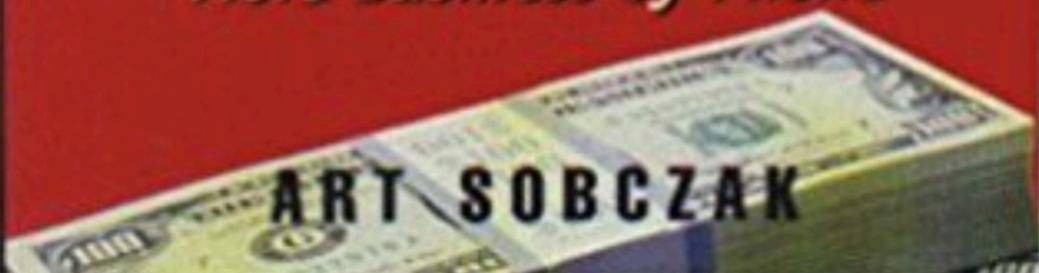


# Telephone Tips That **SELL!**

*501 How-to Ideas and  
Affirmations to Help You Get  
More Business by Phone*

**ART SOBCHAK**



# Telephone Tips That SELL!

## 501 How-to Ideas, Tips, and Affirmations to Help You Get More Business By Phone

By Art Sobczak

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# A Note From Art



Welcome, and congratulations on investing in your sales success by taking the time to ask for this book!

In my over 30+ years of training, speaking, coaching on, writing about, researching, and doing sales, I've found one aspect about it undeniable: people love their training information in meaty, brief nuggets . . . morsels they can easily fit into hectic schedules, and digest and adapt. Stuff they can use right now, and get results with. This handy little book gives you 501 of these gems.

We've sold tens of thousands of the hardcopy of this book, and now are giving it to you free. Can't beat that!

You could breeze through this book and read all 501 tips and affirmations in one sitting. But that would be like trying to rush through everything at Disneyland in a couple of hours--you don't get to truly appreciate the experience. Obviously you bought the book and you can do whatever you want with it, but here's a proven method for getting the most out of these ideas.

1. OK, I'll know you'll do this anyway (I would): skim through the entire book. Some of the ideas will instantly grab you by the collar and shout out, "DO ME!" Start with one.
2. Reflect on the idea. And apply it to your own situation. That's the way we build habits, through application. Visualize the specific scenario in which you would use the idea or tip.
3. Write it down. If it's a word-for-word tactic, put it into your own words. Then say it out loud (when no one else is around, of course. People will talk about you).
4. Use it. Just like the treadmills and other exercise devices collecting dust in your friends' basements, none of this stuff means squat unless you put it into practice.
5. Go through the book again, repeating the process

Finally, I invite you to get and stay in contact with me. Call, or email me your success stories. And please do take advantage of the many other sales resources I provide.

Regardless of whether you use the phone for all or your sales, or just to qualify or stay in touch between personal visits, I have resources that can help you do it better, and more profitably. Go to <http://www.BusinessByPhone.com>

Here's to your continued success!

Art Sobczak

[Art@BusinessByPhone.com](mailto:Art@BusinessByPhone.com)

800-326-7721

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# Time Management

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- 1. Limit your personal calls while at work.** You'll sell more. Just three calls daily, averaging only four minutes each comes to 48 hours per year. How much more could you earn with another 48 hours of sales or prospecting time?
- 2. What percentage of the prospects in your follow-up file** right now will ever do business with you? The ones who won't are costing you money when you continue calling them. Move them forward or move them out.
- 3. After preparing your "to get done" list for the day,** find one item that isn't directly contributing to your success, and get rid of it.
- 4. Review your "To-get-done" list at the end of the day,** evaluate anything you didn't accomplish, analyze if it's really worth doing anyway, and if so, put it at the top of tomorrow's list.
- 5. Don't be too concerned about "best times to call."** Some reps avoid two hours around lunch, late afternoons, mornings, etc., rationalizing prospects won't be available. If you're not on the phone, you have NO chance of reaching anyone!
- 6. Have call objectives for the day.** When you know you need to place a certain number of calls, you are more focused.

- 7.** If getting started calling each day is the hardest task for you, set an iron-clad time you will start every day, no matter what. Make a commitment to get it done.
  
- 8.** The next time you're considering writing a note or letter or email to communicate a brief point or to request information, call instead. It's amazing how much time we waste when a simple phone call gets results instantly.
  
- 9.** If a colleague is stealing your time by hanging out in your area, stand up. This sends a message that you're busy.
  
- 10.** Take each call as far as it possibly can travel. Don't have a preconceived limiting notion that it takes "x" number of calls to make a sale. If you're on a roll, go with it!
  
- 11.** A "No" today is better than one six calls, or six weeks from now. Get a decision; you can deal with those. Ask the fence-sitters: "What's the probability of us doing business within the next month?"
  
- 12.** Plan tomorrow before leaving tonight. Or, on the way home, or in the shower or on the way to work tomorrow. Do this every day, and make the most of your first hour's worth of calling.
  
- 13.** Batch your paperwork or other activities such as sending out brochures or faxes. Set aside time for these activities so you can call non-stop for set periods of time.
  
- 14.** Commit to making just one more call each day. Try to beat each day's results. You'll be amazed how much you can accomplish when you set your mind to it.

- 15.**      **Call every name on your prospecting list.** Jumping around, or prejudging based on some arbitrary excuse wastes time, and might cause you to miss that big sale.
  
- 16.**      **Don't prepare for a call thinking about a single product** or service. Think about determining what the prospect/customer might need, and about offering solutions.
  
- 17.**      **Don't let co-workers steal your selling time by** hanging around when you want to sell. It's like they are taking money out of your wallet, and you wouldn't allow that.
  
- 18.**      **Calculate how much you earn per call.** Take average weekly earnings and divide by average number of calls per week. Hang that amount of money on your wall (a \$5 bill) for example, and then try to increase that average per call every month.

# Self-Improvement and Self-Motivation

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- 19.** When you hear a "no," it's not YOU, personally, that's being resisted . . . it's an idea that's objected to. Analyze your "no's" and learn from them.
- 20.** Don't judge your success solely by your sales. Celebrate the number of attempts. The more you ask, ultimately the more you'll receive.
- 21.** Have a secondary objective for every call, defined as, "At minimum, what do I want to accomplish with this person?" Make it something you'll likely be able to achieve. This ensures you'll never experience rejection.
- 22.** Play to win, instead of to not lose. Too many sales reps take the safe, warm, cozy path . . . avoiding any potential resistance--and missing sales in the process. Go for the gusto!
- 23.** Prepare for each call by asking, "How can I help this person?"
- 24.** You'll never rise above the level of your own self-perception. Define and visualize yourself as the top professional you are capable of being. Believe in that vision, and commit to becoming that person. And keep reaching higher!
- 25.** Those who can proudly count their only failures on one hand aren't so eager to list their only successes on the other.

- 26.** Your imagined, self-imposed limits are always closer than any real ones.
- 27.** End today, and every day, with a positive call. Whether it be a sale, or a secondary objective that you achieved, it helps you leave with an upbeat attitude, and lets you start with one tomorrow.
- 28.** Practice doesn't make perfect. PERFECT practice makes perfect. If you keep doing the same things over and over that don't result in the success you want, you become more skilled at achieving undesirable results.
- 29.** *"Behold the turtle. He makes progress only when he sticks his neck out."* James B. Conant
- 30.** Over the course of the calling day, set mini-goals for yourself . . . checkpoints along the road. For example you could segment your day into thirds or quarters, with a goal for a number of calls at the end of each segment.
- 31.** *"The more I learn, the more I realize how little I really know."*  
Einstein
- 32.** You haven't made your best sales call yet. Strive to make it the next one.
- 33.** It doesn't matter if someone else says you can't do it. It only matters if YOU say it.
- 34.** Preparation is required for successful calls. But don't suffer from "planning paralysis." Remember, you need to be on the phone to succeed.

- 35.**        **How many people have you made smile today?** Do it at least one more time.
- 36.**        **Reward yourself after a big sale you've worked hard to get.** A nice dinner, new clothes, a trip, maybe even a house or car!
- 37.**        **Think back, right now, to several of the sales or accomplishments you are proudest of.** Seize that feeling. Recall what you were doing, thinking, and how you were interacting with others in order to accomplish those things. Repeat them!
- 38.**        **Ask yourself assumptive questions.** "What's the best way for me to increase my sales by 15% this month?" Then, answer in terms of possibilities.
- 39.**        **No customer or prospect, manager or supervisor, can stress you out.** You can only ALLOW others to get to you.
- 40.**        *"If you think you can or you can't, you're always right."*  
Henry Ford
- 41.**        **Nothing of monumental significance has ever been achieved** without it first having been set as a goal. What great things are you going after right now?
- 42.**        **Laugh often, especially at silly mistakes** (as long as you learn from them). Too many people take themselves way too seriously, and their performance and health suffers as a result.
- 43.**        *"If what you did yesterday seems big, you haven't done anything today. And when you're through improving, you're through."*  
Lou Holtz

- 44.** Your rewards are in direct proportion to what you wager. Dare to go after the big accounts, and put in the time to do what's necessary. Your return will be commensurate.
- 45.** When, after 5,000 attempts to come up with the carbon impregnated filament, someone asked Thomas Edison why he was wasting time on failures. He responded, "I've not failed. I've successfully identified 5,000 ways that do not work."
- 46.** Sales superstars consistently do what the average sales reps don't or won't do.
- 47.** Put forth effort as if every day is the end-of-quota period, and you need to meet that goal.
- 48.** Knowledge isn't power; the application of that knowledge is power.
- 49.** Success comes before work only in the dictionary.
- 50.** You can't steal second base with your foot still on first. In order to succeed, you need to stretch yourself and take a risk.
- 51.** There are very few things that you can gain from by saying "no" to, other than illegal, immoral, and physically harmful activities. Don't shy away from opportunities.
- 52.** "One of these days . . ." often results in "If I only would have . . .".
- 53.** Big expectations tend to show big results. Think, and act large.

- 54.**        **Rejection is not an experience.** It's how some people define an experience. You'll never be rejected again if you can pinpoint something positive that comes from every call.
- 55.**        **Be more like a kid on the phone.** Kids: 1. are not bothered by no's; 2. take risks; 3. are imaginative; 4. have high ambitions; 5. have great attitudes; 6. are constantly active, and, 7. are curious.
- 56.**        **The all-time leading base stealer in baseball history,** Rickey Henderson, is also the all-time leader in another category: Caught Stealing. No one dwells on that, nor should you dwell on the "no's" you encounter in your pursuit of successes.
- 57.**        **If you must doubt anything,** doubt your limitations.
- 58.**        **Just DO it! And do it now!**
- 59.**        **Here's a way to beat call reluctance:** Ask yourself what is the worst thing that could happen on the next call? Perhaps get screamed at and insulted personally? It's not going to happen, so place that next call!
- 60.**        **Don't settle for "good enough."** That's defined as just enough to get by and survive. Always put in that little extra.
- 61.**        **In order for someone to become a "natural"** at any skill or profession, they need to be "unnatural" first. That means putting in the practice and effort to reach that level. In order to golf in the 70's, you must go through the 80's first.

- 62.** **You are among an elite group of salespeople.** Simply by using your words, ideas, and voice, you are able to persuade people to take action by phone. Not everyone can do that. You are special!
- 63.** *"If you are going to be thinking anyway, you may as well think big. Most people think small because they are afraid of success, afraid of making decisions, and afraid of winning. And that gives people like me a big advantage."* Donald Trump
- 64.** **So what if you heard a "no" on your last call?** And who cares if you hear another one today, which you likely will if you continue calling. As long as you learned from the experience, and did your best, you can feel proud.
- 65.** **Don't be affected by the "naysayers."** Someone will always try to bring you down, complaining about the quality of leads, lack of support, or anything, for that matter. Times are tough only for those who THINK so.
- 66.** **Never take a "no" personally.** After all, they don't even know you! It's an idea they were resisting, and you can change your ideas.
- 67.** **Zig Ziglar says,** "What you do off the job determines how well you'll do on the job." Invest in yourself.
- 68.** **Get Dr. Alan Zimmerman's free "Tuesday Tips."**  
<https://www.drzimmerman.com/tuesdaytip>
- 69.** **What would you try or do if you knew you could not fail?** Get a picture in your mind. Then go for it! If you haven't done it yet, it's simply a false limitation.

- 70.** What would you need to do to increase your sales by 50%? Brainstorm a list of 10-20 possibilities. Notice that you're thinking in terms of what you could do, not what you couldn't. Pick out a few of those ideas and work on them!
- 71.** Place another call immediately after a success or a sale. Keep the momentum going when you're "in the zone"!
- 72.** On your very next call, make a point to SMILE. You'll feel better, and so will they.
- 73.** *"The world behaves differently when you actually take action to go after what you want. What you wish 'could be' starts becoming. The dream moves in your direction, begins to come to you, even as you reach for it."* Price Pritchett
- 74.** Keep in mind that the large prospect you're waiting to call is buying from someone, but will eventually change. It might as well be from you!
- 75.** To beat call reluctance, think of all the successes you've had when you dug in your heels and took action. Nothing but guilt and regret results from wasting time, avoiding the phone. Pick it up now, and equate action with accomplishment!
- 76.** Set short-term activity goals, such as number of prospecting calls in a two-hour period. It keeps you focused, active, and invigorated.
- 77.** You'll never rise above the level of your own self-perception. Define and visualize yourself as the top professional you are capable of being. Believe in that vision, and commit to becoming that person. And keep reaching higher!

- 78.** End every call on a positive note, regardless of the outcome. You enhance your image, you feel good, they feel good, and you leave the door open for future contacts.

- 79.**      **Prepare yourself emotionally before each call.** Ask yourself, "Am I ready to talk to what might be my most important customer ever?"
- 80.**      **If you must doubt anything, doubt your limitations..**
- 81.**      **There are no "born" salespeople,** any more than there are natural pilots or brain surgeons. Expertise comes through desire, work, and practice. To appear to be a "natural" means you must put in the work first.
- 82.**      **The "no" you received on the previous call** has nothing to do with the results you'll get on your next call . . . unless you let it affect you negatively. Get back at it, and place that next call!
- 83.**      **Every call you place or receive should provide** information which will make you a better salesperson. Learn something from each experience.
- 84.**      **Those who can proudly count their only failures** on one hand aren't so eager to list their only successes on the other.
- 85.**      *"The only risks that aren't a little scary are the ones you've outgrown." Price Pritchett*
- 86.**      **Regardless of the name of the organization** writing your paycheck, view yourself as being self-employed. More than any other profession, you control your destiny, just as entrepreneurs. It's your own business, so make it a success!
- 87.**      **Why is it that the hardest working** people seem to have all the luck?

- 88.**        **Commit to making just one more call** each day. Try to beat each day's results. You'll be amazed how much you can accomplish when you set your mind to it.
- 89.**        **Place your most dreaded calls** at the beginning of the day. You realize that they weren't so bad, you start the momentum earlier, and you get more done.
- 90.**        **ACTION cures fear;** ACTION vaporizes stress; ACTION builds confidence; ACTION beats call reluctance; ACTION gets results.
- 91.**        **Remind yourself that you are an important person.** You have something of value that will make the lives better of the people you call.
- 92.**        **Preparation breeds confidence.** The more prepared you are before a call, the more self-assured you feel.
- 93.**        **The worst time to think of what you'll say next** is right before you say it. Be prepared with your openings, questions, and responses to resistance and questions.

## **Screeners and Gatekeepers**

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- 94.**      **Ask for help from screeners**, or anyone at the prospect's organization. It makes them feel special, and will help you get valuable information.
- 95.**      **If you know who you want to speak with**, and the operator greets you with, "ABC Co., can you hold?", respond with, "Holding for Dale Smith, please." It's takes just as long to put you through as to put you on hold. You'll save time.
- 96.**      **If you reach a company that uses an answering service**, ask when the decision maker typically keeps office hours. Or ask for alternative phone numbers, such as mobile phone.
- 97.**      **Ask the screener to help you get a message to the buyer.**
- 98.**      **Identify yourself with your title**, if it sounds impressive. "This is Jo Smith, National Account Manager, with Notable Services."
- 99.**      **When you leave a message**, ask the screener when the boss will get it.
- 100.**     **Treat everyone you come in contact with by phone** as the most important person in the organization. They just might be.
- 101.**     **When talking to screeners on a follow-up call, in response** to "What is this in reference to?", respond with, "Ms. Bigg and I have agreed to speak again today . . .", if you indeed have.

- 102.** **Identify yourself fully** . . . first and last name, and company when asking for the decision maker. This answers several of the questions screeners typically ask anyway.
- 103.** **Get the screener's or executive assistant's name**, and be sure to note it in your files. Use their name the next time you call. It's a great way to build rapport.
- 104.** **With very inquisitive screeners**, get their help. "You know, I bet you could help me. You probably work closely with Ms. Bigg, right? You probably know the answers to quite a few of these questions."
- 105.** **The screener might be your first sale.** If their job in the organization is to weed out time-wasting, self-interested salespeople, you need to explicitly communicate why you have something of value worthy of the boss' time.
- 106.** **Talk to the screeners and executive assistants** at your own company. Ask them what salespeople say that is sure to get them screened out. Also, ask what works in getting to the decision makers at your company.
- 107.** **Call that tough-to-reach decision maker** during his/her lunch, or before regular starting time. You might have a better chance of getting through.
- 108.** **Compliment screeners, when it's warranted.** Always be sincere. It makes that person feel important, it builds rapport, and they'll remember you the next time you call.
- 109.** **The screener's job is to protect the decision maker's time.** Help screeners do their job by explaining the value you have to offer, and you'll get through more often.

- 110.** **Build rapport with the screener** so that she/he will work with you and deliver your message personally.
  
- 111.** **The screener is often your first sale.** He/she needs to know, "Does this person have anything of interest or value for the boss?" You must be prepared with a results-oriented answer.
  
- 112.** **Consider mailing information to the screener** before your call. This will help you get to more buyers.
  
- 113.** **Ask for the decision maker's direct number.**
  
- 114.** **After building rapport with the screener,** gather personal information about the boss. What he or she has hanging in the office, personal momentos, interests . . . valuable information which can help you begin a relationship.
  
- 115.** **Ask the screener the times of day** you will typically have the best chance of reaching the boss.
  
- 116.** **Ask the screener who the boss reports to.** This can help you learn the decision-making hierarchy.
  
- 117.** **Never consider saying or doing anything** that could be construed as deceptive, such as saying it's a personal call when it's not, or saying you're following up on a previous contact when you haven't spoken before.
  
- 118.** **The buyer's perception of you rises** in direct proportion to how much you know about him and his situation. Use the screener to collect that valuable info.

**119.** You're not trying to go above, around, through, over, or past screeners. That mentality is sure to get you screened out. You want to work with them so you're perceived as a professional.

**120.** Think about what screeners say about you after they put you on hold. Are they saying, "It's some salesperson, want me to dump him?", or, "There's someone here who sounds like he has something interesting."

## Voice Mail

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- 121.** If your main purpose for a call is a one-way communication of information, such as letting a customer know when an order will be delivered, consider making the calls after hours, and leave the messages on voice mail.
- 122.** Call your own voice mail when you're away from the office to remind yourself of great ideas you came up with, or important "to get done" items.
- 123.** Hit "0" or "#" when you reach an electronic switchboard on a prospecting call. This normally routes you to a live person who can provide information, or at least to other options.
- 124.** When leaving a voice mail message, speak more slowly than you would in person. This gives the listener the opportunity to take notes.
- 125.** On voice mail messages to prospects or customers you're following up with, give them an action item they can perform between now and the next call: ". . . and if you could have those performance figures ready when I call back . . ."
- 126.** Having trouble getting through the electronic switchboard? Dial a numeral or two off the main number, and you might be connected to someone's direct line. If the number is 555-1000, you might try, 555-1002.

**127.** Prepare your "voice mail strategy" before your call, just like you prepare your opening and questions. By knowing what you'll say when you reach voice mail, you're able to sound confident and competent.

**128.** Every time you leave a voice mail message, be certain you insert something of interest or value. This ensures they'll return your call, or look forward to your return call.

## Opening Statements

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- 129.** Your opening statement must always answer this question for the prospect/customer: "What's in it for me?"
- 130.** Begin follow-up calls with proactive phrases like "I'm calling to review/discuss/analyze/go over/ . . ." It's much better than, "Just wanted to see if you had any questions."
- 131.** On calls to inactive accounts, don't say anything similar to, "You have an account with us, but no activity," Instead, try, "We had the opportunity to work with you in the past, providing you with . . ." Then mention a benefit you can deliver.
- 132.** After writing out your opening statement, set it aside for a while. Then come back and be merciless in your editing. Most first drafts are rough. Repeat the process until you have something that "sings."
- 133.** Don't ask for a decision in the opening statement, such as, "Calling today to set up a time for an appointment." They aren't ready yet. Open with a benefit, moving them into a receptive frame of mind.
- 134.** Your customers are someone else's prospects. Be sure that you have something of value every time you call. Never take them for granted, or they might just listen to the overtures of your competition.
- 135.** If you insist on using "How are you today?" at the beginning of calls, please, PLEASE be sure you sound sincere, and that you listen and react to their answer.

- 136.** For every word and idea in your opening statement, ask yourself, "Is this adding to what I'm trying to accomplish?" If it's not, edit it out.
- 137.** If someone answers the phone and sounds rushed, don't let that scare you into rushing your opening or questioning. Some people naturally sound fast-paced . . . others do it with salespeople until the rep builds rapport.
- 138.** On a follow-up call, don't ask if they received your material--assume it. You don't want to make your literature the basis for this call.
- 139.** Be certain you deliver your opening in a calm, confident, crisp and articulate fashion. Rushing and mumbling creates an undesirable impression.
- 140.** Consider mentioning the benefit/value you can deliver even before giving your company name. "Mr. Sims, my company specializes in helping retailers increase their off-season traffic. I'm with Precision Promotions."
- 141.** You could hardly go wrong by using "Thank you," "Congratulations," or "I was thinking of you," as part of your opening, and reason for calling.
- 142.** If you feel you must ask for someone's time at the beginning of a call, ONLY do it after mentioning the value you can offer, and then say, ". . . and if I've caught you at a good time, I'd like to . . ."
- 143.** Call with new "ideas." People can resist and object to products and services, but ideas are interesting and create curiosity.

- 144.** In your prospecting opening, mention how you've worked with other companies in the prospect's industry, ". . .helping them to . . .". Fill in with the results you've delivered in the past, and could also provide for them.
- 145.** Whenever you find a way another customer uses your product or service that could be of value to others, be sure to write that down and use it as a Value-Added Point on future calls. And, get permission from your customer to use his name.
- 146.** To create interest with your opening, mention how you help solve an industry-wide problem. "Ms. Prospect, our company specializes in helping convenience stores minimize employee theft, while not harming morale . . ."
- 147.** Opening statement idea to use with regular accounts: "I was recently thinking about you when . . ." Then fill in the blank with the situation appropriate to them. Everyone likes to be thought of.
- 148.** Your opening statement should have two objectives: 1. To move them to the questioning, and, 2. Put them in a positive, receptive frame of mind.
- 149.** Your opening statement is like the foundation of a building. If it's weak, the remainder will crumble.
- 150.** Edit your opening statement by asking, "Is there anything here someone could potentially object to?"
- 151.** You might have the greatest product or service ever, but without a compelling opening that grabs interest, you'll never get a chance to tell your story. Place tremendous emphasis on creating a superb one.

## Questioning

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- 152.** The quality of your answers you hear is in direct relation to the quality of your questions.
- 153.** The only way to ensure you're making the best presentation possible is to question first. Get information, and then give it.
- 154.** People believe more of what they say than of what you say. Create questions that help them understand and voice their problems and needs.
- 155.** You'll sell much more by asking questions than by making statements.
- 156.** Use "playback," or "parrot" questions to get more information. Simply repeat, as a question, the key part of what the speaker just told you: "You've been having delivery problems?"
- 157.** Question "fuzzy phrases" for clarification. If they say, "We'll give it some consideration, let's stay in touch," ask what specifically they will consider, when you should speak again, and why that's a better time.
- 158.** Ask them how they "feel" about an issue. That might give you more information than asking what they "think" about it.
- 159.** The word "Oh?" can be one of your most powerful questions.

- 160.** **Probing technique after hearing** just a vague comment:  
"Which means . . . what, exactly?"
- 161.** **Be specific when looking for information.** Don't use words like "a lot," "often," "much." As in, "Does that happen a lot?" Instead say, "How many times per day does that happen?"
- 162.** **You can use statements to probe.** For example, "Steve, your thoughts on what you'd like to see in a landscape plan will help me provide you with the best information."
- 163.** *"I keep six honest serving men. Then taught me all I knew. Their names are What, Why, and When, and How, and Where and Who."* Rudyard Kipling
- 164.** **Ask "assumptive-problem" questions** that help you learn the details of their problems and needs. "Dale, about how often would you say your supervisors call in sick, when you feel they're really not?"
- 165.** **Ask, "What's most important to you about..."**
- 166.** **Resist the tendency to jump into a presentation** after uncovering just a sliver of a need. Continue questioning to further develop and embellish the need or problem.
- 167.** **If you get a question you'd prefer to defer until later,** turn it around explaining why. "In order for me to quote you the very best price for the system that would meet your specific requirements, I'd like to learn a little more about . . ."

- 168.** Before going into your presentation, to ensure you haven't missed anything, ask them, "Jan, before I make my recommendation, is there anything else I should know about your situation?"
- 169.** Use "loaded problem/benefit" questions. "Many of our customers found they were having problems getting their orders filled within seven days with the other service. What is your experience?"
- 170.** When talking to a prospect who called you in response to your advertising, ask them, "What was it that caught your eye in the ad and prompted the phone call?" This can help you immediately zero in on their hot button.
- 171.** Before sending out information, ask, "Let's assume that you like what you see when you get it. What happens next?"
- 172.** Use opposite choices when questioning to understand their desires. "Are you looking for deluxe office space in an office tower complex, or something more along the lines of an industrial park location?"
- 173.** Avoid using the hanging "or . . ." when questioning, as in, "Is this something you'd use, or . . .?" It's confusing to the listener, and shows a lack of confidence. Just ask the question, then be silent.
- 174.** Don't qualify your questions with wimpy words like, "I don't want to seem pushy, but . . .," or, "You might not want to answer this, but, . . ."
- 175.** Any time you send out a sample or demo, always first ask, "What criteria will you use to evaluate it?"

- 176.** Try the "Triad" question: "Most of our customers use us because of our X, Y, or Z. (fill in with your benefits/results). Which of those are of most interest to you?"/Bill Bishop
- 177.** With indecisive prospects you obviously have shown you can help, ask, "Pat, you're waiting for . . . what . . . before we can work together?"
- 178.** Avoid asking "What are your needs?" This expects them to do your job. Instead, pick out a specific need you can fill, and question about it: "What are you experiencing with downtime?"
- 179.** Embellish the needs you uncover by layering more questions on their responses. For example, "And then what happened?" "What implications does that have on the other departments?" "How does that affect the bottom line?"
- 180.** Question to learn the decision-making process: "What is the normal procedure at your company for making a decision like this?"
- 181.** Help them imagine ownership, by saying, "Let's say you already owned this. How would you . . .?"
- 182.** Whenever sending out a proposal, or when you're competing against other vendors for the business, ask, "What are the top three considerations you'll use to make your final decision?"
- 183.** Any time you hear your prospect or customer mention someone else in the company with regards to what you're offering, ask them, "Oh, what do they do?" This helps you learn of all the players involved, and the process.

- 184.** **Customers buy based on value.** But not what you think is value. It's what their perception of the value is. Ensure you know what they're looking for, then deliver it.
- 185.** **A tactful way to go over their head** after you learn there are other, higher decision makers involved: "Would it help you at all if I called her directly?" Or, "Would it save you some time if I contacted her?"
- 186.** **Layer questions,** one on top of another after their responses, to learn their real emotions.
- 187.** **Use instructional questions,** such as, "Please tell me . . .," "Share with me . . .," "Give me some idea of . . .," and "Please explain how . . .".
- 188.** **On your next follow-up calls,** ask yourself, "What, specifically, is this person interested in? Why am I calling him back?" Unless you can answer with a precise, detailed explanation of the value they're looking for, you need more information.
- 189.** **Present at least two alternative** answers when probing for sensitive information: "Would you say your budget this year is closer to \$50,000 or \$100,000?"
- 190.** **Explain your reason** first when asking for sensitive information: "I'm asking this next question, because it will help me make the best recommendation for your situation. What were your total sales of that product last year?"
- 191.** **Avoid the use of "Really"** as a question in response to their statements. It's meaningless, and annoying.

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- 192.** **Ask prospects what criteria they** used the last time they selected a supplier. Then ask if they learned anything useful from that process.
- 193.** **Never go into a pitch on an incoming call** when the inquirer asks you for information. Instead, respond with, "I'll be happy to help you. So I can provide the best information for your situation, please tell me about..."
- 194.** **Get clarification, always.** Their definition might be different than yours. For example, "When you say 'fast turnaround,' what is your definition of that?"
- 195.** **Money Question:** "How have you typically financed a purchase like this in the past?"
- 196.** **Money Question:** "What type of budget do you have set aside for this?"
- 197.** **Money Question:** "What amount did you have in mind for this type of program?"
- 198.** **Money Question with an Evasive Prospect:** "What budget figure are you thinking of for this project, ballpark figure."
- 199.** **Find out if there are other players involved** by asking, "If you decided to pursue this, who else would be sitting in on the final decision?"

- 200.** **Another way to learn of other influencers** in the decision-making process is to ask, "Who will you consult with when you're evaluating your decision?"
- 201.** **People will go to greater lengths** to avoid pain than they will to seek pleasure. Think about the pain you help people avoid, and ask questions to get them thinking about that potential pain.
- 202.** **Ask the number of questions** at one time that they'll answer at one time: one. Don't pile on questions; they'll get confused and answer the easiest one.
- 203.** **Probe for dissatisfaction.** Ask them what they're receiving now from their present vendor, and then ask them to compare that to what they expected, or would ideally like to have.
- 204.** **Be curious.** Build a desire to visualize everything that's going on in your prospect's environment.
- 205.** **Don't ask if you may ask them a question.** That's a question itself, for gosh sakes! Just ask the question.
- 206.** **After you feel you have the sale cinched,** but it won't take place for a few weeks, ask them, "To prepare for the unforeseen, could you see anything happening that would possibly hold this up?"
- 207.** **A salesperson said,** "I can lead them to water, but I can't make them drink." The wise, seasoned manager responded, "You don't want to MAKE them do anything. You just want to help them realize they're thirsty!"

- 208.** A benefit is only a benefit if the person hearing it perceives it to be a benefit . . . at that very instant. Ensure you're presenting benefits by questioning first.
- 209.** To find out what your prospect is paying now with a competitor, ask, "What are the costs for . . .?" This usually works better than, "What is ABC Company charging you?"
- 210.** If you detect the prospect is just looking for multiple bids, ask them, "If our proposal is the best, will we get the business?" Then ask, "How will you judge the best?"
- 211.** Good salespeople ask questions. Great salespeople know what they'll do next when they get the answers . . . especially the answers they'd rather not hear.
- 212.** Ask what they did in the past, and what they don't want. Ryan Levesque, author of The ASK Method, says that it's easier for people to tell you what they did before, and what they DON'T want, than it is to tell you what they want.
- 213.** Ask questions to help them quantify their needs. Use "How much?", "How often?", and, "What does that cost you?" to get them to understand their problem in tangible terms.
- 214.** If they must speak with someone else before making a decision, ask them, "Are you personally sold on doing this?" If they're not, don't let them get off the phone until they are.
- 215.** Prospects will only take action on a problem if they perceive it as being large enough, strong enough, or painful enough to do something about.

**216.** Don't just present what people need; give them what they WANT. Sometimes needs are just the bare-bones minimum. Ask them, "What do you really want in your new machine?"

# Presentations

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- 217.** Before presenting your benefits, after your questioning, bridge with something like, "Don, based upon what you told me, I believe we have the system that is ideal for what you're looking for."
- 218.** Instead of presenting all of your "benefits," present only a few, but in several different ways. After identifying their hot button, use various terms to describe the feelings they'll have by buying from you.
- 219.** Use the words "for instance," and, "for example" when stating what your product/service can do. This reminds you to personalize and tailor the benefit to their specific situation.
- 220.** Get your prospects and customers physically involved to bridge the communications gap: "Karen, take a look at page five of the proposal and I'll show you what I'm talking about . . ."
- 221.** Customers buy for their reasons, not yours.
- 222.** Avoid statements that are easily challenged, such as, "We're the most respected in the business." Instead, back up claims with proof, or third party references, "Our customers consistently give us 99.9% satisfaction ratings."
- 223.** At the end of a presentation, ask them, "What haven't I covered yet that's important to you?"
- 224.** Drop their name in at the beginning of a sentence to grab their attention.

- 225.**     **Number your benefit points for impact.** "Gail, there are three main results you'll get from this program. First . . ."
- 226.**     **If you've determined you can help them in some way,** every day that goes by without them buying means they have lost. Point this out if they stall.
- 227.**     **When you're in a competitive situation** with several other suppliers to win the business, ask to be the last to present. You can ask about the other presentations to learn valuable information.
- 228.**     **Once you've determined their hot button,** mention the most appropriate benefits several times. Psychologists say that messages become more firmly embedded when they're repeated.
- 229.**     **When you speak from personal experience** about your product/service, be sure they know that. For example, "I have one myself, and it . . ."
- 230.**     **When you're faced with silence,** resist the tendency to just continue talking. Instead, get them to open up. Ask, "How do you feel about that last point?"
- 231.**     **State your price with conviction.** Sometimes a salesperson's tone when stating price implies, "This is a starting point on price, and it's very negotiable."
- 232.**     **Guarantees are necessary for credibility,** but don't sell your guarantee harder than you sell your value. Some reps use the negative sell just to get a "yes," and then later get exactly what they sold: people asking for their money back.

**233.** **Mention the competition's price in terms of dollars**, while presenting yours with numbers. "Their price is two-hundred and fifteen dollars. Ours is only one-ninety-eight."

**234.** **Never assume that your prospect or customer knows** what your product or service can do for him. Once you know his needs, state your benefits and results specifically.

**235.** **If you have nothing to gain, monetarily**, from them buying from you, point that out. Many prospects and customers are skeptical of sales reps who are on commission.

**236.** **Point out the disadvantages of what you have**, if there are any. You'll be viewed as more credible, with nothing to hide.

**237.** **Paraphrase their needs by saying**, "Based on what you told me, what you're looking for is . . ."

**238.** **Help them associate the savings** they can realize with you to something they'll easily understand. "The savings you'll show with this system every month could make the payments on one of your delivery vans."

**239.** **If they could conceivably say "So what?"** to what you think are benefits, don't use them. The points are not strong enough.

**240.** **Preface your benefits with positive statements** that paint an exciting mood: "And here's one of the aspects that our customers tell us they like best about our service . . ."

**241.** **Just SAYING you have experience means little.** Instead, be specific with examples. "I have a list of 20 satisfied customers in your industry who say they would do the same thing again."

- 242.** If you've uncovered a problem you can solve, one that is costing them money, point out how much they are losing every day.
- 243.** When presenting huge volumes and prices, be certain to project with unwavering confidence. Sometimes reps give the feeling, through their voice, that they are ashamed or afraid of presenting such a large number.
- 244.** Forget about benefits. Think in terms of the "results" you deliver.
- 245.** Use action to describe your product/service. People can visualize motion better than abstract ideas.
- 246.** If there's a concern or objection that inevitably comes up, address it before they do. Say, "And if you're asking yourself about \_\_\_\_\_" Then proceed to present the benefits of why that's not really an issue.
- 247.** Get feedback after presenting your value points. "How would that work for you?" "Does this sound good so far?"
- 248.** *"If we can differentiate a dead chicken, you can differentiate anything."* Frank Perdue
- 249.** Use the word "investment" instead of "cost" or "price," and "invest" instead of "spend."
- 250.** It's never good to knock the competition, but it's OK to let the customer do it. Ask questions in areas where you know you're superior, or where the other vendor has problems: "What do you do when you have after-hours service needs?"

- 251.** Brainstorm for emotional, descriptive, and visual terms to help your prospects see and feel the results you deliver. Use familiar comparisons. For example, "It's very lightweight . . . about the same as your standard desktop office stapler."
- 252.** Ask them to retrieve your catalog or sample so they can go through it with you by phone. This bridges the visual gap, and gets them physically and visually involved.
- 253.** Repeat their jargon, language, or pet words to make your points. If they said "Get the ball rolling," several times, you could strategically drop it into your presentation to add impact. This helps you to connect more powerfully.
- 254.** When presenting your price, always attach a value statement to it. "Of course you'll get free delivery, one month's worth of supplies, and installation, all for only \$795."
- 255.** Help them visualize themselves already owning and using your product or service. "Let's just assume for a moment that you did have this unit in your office. What are the functions you'd use it for?" This helps reduce resistance.
- 256.** If you've identified specific prospect needs and problems, but yet they're reluctant to commit to a sale, ask them, "What would happen if you do nothing?" This helps them understand the problem isn't going away on its own.
- 257.** Emotional words that sell include, "guarantee," "easy," "worry free," "saves," and, "helps you to . . .".

**258.** Use third party references to build credibility. "Our customers say . . .", "People who are now on the system find that . . .", "Current users tell us that . . ."

**259.** Use stories in your presentation. It helps them see themselves enjoying the benefits you deliver. Especially so when you put them in the story.

# Closing

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- 260.** Ideally, if you've done everything right, they will sometimes volunteer the sale. But don't count on it. Simply and directly say, "Let's finalize the details, OK?"
- 261.** Don't always judge success by the "yes" answers you get. Measure your attempts. Set a goal for the number of times you'll ask for the business today. Celebrate when you reach that goal. The sales naturally follow.
- 262.** If they like what you have, and say they'll buy the next time they have the need, do everything you can today to ensure that sale. Open the credit-approved account, get a blanket purchase order from them . . . whatever, to make the purchase easier.
- 263.** Closing Question: "Gene, we seem to be in agreement that this is what you're looking for. What do you suggest we do?"
- 264.** Instead of jumping on the first buying signal you hear, question it to help them strengthen their convictions. If they said, "This really would work for us," ask them, "In what areas would you show the most benefit?"
- 265.** To get movement, ask something like: "Kelly, what can we do together to speed up the process and make this happen?"
- 266.** You'll lose 100% of the sales you don't ask for.

**267.** **Closing Question:** "Are you thinking about getting three of them?" Use whatever amount would be just a tad higher than what they likely would do. This prompts a decision, or more conversation.

**268.** **Ask for commitment with conviction.**

**269.** **Those who expect more, get more.** Don't sell yourself short when asking for the sale. Ask big.

**270.** **A question to help them determine** what should happen next: "What is the next step?"

**271.** **Closing Question:** "We could have this delivered and operational by Tuesday. What would you like me to do?"

**272.** **To upsell, don't mention the next price break,** as in "You can get a better deal if you buy 50." Instead, simply mention how many more they need to get the price. "You'll save \$1.50 per unit by getting only five more."

**273.** **Help them visualize themselves owning** and using your product/service. "If you had this, how do you feel you'd utilize it?"

**274.** **Trial Closing Question:** "Amy, do you think you would be happy with this type of service?"

**275.** **Maintain a positive,** confident, steady tone of voice and rate of speech when asking for the sale or commitment. Some reps clutch up and lose it at this point.

- 276.** State the agreement you've reached, then ask for the major commitment: "Jan, since we're in agreement that this is what you're looking for, and it's within your budget, let's go ahead and get the paperwork started, OK?"
- 277.** Closing question: "Sounds to me like you've already decided to go with this. Am I right?"
- 278.** Closing question: "Do you have further questions, or are we ready to proceed?"
- 279.** Closing question: "Any reason to wait any longer?"
- 280.** Closing question: "Is there anything else you need to know to move ahead with this order?"
- 281.** Closing question: "Are you ready to start going over the final details?"
- 282.** Listen for "possession signals," signs that they've already visualized themselves using your product/service. "What we'd likely do is train a couple of people at each location."
- 283.** Leave no doubt you want their business.
- 284.** The main reason customers don't buy more from their vendors: they aren't asked to by the vendor. Be sure you're satisfying every need you possibly can.

- 285.** When you're wrapping up an order, don't say, "Anything else?" We're all conditioned to say "No." Instead, make a tangible recommendation based on what they're already getting, then ask for the sale.
- 286.** Buying signals can signal the time to begin closing. But, consider asking another question or two. This can help them further strengthen their reasons for agreeing with you.
- 287.** "Pushiness" only occurs when you try to sell someone something they don't want or need. Asking for the sale is not being pushy, assuming you've questioned effectively and made the appropriate recommendation.
- 288.** Don't just wish for the sale: "I just wanted to let you know these do come in several colors, and we could even custom order one for you." Be sure there is no question that you are ASKING for it.
- 289.** Tie the timing of the next call into their commitment to take some action. "What day do you feel we should speak again, so that you'll have had enough time to collect those figures?"
- 290.** It's easy to increase order sizes by adding complementary items or services. Simply say, "Many people who get \_\_\_\_ also find \_\_\_\_ to be of great value because (fill in with the results they realize)." It costs nothing to try this technique!
- 291.** Ask "as if" assumptive questions, such as, "Where would you use this if you had it?" "Who would use it?" "How would it work for you?" This helps them visualize themselves already enjoying the results.

- 292.** When not having much luck with prospects who are happy with their present vendor, ask for a trial order as a last resort: "Would you like to try us just on a smaller trial basis? This way you can sample our service and delivery without committing all of your business."
- 293.** Take their temperature all throughout the call. "How do you feel this would work?" "What do you think about . . .?" "How does this look compared to . . .?" Their agreement is your sign to continue. Any resistance is dealt with early.
- 294.** Closing Question: "Why don't we give it a try?"
- 295.** A Trial Closing Question: "Quite a deal, isn't it?"
- 296.** Closing question after buying signals have been heard: "Will two dozen (pick your own figure) be enough?"
- 297.** Get commitment by positioning yourself as the expert. Use powerful phrases like, "I recommend," "I suggest," "I invite you to . . ."
- 298.** Ask for decisions. Don't let people put you off. It wastes your time and money. Equate getting a decision--yes or no--with success.
- 299.** Trial closing question: "So I've answered all of your questions?"
- 300.** Closing Question: "Can you think of any reason why we shouldn't go ahead with this?"
- 301.** Temperature Checking Question: "Are you ready to move forward with an order, or do you have further questions?"

**302. Closing Question** As a Last Resort When All Else Fails:  
"Well, would you use us as a secondary vendor for things that are not available with your present vendor?"

**303. Closing Question** to Begin Wrapping Up the Details: "I'm ready to talk terms if you are!"

# Objections

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- 304.** Upon hearing an objection, respond with the non-adversarial statement, "Let's talk about that." Then proceed with questions to get them talking about their reasons for objecting.
- 305.** If things were flowing smoothly on the first call, but, suddenly on the second call they are a totally different person, simply ask, "Pat, the last time we spoke I had the impression you loved this idea. What happened since then?"
- 306.** If you hear price resistance, ask them, "Is it more of a money-availability question, or a value question?"
- 307.** Buyers usually aren't looking for the lowest-priced vendor. They typically want the least-risk vendor. Determine how you can position yourself as the least-risk supplier.
- 308.** If you hear the obvious brush off, "I don't think we need that," at the beginning of a call, respond with, "I'm not yet sure if you do, either. That's why I'd like to ask a few questions to determine . . ."
- 309.** There are no price objections, only value questions.
- 310.** Before writing off a prospect who you're obviously getting nowhere with, ask, "Would you say we'll likely never do business together?" This might prompt them to say never is a long time, which gives you a lead-in to more questions.

- 311.** Take each of your top five competitors and determine your main advantages over them. Then develop questions to get prospects talking about their needs in those areas. For example, "How are you now affected by the order fill rate you're getting?"
- 312.** When they want to "Think it over," ask them, "In what areas are you still not convinced?"
- 313.** When you hear an objection, to hear the reason behind it, respond with, "I'm not sure I understand." They'll likely respond with more detailed information.
- 314.** After addressing resistance, and there's silence, ask for commitment or the sale again. Don't make it easy for them to delay or serve up another objection.
- 315.** The objection you hear consists only of the words which represent the symptom of the real problem. That's what you must address to be successful. Do it with questions.
- 316.** To get them talking after they state an objection, say, "Tell me more about that."
- 317.** The old myth says that "The selling doesn't start until an objection has been expressed." That's garbage. If the sales process had been perfectly executed, an objection wouldn't even occur.
- 318.** Resistance early in a call is easier to deal with than a major objection later on. Plus it helps you change course when necessary. So, ask for the resistance if it's there. "What are your thoughts so far?"
- 319.** Use the "Just suppose" technique. "Just suppose the money was in the budget. Would you go with it then?"
- 320.** Never tell someone they're wrong (even if they are!). Instead, take the responsibility. "I don't think I explained myself clearly. Here is what I meant . . ."
- 321.** To help the indecisive prospect move: "What would happen if you did nothing?"

- 322.** If they put you off with, "Call back in six months," verify they are sincere. "OK, so what you're saying is that you are interested in doing business together. It's just that now is not a good time?" Then find out what will happen in six months making it a better time.
- 323.** Get to the heart of the reason for an objection: "It seems the real decision here is this: is (the ultimate benefit they'll receive) more important than (the objection)?"
- 324.** If there's a common objection EVERYONE you contact usually brings up, mention it before they do, along with the answer. "And you might be wondering if . . ."
- 325.** Don't focus all your energy thinking of answers for objections. First start with the many reasons someone might have for stating an objection. Work on understanding them, and then on questions to help them talk about those reasons.
- 326.** Create urgency by pointing out what they're missing every day they delay. "Pat, we've agreed that by using our system you'd generate about another \$100 daily in walk in traffic, sales you're missing every day now."
- 327.** Question to ask when they are comparing you to a discounter: "What other expenses have you considered in the long-term if you went with the lower-price alternative?"
- 328.** Question to ask when they are comparing you to a discounter: "How long do you plan on keeping the unit?" This will help you amortize your price difference over a longer life of the product/service.
- 329.** Don't mail information just to get it out the door, especially with people who have no short-term potential. Instead, let them qualify themselves. "Would it be worth it to send you information for your files, just in case things change with you?"
- 330.** If on a follow-up call they immediately say they haven't read your literature yet, reply, "That's OK. As long as I have you on the phone, let cover a few points . . ." Take advantage of the opportunity.

- 331.** Your literature doesn't do the selling for you. If it did, your company wouldn't need you.
- 332.** Instead of blurting out "Why?", which can sound argumentative, ask, "Oh, what has lead to that decision?"
- 333.** In response to a "Send literature" brush-off, try, "I'll be happy to. Let's say you like what you see. What will happen next?" Or, "Will you be ready to buy at that point?"
- 334.** Objections are only symptoms of a larger problem. Unless you identify the problem, you'll never address the true concern.
- 335.** When you hear a price objection, try asking, "If price were not an issue for you, would this be the system you'd choose?"
- 336.** If a prospect says that your price savings wouldn't be large enough to switch, ask him, "How much would you have to increase sales to generate the same NET profit as the savings we'd provide over a year?"
- 337.** You'll never "overcome" an objection by arguing or presenting slick, canned rebuttals. The best you can do is get them to doubt their beliefs through questions. Then they might open their minds.
- 338.** An alternative to asking "Why?" is, "Apparently you have a reason for feeling that way. May I ask what it is?" Then respond with, "If you weren't concerned with that, do you feel we could move forward?"
- 339.** Initial resistance at the beginning of a prospecting call is quite natural. It's a reflex instinct. Quite often prospects will say, "I'm happy with what we have," as an attempt to get off the phone. Be prepared with a question to get them talking.
- 340.** If you ever have to give concessions, do it grudgingly. Giving in too quickly diminishes the value of it, and might cause them to keep grinding away.

- 341.** **Respond to the stall**, "I want to think about it," with, "That usually means you have a money-related question, or a question I haven't yet answered. Is that right?"/ Bill Bishop
- 342.** **If budget is the problem**, ask them, "What have you done in other situations where there was something you wanted that could help your department, but it wasn't budgeted? How did you get it?"
- 343.** **To learn the reason** behind their objection, ask, "Oh? What led to that conclusion?"
- 344.** **If someone claims to be getting a better deal or offer** elsewhere, question every component of it to determine if you're comparing "apples-to-apples." You can determine if they're mistaken, if they're putting you off, or if the deal is better.
- 345.** **If they tell you to call back** "in a few months or so," respond with, "I'll be happy to. What will make that a better time for you?"
- 346.** **Upon hearing an objection**, instead of mentally arguing with it, ask yourself, "Under what circumstances could that be true?" This helps you understand why they say what they do.
- 347.** **When a prospect tells you** they're happy with who they're buying from, ask them, "When you do have to replace your products, or return them, what are the main reasons?" This gets them thinking about problems . . . things you can solve.
- 348.** **Paraphrase objections** and resistance as questions to ensure you understand the situation, and to position them as something to be answered--not overcome. For example: "What you're asking is if you'll get a return on the extra \$200 you'd pay with our system, is that the question?"
- 349.** **Questions and objections** should never leave you at a loss for words. Every time you hear a new one, brainstorm three or four ways you'll respond next time. Write them down in a notebook, and study them until they're committed to memory.

- 350.** People love to buy, but they hate to be "sold," with "sold" meaning being pitched a product or service they have no need or use for. Help them buy!
- 351.** When your prospect is fence-sitting after repeated calls, ask them, "Pat, on a scale of 1-10, with 10 being the most interested, where would you say you are right now regarding our offer."
- 352.** If you hear, "I want to shop around," ask them, "What will you be looking for?" This might help clear up any misunderstandings about what you could provide, and cause them to forgo the shopping and buy from you now.
- 353.** Learn the real reason for the resistance. You only waste time chasing shadows. Ask, "If I understand what you're saying, this is the only factor holding you back, is that right?"
- 354.** Repeating their objection as a question can get them to explain it more fully. "You don't feel you could use us this year?" And if it's not a real objection, it can prompt the real answer.
- 355.** Instead of caving in on price with someone who wants to negotiate, be prepared with low- or no-cost "giveaways" with perceived value that you can offer instead. Get creative.
- 356.** If you're reaching a dead end, ask them, "Under what circumstances would you see yourself using a service like ours?"

# Wrapping Up the Call

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- 357.** When preparing to wrap up a call, ask them, "Ok, what is going to happen next?" This prompts them to detail what they will do as a result of this call.
- 358.** Summarize at the end of every call. Review, 1. What they will do next; 2. What you will do next; 3. What will happen on your next conversation.
- 359.** Offer to send materials to the other people your prospect will speak with in making the final decision.
- 360.** To help qualify a prospect's commitment, and to solidify it, ask them to send YOU something after a call. For example, a brochure, product sample, invoice from a present supplier. It gets them more involved, and gives you useful information.
- 361.** Ensure they know what will happen on the next call. Don't say, "I'll just touch base with you . . ." Tell them, ". . . and on our next contact we'll review the results of your meeting, and talk about details of a proposal."
- 362.** After the call ask yourself, "What did I like?", and, "What would I have done differently?" You'll reinforce the positives, and learn from the negatives so they don't occur again.
- 363.** Put ideas for opening statements in the notes from this call. What a great time to think about what you'll say on the next call!

## More Brief Tips

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- 364.** Do a quick Google search on “Local news (their city) to pick up on news in your prospect's/customer's area. You can use this information to build rapport, and they'll be impressed.
- 365.** Whenever a satisfied customer raves about your company, products, or services, write down the comments, or have a "Testimonial" file in your word processing program. Or, ask them to send you a letter. Use these on calls.
- 366.** Penetrate deeper into the customer's company. Get their assistance. "Pat, who else in your organization would be able to take advantage of the same benefits you're getting?" Ask them to make the introduction.
- 367.** When asking for referrals, help them brainstorm, "Who else do you know . . . maybe people in your trade association, perhaps some of your other suppliers, how about other divisions of your company?"
- 368.** Send a note or post card today to a customer you haven't spoken with in a while. It keeps your name in front of them. You never know when they might have a need for what you sell before your next scheduled call to them.
- 369.** Send a novelty or promotional item to make your package stand out. You can mention it when you call back. "Mine was the package with the pepper shaker that said 'We can spice up your sales'."
- 370.** When you find a news clipping that your prospects/customers would have interest in, copy it and mail it to everyone it would be appropriate for. Include a brief note. This further positions you as someone who delivers value.

- 371.**    **Shop the competition.** Call them. See how they handle calls. Get their literature.
- 372.**    **Don't cold call, Smart Call instead.** See how in the book that won Top Sales Book of 2010, *"Smart Calling—Eliminate the Fear, Failure, and Rejection from Cold Calling."*  
<http://www.smart-calling.com/>
- 373.**    **Ask good customers** to provide you with information and literature on competitors who call them.
- 374.**    **Whenever you pick up** an incoming call, always greet the person with enthusiasm, as if they were the most important person in the world. They'll feel like it!
- 375.**    **If you want your letter** to stand out, avoid mailing it Friday. Monday's mail is typically the biggest pile. Take it home, and mail it Saturday morning. Tuesday is typically the slowest mail day.
- 376.**    **Record your calls** and exchange recordings with a co-worker. Provide each other with feedback.
- 377.**    **If it sounds as if they're** on a speakerphone (and you're not talking with a group), say, "I think we have a bad connection here. I can barely hear you." They'll typically apologize, and pick up the handset.
- 378.**    **When they** answer their phone with their first name, that's implied permission to use it also. As in, "Hi, this is Karen." Using Ms. or Mr. here would put up a barrier of formality that doesn't exist.
- 379.**    **Have them take out** their calculator to run the numbers with you. It bridges the visual gap, and gets them physically involved.
- 380.**    **With your letter and emails,** write like you speak. No one ever says, "As per our conversation," "Please advise," "Attached please find . . ." So don't write that way either.

- 381.** **Set appointments** for your next follow-up telephone call. Be specific with the date and time. This shows you're a professional, and that you mean business. Plus it helps you manage your calls efficiently.
- 382.** **Get referrals by asking:** "Who else do you know who also has a similar problem and would like to get the results you've experienced?" Help them: "Someone in a trade group? Perhaps someone in another city?"
- 383.** **Never put off calling a customer** who you think is going to complain. Their problem won't go away on its own. And by solving it, you can strengthen their loyalty. Plus, they likely just want someone to listen to them.
- 384.** **When your customer changes** companies, offer to call him at the new one to continue the relationship. And be sure to quickly contact his replacement to build a new relationship with that person. But don't assume you'll keep the business.
- 385.** **Upon calling back a prospect** who seemed interested on the first call, but cooled down considerably, find out why: "Mr. Prospect, we seemed to agree that this would solve a few problems. What has happened since our last call?"
- 386.** **When your prospect/customer** needs to confer with someone (or says they will), ask them, "Are you going to recommend that this is what you do?" This ensures they are sold first.
- 387.** **A tension relaxer:** Drop your head to your chest, roll it to the right, nearly touching your shoulder. Roll it back and to the left. Return to the upright position and repeat the process slowly as you feel yourself relaxing.
- 388.** **Don't just tell a prospect** or customer you'll try to do something for them. Tell them you'll DO it, and then follow through.
- 389.** **Understand the organizational** hierarchy of the purchasing decision for your product/service. Through what departments must it travel, who must sign off on it, and what paperwork must be completed?

- 390.** Write down every promise you make to a customer or prospect regarding what you'll do or send. Then check your list every day. Unfulfilled expectations fatally damage relationships.
- 391.** Sincere compliments always have, and always will be an effective way to build rapport and good feelings. Use words like "Congratulations," "That's quite an accomplishment," "You should be proud," and "I admire you for that."
- 392.** When you or your company wrongs a customer, listen, let them vent, then ask them what should be done. It's likely what they request will be less than you're able to give.
- 393.** Write on the outside of large envelopes of literature or samples. For example, "Pat, here's the catalog we discussed by phone." This helps your material stand out, plus reminds them of what you spoke of.
- 394.** If you're placing a follow-up call, assign "homework" so that they're doing something between now and the next contact. This way you know they are committed.
- 395.** If you call nationwide, consider running a map search out at appropriate times to visualize where the prospect is.
- 396.** Don't make the mistake of taking for granted that your customers will automatically think of you when a need arises. Stay in regular contact to build "mind share," working to keep you and your company's name in mind.
- 397.** Regardless of whether you sell a product or intangible service, everyone sells the same thing: the end RESULT of using or owning that product or service.
- 398.** Instead of saying "How are you today?" at the beginning of a call, TELL them how they are: "You sure sound great today!"
- 399.** Be sure you use a P.S. in your sales follow-up letters and emails. The P.S. is many times the first part of the letter that is read. Make it benefit-packed.

- 400.** Write notes on the back of your business cards and clip them to your literature. They just might keep the card!
- 401.** View yourself as a consultant to your customers' businesses. You are helping them maximize their success and the success of their business.
- 402.** *"Focus on what customers want and need, help them buy what's best for them, and make them feel good about it."*  
Michael LeBoeuf
- 403.** For a complete blueprint on every part of the call, get my free book, *"How to Place the Successful Sales and Prospecting Call—Exactly What to Say and AVOID to Get Agreement and Eliminate Resistance."*  
<http://FreeSalesBook.com>
- 404.** Be sensitive of how you react to unusual names. Usually the best reaction is none at all.
- 405.** Dropping price can cost your company money in more ways than one. Everyone, regardless of the price they pay, expects the same level of service.
- 406.** The way you accept compliments says a lot about you and the way you are perceived. Don't be apologetic: "Oh, it's nothing really." Or, "I got lucky." Instead, a simple "Thank you," or add, "we worked hard on that project."
- 407.** Drink warm water when you're on the phone. Cold liquids, especially colas, tend to constrict the vocal cords, and cause build-up in the mouth.
- 408.** Be sure to take detailed notes after the call. Confucius said, "Poor handwriting better than poor memory. "
- 409.** For mailing follow-up literature, have stickers made up with, "Here's the Information We Discussed By Phone." This helps your material move to the top of the pile.

- 410.** Always tell people where they are being transferred, and the direct dial number of that person, just in case the call is dropped. Better yet, stay on the line to introduce the other person.
- 411.** Write out difficult names phonetically. This avoids embarrassing mispronunciations.
- 412.** Take each call as far as you possibly can. Don't assume that you couldn't make a sale on a first or second call.
- 413.** If you ever give a price concession in a negotiation, get something in return. Ask for a larger quantity, a longer contract, or something that suggests you don't drop prices on a whim.
- 414.** Look around your desk area. Do you have enough prompts hanging around, information you can access on calls to help you sell? Take advantage of the fact they can't see you, and surround yourself with sales aids.
- 415.** When a committee is involved, ask your prospect if it would help if you were to address the committee on a conference call.
- 416.** If they ask about your price, that is evidence they could get value from your product/service. Your job is to raise that value higher than the price.
- 417.** Make a point to call one inactive customer per day. Mention the fact you've done business before, question to uncover needs similar to the ones that lead them to buy from you before, and then offer something of value. Calling 250 inactive customers in a year will likely get you FIVE TIMES more business than the same number of cold prospecting calls.

# Powerful Speaking

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- 418.** Your body positioning affects the way you sound. Right now, assume the position you would take if you were calling your biggest potential customer ever. Use that position for all of your calls.
- 419.** Be certain your tone of voice and enthusiasm are at as high a level all day as they were at the beginning of the day.
- 420.** Your attitude is conveyed about 20-30 times more powerfully over the phone than it is in person. Be certain your voice projects your positive attitude.
- 421.** You're not calling names, leads, or web inquirers. You're calling PEOPLE, with real needs, concerns, and desires.
- 422.** Open your mouth wider when speaking by phone. This helps you enunciate more clearly.
- 423.** Loud voices are annoying. Deepen your voice instead to make a point.
- 424.** **Articulation exercise:** Read this several times- "If, I, Place, an, invisible, comma, after, each, word, and, an, invisible, semicolon; after, some, words, my, speech, has, presence." This forces you to enunciate.
- 425.** Practice your tone and articulation by reading children's books aloud.
- 426.** Regardless of how many calls you placed or received today, your next one is the first one to that person. Treat it like the only one for the day.

- 427.** Whenever you greet someone on an incoming call, view it as escorting a friend into your home. You wouldn't be frowning or act indifferently. Greet them warmly, with enthusiasm.
- 428.** Practice tongue twisters to articulate clearly. Recite this one now, several times while picking up speed each time: "Frank phoned four pharmaceutical factories feeling fresh and fulfilled."
- 429.** Place a couple of warm-up non-sales calls at the beginning of the day to get your voice and mouth in gear.
- 430.** Eliminate "fillers" like "uh" and "ah" from your speaking. It detracts from your message, and makes you sound less intelligent.
- 431.** Perform an "articulation warm-up" before starting your calling for the day, in order to get your speaking mechanism in gear. Try repeating, "The tip of the teeth, the lips, and the gums."
- 432.** Many people speak in more of a monotone than they realize. Practice consciously taking words and ideas and punching them with more emphasis. It feels awkward initially (like all new habits) but becomes second nature.

# Effective Listening

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- 433.** **Pause after you ask a question.** Resist the tendency to answer for them, or to keep talking.
- 434.** **Take notes.** It helps you to not interrupt, and to recall key points of your phone conversation.
- 435.** **Words don't mean; PEOPLE mean.** Listen for the tones and feelings behind the words.
- 436.** **Visualize the person** speaking to you at the other end of the line. This helps you listen, as well as put enthusiasm in your voice.
- 437.** **Don't be flustered** when someone answers your call in an apparent rush. Many people do this naturally. Gauge their responses to your opening and initial questions. If they are running out the door, offer to call back at a better time.
- 438.** **To increase your attention** span on calls, after the prospect makes a statement, react by asking yourself, "How can I use this information to help this person buy?"
- 439.** **Pause after they** answer a question or make a statement.. This ensures you don't interrupt, and allows them to give you more information which will help you help them buy.
- 440.** **Clear your desktop** of distractions while on calls. Never read newspapers, memos, or anything else while they are talking. Give them 100% attention.
- 441.** **If someone** misunderstands your statement or question and begins answering something you really didn't ask, resist the tendency to interrupt. Remember, as long as they're talking, you might learn some valuable information.

- 442.** Listen 80% of the time on the phone, and talk 20%. What they have to say is much more important than what you have.
- 443.** Putting yourself in the prospect's position will help you to listen more effectively.
- 444.** Listen for the feelings behind the words. They might not always say what they really mean.
- 445.** Practice listening on the phone and off. Make a point to listen more carefully to everyone you come in contact with when you leave tonight.
- 446.** If you're presenting and hear someone else talking to your prospect in his background, simply stop talking yourself. Obviously he isn't hearing you. Then wait until he comes back.
- 447.** When talking, pretend you're holding a burning match. If you don't get feedback from them before the match reaches your fingers, you'll get burned!
- 448.** NEVER interrupt. It's rude, and deprives you of valuable information.
- 449.** Listen for activity in the prospect's background. If you detect he's right in the middle of something and distracted, offer to call back at a more convenient time.
- 450.** Be comfortable with silence on the phone.
- 451.** When you hear an emotional word or idea that gives you the itch to interrupt, write the word down instead. Wait until they finish, then ask them to go back to the previous idea.
- 452.** Silence doesn't mean they're resisting you. In face-to-face settings, people are often silent as they ponder their buying options.
- 453.** Force yourself to be silent more often in all of your face-to-face conversations today, and notice how much more you'll learn.

- 454.** Their desire to listen to you goes down in direct proportion to the amount of time YOU spend speaking.
- 455.** Be paranoid about talking too much. Every time you speak for more than 30 seconds, set off a mental alarm to remind yourself to get some feedback.
- 456.** Encourage your prospects to continue speaking with "reflective" listening phrases such as, "Go on," "Tell me more," "And then what happened," and, "Please continue."

# Using Persuasive Sales Language

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- 457.** Never begin an answer to a question with the word "no." It taints everything you say afterwards. Instead, say what you can do . . . what the possibilities are.
- 458.** Use the words "you" and "your" to help them visualize themselves already enjoying the results of what you have to offer.
- 459.** Saying "Do you understand?" or "Are you following me?" is insulting. Instead, place the burden on yourself: "Did I explain that clearly enough?"
- 460.** Be specific about times and dates. Don't say, "I'll call you sometime next week." Instead, ask, "Would next Thursday at 1:30 be a convenient time for you to speak with me again?"
- 461.** While in your car (preferably alone!) pick out a billboard, a building, or an object, and practice describing it in colorful, emotional, desirable terms. Use plenty of inflection. Avoid words like "thing" and "stuff."
- 462.** Use "self-disclosure" to build rapport. That means sharing of yourself as well as asking questions. For example, "I know what you mean. I do the same thing," or, "I've been in that situation too."
- 463.** Don't use five words when one will do. For example, use "now" instead of , "at this point in time." Use "because" instead of "due to the fact that." Use "many" instead of "a great number of." Think of the wordy phrases you use.

- 464.** **End calls with a positive**, instead of the self-demeaning, "I don't want to take any more of your valuable time." Simply say, "Thank you. I look forward to our next conversation."
- 465.** **When dealing with an irate customer**, don't refer to their issue as a complaint. Use terms like, "situation," "concern," "this matter," or "misunderstanding."
- 466.** **Avoid using the word "just"** to belittle yourself and your importance. For example, "I was just calling today . . ."
- 467.** **Avoid saying, "I was just** going through my records here and decided to give you a call . . ." That is impersonal, and doesn't make them feel special.
- 468.** **Don't ask**, "What don't you like about your vendor?" That could attack their decision-making ability. Instead, ask, "What would you like to receive that you might not be getting now?"
- 469.** **Avoid words that put** them on the spot, such as "Of course you will agree . . .," "Everyone knows that . . .," "And of course you'd want that, wouldn't you?"
- 470.** **Annoying words and phrases to avoid:** " . . . things like that," "uhhh," "I mean . . .," "you know."
- 471.** **The impressions you make** in your first two seconds of communication are so vivid, it takes another four minutes to add 50% more impression--positive or negative--to that communication./Bert Decker
- 472.** **To direct them back to** business after going off on a small-talk tangent, transition by saying, "Getting back to what we discussed earlier . . .," then ask a question.
- 473.** **People love to be right.** When you hear something you agree with, respond with, "I agree," "That's right!", "Great point," "Very perceptive," and others you come up with yourself.

- 474.**     **Avoid saying "I'll be honest with you . . ."** It's a waste of words. Plus, people might wonder what you were when you didn't say it.
- 475.**     **Avoid internal company jargon or acronyms.** It confuses the listener.
- 476.**     **Avoid the negative, "salesy" phrases,** "I'm sure you'll agree . . .", and, "Of course you know . . ." It's annoying, and usually causes resistance.
- 477.**     **Avoid the use of "disclaimers"** like "I might be wrong, but . . .," and, "I could be mistaken, but . . ." People want definite answers, not wishy-washiness.
- 478.**     **Use "when" instead of "if"** to help your prospect visualize himself enjoying your benefits. For example, "When you use this system, you'll find yourself breezing through your projects in a fraction of the time it took before."

# Prospecting

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**479.** Always start at the highest level at which you feel your decision could be made (or even one higher). It's better to be referred down, since you can drop the name of the higher-up who sent you.

**480.** When the screener coolly informs you that the person you're asking for on a prospecting call is no longer with the company, without missing a beat, ask, "Who took his/her place?"

**481.** Prior to your prospecting call to a decision maker, consider talking to actual users of your product/service within the organization. This will provide great information you can use to prepare your questions.

**482.** Get the free report, "The Top 10 Dumb Cold Calling Mistakes that Cause Failure and Resistance."  
<http://www.BusinessByPhone.com>

**483.** If you have customers you don't bother calling because they're small, think again. Are they really small, or are you thinking small? Are they buying things from your competitors they could get from you? Develop those accounts.

**484.** To help understand what motivates your prospects/customers, ask yourself, "What does making their mortgage payment rely on?" In other words, what are their most fundamental needs and concerns?

**485.** Have you ever said "no" when you really meant "maybe"? Prospects are the same way. Be persistent.

**486.** Whenever your prospect/customer divulges personal information about family, hobbies, interests, etc., write that information down. It can help build rapport when you bring up the topic on subsequent contacts.

- 487.** A more positive name for prospects: **unsold customers**.  
**Better yet: future** customers.
- 488.** *"You rarely, if ever, hear a person at the top of an organization say, 'It's not in the budget.' So where are you selling?"*David Peoples
- 489.** **When searching for prospects**, don't overlook your existing customers' companies. They can refer you to different people, divisions, departments, or subsidiaries who could buy what you sell.
- 490.** **Only have a prospect paged** on a prospecting call after you ask, "Is that the way he/she typically takes calls?" Otherwise, you might be interrupting an important activity, which could potentially annoy the prospect.
- 491.** **If the operator or screener** answers the phone, "ABC Company, can you hold?", and you know the name of your prospect or customer, respond with, "Holding for Joe Smith, please." You'll avoid the hold time.
- 492.** **Always ask for the NAME** of the person who makes the decisions regarding what you sell, as opposed to saying, "I'd like to speak with the person who . . ." This way, you won't be blindly connected, plus you can ask more questions of this person.
- 493.** **Calling a decision maker** without first learning anything about her or her situation is like saying to them, "I didn't feel this was important enough for me to do any research for."
- 494.** **Prospecting opening idea:** "We specialize in (fill in with RESULTS of what you do). To determine if this would be something you'd like more information on, I'd like to learn a little about your situation. Please tell me . . ."
- 495.** **When gathering information** on a prospect company, try the sales department. After all, these people like to talk, and can give you tremendously useful info on the company and its direction.

- 496.** **What business are you really in?** If you answer with the types of products or services you sell, you're wrong. You're in the business of delivering the results customers enjoy from owning and using your products/services.
- 497.** **For each of your main competitors,** determine where you have advantages. Then develop questions to help prospects actually tell you the competitors' weaknesses: "How long does it take for an outside sales rep to get back to you when you leave a message?"
- 498.** **Do you know why your customers REALLY buy from you?** Find out. Ask your best customers, "We appreciate your business and want to provide you with what you expect. What is it you like best about doing business with us?"
- 499.** **If you don't succeed totally** today on a prospecting call, qualify them for the future: "Pat, if situations changed, could you see yourself taking advantage of this offer?" If so, ask, "What would have to change?"
- 500.** **To keep sales growing,** you always need new business in the pipeline to replace what you'll eventually lose. Commit to a consistent number of prospecting calls per day, regardless of how well things might be going.
- 501.** **When prospecting, and seeking** a buyer with a difficult name, ask the operator or screener, "Yes, I'm looking for Dave . . . please help me with the last name here, it's S-M-A-. . . ." They'll say the name for you.

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