



Stovall Grainger Modleski Inc.

Partners in Building Competitive Immunity®

Words to Forget: “Value—Partnership—Consultative—Strategy”

Remove each of the aforementioned words from your vocabulary **at once**. Even if with all your heart you believe that you are using them properly, you’ll get mired in the taint of maladaptation-insincerity and superficiality that others have cloaked your well-meaning intent.

So, you are thinking... *“Why in the world would a strategy consultancy admonish us to lose the very words that characterize a higher level-more strategic approach to our market segments?”*

Here’s the deal. Instead of saying those words...remember Dr. Johnson has heard this aspirational stuff from scores of suppliers...**behave the words**.

Value: Instead of saying it; why not...

1. Take the time to learn as much Terrain Information, Critical Success Factors and through the customer’s eyes-What **they believe** sets them apart as a provider.
2. Next step: look for ways to align your organization’s products and resources in ways that more closely demonstrate a sincere attempt to walk the talk on value.
3. Having a hard time landing on something that more closely aligns? Call or email us. We’ll help you give it another shot.
4. Remember, you don’t have to achieve breathtaking differences in a value alignment versus your closest competitor.

Incremental differentiation if it is meaningful in the eyes of the customer, can potentially become the tipping point. Especially in commoditized market segments where access to your technology or solution is not the main barrier.

5. Think this is too hard versus the old-comfortable approach? If your answer is yes, you need to re-read the previous SGM article that went out. **Even the best Phase II people will not have a place in the new order**. Also, if I’m your competition and I take the extra time necessary to truly define value as my customer defines it-I’ll beat you.

Partnership: If you bring value-you’ll be viewed as a partner.

1. As Lady Thatcher aptly said... *“If you have to say it-chances are you aren’t”* A partner in this case.

2. Never-ever say to your customer **“We want to Partner with you”** ...tough love, we know. Don’t your feathers



get ruffled. You didn’t wear this phrase out and ultimately create an environment where it is synonymous with insincerity and lack of



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true customer understanding. Hoyt, Stinky, Cassandra and Darnell did! You know them...the account specialists from **other companies** that promised the world and delivered...whatever.

3. Once again. Behave it. Don't say it.

Consultative: If you don't know what your customer is relying upon to win...what they are seeking to accomplish to have a full and profitable waiting room and what their Critical Success Factors are-**then you can't be consultative.**

1. If you aren't having non-product and non-disease centric discussions and capturing what you've learned-you won't ever be consultative.

2. See number 3 under Partnership.

3. There is no shortcut to number 1.

4. Go to Amazon and buy a couple of **Non-Healthcare** "Consultative Selling" books. Then toss 'em. Your customers have heard em all!

Strategy: The most co-opted and misused word in business parlance.

1. Strategic...Planning-Imperatives-Thinking-Drivers-Positioning...no wonder it's enough to make us crazy. Every school, company, military branch and consulting agency has their own... *"Oh but you don't understand- this is real cerebral and esoteric"* brand of strategy. Or lord forbid ... *"I'm strategic*

because I have an Ivy MBA or was a military officer".

2. Stop making yourself crazy. Strategy is complex enough without throwing all the esoterica and lore on top of it. Your best use of the discipline is being able to answer and defend the following:

S.M.A.R.T. Objective: What it is that you seek to accomplish-measured by what and celebrated on what date. If you don't create rigor here, the rest of the journey gets wobbly! Aspirational stuff that represents what you and your brand ultimately want to be on some far off date should be left for your personal-team-department-brand mission and vision process facilitated by a patchouli laden, finger cymbal clapping Woodstock holdover that will be nowhere in sight when you sit down for your performance review.

My Competition: Who will **scream the loudest** if you

don't let them get your share or if you take theirs. If you

want to play the mind game of defining competition as the **"disease or the difficulty of the marketplace to accept my value prop"**, then call the finger cymbal troops in to tell you that your decision is correct. Let them do some affirmation exercises with you while in Lotus. Take seven cleansing





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breaths and hit the street. Remember though, they won't return your phone call when it's time to head in for your performance review. Only people with the molecule or technology that the marketplace has to have or it's malpractice can play these little feel good games in the strategic process.

Winning Strategic Position: Singular in nature and aligned to customer CSF's and what they define as relevant. Based on a strength that you own-not something you hope to own or think you deserve.

Tactics: The actions you must undertake to support the Winning Strategic Position in order to achieve your S.M.A.R.T. Objective. If the tactic doesn't align with the previous steps in the journey-scratch it. You'll be less stressed with fewer random tactics.

Here's another bit of rationale for doing a hard edit on your tactics. Even the best strategist with the most lean and formidable set of tactical elements will have other junk put in their lap. Some of it you can't say no to-it's company-supervisor stuff that's gotta be done. For every random-non strategic tactic you edit, the more reservoir you will have remaining to handle the uncontrollables that less strategic and circumstantial forces throw your way.

Resources: Time-Human-Money. These will always be limited and most times, you have to get buy-in or permission from others to run in the direction you want with these in

your kit. So why not be facile in articulating the rationale for getting what you want out of these three buckets? Articulating a SMART Objective along with demonstrating what you'll rely upon to win usually yields friendlier conversations when requesting resources.

Have a blessed and productive week.

And finally, we aren't anti Patchouli, Woodstock, Finger Cymbals, Cleansing Breaths, Affirmation Activities or Yoga. Matt Modleski wears patchouli after shave and hemp boxers. Tom Stovall was at the **original** Woodstock-playing a little set of finger cymbals dancing around when the Lovin' Spoonful performed "Do You Believe in Magic" and Dustin Grainger is a Bikram devotee. All have a place. Just not smack in the middle of your business plan.

We want you to win-we want you to have Access--we want you to be relevant.

SGM Inc. is Training and Consulting collaborative with expertise in Strategy and the Healthcare Marketplace. They can be reached through their website at: www.sgbc.com
