

Business Solutions

Growth Strategies For The IT Channel

CompTIA Breakaway: Turning Good Ideas Into Great Results

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Peter Sheahan, founder and CEO of ChangeLabs, presented the feature keynote on Tuesday, Aug. 2, in the opening hours of **CompTIA Breakaway 2011**, sharing his advice on how to help your potential or current customers make buying decisions.

As part of his presentation, Sheahan offered the idea that the biggest hurdle to sales is misperceptions of the seller about the target audience. Interesting, right? "It is often not the buyer getting in the way of the seller exploiting the opportunity, but the seller not fully understanding the opportunity," explains Sheahan. "I would put to you that success is less about the tactical decisions, but rather your ability to see the money to be made, otherwise you rob yourself of opportunity."

Examples of assumptions that block your way to sales:

- Assumption #1: buyers think like us. That leads to Observation #1 — "our conditioned bias creates misalignment between our offer and the buyers need." For example, VARs may go in to talk technology, but the customer is thinking line of business. So when you are thinking, cloud and CRM, they are thinking "get my sales team the info they need on the road." You must be able to see the opportunity within that problem.
- Assumption #2: details drive differentiation. Sheahan argues, too many details drives disengagement and disagreement. If you focus on the fine details, you are likely going to kill the opportunity.
- Assumption #3: the market moves slowly. Guess again, says Sheahan. It moves slow until it hits a tipping point and explodes. So if you wait for that momentum to build, you are already too late. The lesson? Cloud may still be maturing, but don't wait until it does to create your strategy. You'll be too far behind to catch up then.

Want to talk with customers in a better, more productive way? Here are some questions Sheahan suggests you ask your customers:

- What drives your team crazy?
- What areas of your business present an opportunity to drive down cost?
- Would you describe your team as collaborative?
- If we could fix three things for you, what would they be?
- Leaving aside technology, what business value do you really want out of this relationship?
- How will you know what we do together is working?

The bottom line, says Sheahan, is that the margin is in bringing solutions together. Can you show your customers how to take disparate IT solutions and turn it into a business solution that answers one of those questions above? Your challenge? Learn to talk with your customers at a level where you uncover that need — a business need — and can pull together the IT pieces that creates a seamless business solution.

Source: [Business Solutions](#)