

Gap Selling

Keenan's Problem-Centric Selling Framework

Sales Methodology Guide · convinco.co

Overview

Gap Selling was developed by Jim Keenan and introduced in his 2019 book of the same name. The central premise is elegant: every sale is about the gap between where the prospect is now (current state) and where they want to be (future state). Your product is not the sale — it's the bridge across that gap.

Keenan argues most salespeople fail not because of poor closing or weak objection handling, but because they don't understand their prospect's current state deeply enough to make the case for change compelling. Gap Selling is deeply diagnostic and demands thorough, multi-dimensional discovery before any solution is positioned.

The Framework

Current State Mapping

Map the prospect's current situation across four dimensions: physical/environmental (what tools, processes, teams), problems (what's broken or inefficient), impact (the consequences of those problems — financial, operational, human), and root causes (why the problems exist in the first place). This is the foundation of everything.

Future State Vision

Define what success looks like. Not 'what do you want to buy?' but 'what does the world look like when this is solved?' Quantify where possible. The future state should be vivid, specific, and compelling.

Gap Analysis

Calculate the gap: the distance between current and future state, expressed in business terms. Revenue lost. Hours wasted. Deals missed. Risk unmitigated. The bigger and more credible the gap, the stronger the case for change.

Solution as Bridge

Only after gap is fully established: position your solution as the specific mechanism that closes the gap. Every feature maps to a current-state problem and a future-state outcome.

How to Use on Sales Calls

Discovery	Spend the first 60–70% of the call exclusively in current state discovery. Resist the urge to position. The deeper you go, the stronger the pitch.
Problem Probing	For every problem surfaced, ask: 'What's the impact of that?' 'What's causing it?' 'How long has this been going on?' 'What have you tried?'
Future State Conversation	Once current state is mapped: 'What does winning look like for you in 12 months if this gets solved?' Make it vivid and specific.
Gap Quantification	Co-calculate: 'Based on what you've shared, the gap looks like approximately X in [revenue/time/cost] — does that resonate?'

Pro Tips

- Never position your solution until you've fully mapped current state, future state, and gap.
- Problems without impact are features requests. Find the impact or the deal won't close.
- The root cause diagnosis is where you differentiate: go deeper than surface symptoms.
- Gap Selling requires discipline. Train yourself to stay in discovery longer than feels comfortable.

Powered by Convinco — Your Invisible AI Sales Copilot

Every sales methodology in this guide becomes dramatically more effective when your reps can execute it flawlessly on live calls — without relying purely on memory or experience. That's exactly what Convinco enables.

Key Features

◆ Real-Time AI Guidance

Convinco listens to your live call and surfaces the right question, reframe, or talk track at exactly the right moment — invisibly, so your prospect never knows.

◆ RAG-Powered Knowledge Base

Upload your whitepapers, battle cards, pricing sheets, and case studies. Convinco instantly retrieves verified answers to complex technical questions mid-call.

◆ Objection Handling

Never freeze on a tough objection again. Convinco generates contextual, on-brand responses based on your playbook and the live conversation.

◆ Shadow Mode for Managers

Sales leaders can enforce their winning playbook across the entire team without joining every call. Scale coaching effortlessly.

◆ Post-Call Speech Analysis

After every call, get feedback on tone, filler words, pacing, and clarity — so every rep improves with every conversation.

◆ Cross-Platform Compatibility

Works with Zoom, Google Meet, Teams, and virtually any calling platform. Zero friction to get started.

Never freeze on a sales call again.

Equip your reps with an invisible, real-time AI sales copilot.

Start for free at convinco.co or book a demo at tally.so/r/eqYkZk