staring aimlessly at my laptop, hoping that some serendipitous event would come save my business. I can vividly remember these nights like a recurring bad dream. Oddly enough, I would have LinkedIn open on the home page. I honestly don’t remember why LinkedIn specifically. I would spend hours and hours thinking about all my business development success via the telephone, and thought about how I could communicate with prospective buyers faster and with greater scale. This speed-to-market thinking is what probably had me staring at LinkedIn. I began to really see the potential of LinkedIn as it seemed like I was one-degree connection away from so many (Vice Presidents of Sales. Unfortunately, I couldn’t find best practices online to help me monetize LinkedIn. I remember thinking about my experiences via the telephone, and kept trying to mentally reverse-engineer my process inside LinkedIn. Slowly, throughout the summer of 2011, I started to figure out new ways to create sales opportunities for

myself on LinkedIn. Each time I had successful breakthrough the night before, the next morning I would show my existing clients the tactics I had used. I found that clients were more excited to learn my LinkedIn sales tactics than to talk about my existing sales consulting services. Week by week, month by month, I got better and better at monetizing the powers of LinkedIn. Not only was I becoming effective with the tool, but my clients were showing repeatable success and quantifiable return-on-effort from my tips. At this same time, I was introduced to George Albert, the founder and CEO of Sales for Life®. His business was also struggling to expand beyond a lifestyle sales recruiting firm. We were also both experimenting with digital content marketing, marketing automation, and other social platforms to capture any sales spark for our businesses. By autumn of 2011, the entrepreneurial lightbulb turned on in my head – “If only I could find a way to turn my new digitally-infused sales tactics into a business.”

Fast forward to the afternoon of April 18, 2012, at the AA-ISP Leadership Summit in Dallas, Texas. At the conference, there was a breakout session by Josiane Fegion titled “Wake Up and Press Refresh on Social Media.” When I first arrived at the conference, I noticed this session on the agenda, and preplanned that this would be my moment to speak up in front of the entire room about my LinkedIn tactics. As I walked into the breakout room, I took a seat in the middle of the room on the right side. Little did I know, I was surrounded by sales and marketing superstars:

- Left of me: Gary Ambrose – CEO of TimeTrade
- Right of me: Ralf VonSosen – then CMO of InsideView, later to become CMO of LinkedIn Sales Solutions
- Behind me: Ken Krogue – Co-Founder of InsideSales.com

About 10 minutes into Josiane’s presentation, she asked the audience for specific examples of sales success leveraging social media. I sprung up like a leopard looking to attack a gazelle! I shouted “We have been helping clients send LinkedIn InMails to prospects with a 12- to 20-percent message -to-appointment ratio.” That one line changed my life forever. Honestly, I can pinpoint the moment exactly. The breakout room’s temperature seemed to change as the buzzing of chatter began to build. People looked at me as though I had invented fire. Almost immediately, someone from the back had shouted “Can you describe exactly what you’re doing on LinkedIn?” So, for the next few moments, I explained what I later would call the “Sphere of Influence” sales process. I felt like a rock star for the first time in my life. I had potentially created a consulting service that people actually wanted!

After the breakout session had finished, Gary Ambrose and Ken Krogue approached me to exchange business cards. They both asked me to call them to

discuss doing a joint webinar and ebook on the topic of LinkedIn. I walked into the main lobby of the conference center with a sense of hope and newly found self-confidence I hadn't felt in two years. The very next thing I did was call my business partner George Albert. This call should have been recorded, and I should plaster its text on the walls of our corporate office:

Jamie: "George, it's Jamie."

George: "How is the conference, any great leads?"

Jamie: "George...I'm telling you, we're scrapping everything! I have been talking about our LinkedIn stuff, and people around here are calling it 'Social Selling'. George, we're going to stop all of our other services and just coach people on Social Selling!"

George: "Are you f&%king mental?"

George may tell you this isn't exactly what he said, but I beg to differ. He was right: How could we dismantle a business that was slowly starting to climb out of the abyss for this "Social Selling" thing? But for me, the point was simple, as *Social Selling* was a term that only a few people on earth could define. But, it seemed the appetite to solving this social media for sales thing was only going to grow exponentially.

Throughout the summer of 2012, I began to test my assumptions on the demand for Social Selling. George and I agreed that I would create a basic curriculum and train ten clients for free! Based on their feedback and quantitative success, we would both have a sense for the demand, and we would have ten client success stories to show to future buyers. Providing our training for free was one of the smartest business ideas I've ever executed. Within 90 days, we had ten extremely satisfied advocates and collected empirical sales success from these engagements.

I guess you can say, the rest is history. Over the next four years, we've created the world's largest Social Selling training system called Social Selling Mastery®. As of the date of this publication, our system is being used by more than 60,000 sales and marketing professionals worldwide, and growing exponentially. We've helped companies acquire billions of dollars of incremental sales pipeline and revenue. It's been incredible to see our curriculum on every continent, in every size of company, within dozens of industries. Our idea of giving free training to our first customers in exchange for feedback inspired us to crowdsource all future curriculum development. Our current curriculum, the basis for this book, is the most robust and comprehensive in the world because it's consistently evolving from sales and marketing professionals' feedback.

I wanted to share my humble Social Selling beginnings with you because it proves that anyone can build a personal brand. Building a personal brand is going

to be a major step you'll take to scale your company in this new digital economy. If you and your entire sales and marketing organization apply the principles based in this book, I promise you that Social Selling will positively affect the growth trajectory of your company. I can't wait to hear your stories of Social Selling success!

—Jamie Shanks

Introduction: The road map to Digital Transformation

“Definition of synergy: The whole is greater than the sum of its parts.” – Aristotle

I use this definition to outline your road map to a Digital Transformation inside your organization. I can’t stress this enough: Social Selling success is a team sport, not a showcase for great individual contributions. Great teams comprised of one cohesive unit always seem to outperform and win more championships than the team that gathers amazing individual talent “on paper.” If there are only a few antidotes that you remember from this book, please remember Aristotle’s definition of synergy, and how teamwork in your organization is always going to outperform what you can accomplish individually in a vacuum.

Every organization, no matter how effective at traditional selling principles, will start its Digital Transformation from simple beginnings. For hundreds of technology companies in San Francisco, these beginnings had already happened, while many global financial services companies are just planting the seeds for a Digital Transformation. To help you understand the Digital Transformation progression that all companies will face, here are its six stages. The question you must ask yourself is: Where is my organization in this progression?

Level 0— “Status Quo”

Your organization is complacent and will continue selling as it always has. You have not established with your sales team the mindset that social and digital communication will have a positive impact on the business. There is little to no buy-in from commercial leaders on the effectiveness of social, no social governance, and no formal training on social. The adage “Sales is from Mars; marketing is from Venus” couldn’t be more true. These two departments couldn’t be more disconnected. Is this your organization, in which sales and marketing barely speak and most likely are not located in the same building, city or country?

Level 1—“Random Acts of Social”

Random acts of social is a popularized term by PeopleLinx: The social seed has been planted somewhere in your organization, but it hasn't gone viral. Pockets of individuals, typically high-performing sales professionals, are attempting to create a groundswell of change. The problem with this randomness is that there's little to no empirical evidence to support the effectiveness of social. While a few commercial leaders may believe in social, your corporate sales approach is pretty much status quo. Social Selling is a whisper throughout the halls of your sales and marketing departments.

Level 2—“LinkedIn or Social Media Training”

At this stage, your organization has had enough internal demand for social best practices that someone is trying to formalize a game plan. Most likely though, you or your teammates have confused LinkedIn and Social Selling as one and the same. As a result, you've probably made any of these investments:

- Your department's sales tool stack needs to standardize a LinkedIn product, so you invested in LinkedIn Sales Navigator.
- You started training workshops. Someone at your company was chosen to facilitate training; queue the Social Media Marketer or a “digitally native” sales professional who seems to “get it.”

Your sales enablement team is trying to gather ideas for a “Social Selling 101” workshop filled with a basic assortment of tips, tricks and tactics. You and your sales team will learn the basics of becoming social, starting with redesigning your social profiles. Unfortunately, there are usually two missing ingredients. First, what is the road map to global change beyond these initial workshops, and how will you measure success? Second, how do you get marketing involved in this Social Selling equation, as the sales team is not being fueled with new insights to share with your customers?

Level 3—“Social Selling Mastery®”

Your Social Selling Mastery® organization has top-down executive support to make social a priority. Your front-line sales leaders are driving accountability throughout their sales force to ensure social actions are reaching the defined measurable milestones. The digital marketing team is working side by side with sales to fuel the insights (content) that sales professionals will use to engage their buyer.

Social Selling is manifesting beyond a business unit and seeking to be standardized throughout your entire sales and marketing organization. To become a Social Selling Mastery® company, you understand that Social Selling effectiveness is not accomplished through a few training workshops. You and your sales enablement team will seek to weave social into the DNA of your existing sales process. Social Selling is additive, not a replacement for how your team sells today. You’ll also ensure the “skill gap” between existing sales professionals and future new hires is nonexistent; thus, you’ll make Social Selling training part of your new hire onboarding.

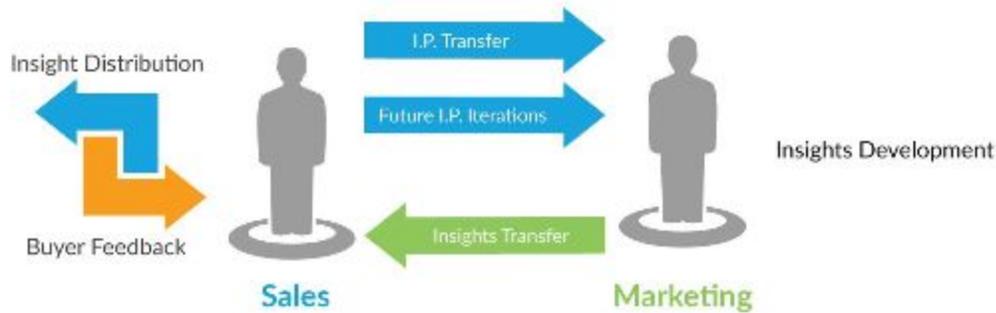
Throughout all business units, your sales and marketing teams are leveraging social “every deal, every day” (as quoted by Jill Rowley) as part of the following three intersecting pillars of Social Selling:

1. *Trigger-based Selling*: Internal or external events happening around your buyer, and this digital information can alert a sales professional in real time, allowing for highly contextual conversations.
2. *Insights-based Selling*: According to Forrester and Corporate Visions, “74% of buyers choose the sales team that was first to provide value and insight within their buying journey.” Shaping your Buyer’s Journey early is critical, and leveraging digital insights will help arm your buyer with information to make informed decisions.
3. *Referral-based Selling*: People buy from people. The road map of relationships can be mechanized through tools such as LinkedIn and Twitter. You can build a relationship road map to establish deeper connections with your buyer.



Level 4—“Sales and Marketing Alignment”

Social Selling is simply a by-product of effective sales and marketing alignment at scale across your organization. We’ve met companies that have renamed their Social Selling initiatives “Digital Sales,” as they recognize that digital communication going far beyond social platforms such as LinkedIn. These companies have created streamlined communication bridges between sales and marketing, which have increased the flow of new ideas for digital insights. At a tactical level, your company would have an Insights Committee, which is a group of sales professionals that meets regularly with the marketing department to develop new digital insights that fuel sales conversations. This consistently developed intellectual property is repeated by creating a process that we call the “IP Transfer Loop.” The IP Transfer Loop has a sales professional story-tell an idea based on buyer’s challenges, and the marketing team turns this idea into a new digital insight for sales professionals to leverage with their buyers. As sales deploys these digital insights into the market, buyers provide more feedback in the form of objections, concerns, questions. This cycle continues to repeat itself, with more sales feedback, while developing more and more granular insights that are highly valuable for the buyer.



Sales and marketing alignment also begins to formulate new ways to measure success. Great Social Selling teams recognize that a Buyer’s Journey involves both the marketing and sales efforts; thus, everyone in marketing and sales becomes accountable to winning that new buyer. You’ll recognize greater sales and marketing alignment when your marketing team is no longer focusing on website traffic or lead volumes as their ultimate key metric. Alignment occurs when your team begins to create metrics around the handshake between sales and marketing, at the sales qualified lead, or opportunity level. Marketing will be accountable for delivering a percentage of sales qualified leads to achieve a sales professional’s quota attainment, and sales is accountable for timely pursuit and proper nurturing of these leads with Social Selling best practices. Everyone is ultimately accountable to new sales bookings. Tactically, a Service Level Agreement between sales and marketing takes form and becomes the blueprint for accountability among all team members.

Level 5—“Sales and Marketing Integration”

We are bullish that integration between sales and marketing is the future of commercial interactions with your buyer. “Team Revenue” is what we call the interlacing of marketing and sales departments. Your commercial team recognizes emphatically that everyone in digital marketing and sales is accountable for helping buyers throughout their journey. Each team member has also completely bought in to Aristotle’s definition of *synergy*, that no role is more important than another, nor can be short-cut to be a successful Digital-Sales organization. We recognize that while the business cards and LinkedIn profiles of sales and marketers will always show the external world that they have a traditional role and title, internally they are just a member of one unit—Team Revenue. They are accountable to only one number—sales bookings!

Throughout this book, we explore very tactical steps to reach beyond even Level 3—Social Selling Mastery® to help you create greater collaboration between sales and marketing. I truly dream of a day when I see sales and marketing conferences (which are very much mutually exclusive events today) blend, and both sales with marketing are equal attendees at these events, collaborating and trading best practices as if they all share a common role. I also dream of the day when marketers have as much involvement in sales kick-off events (SKOs) by working hand in hand with sales to better address customer needs. Sales and Marketing Integration is coming, mark my words. Social Selling Mastery® is going to be your company’s biggest leap forward to begin the journey toward this integration.

We at Sales for Life® have trained more than 250 companies, ranging from five sales and marketing professionals to 25,000 spread across the globe. Personally, I’ve been in more than 1,000 boardrooms (virtually or live) to assess company’s elementary starts to Social Selling at Levels 1 and 2. After reviewing the six stages to Digital Transformation, please don’t get discouraged if you self-assess your organization as far, far, far away from trying to obtain Level 3—Social Selling Mastery® or beyond. This book is going to serve as your guide and road map.

How do I use this book?

I have taken two very deliberate steps in creating this book for you:

1. This book is very tactical

I want you and your organization to have the road map to Social Selling success. You’re going to notice very quickly that we spend little time making the case for Social Selling in your organization. The “why” of Social Selling has been beaten to death, with hundreds of articles on Google available for your review. My assumption is that you’ve purchased this book because your organization is stuck at Level 1 or Level 2, and you need the road map to Level 3—Social Selling Mastery®. I promise you one thing: This book is very tactical for both an individual quota-carrying sales professional, all the way to a C-level executive rolling out a global training program. I will have accomplished my goal for this book if you feel it becomes your “Bible for Social Selling.” You’re getting a brain dump of four years, hundreds of customer engagements and an outline of best practices from Sales for Life®. I legitimately want to change your life and the success trajectory of your organization.

2. Social Selling at scale

Scale—this is the missing ingredient of nearly all “Social Selling” books and training programs from “Social Selling experts” I’ve encountered. Their programs have done an admirable job of helping sales professionals kick-start their Social Selling activities. Unfortunately, they haven’t approached Social Selling as a global initiative, littered with the complexities of multiple departmental stakeholders, training deliverables that reinforce behavioral change and global KPI measurements that drive a real sales impact to your company’s bottom line. Social Selling execution based on individual sales professional’s activities is like sailing a ship without a course. Based on an independent study conducted with over 300 sales professionals by [Feedback Systems](#) with insight from Sales for Life®, PeopleLinx, Sales Readiness Group, VorsightBP and Sandler Training, we found that 69% of Social Sellers were self-taught, with no formal training, and they couldn’t “bottle” their process. These pockets of successful Social Sellers could hardly articulate what made their process so special. The problem this poses your organization is simple: Core Performers (typically 50 to 70 percent of your sales force) are not executing the same playbook as your High Performers. According to the Corporate Executive Board: [“Boosting Core Performers’ sales performance by 5% will result in a 60% higher increase in revenue, than firms that increase their High Performers’ sales performance by 5%.”](#) This statement is obvious when you factor in the importance of scale. This is exactly why you need to look at Social Selling as part of a Synergistic ecosystem, where all the elements of this book are equally important, not just tips for sales professionals to execute in their own vacuum. This book has designed a daily sales cadence for every sales professional in your organization among key steps for front-line sales managers, sales operations and sales enablement, and digital marketing. All of these business units must learn, execute and measure in unison.

IMPORTANT TIP: Don’t skip sections, even if they’re not part of your current job description. While this book is written in job function sections, please read each section in detail. I wrote each section to speak directly to the leader of that applicable job function. If you’re in a part that doesn’t align to your current role, **still read**. Read that part and its applicable chapters as if you were the leader. The only way you’ll become the ultimate Social Seller is if you understand how the entire ecosystem works in unison. I’d like you to gain an appreciation for how each department is critical for Social Selling success.

PART 1: Creating a Mindset Shift for a Digital Transformation

Chapter 1: Why do I need to change now, not tomorrow?

“90% of customer buying decisions are starting online.”

– 2011 by Forrester Research

The above statistic is already five years old, and it couldn't be truer. The average buyer in business is just like you and me at night, on our couch, surfing the Internet. Buyers purchase clothes, televisions and build their future vehicles online. What makes you think they don't also research software, HR best practices, insurance or corporate healthcare policies?

My business, our clients' businesses and your business have already forever changed because buyers have changed. Buyers are arming themselves with more information than ever to make informed decisions. Buyers can now connect with their peers on social platforms such as LinkedIn, Twitter and Facebook to learn about the challenges, pitfalls and successes of any solution implementation. In 2012, other statistics began to emerge on the change in buyers' behavior that progressed Social Selling:

“57% of the Buyer's Journey is now done before a sales professional is involved.”

– 2012 by Corporate Executive Board (CEB)

“75% of business-to-business buyers are now using social media to research vendors.”

– International Data Corporation (IDC)

These core statistics in 2011 and 2012 awakened progressive companies because their sales professionals saw the vital importance that social played within “top of the sales funnel” activity. Sales and marketing departments would need to change their ways to become a resource to buyers **before** a sales professional would even know an opportunity existed. I can personally account dozens of clients over the last four years who attracted “Blue Birds” into their sales pipeline through social. At first, I would chalk up these serendipitous opportunities and great fortune, but it has become very clear that providing value to someone first has been the catalyst for these opportunities. In May 2012, Aberdeen Group presented a finding about Social Sellers: “79% of sales professionals achieved

quota in their last calendar fiscal year, compared to the 58% non-Social Sellers who were Average to Laggard in their industry. This had a 16.3% increase in their company's overall revenue." Such empirical evidence was hard to ignore.

In 2013, Craig Elias, the author of *Shift*, had presented me with this mind-blowing statistic from *Corporate Visions*: "63% of buyers are choosing the sales professional and company that was **first** to add value and insight in the buying journey." What does that mean? It means that long before you think about adding value to a prospective buyer via the phone, email or presentation, the buyer has been learning without you. Buyers have been collecting enough information to be able to select which vendors are best for their business. This is all happening before ever speaking to a sales professional. Then, as buyers are making vendor decisions, they are typically choosing that first vendor who presented them new ideas, concepts and road maps that the buyer hadn't encountered before. This is scary because all this education is happening without you! Yes, your competition has been teaching your prospective buyers with their blogs, videos, infographics, ebooks, webinars and success stories. Your buyers are shifting their priorities before you've even called them for the first time. Think about this scenario. You're about to conduct a huge presentation in the buyer's boardroom. You've been preparing statistics, ROI calculations and reasons why your company is the best vendor for the project. The problem is that when you start your presentation, it doesn't go anything like what you planned in your mind. The client seems completely educated on your market – features, implementation strategies, best practices and pricing. In fact, the flow of the conversation seems like a grand inquisition as the buyer has been prepped with land-mine like questions. Guess what? I, the Social Seller, was the one who set up those land mines! I, the Social Seller, had been sharing best practices, implementation road maps and pricing scenarios to the buyer for months. The buyer now uses my solution as the benchmark, and because I taught him or her all the pitfalls to look out for, your solution seems to feel like it's been **sold** into the business, rather than a right fit. While a simplistic analogy, this is the cause and effect that social media has had on buyers.

It's time to take an objective look at your business. Has it become more difficult to reach decision-makers over the phone or via email? Are these mediums having the same effect they did even a few years ago? Also, "the buyer" is not just one buyer anymore. According to the CEB, "There are now on average 5.4 decision-makers, champions and influencers, all part of the buying decision." Are you effectively nurturing and influencing these five or six champions, influencers and decision-makers in the organization with the phone? This is another reason social media became a tool for sales professionals. With one article shared socially, I'm able to educate and become a resource to an account's

5.4 decision-makers, and thousands of others – instantly. This kind of scale is unmatched by the phone or email.

In 2014, LinkedIn did a study of 5,000 buyers in leadership positions and found that “92% of buyers want to deal with the sales professional who is the known thought-leader in their industry versus 17% of buyers still don’t mind being cold called.” By 2015, a new analysis had emerged; the realities that “50% of all B2B researchers are millennial,” so think with Google. While the decision-maker might be a Gen Xer or Baby Boomer, the functional users and champions who support buying trends are “digital natives.”

Where does this leave you and your organization if you’re not leading the customer conversation? You’re a ghost, lost in a sea of screaming voices. What is the probability that you’ll be found? If you work at a Fortune 2000 company, and for a brief moment you rolled your eyes and thought, “This doesn’t apply to me. I work at XYZ Company, and we have a brand as the market leader.” If this was your reaction, your future is in even more trouble! At a macro level, Forrester studies suggest that one million sales roles will be wiped out by 2020. These declining roles will be Order Takers (decline by 37%), Explainers (demoing sales professionals will be down 27%) and Navigators (relationship nurturing sales professionals down 17%). All these roles are reduced because you’re not the face to the industry. You’re not the “consultant” shaping the Buyer’s Journey; you’re only answering questions along the journey. At a micro, personal level, you in a big business are not very nimble. You can’t start guerilla marketing campaigns like your smaller competitors. Don’t think for a moment that because of your business card that you’re an obvious vendor choice. People buy from people **first**; then they buy into the solutions that a person represents. Your corporate business card might get you a few more meetings than smaller companies, but the value many times ends there. Nimble, smaller competitors can unleash ground-breaking insights that disrupt your sales cycles. Now your buyer is armed and dangerous with market information, so how are you going to stand out? Why do they need you?

If you’re part of an information technology or telecommunications company, and you’re not executing Social Selling at global level in 2016, you’re no longer an “early innovator” – and you’re late to the party. As LinkedIn mentioned at its 2015 SalesConnect event in Las Vegas, 2016 to 2020 will be “[crossing the chasm](#)” for many technology-focused companies. For those of you in other industries such as professional services, healthcare, finance or manufacturing, your markets are changing rapidly! This isn’t a scare tactic, but a reality check.

Where you need to change your mindset is on Social Selling's involvement beyond the sales role. How is sales operations, sales enablement and especially marketing influencing your digital interactions with buyers? The size and scale of your organization is irrelevant here. Throughout this book, we'll use the word *global* as a ubiquitous term for **all** of your organization. What's most important is that you change your mindset from "me" activity to "we" global scale, and "we" is only important if it improves your entire organization's ability to serve your buyers. That's it! Nothing else matters with Social Selling or any type of innovative sales process. Your sales approach must have a positive impact on your ability to enhance your buyer's experience. I've seen B2C (Business-to-Consumer) companies change their digital approach years ago to help enhance a buyer's experience. Unfortunately, B2B (Business-to-Business) companies have been approaching Social Selling as a series of individually executed "sales hacks" to create quick wins, but have done little to improve long-term trust within their buyer-to-seller interactions.

I know it's hard to think of the long game here. I get it: You're measured with monthly or quarterly goals that make it difficult to think about your commercial approach two, three, five years from now. You're looking for a material impact to be made this quarter, and Social Selling tips, tricks and tactics will book you immediate meetings and create quick opportunities. Again, I get it, as this is how Sales for Life® started Social Selling training in 2012. But I promise you, the analogy that constantly pops into my head will hold true. Picture a massive wave approaching your dam, a metaphor for your company. The wave is inevitability going to hit your dam (as your buyer is leveraging social and digital information to make informed buying decisions), and your approach to mending your cracking dam is with "Social Media hacks." This is like concrete filler for the cracks in the dam. These tips, tricks and tactics can keep your dam together for the short-term, but the engineer in you knows you're doomed if you don't find a long-term, scalable solution. Please don't throw up your hands and say, "That's not my job" as you perhaps can't see yourself fixing an entire dam. Don't dismiss your ability to be a change agent for the entire dam's construction. You bought this book to help give your company the road map and playbook to Social Selling, and within the book, we help you identify the key players necessary for success within your company. The key take-away here is that social media tips, trick and tactics within tools such as LinkedIn are great at establishing buy-in for Social Selling. But you're not reading this book for buy-in, you want a global Social Selling Mastery® program that scales beyond a few high-performing sales professionals. If that truly describes you, then you must first shift your mindset toward the long play for your organization. The long play is going to require team work.

What's included within the mindset shift to scaling Social Selling? First, you gather executive buy-in, and each role is accountable to executing towards a predefined set of Key-Performance Indicators (KPIs) that all align to one corporate goal.

What departments will be involved in a global Social Selling deployment?

- C-Level Commercial Leadership (Revenue Officer)
- VPs/Directors/Front-Line Sales Managers
- All Sales Professionals from:
 - Demand/Lead Generation
 - Quota-carrying Sales Closers
 - Customer Success/Account Management
 - Channel Partnerships
- Sales Operations and Sales Enablement
- Digital Content Marketing

Most Level 1 and Level 2 organizations that are executing some form of Social Selling are just not thinking about all these departmental chess pieces. As I meet these organizations, they might be running pilots within inside sales, or they might be a business unit/product group in the United Kingdom testing Social Selling. There is little to no inclusion for a joint task force of sales, marketing, sales operations and enablement planning and executing together. The results are highly predictable as their Social Selling programs have minimal impact on revenue. Sure, they appear “successful” using other measurables such as “engagement was high,” “we created two times more leads.” But did that really move the needle for their corporation? The bigger challenge with this lack of departmental involvement is disruption. Certain business units are running a playbook that doesn't align with other business units' goals, especially when marketing isn't involved. You're, in essence, selling in a vacuum.

Collecting these stakeholders might seem crazy to you at first as you gather (sales leadership, marketing leadership and operations/enablement leadership) them into alignment. But it's absolutely the very first thing that Level 3—Social Selling Mastery® companies have done. These companies recognize that selling in a vacuum is ineffective, and each department understands that working as one cohesive system will have a far greater impact on their respective business unit's success. Like a house of cards, remove one pillar, and the entire house crumbles to the ground.