

How they did it:

Beyond Trusted Advisor – becoming a Trusted Asset

White Paper



Beyond Trusted Advisor – becoming a Trusted Asset

By [Bob Lambert](#), Founding Partner, [Samurai Business Group](#) – *Turning sales mastery into a competitive advantage*

In The Little Teal Book of Trust, sales and marketing guru Jeffrey Gitomer offers several strategies salespeople can use to become a trusted advisor. Here are the best ones:

1. Trusted advisors try to provide value, not supplies.
2. Trusted advisors focus on building relationships, not just closing deals.
3. Trusted advisors consistently provide buyers with actionable insights and strategies for improving their business.
4. Trusted advisors make decisions based on what's best for the customer's interest, not their own.
5. Trusted advisors view themselves as partners in each buyer's success.
6. Trusted advisors put the relationship first, quota second.
7. Trusted advisors speak in terms of long-term value and return on investment



First let's look at the term "Trusted Advisor". It's one of the most over used terms today, it's like the over use of paradigm in the last decade. This over use has lead to a "so what" everyone says the same thing attitude. BTW who's determining what a Trusted Advisor is?

What do prospects, clients, and customers say about "Trusted Advisors". That's what really counts... what they think, not the sales person's pre-determined view.

Starting with word Trust in (Trusted Advisor), what does trust mean? What are the components and elements of trust? What, in the eyes of the prospect, client or customer makes you trustworthy?

According to Steven M.R. Covey in his book "The Speed of Trust", there are key components that make up trust. One is Character, its key elements include; integrity, & intent (agenda). Second is Competence, which has key elements of skill, knowledge and results.

Recently a group of bank executives told me that one of their top goals was to train their bankers to be "Trusted Advisors". When asked what a trusted advisor is, they stumbled through describing what that is. More importantly when asked what their clients' view of a trusted advisor is, they again stumble explaining and admitted that they have never asked their customers why they buy from them.

Next I would suggest that "Trusted Advisor" has limitations. Going beyond advisor is really getting to a higher level for both buyer and customer. First you can't become a "Trusted Advisor" to a prospect until they've determined you are a person that they can trust.

The key to earning trust is understanding what the buyer values, what their compelling reasons are and the criteria they use for evaluating who they're going to trust doing business with.

There are four basic criteria the buyer is using:

1. Does your product/service overcome the pain of change?
2. Do they believe your solution meets their compelling reasons to buy?
3. Is your solution viable for them to implement?
4. Does the buyer trust you and your company to deliver on your commitments and promises?

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Trusted Advisor	Trusted Asset
Try to provide value	Viewed as a useful and valuable person, an advantage and resource
Focus on building relationships, not just closing deals	Relationships are built on mutual trust, character and competence go beyond business
Offer insights and strategies for improving business	Pro-actively provide business building opportunities from divergent resources
Make decisions based on what's best for the customer's interest	Their guidance has proven profitable and expanded the scope as a resource to the customer
View themselves as partners in each buyer's success.	Viewed by the buyer as collaborators, part of "their team or staff" and important to overall success
Speak in terms of long-term value and return on investment	Have established a long term value and proven ROI through constant improvement
Strive to be considered experts in the field	Go beyond what is expected, they establish a level of trust through honor, service and commitment

Your goal, with all of your clients, should be to move from trusted advisor to Trusted Asset. You can accomplish that only by constantly putting the client first, and by going beyond the scope of the definition of your professional opinion. Stating it differently, if you believe and follow the guidelines of a Trusted Asset, in reality you are a Trusted Friend.

About Samurai Business Group LLC®

Samurai Business Group was founded with a vision of helping companies and selling professionals more effectively compete in a complex, rapidly-changing global economy. Devoted to sales and business development mastery, Samurai provides sales and sales management training programs, coaching and consulting to turn selling into a competitive advantage and drive long-term business success. For more information, please visit www.samuraibizgrp.com or email r.lambert@samuraibizgrp.com