

So What?

Think back to the last major purchase you made. Maybe it was a tablet computer, a new pair of running shoes, or a brand-name handbag. What was your interaction with the salesperson like? You may not have known it, but chances are good that s/he used feature-benefit selling in the sales presentation. When you bought a tablet computer, what features—its size, weight, and portability—did you notice? What benefits—its ability to hold a lot of information, its portability, and its ability to connect to other devices—did you notice? What features—its size, weight, and portability—did you notice? What benefits—its ability to hold a lot of information, its portability, and its ability to connect to other devices—did you notice?

SAMPLE PAGE

You can see examples of feature-benefit selling everywhere, if you know what you're looking for. It's an important phase of the selling process that you should be familiar with if you plan to pursue a career in sales or marketing. Read on to learn more about features, benefits, and how to create a feature-benefit chart.

Objectives

- A Describe feature-benefit selling.
- B Prepare for feature-benefit selling.

What Is Feature-Benefit Selling?



▲ No matter what you want to buy, you have lots of choices. Just think about all the options you have when you're purchasing face wash or lotion!

In our highly competitive market economy, customers have lots of choices. No matter what good or service they're looking for—skincare products, dog-walking services, industrial-grade steel beams—new choices are appearing on the market all the time. Why are so many choices necessary? Because not every customer has the same desires or interests.

How can you, as a salesperson, sell to people who have unlimited options? First, you have to determine what each unique customer is looking for in a good or service. Then, you need to convince customers that your good or service has the features that will benefit them. This phase of the selling process is known as **feature-benefit selling**. Although feature-benefit selling can occur at any time in the selling process, it should always occur during the sales presentation as part of the sales dialogue and product demonstration.

Feature presentation

A **feature** is a physical characteristic or quality of a product. It is something the customer can touch, feel, smell, see, or measure. It helps to describe the product. In short, a feature answers the question, “What is it?”

Sometimes, features are obvious, and clients can see them as soon as they look at a product. For example, when looking at new employee uniforms, a business customer can easily see features such as color, sleeve length, and style.

Other features might not be so noticeable—they may even be hidden so that clients can’t see them. Less obvious features of an employee uniform may be that it is 100 percent cotton and has double-stitched seams. While those are important features that impact the product’s durability, the customer won’t know about them unless you tell him/her.

Benefits package

A **benefit** is the personal satisfaction or advantage that a customer wants from a product. It is how a feature helps a particular buyer. For customers and clients, it answers the questions:

- “How will I (or my business) benefit?”
- “What’s in it for my business and/or me?”

5 ways Landau scrubs are made better:

- 1 Better Fabric
- 2 Better Color
- 3 Better Design
- 4 Better Construction
- 5 Better Quality Control

STRENGTH
DURABILITY
COLOR CONSISTENCY

▲ Not all product features are obvious. Customers won’t know about a product’s hidden features, like durability or construction, unless a salesperson points out the features!

THE GRAY ZONE

Brad is a salesperson at a local electronics store, where he specializes in selling televisions. The owner of a sports-themed restaurant comes in for several televisions so that his patrons can watch the big game. Brad offers a deal on a television for \$200 less. Brad knows he has to kick his sales presentation to the next level to ensure this customer’s business. However, he hasn’t exactly done his homework on the other store’s product. He’s *pretty* sure his competitor offers a longer warranty for the televisions than he does, and he thinks this information could sway the customer. Is it ethical for Brad to mention this to the customer when he’s not completely sure? What would you do in this situation?

SAMPLE PAGE