

# Enhancing the Student Role-Play Experience

Sales Educators Academy 2018



PROFESSIONAL SELLING INITIATIVE

# Agenda

- Importance of Role-Playing
- Drawbacks & Hardships
- Process Example
  - Motivation
  - Preparation
- Outcomes
  - Improvement & Reflection
- Brainstorming Discussion



[https://www.google.com/search?q=sales+role-play&rlz=1C1GGRV\\_enUS751US751&source=lnms&tbn=isch&sa=X&ved=0ahUKewio00iQi\\_naAhUI74MKHXmGB0cQ\\_AUICyG&biw=1920&bih=1094#imgrc=KQ352WhyRi\\_UiM:](https://www.google.com/search?q=sales+role-play&rlz=1C1GGRV_enUS751US751&source=lnms&tbn=isch&sa=X&ved=0ahUKewio00iQi_naAhUI74MKHXmGB0cQ_AUICyG&biw=1920&bih=1094#imgrc=KQ352WhyRi_UiM:)

# Difficulties of Role-Plays



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## Student Quote:

*“Public speaking absolutely terrifies me and I was **dreading** this class due to the role plays. I am so unbelievably surprised that I found these to be challenging, and even **fun** at times. I had no previous experience in this area, and I **now feel prepared** to take on more high stakes face to face meetings, even those outside the realm of sales.”*

*- MKTG 335, Professional Selling student*

# Importance of Role-Playing



<https://jeffshore.com/2013/12/my-10-5-3-1-performance-improvement-plan/>

## Role-Playing...

- is different than a traditional exam based course
- can lead to greater confidence
- can develop listening skills
- fosters creative problem-solving
- leads to greater sales success
- identify skills gaps
- is a win – win for partner companies
- lead to higher job placement!

# I have Found that students...

Before Role-Play 1



<https://www.dreamstime.com/stock-photo-nervous-man-image2500400>

- are also enrolled in other classes
- often have other priorities outside of my class
- do not always know what they are doing
- do not practice as much as they should
- get more nervous when they find out that the buyer is not a student
- do not think about the bigger picture

After Role-Play 2



<http://finallyinfirst.blogspot.com/2011/03/i-am-so-excited.html>

# Background information

## Course:

**Professional Selling** (Offered Fall, Spring, Summer)

- Hybrid style (half online, half in-person)
  - Monday, in-person – 75 minutes
  - Wednesday, either online/in breakouts/OR role-playing
    - Breakouts & role-plays (sections of 20-25 students)
  - Grades = 1/3 role-plays, 1/3 quizzes, 1/3 assignments

## Course Materials:

PointForward Software (<https://go.pointforwardsoftware.com>)

- Students watch videos & take quizzes
- Students complete practice recordings (challenge recordings)

Gallup Strengths Assessment

Chally Assessment



<https://www.ucd.ie/teaching/resources/teachingtoolkit/largegroup/teachingstrategies/>

# 3 Role-Plays per Semester

## Role-Play 1

Students are given a case and go through **FULL** sales process



## Role-Play 2

Students are given a case and go first half of the sales process:  
Approach, Needs Discovery, and Value Proposition



## Role-Play 3

Students use case from role-play 2 and go through second half of the sales process:  
Presentation & Close



- All role-plays are 12 minutes in length
- All cases represent real products/situations
- All buyers are industry representatives



# Role-Play Prep Structure



# Challenge Recordings

PointForward PLAYLISTS COMMUNITY COACH REPORTS Andrew

Approach  
Switch Playlist

Engaging Prospects in 15 Seconds

RECORD

UPLOAD VIDEO

DIRECTIONS ✓

### Individual Role-Play Challenge Directions:

Based on the case for Role-Play 1, create 30 second video to demonstrate the challenge below.

**Situation:**

Before discovery or presentation, every meeting begins with a good first approach. Deliver an approach that gets your customer's attention and engages them early in the meeting. Use the background information provided in the case. Your approach should (at a minimum) include: your name, the company you work for, the reason why you are meeting with the buyer, and any goals you have for the meeting. The approach should end with a question (i.e. does this sound good?)

COACHING FEEDBACK

PointForward PLAYLISTS COMMUNITY COACH REPORTS Andrew

Buyer Needs - Explicit vs. Implicit

RECORD

UPLOAD VIDEO

DIRECTIONS ✓

### Buyer Needs - Explicit vs. Implicit:

Use the PointForward software to create a 3 minute video to demonstrate the different needs of your customer based on the challenge.

**Situation:**

Based on the upcoming role-play you are planning a discovery call with the buyer. You will need to ask several open and closed questions to find buyer needs before presenting the core product. List several explicit (obvious) needs of your client that your product resolves. Then list an implicit (not so obvious) need your product resolves. What specific questions would you ask to uncover that implicit need? Walk through the GOALS model and record the questions you will ask in each area. Next - In order to effectively sell your product, you will need to demonstrate a Return on Investment for the buyer. In order to calculate ROI, what information will you need? \*I want you to specifically ask the questions you would want answers to, in order or importance\*

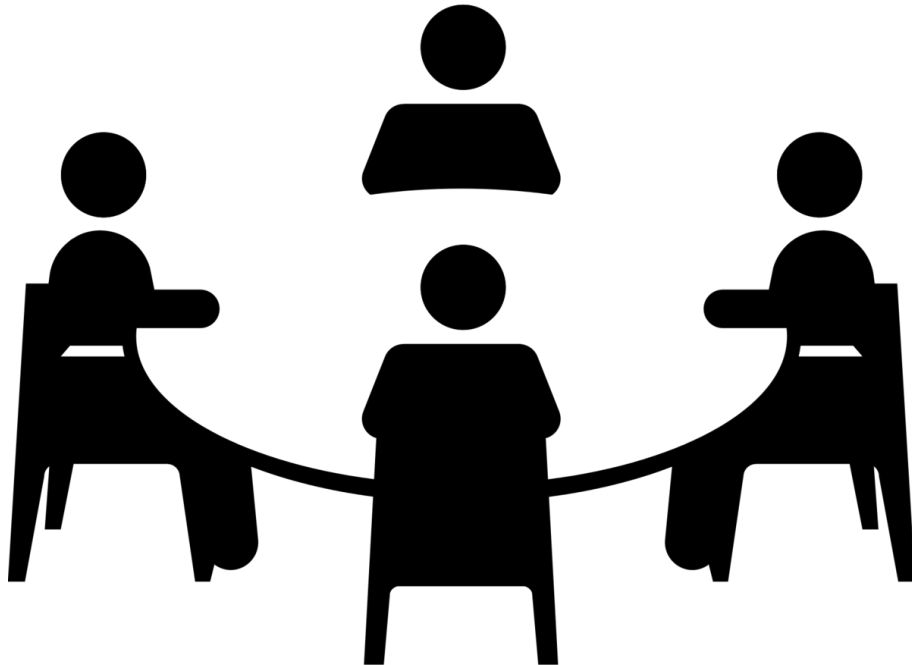
COACHING FEEDBACK

DOCUMENTS

# Role-Play Prep Structure



# Prep Session (Breakouts)



- Groups of 4 (groups change for each role-play)
- Students are given a worksheet to complete during the breakout that they turn in the day of the role-play
- I go from room to room and answer questions

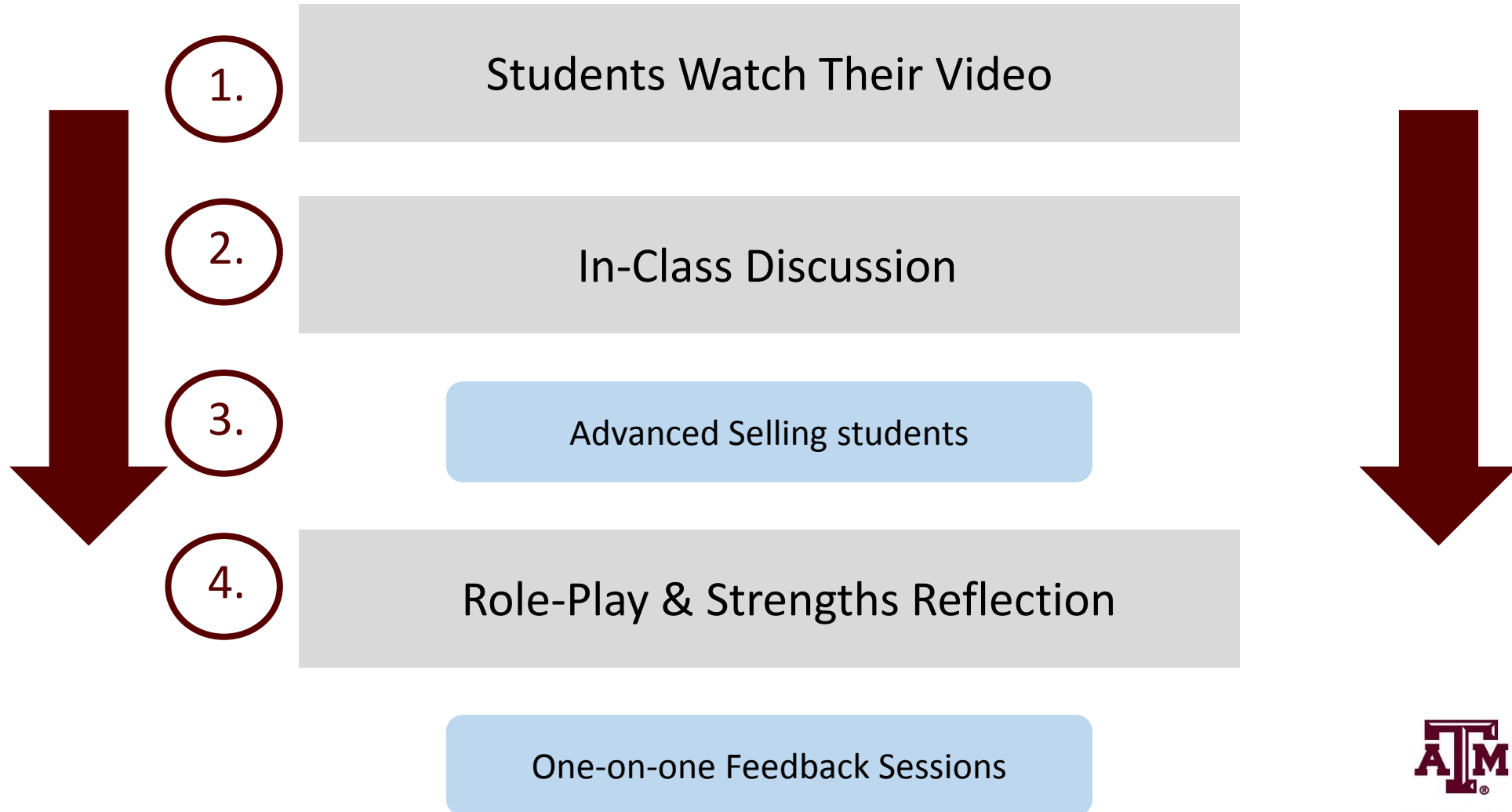
<http://www.barbpedersen.ca/facilitating-participants-resist-small-group-discussions/>

# Role-Play



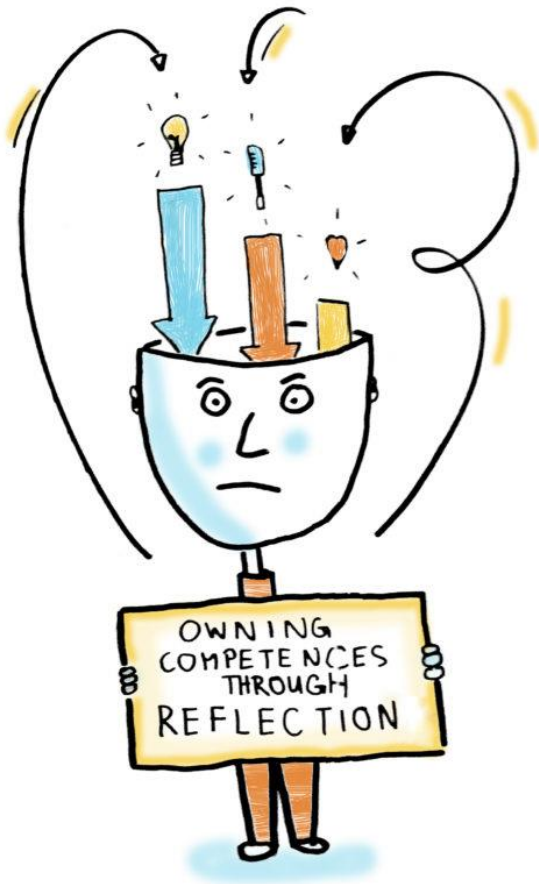
- Students are given a 15 minute time block
- The role-play is 12 minutes in length
- There is the opportunity for 3 minutes of feedback post the role-play
- I typically have a recruiter sit with me in the “control room” who is available to talk to interested students
- Role-Plays are uploaded to Blackboard (Internal course website) for students to review
- \*Students can opt to download and share their video with partner companies\*

# Role-Play Evaluation Structure



# Role-Play 3 Evaluation Structure

## Role-Play Reflection



- Compare the three role-plays
- How did your strengths play a role?
- How will the role-play's help you in your future?

# Grading



[https://www.google.com/search?q=grading&rlz=1C1GGRV\\_enUS751US751&source=lnms&tbn=isch&sa=X&ved=0ahUKEwjeldTfp\\_TaAhUI6IMKHR55C-YQ\\_AUICigB&biw=1920&bih=1094#imgrc=g-AUIzy4PieUXM:](https://www.google.com/search?q=grading&rlz=1C1GGRV_enUS751US751&source=lnms&tbn=isch&sa=X&ved=0ahUKEwjeldTfp_TaAhUI6IMKHR55C-YQ_AUICigB&biw=1920&bih=1094#imgrc=g-AUIzy4PieUXM:)

- First, students self-grade their performance (with the same rubric I use)
- Second, they work with an Advanced Selling students to further identify an accurate self-grade
- Third, I watch and grade their video

\*If the self-grade is more than 10 points higher than what I gave, I will email the student



# Tips

- VLC Player allows you to speed up the role-play video when reviewing/grading = save 20 seconds per minute
- Place students into role-play/breakouts (do not let them choose)
- Reiterate the importance of preparation & practice
- Leverage appreciative inquiry while giving feedback

# Brainstorm Session

## 3 Groups:

- 1) I am completely new to role-playing
- 2) I am familiar with role-playing but I want to enhance my current process
- 3) I want to talk about role-playing in an Advanced Selling course

# What if...

... I don't have a role-play facility?

- find a conference room or a space in the department

... I don't have partner companies to play the role of the buyer?

- first, try and solicit volunteers in the community or ask other faculty/staff members in the university

... I don't have cameras or video equipment

- Use PointForward Software or another video recording program that allows the student to film their role-play on their phone/laptop