

# **THE KEY ACCOUNT MANAGER'S POCKETBOOK**

*2nd Edition*

By Roger E. Jones & Richard J. Ilsley

*Drawings by Phil Hailstone*

“This compact, easy-to-read book on key account management reduces this complex subject to understandable proportions and easily beats most of the dense, convoluted current texts on the topic.”

**Professor Malcolm McDonald, Professor of Marketing Planning, Cranfield School of Management**

“Building long-term customer-supplier partnerships is the foundation of business success. The Key Account Manager’s Pocketbook shows you how to do this using proven strategies and techniques. It is a *must read* business book.”

**Sahar Hashemi, Co-founder of Coffee Republic and author of *Anyone can do it***

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## THE KEY ACCOUNT AS A BUSINESS PARTNER



### ABOUT THIS CHAPTER

Many customers say that they find it hard to differentiate between their top suppliers.

Are you in trouble? Does your customer think you are just another competent supplier?  
Or worse – are you seen merely as a supplier of a commodity?

To grow your business your key account customer must think of you as a business partner. This chapter will show you how to achieve this; it demonstrates:

- The benefits of forming a key account partnership
- The importance of customer perception
- The significance of the customer perception ladder
- How to climb this ladder to become a true business partner with your key account

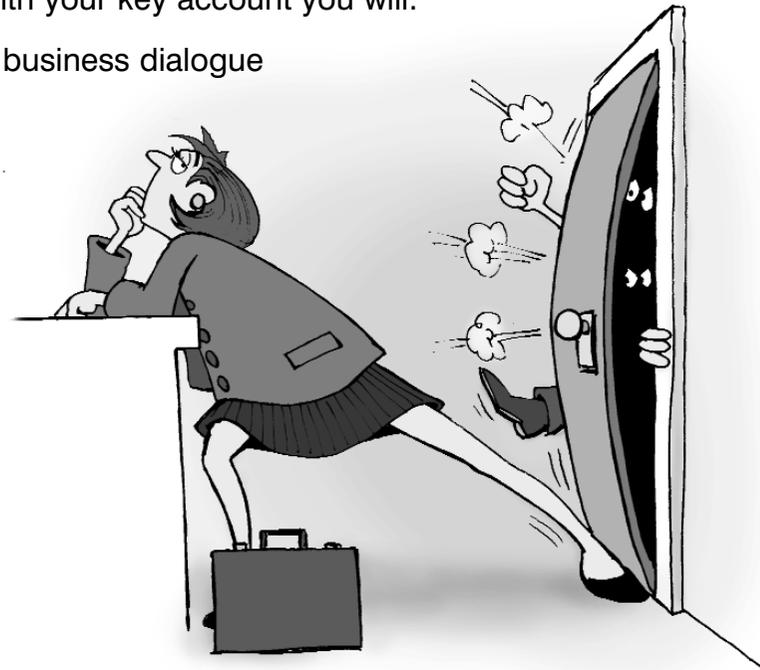
## THE KEY ACCOUNT AS A BUSINESS PARTNER

### THE BENEFITS



If you form a business partnership with your key account you will:

- Profit from a mutually beneficial business dialogue
- Lock out your competitors
- Be able to focus on long-term planning
- Secure a constant and reliable revenue stream



## THE KEY ACCOUNT AS A BUSINESS PARTNER



### CUSTOMER PERCEPTION

How well you think you are progressing with your account is irrelevant. The key is how well your customer thinks you are doing. Does your customer:

- P**ick faults with your products?
- E**njoy discussing business issues with you?
- R**un when you call?
- C**onsider you to be the best?
- E**nter into agreement with your competitors?
- P**ut off talking to your rivals?
- T**ick you off from time to time?
- I**magine you help him succeed?
- O**pt for competitor products from time to time?
- N**eed you as much as you need her?

Customer perception is what counts

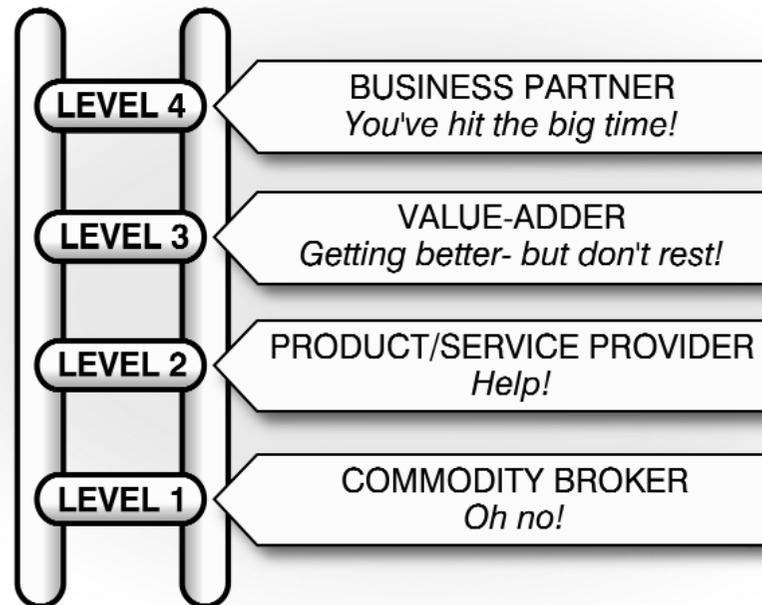
## THE KEY ACCOUNT AS A BUSINESS PARTNER

## THE CUSTOMER PERCEPTION LADDER



What level are you at?

Does your customer  
think you are a:



## THE KEY ACCOUNT AS A BUSINESS PARTNER

# THE CUSTOMER PERCEPTION LADDER

## LEVEL 1: THE COMMODITY BROKER

To the customer, you are just a commodity supplier. Price is the only factor that influences the purchasing decision. A purchaser of corrugated boxes, for example, might think all manufacturers offer the same product/service and so select based on price alone.

At level 1 you are in trouble because:

- Price sensitivity is sky high
- Customer loyalty is zero



## THE KEY ACCOUNT AS A BUSINESS PARTNER

# THE CUSTOMER PERCEPTION LADDER

## LEVEL 2: THE PRODUCT/SERVICE PROVIDER

To customers you offer a product/service plus some benefits. Price is still the driving factor, though, in distinguishing among competitors' offers. If they think this, then when your competitors allow the customer to print on the corrugated box at no additional charge, your customer will expect you to do the same...and quickly.

Level 2 is only the first step up:

- Price sensitivity is high
- Customer loyalty is low



## THE KEY ACCOUNT AS A BUSINESS PARTNER



# THE CUSTOMER PERCEPTION LADDER

## LEVEL 3: THE VALUE-ADDER



In the customers' eyes you add value by helping them achieve their objectives. Take, for example, the banker who helps to finance a customer's new overseas project and also gives advice on exciting opportunities that fit in with the customer's expansion strategy. Slowly but surely you are tying the customer in.

Level 3 is a good position to be in but not the place to stop or, worse, slip! At this level:

- Price sensitivity decreases
- Customer loyalty increases

## About the Authors

### Roger E. Jones

Roger is consulting partner for CEOs and top teams that are committed to achieving and sustaining their full potential. A best-selling author, he has conducted business in over 40 countries. His clients include senior executives in world leading companies.

He is an engaging and insightful keynote conference speaker and his work has been featured by the *BBC*, *Financial Times*, *The Sunday Times* and *Forbes*. In addition to the *Key Account Manager's Pocketbook* that he first wrote in the late 90s, he has also published *What Can Chief Executives Learn From Stand-Up Comedians* and *The Storytelling Pocketbook*.

To discover more about how Roger can assist your senior leaders and top teams, please visit [www.RogerEdwardJones.com](http://www.RogerEdwardJones.com) or contact him on telephone 44 (0)20 8878 3429 or email [roger@RogerEdwardJones.com](mailto:roger@RogerEdwardJones.com)



### Richard J. Ilsley

For the last 20 years Richard has worked at senior levels in major corporations on a range of strategic sales and marketing projects throughout the world. He has written many published texts including the book *Best Practice – A Manager's Guide (Management Books 2000)*, is an expert commentator for the national press, trade media, has spoken at conferences around the world and appeared on TV and radio.

Richard is a founder partner of Meridian, the Managing Partner of The Sales & Marketing Consulting Group and the founder of the key account esource site [www.KeyAccountManagement.org](http://www.KeyAccountManagement.org).

To find out more about Richard's strategy work in sales and marketing visit [www.smcg.net](http://www.smcg.net) You can contact Richard directly at [richard.ilsley@smcg.net](mailto:richard.ilsley@smcg.net) or +44 (0) 7866 471382

