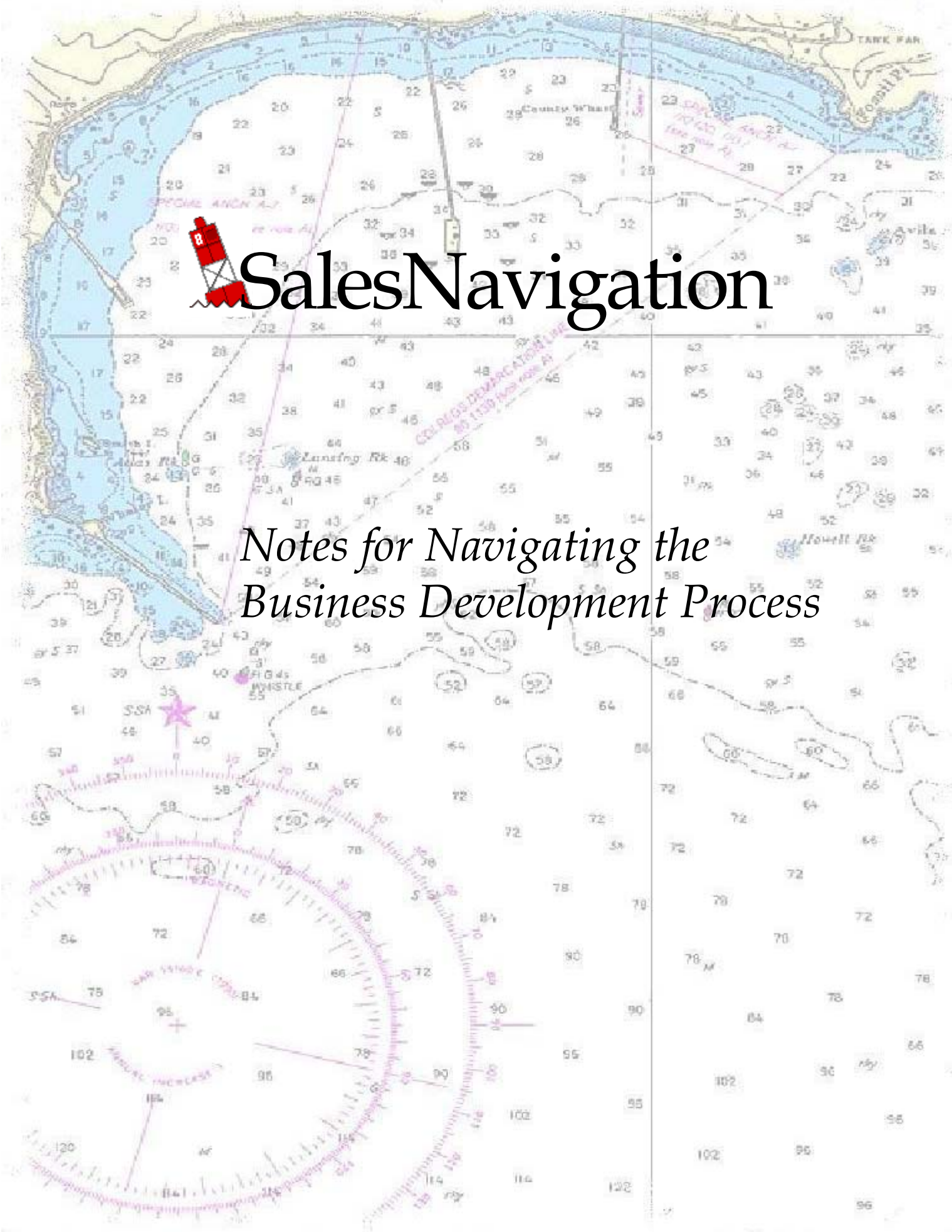




SalesNavigation

*Notes for Navigating the
Business Development Process*



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A Few Thoughts...

"The ancestor of every action is thought." – Ralph Waldo Emerson

I want to provoke you. It begins with your thinking about the actions you take in communicating with your potential borrowers. With enough thought and practice, what happens is people find they begin to take more effective action to get their job done. That's what I want to happen as the result of your reading this *Note*.



Do a little a lot of the time... Not a lot a little of the time!

Most people want to master something before they ever start to use it. This material works the opposite of that approach. Find something you like in the *Notes* and start to become aware of when and how it might work for you. Take the information a chunk at a time. When you're comfortable with one piece, take on another... and then another. Don't wait to master it all – it isn't going to happen.

Practice in low risk situations... Not on prospective customers!

When you decide to use it, practice first! Start by running it through your head... "I know I could have used that piece when my customer said..." Imagine all the way through the interchange. You may even want to role-play a scenario with one of your co-workers. Don't ever practice or go through the material for the first time when the outcome is important to you. It's too risky. You don't own it yet.

Relax... And be yourself!

Simply relax when you're engaged in conversation with your potential customer. Just be yourself. When you're comfortable with some of the material you will surprise yourself when you hear yourself saying it! That's the way it happens.

"You cannot teach a man anything. You can only help him discover it within himself." – Galileo

That's what's going to happen in this workshop. You will discover all of the material within yourself. You will find the way to change the words and make it your own. You will find parts where you say to yourself... "I knew that... I wasn't sure why I did it... That makes sense."



A New Model

Over the course of my career, I discovered that being in business development was a great way to earn a living. As a profession, however, it's often misunderstood and it's value underestimated.

I realized in order to change the way it's perceived, a new model for the business development process was needed. I spent the early part of my career very successfully, some of the time, using what I'll refer to as the...

Traditional Approach

When I first got into business development, I was taught the traditional approach to selling -- get a nice suit, a Hartman leather briefcase, learn the features and benefits of your products, smile a lot, and go find someone who'll listen to how well you know your stuff. I was young, slim, and about 6"3". Although it worked a lot of the time for me, it didn't work *every* time. And worse, I really couldn't explain when it would work and when it wouldn't.



The net result was that I got beaten down and hammered a lot out there in the marketplace... I'm now about the same weight but down to 5'7"! Prospective customers often knew what I was going to say even before I said it. They seemed to be able to anticipate my every move... And some of them even knew the names for the moves... "That's the Ben Franklin close...." Or "You're using the impending event on me..." If I hadn't had the success I did, I'm sure I would have changed careers and found something to do other than business development. I heard "Yes!" more than I heard "No!" and I seemed to get a bonus or commission check

from a win right after I found out I lost. I knew there had to be a better way to do this wonderful job...

Ideal Business Development Environment

If there really was a better way to do this, I had to first envision what that would be. It didn't take me long to find the mental image of the *ideal business development environment*. It would start something like this...

Instead of sitting in some stuffy old office making a lot of telephone calls to people who really didn't want to talk to me and begging for appointments, I'd be very patiently sitting on the beach with my lovely wife...



Before long, the telephone would ring and it would be a prospective customer calling me... After exchanging pleasantries, the next thing I know they're inviting me to come see them. I didn't even have to ask for an appointment!

So I go see them as they requested. Unlike in the past when we used to play the game "See if you can find out what I'm doing!" (it's a game where everyone doesn't quite tell you what's really happening!), this potential customer starts telling me about their problems that may be resolved by using my products. I know they're telling me the truth. I hear the *pain* in their voice and see it in the expression on their face. I take some notes so I don't forget anything (knowing this must be a dream!) and then the strangest thing happens...



They start giving *me* the presentation. They're doing all the work! They're explaining to me how my products will solve their problems! The next thing I know, they leave the room, go get a check, and come back and hand me the money! At this point, most people say to me "Can it get any better?" My response is "Absolutely YES!" And here it is... the big payoff...

After doing all the work and handing me money, they turn to me as I'm leaving *and thank me for coming to see them!* Can you imagine? Keep in mind that this is the ideal business development environment. Anything is possible. Here's what I discovered...



Business development people are *paid* to help people *solve their problems*.

All I have to do is stay focused on helping people solve their problems and they'll do the rest for me! I also discovered the ideal business development environment is a reality. It took a while. Over the years I've developed a systematic approach to the business development process that can be taught to anyone.

Systematic Approach

As I embarked on the development of the ideal business development environment, first and foremost I wanted a *systematic approach* to this process. Why? I wanted a methodology that would always let me know where I was and *what to do next without thinking!* I found that in the heat of this process, when the going gets really difficult, pressure builds up... at least on me. And when the pressure builds, I don't want to be stressed out about what to do next. I want it to be systematic so I don't even have to think about it. There's nothing like running on fully automatic.

The Business Development Process

The business development process as I defined it consists of 6 separate phases. They are...



1. Problem – This is where we begin to help our prospective customer discover and identify the problems that may be resolved through the use of our products.
2. Funding – If there are any problems, the next task is to find out their severity or cost and the method of funding our prospective customer will use to pay for the solution.
3. Process – We want to fully understand the decision process our prospective customer will use to make the decision about spending the money to fix the problems.
4. Proof – Once the previous 3 phases are completed to our satisfaction, the prospective customer is now *qualified* for us to prove our solution to them via a presentation or proposal.
5. Confirm – This is where we confirm the solution to their problems in a legal agreement that spells out who is going to do what.
6. Service – This is where the solution is delivered or achieved and usually takes the form of the first three phases in a simpler and on-going basis.

A consultative orientation

This is very much a consultative orientation. The information exchange, although it would seem conversational, is by and large an interview with a series of questions that increase in specificity to accurately gain a true understanding of the problem described.

Does not look or appear to be stereotypical selling

Rather than trying to force a solution to an undetermined problem, this business development process is like the doctor asking his patient questions about their condition to fully understand the problem. There is no attempt to "sell" the patient on a pre-determined medical procedure.

Value added process for both sides

The net result is that the entire process becomes one of value for both the prospective customer and the business development professional. Through the process of discovery, the problems, if they exist, come to the surface in such a way that they demand immediate attention. The *pain* of not having the problem solved or the consequence of doing nothing about it cannot escape the prospective customer's attention.

Focuses on "qualifying" versus "closing"

Rather than a continual and non-stop effort at "winning" the business through what I've heard described as the "ABC's of Selling – Always Be Closing," we will keep the prospective customer off-balance by doing the opposite of what was expected. It's not selling. We're not going to be "closing." Ever! We are going to focus on *qualifying* – making sure we understand what the real problems are, how they intend to pay to solve the problems, and the process they use to make the decision to spend the money to fix their problems.

Time spent *understanding* the customer's point of view rather than *convincing* them to buy!

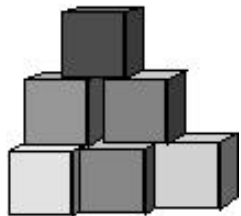
Through our questions, playing back what we hear, we begin to understand their point of view as never before. And they will know we understand. The process becomes far more engaging since they won't constantly be thinking they're going to be tricked into buying something they don't want or paying too much for something they don't need. Under those circumstances, it's hard to develop a relationship built on trust.

Parts of the Process

There are 3 different parts to the Business Development Process. They are:

Business Development Building Blocks

In order to build the skill set for those occasions when it's critically important to know how to communicate with ourselves and the other people to get the results we want, we need to have a strong foundation – one built with a few simple Business Development Building Blocks. These Building Blocks help us to understand what really happens when we interact with other people, better understand ourselves, what motivates us, alternative ways to interact with others to improve our understanding of the potential problems they may want to solve, and aid our communication with them.



Finding Customers

Finding and identifying prospective customers is the *life-blood* of the business development professional. How we find, identify, and connect with our prospective customers determines what we do tomorrow and the day after. All business development activity starts at this point, whether or not we have to go out to find potential customers for our products, our customers bring us new prospective customers, or we respond to a request for information as a result of our company's marketing activity. The difference between long-term success and failure rests on these skills – not closing ability! You've got to be able to get in the game enough times...

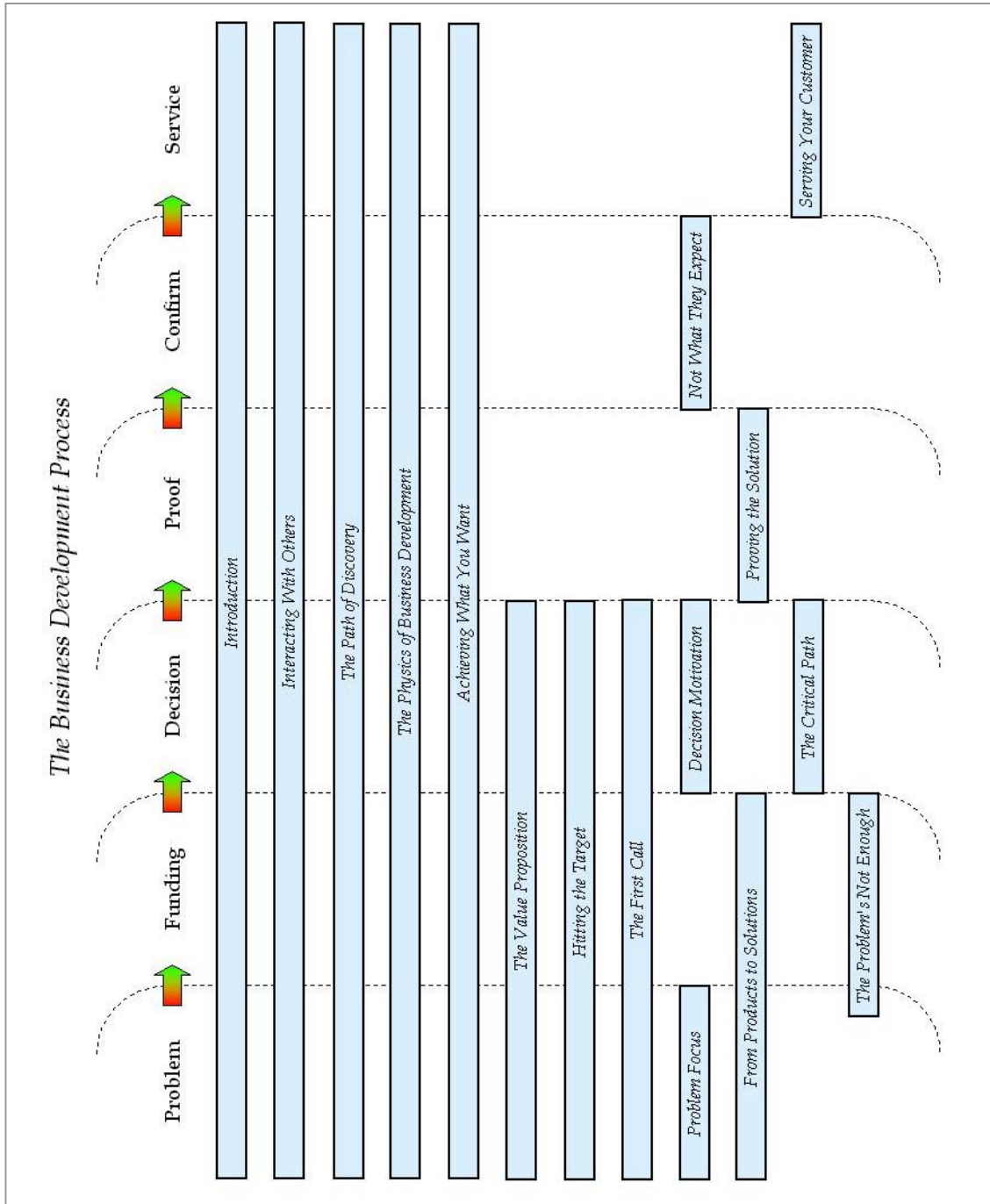


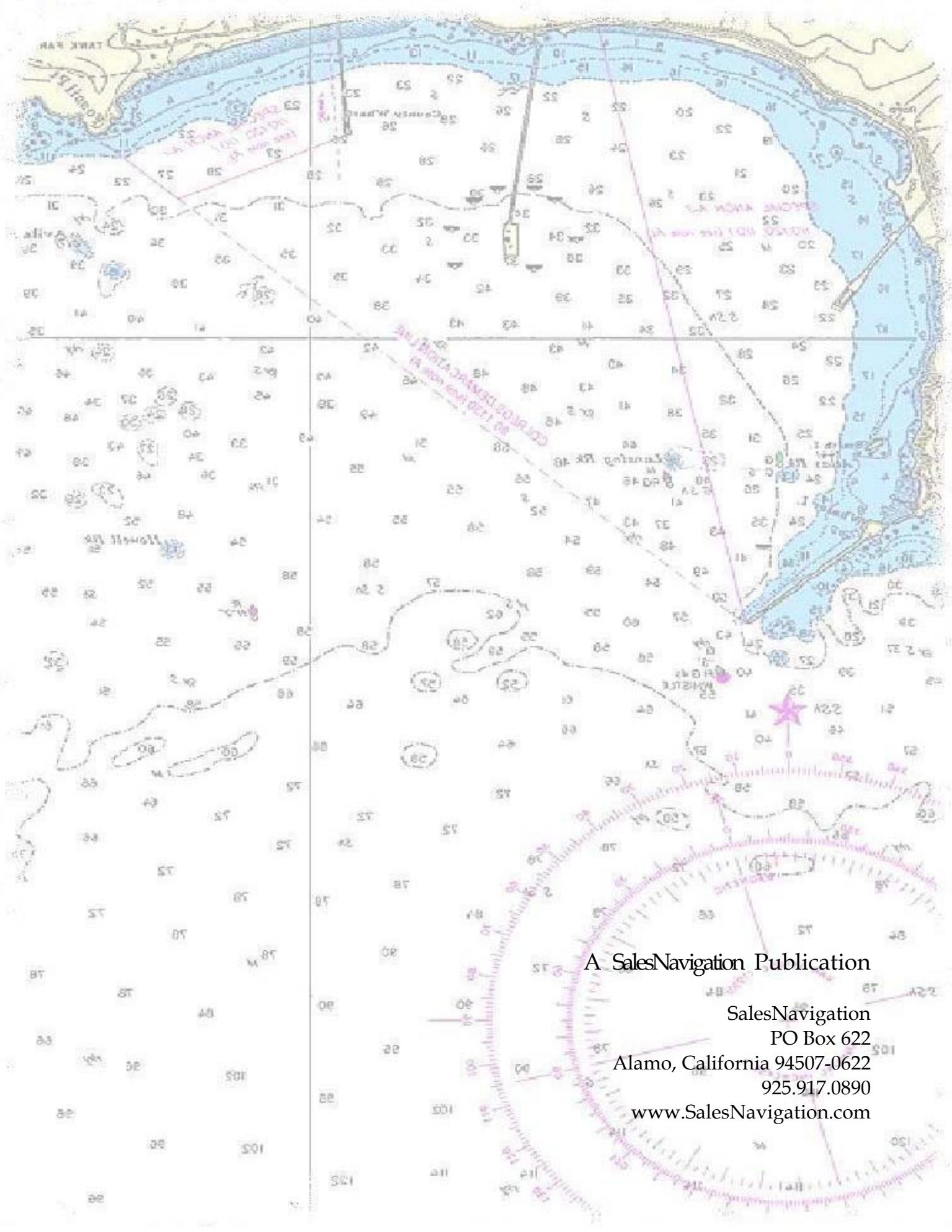
Navigating the Decision Cycle

Navigating the Decision Cycle is the new systematic approach to business development designed to eliminate the pressure on front-line professionals and provide them with a complete methodology to use during the entire business development process. Rather than follow the traditional model, the decision cycle is turned upside-down and inside-out. We now become more of a consultant for our prospective customer, helping them to define the real problems they want to solve, allow them to discover the solution through the use of our products, and assist them with their decision through the remainder of the cycle to eliminate their problems.



SalesNavigation Publication Map





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