Selling the invisible

White Paper (Mock)

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Introduction

Selling something you cannot show in a catalog takes trust and precision at the same time. In the case of Lyra Learning, the catalog-free model answers a strategic choice aimed at building proposals that are always made to measure. How do you sell what does not yet exist? How do you stay consistent when every project is a prototype?

This mock white paper comes out of 32 conversations conducted through Tacita, Sharazad's AI agents, between 10 and 20 June 2025. A common thread emerged from the interviews: operational ambiguity, vocabularies that do not always line up, and a widely shared wish for tools that help give shape to the intangible. The pages that follow describe how Lyra's sales consultants are learning to sell the invisible by translating, hybridizing, experimenting and searching for a story about who they are that holds freedom and clarity together.

The context

A market that trusts whoever can explain

In recent years the dynamics of B2B selling have changed radically. Buyers give suppliers less and less of their time. Most of the decision-making happens without direct contact, through independent research, benchmarks and peer comparison. Companies, buried under information and near-identical offers, are looking for counterparts who can bring clarity before they sell anything. In this scenario, the ability to explain well becomes more of a competitive advantage than price or reputation.

The idea of a catalog-free model sits precisely inside this transition. Not offering a fixed price list means accepting the complexity of the client's context and the effort of deciphering it every time. Every proposal is a different story, built to measure, and for that very reason it demands more refined narrative, cognitive and operational tools. The value lies in the process of shared interpretation that produces it.

In corporate learning this is even more evident. Organizations no longer want courses. They want journeys, experiences, transformations that fit into their development strategy. Learning has become an infrastructure for growth. That implies a new kind of relationship between the party offering and the party buying. The supplier-client relationship gives way to a design partnership.

At the same time, the sheer plurality of channels and intervention models — from experiential training to digital micro-content, from coaching to blended programs — has made it harder to stand out. In a market where everything looks customizable, the difference is made by whoever can give meaning to the customization. The client is looking for someone able to guide them through a sea of possibilities.

This is the ground Lyra Learning operates on. A model that refuses the comfort of the catalog in order to explore the complexity of the real. Choosing to work without a fixed list of courses is a declaration of faith in dialogue and in people's ability to build value together. It is a bet on the interpretive competence of its consultants and on their ability to turn conversation into a design tool.

The method

Listening in order to understand how people talk about selling

To understand what selling the invisible really means, numbers are not enough. You have to listen to the people who turn conversations into projects every day. That conviction is what led to a cycle of exploratory interviews conducted through Tacita, the AI agents developed by Sharazad for qualitative listening. The interviews were not there to collect surface opinions. The objective was to get inside the thinking of the people working in the field, to capture the language sales consultants use to build meaning.

The 32 conversations held between 10 and 20 June 2025 involved consultants of varying experience, with different roles and portfolios. Each interview lasted between 20 and 40 minutes, in the form of a single-question dialogue. One question at a time, no anticipating the answer, no immediate validation. The aim was to slow the pace down to encourage reflection and awareness. The AI agent involved, Michele Picella, alternated listening with structured analysis. The conversations were then exported and analyzed thematically, until five recurring patterns emerged that describe how sales consultants make sense of the catalog-free model.

More than a quantitative study, this was a qualitative exploration. An attempt to understand how people build meaning when they cannot lean on a product list or a predefined scheme.

Five key ideas from the conversations

The interviews with the sales consultants surfaced a set of rich, practical insights. Each of them reflects a different way of inhabiting the complexity of the catalog-free model. These are attitudes, micro-strategies that make it possible to hold listening and design, precision and freedom, together.

1. Selling means translating

In the catalog-free model, selling works as mediation. The salesperson moves like a translator between two worlds. The client's, where the key words are urgency, KPIs and budget, and the internal one, which speaks of capability, learning, impact and culture. Creating a shared vocabulary becomes the first gesture of mutual trust. The most effective people are those who can change register naturally, moving from rational analysis to concrete storytelling without losing coherence. Translating, in this context, is the most honest way of selling. Making the idea of value intelligible.

2. Ambiguity slows things down

Without shared frames, every negotiation starts from zero. Absolute freedom can become a burden, because it generates interpretation anxiety and stretches decision times. Interviewees describe a widespread sense of uncertainty. When everything is possible, there is no foothold to build from. Some have found pragmatic solutions — reusable proposal models, module maps, shared formats — that work as operational anchors. They do not impose a direction. They help recognize the contours of what is possible. In this way ambiguity turns from an obstacle into a space of guided choice.

3. Hybridizing as a tactic

Almost all the salespeople interviewed say they use a mixed strategy. Start from indicative modules — diagnostic, experiential, coaching — and then customize. This approach speeds up mutual understanding and reassures the client without giving up customization. The ideal share of bespoke work varies. The principle is clear: a dynamic balance between structure and creativity. The best sellers use the modules as a language, not as a price list. Hybridizing is an exercise in narrative design. Showing a form so that it can be gone beyond.

4. Social proof beats the pitch

When words are not enough, you need examples. Clients believe experiences that resemble their own, not abstract promises. Real cases — complete with data, feedback and verifiable results — work as accelerators of trust. They are not only there to persuade. They make the potential concrete. Many sellers describe how one well-documented example is enough to move the conversation from price to value. A well-built case library is a platform for collective learning.

5. Identity and narrative coherence

In the chaos of customization, coherence is a form of recognizability. Every Lyra seller builds their own way of telling the story. All of them feel the need for a shared backbone. Hence the idea of a shared value narrative, a ninety-second mother story that captures the essence of the brand. When a stable — not rigid — narrative exists, every person becomes the ambassador of a recognizable message. Lyra's strength lies in being able to combine a plurality of voices with a clear direction. In a crowded market, narrative coherence is the most solid form of differentiation.

What this means for the market

The internal conversations reveal something that goes beyond Lyra Learning. They describe a broader transformation of the learning market and of the way organizations buy complex services. Selling means accompanying the client through a process of discovery and clarification. Decisions no longer follow linear paths. The buyer explores, compares, evaluates, informs themselves independently and looks for counterparts able to give shape to their uncertainties.

In the B2B world, information overload is now the norm. Clients ask for interpretive contexts. They want the supplier to help them understand what matters, to read reality strategically, to give sensible shape to the options. In this scenario, competence is not measured only by the quality of the content. It is measured by the ability to build a shared language.

In corporate learning, all of this means moving from an offer of courses to the construction of learning systems. Companies buy integrated experiences, journeys grafted onto measurable objectives. Whoever cannot articulate the link between content and impact is ruled out at the start. Narrative therefore becomes an infrastructure. The condition for the proposal to exist at all.

Another transformation concerns the timing of the decision. The purchase is a sequence of micro-confirmations. Every interaction either builds trust or dissipates it. Social proof — cases, metrics, testimonials — becomes the new currency of credibility. In a context where everyone claims to be custom, only those who show evidence get past the stage of the promise.

Finally, selling shifts from the ground of the transaction to that of the relationship. Selling the invisible today means being present at the moments where meaning is made. Being there when the client is trying to make sense of their challenges, not only when they are ready to sign. It is a change of paradigm that rewards those who can combine analysis and imagination, clarity and openness. It is also a sign of the market maturing. Attention shifts from finished products to processes of interpretation, from immediate solutions to relationships that generate shared learning.

From ideas to action

Five practical recommendations emerge from the conversations, to turn the insight into practice.

1. Build an indicative, modular catalog — not binding — able to reduce the anxiety of choice.
2. Create a library of validated cases, searchable and kept up to date, that makes the results achieved visible.
3. Develop a discovery playbook to standardize the first three conversations with the client.
4. Define pricing guardrails, to avoid improvised discounts and guarantee consistency.
5. Formalize the value narrative, supporting every consultant with micro-assets (pitch, slides, short stories).

Roadmap (16 weeks)

The proposed roadmap is a progressive weave that alternates moments of building, validation and learning. Each phase creates the conditions for the next. An iterative path, designed to turn qualitative insight into concrete operational tools.

Week	Main activities	Output / Deliverable
1–2	Mapping and diagnosis	Draft case library, list of gaps and priorities
3–4	Module and pricing design	Indicative catalog v0, shared pricing scheme
5–6	Discovery playbook development	Question bank, risk checklist, post-meeting email kit
7–8	Production of "gold" cases	Six one-pagers complete with metrics and lessons learned
9–10	Value narrative and micro-asset creation	90-second pitch, five micro-slides, copy for digital materials
11–12	Pilot on three accounts	TTFP analysis, 1st→2nd meeting conversion rate, feedback collection
13–14	Consolidation and optimization	Version 1 of the system, update guidelines
15–16	Roll-out and retrospective	Improvement backlog, quarterly update plan

Phase 1–2: Mapping and diagnosis

These first weeks take an inventory of the existing assets — sales materials, cases, presentations, templates — to identify redundancy, gaps and opportunities. The objective is a realistic picture of what already works and what is missing. Expected output: a draft of the case library and a definition of the gaps.

Phase 3–4: Module design and pricing structures

On the basis of the evidence gathered, the team co-designs a modular indicative catalog. A map of narrative and operational blocks that works as a shared internal language. In parallel, pricing guardrails are set, with indicative bands and discount rules to keep proposals consistent and transparent. Output: version 0 of the indicative catalog and a shared pricing scheme.

Phase 5–6: Developing the discovery playbook

In this phase the playbook for the first conversations takes shape, with guiding questions, risk checklists, email templates and note-taking templates. It is a tool intended to make the consultative approach consistent and to reduce cognitive drift in the early stages of a negotiation. Output: a question bank and a ready-to-use post-meeting kit.

Phase 7–8: Producing the "gold" cases

Selection and formalization of at least six representative success cases, documented with concrete results and impact indicators. Each case includes a concise one-pager, a slide with metrics and a narrative deep dive with quotes and lessons learned. Output: a library of validated cases ready for internal distribution.

Phase 9–10: Creating the value narrative and the micro-assets

Definition of Lyra's mother story. A short, recognizable account able to unite vision and concreteness. From it derive micro-assets such as a 90-second pitch, thematic slides and short copy for digital materials. Output: a complete narrative set to support the sales team.

Phase 11–12: Pilot on three accounts

Testing the system with a small group of real clients. The objective is to test the effectiveness of the new framework, measuring indicators such as time-to-first-proposal and conversion from the first to the second meeting. Output: pilot analysis and first performance metrics.

Phase 13–16: Roll-out and retrospective

Extending the model to the whole team and integrating the feedback that came out of the pilot. The final weeks are dedicated to creating the continuous improvement backlog. An archive of ideas, revisions and priorities for the next version of the tools. Output: consolidated version 1 of the commercial system.

Success metrics

- Time-to-first-proposal reduced by 25–35%
- Win rate +10–15% in cases with social proof
- Average time to close −15–20%
- CRM asset usage >70%
- Purchase-process NPS +8–12 points

Conclusion

Selling the invisible is a discipline that combines intuition, method and trust. It means learning to read weak signals, to recognize what the client cannot yet put into words and to give shape to implicit needs. Every sale becomes a design conversation, a process of co-creation whose objective is to open up a shared language.

Lyra Learning's catalog-free model is a training ground for this new way of selling. It forces a rethink of the salesperson's role. An architect of dialogue, able to build connections between different worlds. In a market that changes every six months, the ability to explain well becomes a competitive advantage.

Selling without a catalog is also a political act. It means refusing the shortcut of the standard product and choosing the more complex path of the relationship. Every meeting becomes an exercise in mutual clarification, an experiment in language, a moment in which value is drawn in real time. This approach is pragmatic for anyone who wants to build trust in a fluid context.

In this scenario, success depends on the ability to generate understanding. Whoever manages to make the invisible visible through a clear narrative turns selling into a creative act, almost a craft. A trade that unites empathy and rigor, imagination and measure.

In the end, selling is an act of shared imagination. When client and consultant manage to see the same possibility and to build it together, the invisible stops being a void and becomes fertile space, a ground for collaboration where value takes shape before the product does.