

MSME OWNER'S PLAYBOOK · BONUS 03

7 Wrong Sales Mindsets Killing Your Revenue

The beliefs that replace them.

WORTH ₹499 — YOURS FREE

For every founder whose team gives away margin the moment a customer says "can you do better?"



THE PROBLEM

Your Best Salesman Just Discounted Again. Nobody Even Asked Him To Check.

Suresh sells industrial fasteners to OEMs out of a small unit near Pune. His best salesman — the one with the most experience, the biggest book of accounts — just shaved 15% off a deal without a call to Suresh, without a fight from the customer, without a second thought.

This is the third time this month.

You've watched this with people you know — the distributor friend whose entire sales team "just checks with the customer's budget first," the cousin whose reps apologise for the price before the customer's even objected to it.

This isn't a training gap. It's a belief system — quietly inherited, rarely spoken out loud, and killing margin one "reasonable" discount at a time.



WHY THIS HAPPENS — AND WHO'S REALLY RESPONSIBLE

Your Team Didn't Invent These Beliefs. They Learned Them From Watching You.

Here's the part most owners miss: sales mindsets aren't trained in a workshop. They're absorbed — from what the founder does under pressure, from what gets tolerated in a Monday review, from what "everyone in this industry just does."

If you've ever discounted a deal when pushed, your team learned that price bends under pressure — and they'll bend it faster than you did, because they have less to lose.

Three reasons these mindsets take root and stay there:

Nobody's ever named them out loud. A wrong belief that's never challenged just quietly becomes "how we sell here."

The team has nothing better to say than the price. If there's no trained value story, price is the only language left when a customer pushes back.

The founder models it first. Whatever you do on your biggest deal becomes the ceiling for what your whole team believes is acceptable.



ROOT CAUSE ANALYSIS

Let's Actually Get to the Root of It

Run the "5 Whys" on Suresh's discounting problem — the same drill-down you should run on your own team's last unnecessary discount:

THE SYMPTOM	"Every deal closes with a discount, and nobody even asks me first." ! Why?
WHY #1	The team believes price is the only thing the customer actually cares about. ! Why?
WHY #2	Nobody's ever trained them to sell the value story before price comes up. ! Why?
WHY #3	The founder also discounts when pushed hard enough, so the team mirrors it. ! Why?
THE ROOT	There's no defined value story the team can lean on instead of price — so price becomes the default language of the entire sales conversation.

Run this on your own team's last unforced discount. You'll rarely land on "the customer demanded it." You'll land on a value story that was never built.



LIKELY SOLUTIONS — AND WHAT EACH ONE ACTUALLY GETS YOU

Four Ways Owners Try to Fix This

A

Hire "Closers" With a Reputation

What you get: Confidence, possibly faster deals in the short term.

What it costs you: Expensive hires who'll still discount the moment they hit a customer objection, because they have no value story either.

B

Run an Annual Sales Training Workshop

What you get: A motivation spike, some new vocabulary.

What it costs you: It fades within weeks without reinforcement — old mindsets are stronger than a one-day workshop.

C

Set a Strict No-Discount Policy

What you get: Immediate margin protection on paper.

What it costs you: Lost deals — your team still has nothing else to offer when price comes up, so they just lose instead of discount.

D

Replace the 7 Wrong Mindsets, Deliberately

What you get: A durable shift, because the team now has something better to say than "let me check on the price."

What it costs you: Weekly reinforcement — this is a discipline, not a one-time fix.

THE RIGHT DEFAULT FOR A TEAM THAT KEEPS DISCOUNTING



THE RECOMMENDED PATH — STEP BY STEP

How to Actually Install a New Belief

01 Pick one mindset a week

Discuss just one of the seven in your Monday huddle. Trying to fix all seven at once fixes none of them.

02 Roleplay the flip out loud

Practice saying the new belief in a mock call before it's ever needed for real. Words feel different in the room than in your head.

03 Debrief every lost deal with one question

"Which mindset cost us this?" Make it routine, not an inquisition.

04 Track value language, not just close rate

For one month, note how often the team leads with value versus price. What gets measured gets practiced.



HOW TO AVOID THIS GOING FORWARD

Make It a Habit, Not a Hope

A belief, once installed, needs maintenance — or the old one quietly creeps back in. Build these into your sales rhythm permanently.

- **Never let a discount happen without a documented reason.** The act of writing it down alone cuts casual discounting.
- **Debrief every "no" as a team, weekly.** Losses teach faster than wins, if you actually look at them.
- **Keep a swipe file of your best value stories.** Update it monthly with real language that's worked in real calls.
- **New hires shadow 10 calls before their mindset briefing** — not after. Let them see the belief in action before you explain it.

Old mindsets don't disappear. They wait. Keep the new belief louder, every single week.



THE SIMPLEWORKS FRAMEWORK

The 7 Flips

Wrong belief on the left. The replacement on the right.

Price is the only reason they buy	→ They buy the outcome. Price is just the number attached to it.
If I don't discount, they'll walk	→ If I don't defend value, they'll never trust the price again.
Selling is convincing	→ Selling is diagnosing, then prescribing.
No is the end of the conversation	→ No is information, not rejection.
The customer knows what they want	→ The customer knows their pain. I know the solution.
A longer pitch shows more value	→ A sharper, shorter pitch is felt as more valuable.
Following up feels like pestering	→ Silence is what actually loses the deal.

Pin this page up where your sales team sees it weekly. A belief that's out of sight goes back to being the old belief within a month.



ABOUT SIMPLEWORKS

One Consultant. Four Connected Disciplines.

Simpleworks Consulting is a boutique advisory practice built for Indian MSME owners — founded by **Prem Menon**, drawing on 39 years across Consumer Durables, Tyres, Telecom, and IT/SaaS. The philosophy is simple: strip away complexity, and give founders tools sophisticated enough to work — and simple enough to run without a large team.

Every Simpleworks engagement draws on four connected practice areas, because strategy, go-to-market, execution, and measurement are rarely separate problems in a real business.

01 Business Strategy

The smallest set of choices that makes every later decision easier — where to play, and how to win.

02 Go-to-Market

Turning the strategic choice into revenue — the right segment, message, channel, and price, working as one coherent system.

03 Execution Enablement

The operating rhythm — meetings, decisions, ownership — that converts intent into outcome.

04 OKRs

The feedback loop that tells you honestly whether the strategy is working, and holds the system accountable.

Four lenses on the same question: how does your business get from where it is, to where you've decided it should be?



LET'S TALK

You've Seen the Problem. Let's Fix It Before the Next Deal.

If this booklet described your last sales review, that's usually the first sign it's worth a real conversation — not another training day.

Reach out. No pitch, no jargon — just a straight conversation about your team, your growth, or whatever's keeping you up tonight.

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