

Three Words That Will Help You Sell More

I'm frequently asked: "How do I close more sales?" This, of course, is a challenge that every sales-based organization faces. In my experience, the best and most useful answer is a very simple one.

Ask more questions!

Most sales professionals understand that effective qualifying can lead to more sales. Unfortunately, these same salespeople are too often focused only on the outcome of their own process (closing), and as a result they fail to ask effective questions of their prospects and customers. The end of the month draws near, they still haven't reached their sales targets, and the marketplace is fiercely competitive. So they focus on one thing: nailing down the business. The result is a hurried, rushed approach.

That's the way the majority of people sell. If you want to differentiate yourself from your competition, concentrate on what your prospect is trying to accomplish rather than on your own situation. Resist the temptation to jump quickly to a demonstration of your product or service. Instead, find out what's important to your prospect.

Salespeople have improved their performance by asking questions like these:

- "What are you trying to accomplish this quarter?"
- "What challenges do you face right now?"
- "If you had a magic wand, and could use it to create the ideal supplier, what would that supplier provide?"
- "If there was one thing you could improve about your existing situation, what would it be?"

Although this approach may sound simplistic, the truth is that questions like these will instantly distinguish you from most of your competitors. You will encourage your prospect to open up and you will initiate a meaningful, two-way dialogue. You will ask more, talk less, and close more sales.

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