Essential Sales Skills

How to Build Relationships and Have Conversations that Convert

oribelle marketing's

Sales labs

GROW YOUR SALES

Course Book

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Introduction

If you haven't done much one-on-one selling in the past, you may have a negative perception of the process. Many business owners hate the idea of selling because they see it as pushy, manipulative, or dishonest. This is the reputation of old-school hard-sell tactics – but when you use the right approach to convert prospects to customers, it won't be like that at all.

Customers are the foundation of your business and the reason it can exist and thrive. In order to get customers, you have to sell your product or service.

This doesn't mean you have to learn high-pressure sales techniques. Effective selling is about clarifying and meeting the prospect's needs. Making a sale gives you the opportunity to use your expertise to serve your customer in the best way you can. So think 'serving' rather than 'selling' and you'll feel confident in the process.

Rather than fixating on closing deals, focus on developing deeper relationships with your ideal customers. Using this approach, you'll see much greater success in the long-term. You'll be proposing the best, most relevant solutions to resolve your prospects' problems. When you do this, they'll naturally want to buy from you.

In this course, you'll discover that you don't need to be a 'natural salesperson' to be successful in selling. You'll learn how to develop the essential relationships that lead to sales and master key communication skills such as listening and questioning. You'll discover ways to collaborate with your prospects and coach them to make the right decision for their unique needs, so that they're completely satisfied with their purchase. By the end of this course, you'll appreciate just how natural the selling process can be, which will result in more sales and steady growth for your business.

Learning Objectives:

By the time you complete this course, you'll be able to:

- Recognize why you need to develop sales skills and how the right approach reflects your desire to serve your customers
- Uncover your blocks to selling and discover ways to overcome them, so that you can sell with ease and self-assurance
- Deepen your knowledge of your customers and yourself, so that you feel confident when you go into the sales process
- Start relationships with potential customers on the right note, so that prospects feel a connection to you and want to learn more
- Develop relationships with prospects based on serving their needs, which will naturally lead to sales opportunities
- Manage multiple relationships with prospects and customers efficiently and in a way that leads to more conversions and ongoing sales
- Actively listen to your prospects and customers, so that you don't jump to conclusions at any point during the sales process
- Use different types of questions to learn more about your prospect's situation and needs, so that you have a complete picture before developing a solution
- Provide information that helps prospects understand their situation and needs, so that they feel empowered to find the right solution
- Work together with prospects to identify the root cause of their problems, so they feel a part of the solution process
- Communicate the value of your proposed solution, so that your prospect recognizes and visualizes the impact it will have on them

- Ensure the sale goes smoothly, prospects don't back out at the last minute, and everyone is confident in the sales decision
- Consolidate and implement your learning and plan future action steps so you can achieve the goals you set for this course

This course is broken down into 5 major modules and individual lessons to take you step-by-step through acquiring powerful sales skills to help you achieve your business goals.

The modules follow a logical order, so while you can skip around if you want, it's best to work through them one at a time.

As you go through each module, use your Action Guide to help you complete the Action Steps at the end of each.

Expectations

Before we start the course, take a minute to think about what you want to get out of it.

In the Action Guide, write down three skills you expect to gain.

Now that you're clear about what you want this course to deliver, we can get started.

Module 1 – Selling Isn't Just for Salespeople

Many business owners who don't sell full-time dislike or even fear the idea of selling. Some do everything they can to avoid it. You may find yourself in this situation now, even though you know that you have to sell to stay in business. Direct advertising lead are different from referrals or people who have searched you out. Ads are run on multiple platforms displaying a product and a service they never knew they needed or existed. They were not looking for your product or service, but the ad drew them in and they decided they want to know more. Now it is time for you to consult and educate you prospects on your product and service and how it will benefit them in the long run.

In this module, you'll recognize the need to develop your sales skills so that you can truly help and serve your customers.

Why You Need to Develop Sales Skills

Sales may not be your profession, but you need to make sales if you want to have a profitable business. These may be online or offline sales, but the skills are the same.

Think a bit deeper about what selling actually is. It's an exchange of goods and services for money. In other words, you are giving something back when someone pays you money, so you have nothing to feel ashamed about.

But the impression persists that selling is sleazy, tacky, or even dishonest. If you resonate with this, then try changing the way you think about selling. Instead think:

- Selling is solving a problem for my customer
- Selling is serving them in the best way possible

You know that you want what's best for your customers, but you can't help them if you don't make the sale first.

Selling is about matching what you have to offer to what customers need, so it must always be customer-focused.

Your job when you're selling is to help your customer make a decision – the right one for them. You're their decision coach. And they may well come to work with you because of that decision.

Of course, the sales process is often a lengthy one and begins with you finding suitable leads before you make an offer. In this course, we are focusing on the key communication and relationship-building skills you need to master in order to sell successfully.

Depending on your business, you'll use sales skills in a variety of contexts, from outbound sales calls, to inbound sales called, to emails and texts.

Also depending on your type of services, you may be selling to other businesses . That's known as business-to-business and often abbreviated to B2B, such as a dealerships or custom shops. But you may sell to individuals, or business-to-consumer (B2C).

Your core sales skills will work for you in all situations.

Attributes of Customer-Focused Salespeople

Successful salespeople are not out to manipulate people into buying something they don't want. That's an old-school, high-pressure way of selling. It might've worked for a first sale, but it wouldn't have people coming back for more.

Customer-focused salespeople are:

- Committed to customer success
- 100% confident in their product or service and in themselves
- World-class communicators
- Enthusiastic educators
- Effective problem-solvers
- Efficient at building and managing relationships
- Excellent coaches

Be aware of your own strengths when it comes to these attributes. You might perform better at some than others. As long as you're committed to the customer and totally confident in your offering, you can develop the other strengths. You'll be improving in all these aspects during the course.

Key Takeaways:

- Selling means matching what you have to offer to what customers need.
- You can improve your core sales skills as long as you're committed to your customer's success.

Action Steps:

1. Identify the contexts in your business where you need to use your sales skills and with whom, e.g. in one on one sales conversations, emails, phone calls, etc.
2. Rate yourself on a scale of 1 – 10 on the following statements. Note where you are strong and where you need to develop (this course will help you):
    a. I am committed to customer success
    b. I am 100% confident in my offerings and in myself
    c. I am a world-class communicator
    d. I am an enthusiastic educator
    e. I am an effective problem-solver
    f. I am efficient at building and managing relationships
    g. I am an excellent coach

Module 2 – Successful Selling Starts Here

A great deal of preparation goes into selling, and the majority of that preparation has to do with preparing yourself.

In this module, you'll learn how to overcome your resistance to selling and build your confidence so that you can achieve the best outcome for both you and your customer.

- **Lesson 1: Develop the Mindset for Sales Success**
- **Lesson 2: Prepare to Sell with Confidence**

Lesson 1: Develop the Mindset for Sales Success

Why Making Sales Feels Difficult

How you feel about selling will influence your ability to sell. If you think it's sleazy, manipulative, or immoral, then of course you'll find selling difficult.

As we said in the last module, old-school selling was like this, but now businesses want to sell only what the consumer wants and needs. Your job is to match your solution to their need.

How you feel about yourself will also influence your selling. This is especially true if you are selling your own services.

Every business person doubts themselves at some time or other. But if your general level of self-esteem is low, this will affect your ability to sell until you do something about it. Self-esteem is the value you put on yourself. You can judge its level by how quickly you recover from a set-back, such as a storm of criticism or a launch that flopped. If you pick yourself up quickly and carry on with a light heart, this shows a high level of self-esteem. If you can't go on with your business because of it, your self-esteem is low. Most people are somewhere in between.

When you're preparing a launch or a sales meeting, do you ask yourself things like:

Am I worth what I'm charging?

Who am I to know that my product will really help people?

What if they say 'no'?

- Am I worth what I'm charging?
- Who am I to know that my product will really help people?
- What if they say 'no'?

These internal questions indicate a lack of self-esteem. Take those questions and turn them into positive statements. For example:

I'm worth every cent of what I'm charging

I'm an expert in my field and I know my offering helps people

It's okay if they say no. My offer isn't right for everyone

- I'm worth every cent of what I'm charging
- I'm an expert in my field and I know my offering helps people
- It's okay if they say no. My offer isn't right for everyone

Be aware of these thoughts, as they can trip you up when selling. For example, if you doubt your worth, it's going to be hard to talk about and believe in your pricing. Or you'll price your products and services so low that they will be seen as worthless.

Can you see how these internal questions prevent you from selling successfully? If you don't value yourself and your work, you can't expect customers to see the value in what you're selling.

Change Your Mindset

Holding onto negative ideas about selling will inevitably hold you back from ever becoming a true sales success. Before you can even start developing sales skills, you need to change your mindset about selling.

You know that you want to serve your customers and help them solve their problems. Remind yourself to think about each sales interaction as 'serving' or 'problem solving' rather than 'selling.' They may need another service, or a combination of services, other than the ad they came in on.

If you've had your business for a while, you've certainly had some sales success over the years. This is proof you can sell. But it's easy to remember the sales 'failures' and forget the wins.

One way to turn this perception around is to focus on your past sales successes. Those were the times you made a sale and received money, not just when someone said they would buy and then changed their minds.

Conduct an analysis by answering these questions:

What was the situation?

What led up to the success?

What skills did you use to bring success?

Where there any negative consequences?

If so, why was that?

What might you do better next time?

- What was the situation?
- What led up to the success?
- What skills did you use to bring success?
- Where there any negative consequences? (E.g. the person retracted, canceled the contract, etc.)
- If so, why was that?
- What might you do better next time?

One thing is certain: Not everyone will buy from you and some people will say no. For many business people, this is tough to deal with and you may feel rejected, angry, or disappointed when this happens.

Since rejection is inevitable, you have to find a way to handle it that leaves you feeling confident, not discouraged. This might sound impossible right now, but you can do it with a change of mindset. Here are some tips:

- Don't take it personally
- Reframe it and put it in context
- Learn from it and identify skills you need to work on
- Use any feedback about your offer
- Be happy about new relationship and potential lead

- Don't take it personally. It isn't about you. When someone says they don't want to buy from you, it's the offer they're rejecting, not you as a person.
- Reframe it and put it in context. Think of all the exciting and interesting things going on in your life and in the world. Someone saying 'no' one day to one offer is nothing compared to that.
- Learn from it and identify the skills you need to work on. Perhaps you didn't get the match quite right between what the customer was looking for and what you were offering. Next time make sure this doesn't happen.
- Use any feedback about your offer. If a customer questions the price or the features, then use that information to rethink your offer. You may decide not to change it but at least you can understand why that person said they weren't interested.
- Be happy you have a new relationship that could lead to sales later. They may not buy this time but if you establish the right connection, you leave the door open for them to come back.

Everyone experiences setbacks. It's the choice you make after you fall down that makes the difference. Highly successful salespeople don't dwell on their self-doubt because they know it serves no purpose. Instead of doubting yourself, cultivate ways to bounce back.

Key Takeaways:

- How you feel about selling will influence your ability to sell.
- How you feel about yourself will also influence your selling, especially if you are selling your own services.

Action Steps:

1. Write down all the questions you ask yourself during the sales process. What do they say about your opinion of yourself? How do these questions block you from selling successfully? Then rewrite these questions as positive statements.

2. Analyze your past sales successes. Write down at least 3 times you made a sale and received money and answer these questions:

    a. What was the situation?

    b. What led up to the success?

    c. What skills did you use to bring success?

    d. Where there any negative consequences? (E.g. the person retracted, cancelled the contract, etc.). If so, why was that?

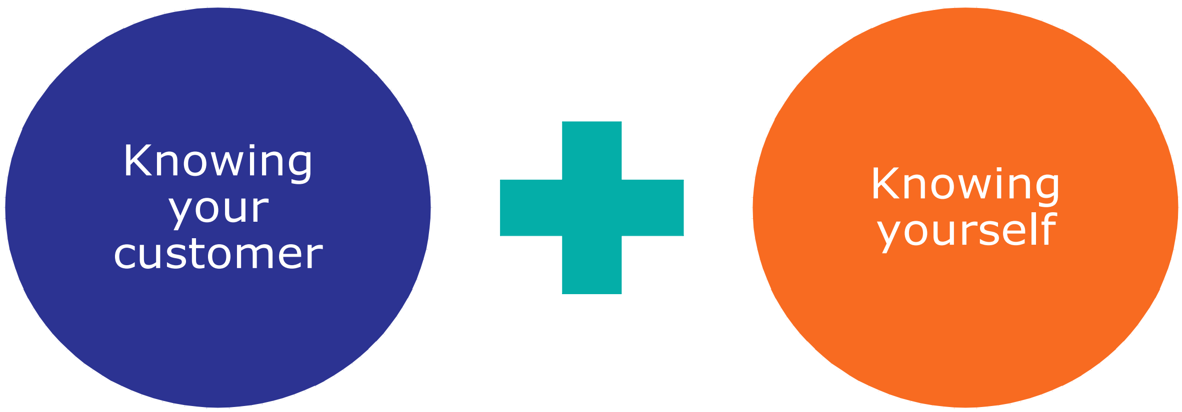
    e. What might you do better next time?

3. What do you need to change about your mindset to make selling easier for you? How will you do that? For example, if hearing the word 'no' takes away all your confidence, what methods can you use in the future to reframe this, such as putting it in the context of your whole life?

Lesson 2: Prepare to Sell with Confidence

Customers First

Being confident about selling involves two main things:



- Knowing your customer
- Knowing yourself

Let’s begin with the customer, as that’s where most of your focus should be.

Successful business starts with your target market. Identifying and getting to know your audience is the first and most important step.

Start by reviewing the types of customers who could benefit from your offers.

- New Car Buyers
- Vehicles that are still worth a high dollar value
- Vehicles that are very large and take a lot of time to maintain
- Professional service providers (e.g. Dealers or Performance Shops)

Next, get more specific about who the person is behind the type. Describe them as if they were a friend. Do not just look to past clients. This means including:

- Age
- Gender
- Location
- Education
- Job title
- Income
- Family circumstances
- Interests
- Hobbies
- Dreams and aspirations

You may have done this before, but do it again. Failure to define specific target customers is one of the most common reasons businesses never thrive, so don't let this happen to you. When you know your ideal customer from head to toe, you can decide if they will be a good fit when you go into the sales process.

Try to judge whether they have the budget for your offer. This is probably easier when selling B2B as departments will usually have set budgets. **But don't make assumptions, especially about individuals.**

Use income as a guide only. Some customers will do all they can to find the money if they're sure you have the solution that's right for them. Offering financing opens a whole new world to you. Now you talk about monthly payment vs. price.

Build a Complete Picture

Now it's time to narrow your research to individual customers and representatives of businesses you've identified. This is time well spent and is relatively easy to do using information available online.

- When selling B2C, find out all you can about the individual by looking on LinkedIn, Facebook, Instagram, other social media, their website, etc. This may take time but can help if your are struggling. This is for cold calling. This approach has nothing to do with inbound leads.
- When selling B2B, check the business's website, any social media pages, industry info, ask colleagues who know them, etc. When you know enough about the business, find the name of an appropriate contact person. Research them as you did with B2C.

Your aim is to build up as full a picture as you can before you reach out.

Conduct a Suitability Check

Once you've done your research and before you make contact, ask yourself:

- Is this my ideal customer
- Can I really help them solve their problem?
- Am I genuinely excited about this project?
- Does this client have a budget I can work with?
- Do my values align with their business or aims?

- Is this my ideal customer in terms of industry, size, or revenue?
- Can I really help them solve their problem?
- Am I genuinely excited about this project?
- Does this client have a budget I can work with?

Use these questions to check the suitability of existing leads before you take them further. This helps you qualify them as potential customers and avoid wasting your (or their) time.

Of course, it isn't all about you finding them. You may have people who find *you* and come to you asking for information about what you do. Conduct your suitability check on them too and don't be afraid to say 'no' to them. They may not be a fit for your offers or they may simply be someone you don't want as a customer.

Remember, people are looking for solutions. If you are asked to a meeting or a one-on-one call, these people already think you can help overcome their challenges, so you're on your way to a sale if you want it.

Your Knowledge

Knowing yourself is the second part of your preparation to sell with confidence. You need to be 100% confident in your product or service and know it inside and out.

If you're proud of what you have to offer and can **talk about it with enthusiasm**, this will come across to the customer. **Get excited about it and believe in it fully.**

Be confident in the price you have set for your offer. If you have calculated it logically and it reflects the true value to the customer, then it's the right price. Even if this is the case, you may still feel uncomfortable. If so, rehearse talking about the price until it sits well with you.

Before getting to the sales discussion, decide in advance about any options you are ready to offer to meet the customer's needs, such as any discounts you can make. But don't go to the lowest denominator just to get a sale. Accept that your product is not for everyone.

The key is to find out who really wants what you have to offer and who is willing and able to pay for it.

Key Takeaways:

- Preparation is key to sales success. Find out all you can about prospects before you talk to them.
- Make sure you're 100% confident in your product or service.

Action Steps:

1. Describe 3 types of customers that could benefit from your offers.
2. Write down a description of your ideal customer, e.g. age, gender, education, location, job title, interests, etc. Include their budget.
3. Name 3 potential customers who fit your ideal. Note down all the information you can find out about them. Ask yourself:
    a. Is this my ideal customer in terms of industry, size, or revenue?

   b. Can I really help them solve their problem?
   c. Am I genuinely excited about this project?
   d. Does this customer have a budget I can work with?
   e. Do my values align with their business or aims?

4. Write down all the things you are proud of in yourself, your offers, and your business.

Module 3 – Build Relationships That Lead to Sales

Selling starts with relationships. Focus on forming connections and having conversations to nurture your contacts and you'll be well on your way to sales success.

In this module, you'll master the skills for building and managing the types of relationships that lead to sales.

- **Lesson 1: Initiating Relationships**
- **Lesson 2: Developing Relationships**
- **Lesson 3: Managing Relationships**

Lesson 1: Initiating Relationships

You Need Relationships to Make Sales

At the beginning of the sales process, you'll identify a variety of leads. Then you need to be able to initiate, build, and manage relationships with them. We'll look at how to do each of these in this module.

The relationships you build are not just for this sale, but for future sales opportunities as well. If the relationships you cultivate are beneficial to the customer, then they will naturally lead to referrals and more prospects.

Let's start with initiating the relationship. At this stage, it isn't about selling. This takes the pressure off you and you can focus on your most important skill: listening. You'll learn more about developing active listening to build relationships in the next module.

For now, it means that when you meet someone, listen to what they say and don't try to push a solution on them.

Ways to Build Personal Connections

In the last module you researched your customer profiles, so by now you know a great deal about your ideal prospects.

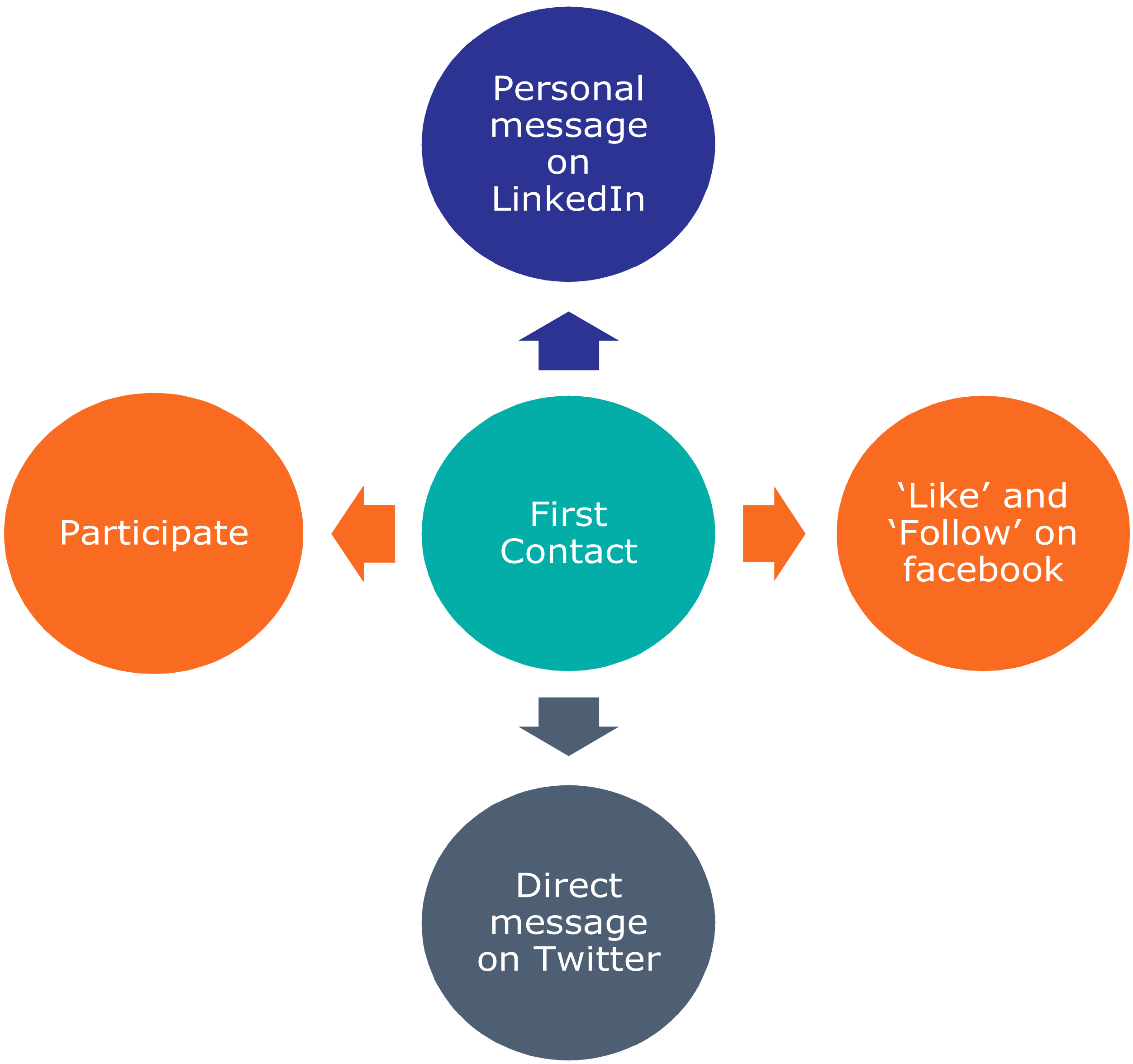
Your goal is to build a personal connection with them. If you've discovered you have something in common, such as you have the same vehicle, went to the same school or you both have the same interests, mention it. This type of information sets you apart from everyone else, and they'll remember you for it.

Always show a genuine interest in your prospects. This will be easier when you've done your preparatory research. When you're genuine, it builds trust.

If you don’t build trust at this initial stage, it’ll be much harder to do it later in the sales process.

Use Social Media to Take the First Step

Once you’ve identified a list of potential customers, or leads come in, you can make the first contact through their social media platforms. For example



- Contact someone who's written something you agree with on LinkedIn and ask to connect. Send them a personalized message to make the first contact.
- 'Like', and 'follow' a potential customer on Facebook. If you can tell you share their values and opinions, then privately message them to tell them so.
- Direct message leads on Twitter if they've tweeted something that's helped you in your work. Here is a video for you.
- Participate in your prospects' online conversations wherever they interact on social media.

Before you start contacting people, make sure your profile is up to date and communicating your brand the way you want it to.

If you already know the person or know of them, then you'll approach them differently. For example, if a colleague has put you in touch with a prospect, use personal methods to connect such as a direct email or phone call.

However you find potential customers, a genuine connection will make them feel like they can relate to you. In this way, you build rapport and trust which are essential to sales success.

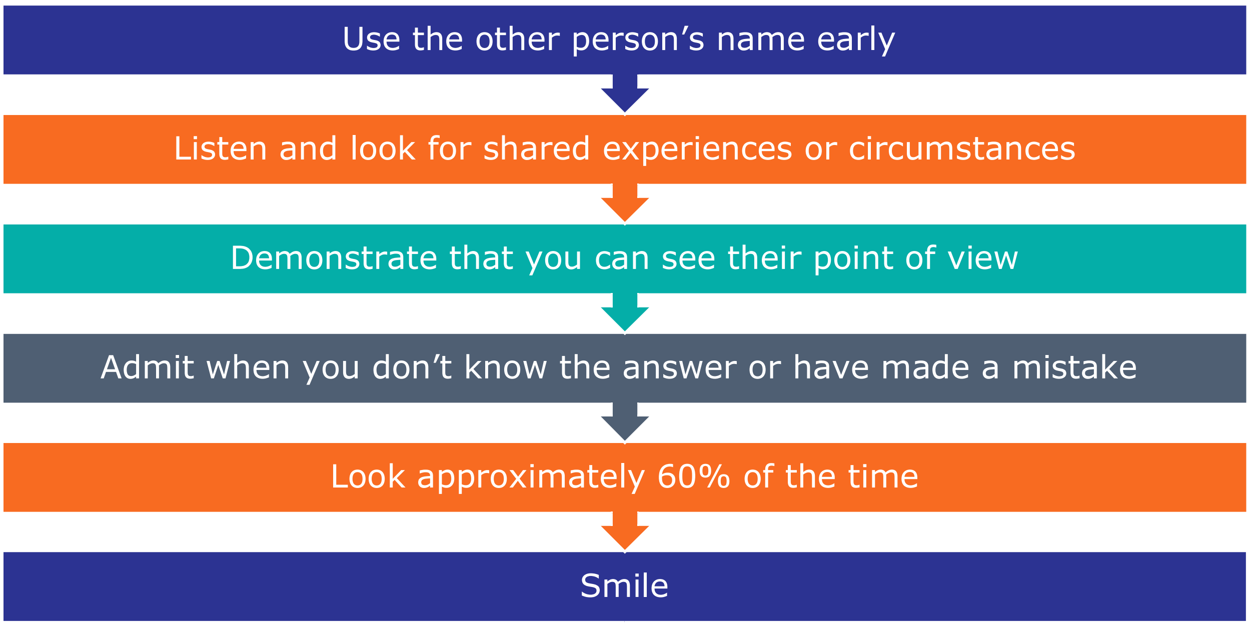
Rapport Building

If you have a negative view of sales, you may see building rapport as a ploy to make a superficial connection – but this isn't true. Building rapport simply means getting on the same wavelength as someone else. It's a natural thing and takes place during all human interactions. If you've ever had the experience of meeting someone for the first time and feeling you've known them for ages, that's because you are naturally in rapport with each other.

When you're building relationships, you need to be more conscious of the rapport building process. It's always easier to build rapport with someone who seems to be very like you or who shares your interests.

Some of your prospects will not fit into this category and therefore you will have to work harder with them to develop your relationship.

Here are some key ways to build rapport from the start:



- Use the other person's name early in the conversation.
- Listen to what the other person is saying and look for shared experiences or circumstances
- Demonstrate that you can see their point of view
- Admit when you don't know the answer or have made a mistake
- Look at the other person for approximately 60% of the time but don't stare. (this is a one on one meeting)
- Smile. People can tell tell when you are smiling on the phone.

When your focus is on listening to the other person and understanding their needs, you're likely to build rapport quickly.

Key Takeaways:

- The relationships you build are not just for this sale, but future sales too.
- Show a genuine interest in your potential customers to help build rapport.

Action Steps:

1. Choose 3 potential customers who fit your ideal customer profile. They could be the 3 you identified in the last module or 3 others.
    a. Decide by which method you will take the first step to initiate a relationship, e.g. email, social media, call, etc.
    b. What will you say?
    c. Take that action and note the result.
2. Imagine you're going to have an initial sales conversation with someone. Plan how you will build rapport with them from the start.
    a. Practice with a fellow student (if taking the course live). Have a 5 minute 'conversation' taking turns to be the customer and the salesperson.
    b. If you're a self-paced learner, ask a friend or colleague to help. Give them details about your prospect first so they'll get a sense of how to respond.
    c. Ask the other person how good you were at establishing rapport.

Lesson 2: Developing Relationships

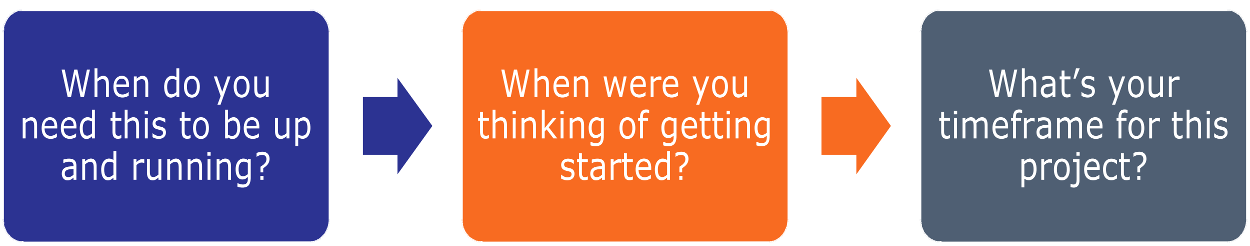
Take Your Relationships to the Next Level

Once you've initiated a relationship, you need to develop it. You'll do this by using your key listening and questioning skills.

At this stage, you want to start exploring the prospect's needs and considering if you can help them. We'll look at how to do this in the next module.

One important aspect to establish is timing. This is the moment to do that if you have enough information. For example, find out if a customer wants something installed by a certain date. Then you can help them work backwards from that date.

Ask helpful questions to start, such as:



- When do you need this to be up and running?
- When were you thinking of getting started?
- What's your timeframe for this project?

Don't be pushy – you're still developing the relationship and they may not be ready to talk about purchasing yet.

Another key point to establish if you sense there's a potential sale is to make sure you target the true decision maker. That's usually the person who controls the budget and who gives the final 'yes' or 'no' to the purchase.

Who this is will depend on the type of customer:

- In a larger business, this could be the CFO or head of department
- In a small to medium sized business, this could be the managing director or CEO
- In a B2C situation, this could be the biggest earner in the family.

Getting to the right person at this stage can save you time later when it comes to the buying decision, as you don't need to establish a relationship with a new person or group of people.

Best Practices and Tactics

Here are some ways you can take the relationship further and build on your initial contact.

Be genuinely helpful where you can to your prospect

Don't hide behind your computer

Delight your customers after the sale

Keep in touch with potential customers

- Be genuinely helpful where you can to your prospect. For example:
  - Share their content with your network to give them increased visibility
  - Connect them with a person they would benefit from knowing so they can expand their network
  - Send them a piece of content they would find helpful and useful. This could be your content or someone else's
    - Recommend them to someone else who might be able to help them with another problem they have
- Don't hide behind your computer. Get out and meet people or schedule a Skype call when the time is appropriate.
  - If you're in their town, passing through or at a trade show, invite them to join you or drop by
  - Organize local events if you have customers in your neighborhood and make sure you invite prospects
    - Attend meetings at your Chamber of Commerce or professional body where you can arrange to meet up with people you've only contacted on social media
- Have a customer service strategy set up so you can delight your customers after the sale. You don't want to fail them after they've decided to purchase. Set down exactly what you can offer the customer including delivery times, customer support resources, response times, and so on.
- Set up a system to keep in touch with potential customers
  - Sign up to an email marketing platform such as MailChimp, ActiveCampaign, or Aweber if you don't have one, or even Gmail to start
  - Develop a sequence of emails you can automate which help educate prospects and encourage them to keep in touch

- Personalize your messages
- Don't use devious ways, e.g. "Re: XXX" in the title when you haven't been in contact before

Key Takeaways:

- Assist your customer in developing a timeline for their project so you can help them work backwards from that date.
- Be genuinely helpful to prospects without thinking of making sales.

Action Steps:

1. Look at your list of people you've started building a relationship with.
    a. Identify 5 names you can help this week with useful information.
    b. Decide what you can do to help. E.g. sharing their content on social media.
    c. Choose how you'll contact them again, e.g. email, private message, etc.
    d. Take action and note the results.
2. Check that your customer service strategy is defined and ready for when your customer is ready. Make any necessary adjustments.
3. Sign up to an email marketing platform if you don't have one. Develop a sequence of emails you can use to keep in touch with potential customers and use your email system to automate them.

Lesson 3: Managing Relationships

Be Efficient in Relationship Management

You now have a list of potential customers whom you know you can help. You know they're interested in looking at solutions you can provide. You also have lists of others who are at the initial stage and some you haven't even contacted yet.

It can get stressful juggling leads and customers and keeping track of where you are in the relationship-building process with them. Therefore, you need to be efficient. Otherwise your productivity will suffer and you might let a valuable customer slip through your hands.

The best way to handle this is to employ systems and automation. This will ensure you record whom you've contacted, when, and what the result was.

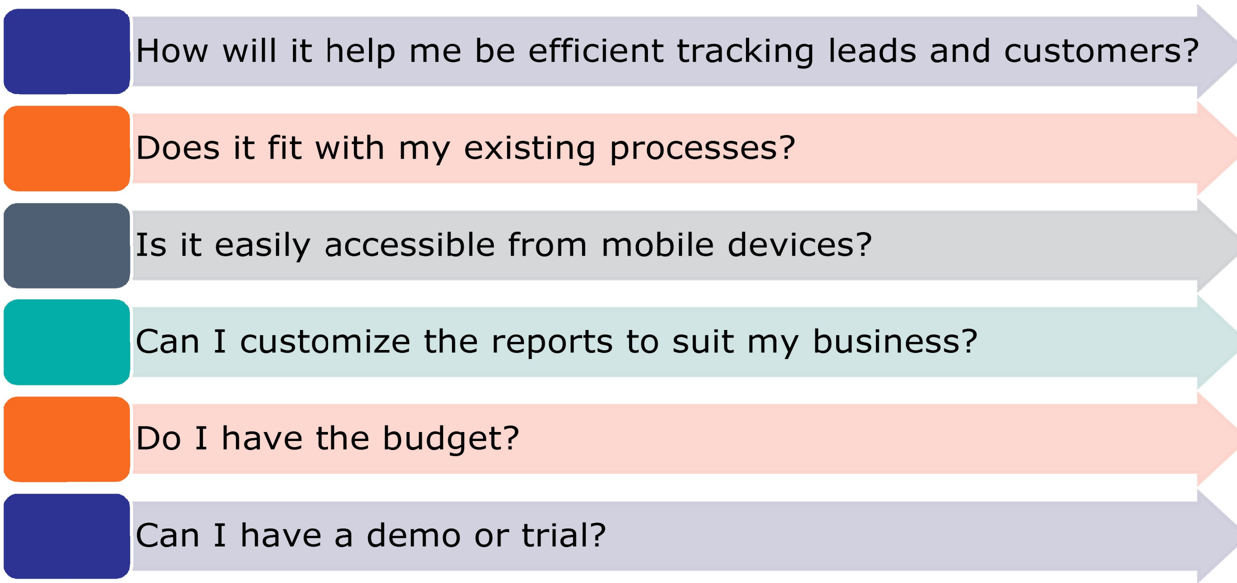
The email marketing platform you set up in the last lesson is your crucial first step with this. Get prepared with your email sequences uploaded and scheduled to go before you dive into selling.

Using customer relationship management (CRM) software takes it a step further by making it easy to keep track of prospects and sales. Some options include Zoho CRM, Pipedrive, Agile CRM, ActiveCampaign, HubSpot, Keap (formerly Infusionsoft), and Salesforce. In addition to relationship tracking, most of these programs provide online reports and analytics to help monitor your sales metrics over time.

But they come at a cost (both money and set-up time) so decide on your needs before investing in a CRM. You need to identify the problem you want to solve and the information you want to gather, otherwise you'll be collecting data for the sake of it. For example, you need to track leads and lead activity and monitor your customer base, but do you need team members to have access to the data?

If you don't have a team, this clearly doesn't make sense.

Here are some questions you can ask yourself before you research solutions:



- How will it help me be efficient in tracking leads and customers?
- Does it fit with my existing processes?
- Is it easily accessible from mobile devices?
- Can I customize the reports to suit my business?
- Do I have the budget?
- Can I have a demo or trial?

Check your existing email platform first to see if it can deliver what you want as many have CRM applications. There are also a plethora of tools that can be integrated with email systems to give you CRM capability, e.g. Zapier, Bitrix24, or Google Contacts.

Choose what works best for your business and what will help your business grow. Then set it up to handle your existing and future customers.

Tips for Managing Relationships

- Schedule time on your calendar for regular focus on relationship management. Whatever systems you use, it's important to set aside time to check in on your relationships, prospects, and customers. Plan when and how to follow-up with prospects.
- Don't rely on automation to take the relationship further for you. However useful your CRM system is, it can't replace personal contact when it comes to relationship building.
- Continue to use the tactics you identified in the last lesson and build on them.

Key Takeaways:

- Take the stress out of juggling leads with a CRM system to suit your business.
- Keep developing the relationship by personal contact.

Action Steps:

1. Write down your needs for tracking and monitoring leads and customers.
2. Research CRM solutions for your business.
    a. Investigate relationship management integrations available for your existing email marketing platform.
    b. Look at dedicated CRM systems.
    c. Compare them and choose what is right for your business now.
    d. Set up the appropriate CRM solution.

Module 4 – Customer-Focused Sales Skills

Good salespeople are not born. They are made from people who are willing and eager to invest time and energy into learning the key skills that will lead to sales success.

In this module, you'll develop the necessary skills for helping your customers decide on the right solution for their needs, whether or not that ends up being your own offer.

- **Lesson 1: Listening**
- **Lesson 2: Asking Questions**
- **Lesson 3: Educating**
- **Lesson 4: Collaborating**
- **Lesson 5: Communicating Value**
- **Lesson 6: Coaching To the Close**

Lesson 1: Listening

Why You Need To Be Good At Active Listening

Active listening is the most important skill any salesperson can learn. It's called "active listening" because it is not a passive activity. It demands focus, concentration, and mental effort. And it includes speaking. Sometimes we are so busy "listening" that we forget that people need a response.

When you're using active listening, you are genuinely interested in understanding what the other person is thinking, feeling, and wanting. You are active in checking your understanding before you respond. PUT ALL DISTRACTIONS AWAY WHEN SPEAKING TO A PROSPECT.

Real communication is very hard to achieve. We tend to judge, evaluate, approve, or disapprove before we really understand the frame of reference from which the other person is speaking.

Most People Hear But Don't Listen

In general, people hear but do not listen. They may hear what the other person has to say, but they don't take the extra step to actually listen and understand it.

There are a couple key reasons for this:

People allow their internal filters to get in the way.

We all have filters which act like barriers and make active listening more difficult. These are often based on our personal beliefs about what is being said and the judgments we make about the speaker or the message. You may think that the vehicle is too old but it may have been passed down from their Grandfather and it is precious to them.

You need to be aware of your barriers to active listening so that you can overcome them. They could include customers who:

- Speak more quickly or more slowly compared to your usual speaking speed
- Have an accent unfamiliar to you
- Use jargon you don’t understand
- Give too much detail, some of which is irrelevant so you switch off
- Say something that interests you so much that you stop listening and go off on your own thoughts.

People also allow their preoccupations to distract them.

If you’re thinking of something else when you’re “listening,” your listening won’t be very accurate. For example:

- You’re stressed because you have too much to do and you’d rather be doing something else
- You’re desperate to make a sale so you’re planning the next question in your head trying to drive the conversation to the decision point
- You’re in pain because you’ve just pulled your back
- You’re hungry because it’s late and you didn’t have breakfast
- You’re tired because your kids kept you up all night

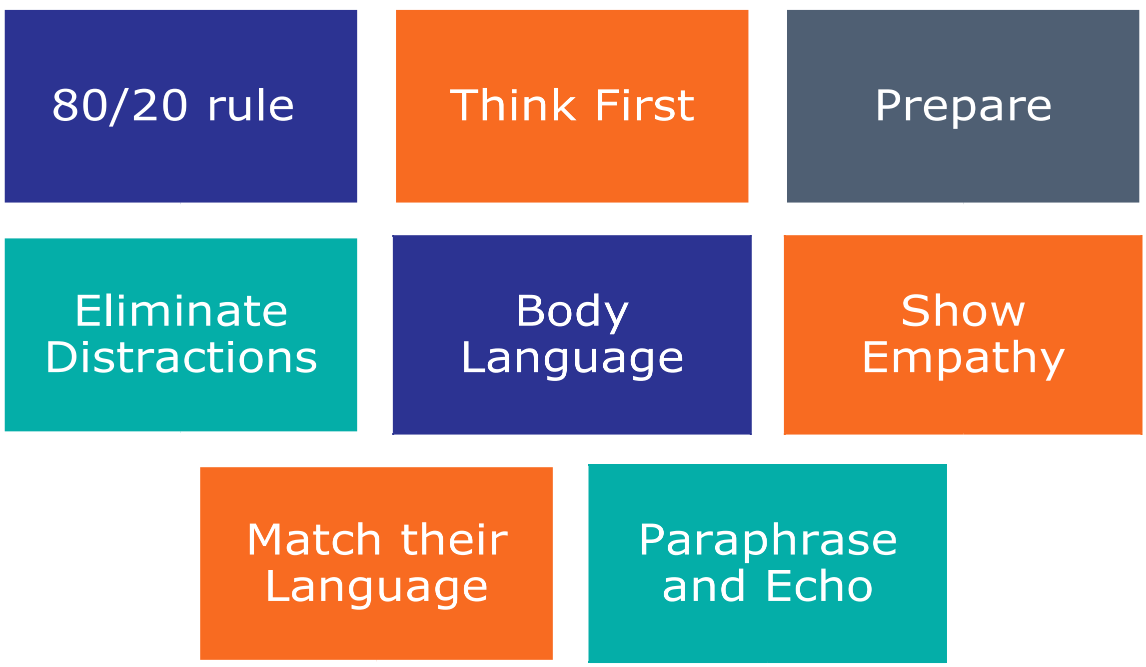
These things and more happen to us all. But you have to set them aside if you want to perfect your listening skills.

Evaluate your own listening skills using the assessment in the Action Guide. This will give you a starting point and you can identify what you need to do to improve this all-important skill.

Tips for Effective Active Listening

Active listening is the single most useful and important listening skill you can use when you want to build a relationship and of course, when you want to make a sale.

So let’s look at ways to improve your active listening:



- In any conversation, you should be listening much more than speaking. You can use the 80/20 rule as a guideline and try to speak for only 20% of the time. If you can't manage this yet, then ensure that you let the other person speak for at least 60% of the time.

- When it comes to speaking, think first. Try not to interrupt, anticipate what you think they want to say, or make assumptions. If you feel tempted to jump in while they are talking, don't.

- Prepare yourself to listen actively. This means dealing with anything on your mind first. Then you can give your full attention to the other person. Keep your focus on them and don't do other things at the same time. For example, if you're on a phone call with a customer, don't look at your emails when they are talking.

- Suggest a quiet place to talk where you won't be interrupted if you can. It's very distracting to be in a noisy or busy environment and it will only hinder your listening skills.

- Listen with your eyes and heart as well as your ears. People don't only communicate with words but also with gestures, looks, silences, and so on. When you actively listen to someone, you'll pick up things they aren't putting into words.

- Show empathy. This means seeing the ideas and attitudes expressed from the other person's point of view. Don't confuse empathy with sympathy. Sympathy takes over the conversation from the other person and adds your own take on the situation. You use phrases like "I know what you mean" - but you can't know what they mean. Instead empathize by saying "That sounds like it was difficult for you" and ask "Can you explain what that means to you?"

- Match your language to theirs to reinforce the rapport. Listen carefully to the words they use and use the same types of words in your conversation.

  For example, if someone often uses 'visual' words like 'My *vision* is…' 'I *see* what you mean' 'I'm going to be *looking* at that tomorrow' then use visual words in your sentences, e.g. 'let's *look* at that together' 'shall we *focus* on that?' '*Imagine* you had…'

Or they may have a key phrase that they use and repeat often. You can use the same words or a paraphrase back to them.

- Show you've listened and this will encourage your customer to say more. Use:
  - Paraphrasing: rephrase the other person's own words and reflect them back to show you've heard and understood and want them to elaborate further
  - 'Echoing': play back the last word with a questioning tone.

Include these tips to be more effective in your active listening and keep working to improve your listening skills.

Key Takeaways:

- Active listening is the most important skill of any salesperson.
- Listening isn't a passive activity. It demands focus, concentration, and preparation.

Action Steps:

1. Evaluate your own listening skills using questions in Action Guide.
2. Find someone who is prepared to have a 15-minute conversation with you, e.g. someone in the group, a colleague, or even a family member:
    a. Set up to record the conversation, e.g. on your phone. (Once you get into your conversation, you will become less conscious of recording).
    b. Discuss a topic of mutual interest without taking notes. This could be about what you think of active listening, holidays you've had, the last film you saw, etc.
    c. At the end of your time each of you should write down as much as they can remember about what you each said, word for word if possible.
    d. Listen to the recording and evaluate how well you listened by answering these questions:

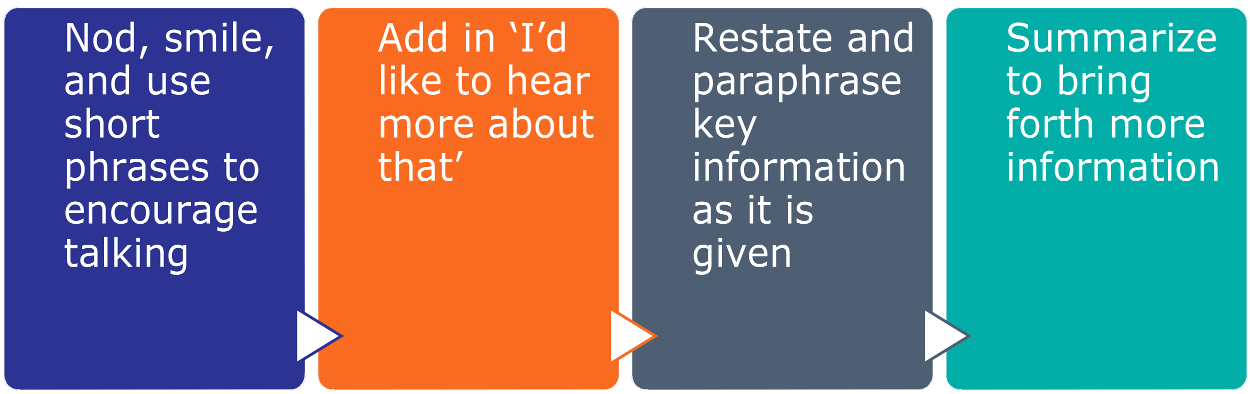
- How accurately could you recall the conversation?
- If there were inaccuracies, what caused them?
- What helped/hindered your active listening? What barriers to active listening were you aware of?
- What did you learn from this exercise?

Lesson 2: Asking Questions

Ask the Right Question

Generally, in a conversation you want to get the other person talking.

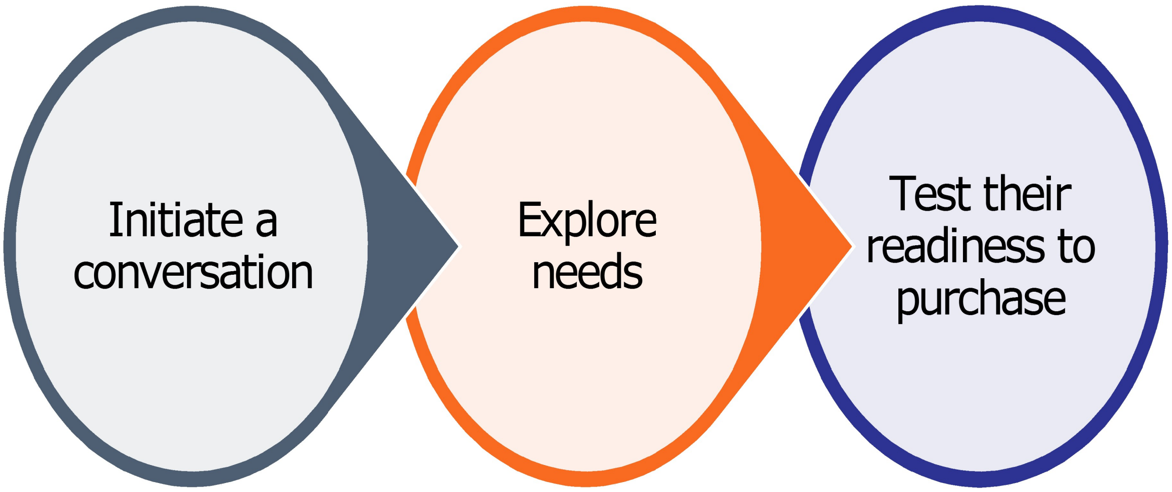
Before we get on to actual questions, here are some other tactics that will achieve this:



- Nodding, smiling, and short phrases like 'I see that' 'That's interesting' 'Understood' will encourage the person to keep talking.
- Add in 'I'd like to hear more about that' to get them talking.
- Restate and paraphrase key information as it is given. This helps people clarify their thinking, e.g. "What you're saying is …"
- Summarize to bring forth more information, e.g. "To recap on the current situation …"

So when do you need questions?

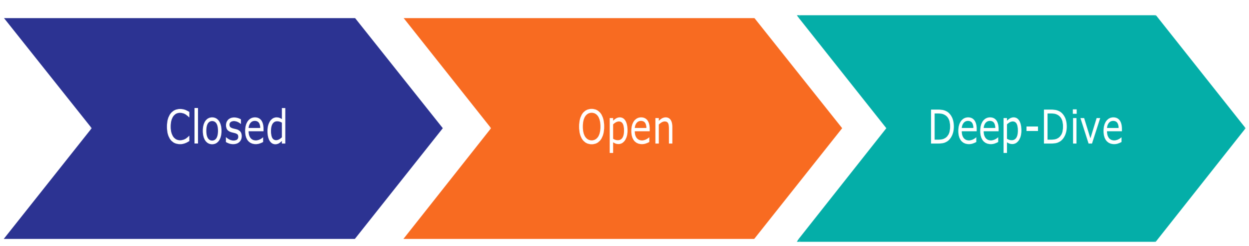
Most of the time you need to listen, but you also need to ask questions, for example to:



- Initiate a conversation
- Explore needs
- Test their readiness to purchase

Effective questioning goes hand-in-hand with active listening. It also needs preparation as you need to think about the type of questions that will be the most effective in the situation.

There are three main types of questions:



- Closed – questions that invite a yes/no answer and can therefore stop a conversation in its tracks, e.g.

  "Do you have a problem with your paint?"

- Open – questions that get people talking, e.g.

  "What's the problem with your paint?"

- Deep-dive – questions that probe and get them thinking, e.g.

  "How do you think this paint issue affects the value?"

Ask questions to clarify your understanding and don't pretend you understand something a customer has said to you. Get additional information from them and then expand the discussion.

Which Types of Questions Are Appropriate For Which Situation?

Questioning shouldn't feel like interrogation to the person you're speaking to. Neither should you run through a list of questions you have in your head like a robot.

You need to choose the question that's appropriate to the situation. Questions help you understand your potential customers' needs and the root causes of their problems.

Start the search for pain points by asking questions to help the customer feel comfortable. Then move to more focused, deep-dive questions so they reveal additional information.

When you want to close the sale and need a clear answer, closed questions are useful, e.g. “Are you ready to go ahead?” or “If that answers all of your questions, shall we agree on a price?"

Use the different question types to ask the same question but at a different level.

- For example, a deep-dive question example could be:

  “What makes you think ‘X’ has been such a big problem for you?”

- Example of an easier open question could be:

  “When did you notice this problem?”

- An example of a closed question could be:

  “Have you tried any solutions?”

Key Takeaways:

- Effective questioning goes hand-in-hand with active listening as a key skill for selling.
- Be flexible in your questioning and choose the types of questions needed for each stage of the conversation

Action Steps:

1. Complete the exercise in the Action Guide to change closed questions to open and deep-dive questions.
2. Practice asking different types of questions and seeing the differences:
    a. Choose someone you'd like to get to know better, e.g. another student in this course, a current customer, or a colleague.
    b. Write down a series of questions to ask them - using closed, open, and deep-dive.
    c. Note the effect of each question type on their responses, e.g. A closed question didn't provoke much discussion, deep-dive questions really got them talking, etc.

Lesson 3: Educating

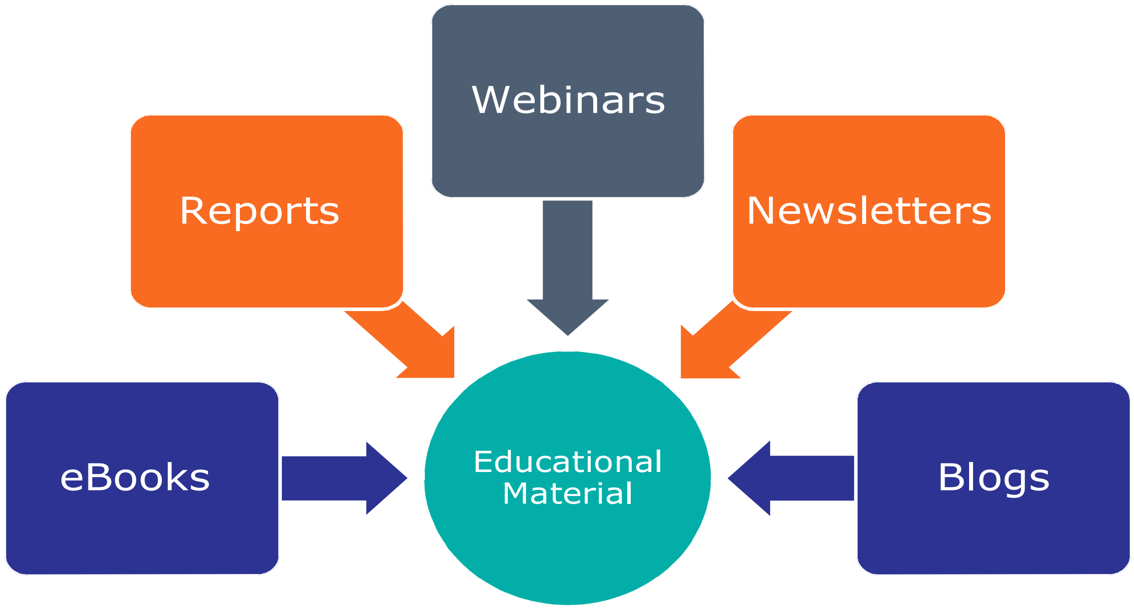
Buyers Want Information

Before people make a purchase, large or small, they usually seek out some information first. With so much information available on the Internet today, consumers are making more educated buying decisions than ever before. You need to be prepared to meet your prospective customers' questions with educational material.

Educating means giving your customers all the information they need to understand what you're selling, so they can feel empowered to make a decision.

Always have information available for consumers to research your offers for themselves and find the answers they need.

Most people will probably start with your website. You could set your site up as a one-stop resource where visitors can access and download other information from a knowledge library. Or, you can offer access to separate educational material including:



- eBooks
- Reports
- Webinars
- Newsletters
- Blogs

Use as many different media formats as possible to communicate this information, such as podcasts, video, digital downloads, and so on. Some people respond better to watching a video than to reading an article, so make sure you have a variety of formats to suit your audience's needs.

When it comes to preparing to sell, always ask potential customers what information they need to help them find the right solution and make their decision to buy. Don't repeat what they've already found out for themselves as this can be frustrating for them.

When you do a good job of listening and asking questions, you'll know what your prospect is interested in. Use that information to decide what types of content and education you should supply them with. Add extra value by giving them something they can't get elsewhere. This might include live or online demonstrations of your product, exclusive customer-only content, and more.

Tips for Effective Educating

Make sure that you are clear and precise in all your information. Customers shouldn't be left confused by any of your content.

Types of information you could provide in report form or a digital version include:

- Latest trends in the market
- Comparison charts specific to their needs
- Survey results
- Industry reports

Here are some other ways you can educate:

- Demonstrations can have a huge impact and are sometimes the easiest way to show what you have to offer. People believe what they see with their own eyes. It’s not enough to simply tell them what your product does – you need to show them. A good way to do this is to create videos that showcase your products in action. You can also produce videos that show the many different uses of your product, especially those that may not be obvious.

- Use storytelling to talk about the experiences of past customers who have seen positive results using your offers. Stories are powerful because they resonate with people much more than bland statistics can. For example, if you can say that someone else saved $X by using your product, or someone saved X amount of time, that will have real impact. Ask customers to provide this information when they give you their testimonials in one or more of these formats:

- If you don’t have that information, or even when you do, show the tangible outcomes a customer can expect when they buy your product or service.

Once you’ve provided the information the prospect needs, you’re in a good position to collaborate with them and help them to find the right solution. We’ll move on to that in the next lesson.

Key Takeaways:

- Be clear and precise in your information. It should educate and not confuse the customer.
- Provide the information the prospect will need in order to collaborate with you to find the right solution.

Action Steps:

1. Identify the information people want to have:
    a. Make a list of potential and current questions your customers have or could have about your product or service.
    b. For each question, brainstorm ways to provide answers to those questions. Choose a variety of media and formats, such as video, podcasts, and FAQs.
2. For each of your offerings, write down the outcomes you can promise. If these are not tangible, then make them so, e.g. this solution will save you X per year.
3. Bring together any facts you have that demonstrate your offering has been effective for past customers, e.g. from testimonials, comments on social media, etc.

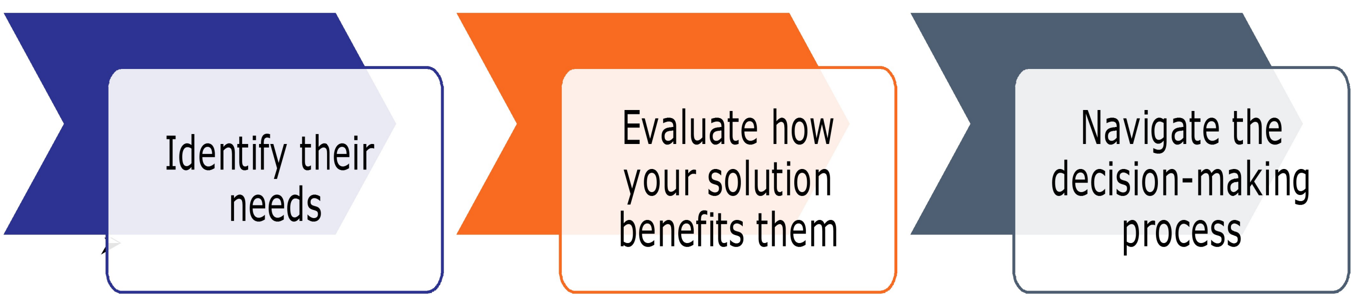
Lesson 4: Collaborating

You're in This Together

When you've had a negative experience of selling, as either a buyer or a seller, it can feel like the process is a fight to wear the prospect down until they say 'yes'. But selling isn't a battle of wills. You are side-by-side with your customer working towards the same goal, which is to get to the right decision.

This is why collaboration skills are so important. Buyers want to be part of the solution. After all, they are invested in the outcome so if you've established a good relationship with them and they trust you, they'll welcome your help.

When you collaborate with your potential customers, you support them to:



- Identify their needs
- Evaluate how your solution benefits them
- Navigate through the decision-making process.

A key part of this is helping them uncover the root cause of their problems. This isn't always obvious as their primary needs can be masked by more superficial ones. But once they get to the root cause, they know what the real issue is and are in a better place to evaluate their options.

To help, use deep-dive questions to dig deeper. These form the basis of a problem-solving exercise known as the **5 "Why?"s exercise**. It's a simple exercise but has very powerful outcomes.

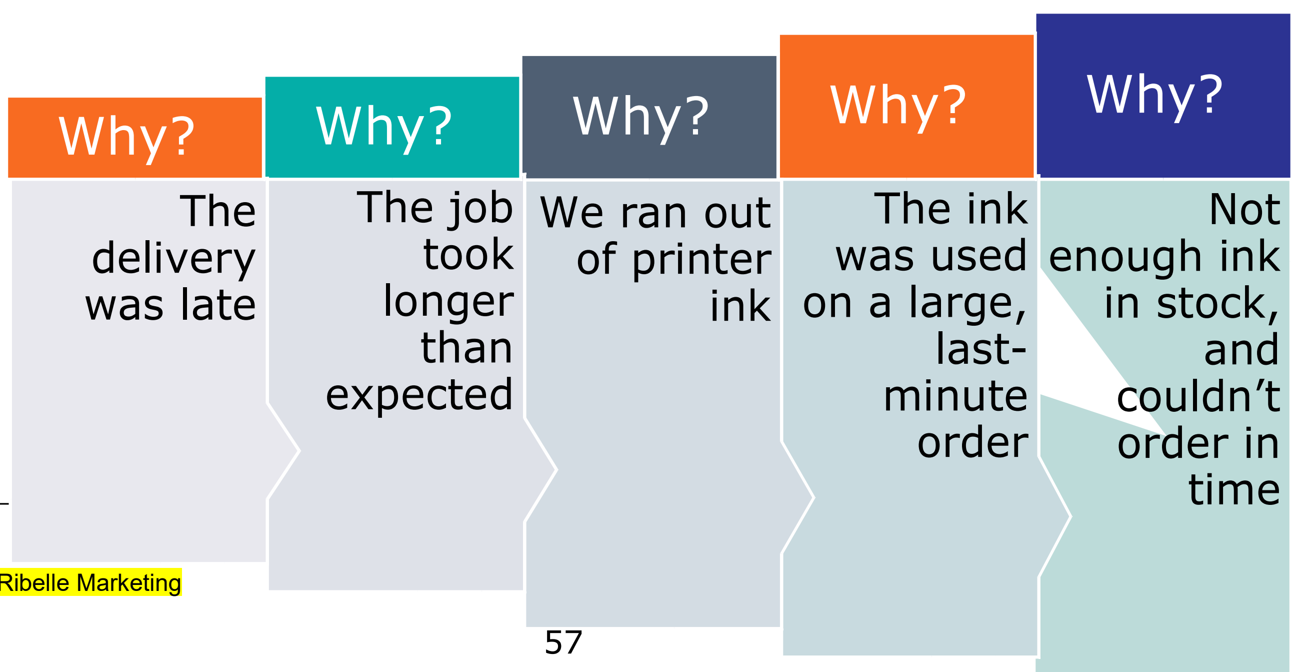
In this exercise, take the problem the customer gives you and ask them "Why?" Then take the answer they gave and ask four further "Why?"s in succession. We often leap to conclusions and try to fix superficial issues rather than investigating sufficiently to see if there's a deeper cause. This exercise allows you to dig down the root of the problem.

Here's an example to illustrate this:

- Problem = A client is refusing to pay for leaflets we printed for her
    - Possible solutions = don't accept another order from this person and improve our debt recovery systems

Now apply the 5 Why's technique to the same problem:

- Problem = A client is refusing to pay for leaflets we printed for her



Ribelle Marketing

  - Why? The delivery was late, so the leaflets couldn't be used
  - Why? The job took longer than we expected
  - Why? We ran out of printer ink
  - Why? The ink was all used on a large, last-minute order
  - Why? We didn't have enough ink in stock, and couldn't order new supplies in time

- Solution= Find an ink supplier who can deliver at short notice, so that we can continue to reduce waste and respond to customer demand.

You'll notice that the root cause of the problem turned out to be something completely different from the first assumption. Therefore, the solution was also very different. Don't let yourself get caught out by leaping to conclusions before you've investigated.

Don't Just Focus On What Doesn't Work

When you're collaborating with customers, it's inevitable that they'll tell you about things that don't work.

But don't let them focus solely on what's wrong, as it can get very negative and close down possibilities.

Ask them about their aspirations and goals. Get them to compare the future vision they want to see against their current situation to assess if you can help them. Your deep-dive questions are very important here, e.g.

By involving the customer in picking the solution, you 'coach' them to a decision. This means you'll probably need to allocate more time to this than the traditional sales approach. You may need more meetings or conversations, but the results will be worthwhile.

Clarify the solution you've identified together before moving on.

Solve Their Problems

We talked about helping them get to the root cause of their problem by using a problem-solving technique. You also need to be able to solve any problems that arise during the sales process itself.

Try to anticipate these before they occur and then proactively address them.

Here are some typical problems you might encounter:

- They don't have the budget. [Offer financing]
- It's bad timing – deal with this earlier in the process if you can (see lesson on Developing Relationships)
- They have an existing contract with someone else (this is for Dealerships)

- The person you're speaking to isn't authorized to make decision - deal with this earlier in the process if you can (see lesson on Developing Relationships)

When problems arise, try to help the customer solve them, for example:

Budget Constraints	Bad Timing	Existing Contract	No Authority
Can you offer a payment plan?	Can you delay the start?	Can you handle the contract cancellation for them?	When can you meet the person who has the authority?

- Budget constraints – can you offer a payment plan?
- Timing – can you delay the start?
- Existing contract – can you handle the contract cancellation for them?
- No authority – when can you meet the person who has the authority?

If you can't work together to solve these issues, then maybe there are other reasons the prospect is hesitating about the purchase. If you suspect this, go back to your deep-dive questions and find out more.

Objection handling is a part of the traditional sales methodology. It means having an answer ready for every situation so you can still push the prospect to buying. But the collaborative approach means that you respond to the buyer more flexibly to find ways to alleviate their concerns so they can confidently move to purchase.

You still need to work out how you'll respond in advance, but keep the flexibility in the conversation. Remember, your focus is on their needs and your mindset is serving, not selling.

From the personal point of view, don't be attached to the outcome. If they buy, that's great, but if they don't, that's okay too. And don't be defensive. If they say 'no', it's not about you. This change of mindset will help relieve the stress for you.

When you use a collaborative selling approach, confirming the sale is the logical conclusion to your relationship-building and problem-solving process.

Key Takeaways:

- Selling isn't a battle of wills. It's a collaborative process between you and your potential customer.
- Anticipate any problems before they occur and proactively address them.

Action Steps:

1. Practice using the 5 "Why?"s exercise to discover the root cause of a problem. Follow the steps in the Action Guide which set out the 5 "Why?"s formula of asking your prospect 'why?' five times for each pain point a customer has identified to check your understanding of their core challenge. If you don't have a specific prospect to do this with, choose a problem of your own to use as an example to practice the exercise. Note your findings.
2. Write down 3 things you can do to be more collaborative in your selling, e.g. use phrases like "let's look at this together," plan more time for face-to-face meetings, etc.
3. Practice handling objections:

a. Note the 5 most common objections you get.
b. Develop a planned response for each one.
c. Practice your responses so that they become natural.

Lesson 5: Communicating Value

What Sets You Apart From the Competition

What you are offering is unique, or should be. If it isn't, then you need to find a way to differentiate it from your competitors. It's good to position yourself as different. Find value aspects to zoom in on which set your product or service apart from your competitors.

Of course, you need to identify your unique value before you can communicate it to potential customers.

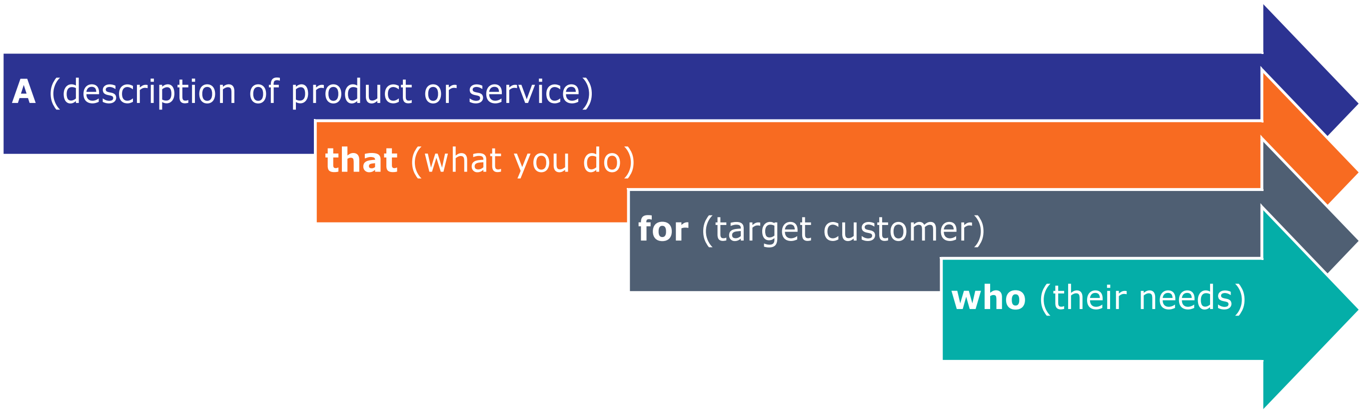
To help you do this, write a value statement that includes:

- How your products or services solve your customers' problems
- What specific benefits they can expect from using your products or services

It should be clear, concise, and precise. For example:

- XYZ Inc. is the exclusive provider of… or XYZ is a certified installer of...
- ABC Ltd is the premier coating for business professional who want to look good and who don't have time to waste.

Here's a template that you can use to write your value statement:



"A (description of product or service) that (what you do) for (target customer) who (their needs)."

Techniques for Building Your Value Case

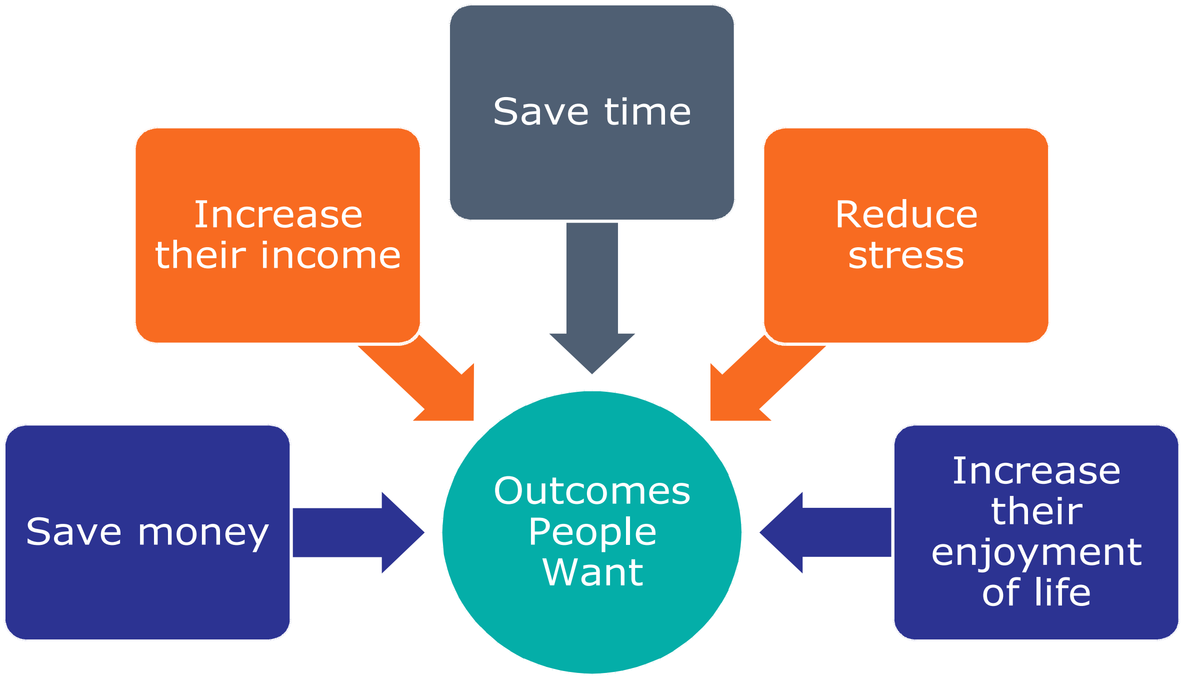
Value is different for each person. It's based on the needs and desired outcomes of the individual. You must communicate the value of your solution so that your prospect recognizes how it will help them.

But you can't sell value if you believe that people only buy based on price. In fact, many customers put things like convenience, quality, and service above cost when making a buying decision.

When you base your pricing on value, you need to demonstrate the strength of the benefits you offer to your customers.

Get your mindset to where you know the value of your offering and feel prepared to ask for this price.

Let's look at the main outcomes people want:



- Save money
- Increase their income
- Save time
- Reduce stress
- Increase their enjoyment of life.

Make sure you can identify that they will receive one or more of these outcomes by buying your product or service.

Each Buyer Is Different

What a specific person is buying isn't necessarily the same as what you're selling. To take a simple example, a hardware store sells a drill bit to a customer. The customer is physically purchasing the drill bit, but what they are really buying is the hole that the drill bit will create in their wall. This will allow them to put up the certificate they've just received from their business school. And this will allow them to feel pride in the eyes of their family and to boast in front of their colleagues.

As we said, every person is different and you can't assume you know the value they attach to the outcome you promise.

For example, when you're selling the latest model car, the buyer could be buying a status symbol to make them feel successful, or a reliable car they don't mind their teenager taking out at night, or a safe vehicle they can take their family on holiday in.

By this stage in your relationship, you should know something about what that person values. But use your deep-dive questioning to dig deeper by asking:

- What do you see as the benefits?
- What problem in your life/business do you see my product/service solving?

If they're having difficulties verbalizing this, visualizing a future state can help them understand the value to them personally. For example, you can ask these questions:

- If you were to make this happen, what would it mean for you?
- If you were to fast-forward 5 years from now, how would you feel that your vehicle still looks incedible?

You want to identify one or more of these aspects for them:

How	much money they'll be saving
How	much money they'll be gaining
How	much time they'll win back
How	much better they'll feel with less stress
How	much more they'll enjoy life

- How much money they'll be saving
- How much money they'll be gaining
- How much time they'll win back
- How much better they'll feel with less stress
- How much more they'll enjoy life

When you know what specific value each of your customers is looking for, it will be easier to gear your solution to providing that value.

Communicate the Value of Your Solution

Develop a Value Checklist that itemizes all the elements of your offering and their value to the customer. You can use this as a reminder when you're in a sales conversation.

Take the solution you've identified together and help the customer see the value for them, so that they make the decision to buy.

Here's how you can put your solution forward to a potential customer:

- Explain how your products or services will solve their problems
- Tell customers what specific benefits they can expect from using your products or services
- Describe what sets you apart from your competitors
- Give tangible examples from past customers (as you identified in a previous lesson) so they can see that your solution works.

Then try to find ways to add value and link these to the things your customer particularly wants. For example:

- Offer speedy delivery for those who want a quick turnaround time
- Provide a comprehensive service package for those who value after-sales service and reliability
- Include bonuses for new customers for those who want good value.

Don't be average. If you can provide an exclusive service, provide it. Customers are often prepared to pay more for a premium package.

You must be clear about your value. If a customer makes an uninformed buying decision because you were vague about the value of your offer, they could end up dissatisfied, resentful, frustrated, and angry.

Key Takeaways:

- Get clear on the value of your offer to the customer before you go into a sales conversation.
- Take the solution you've identified and help the customer see the value for them, so that they make the decision to buy.

Action Steps:

1. Write a value statement using the template provided in the lesson for guidance.
2. Develop a Value Checklist that you can use when you're in a sales conversation. It should itemize all the elements of your offering and their value to your ideal customer.
3. Identify 3 specific customers. Write down what each particularly values including:
    a. How your products or services will solve their particular problems
    b. What specific benefits they can expect from using your products or services
    c. What sets you apart from your competitors
    d. Tangible examples of positive outcomes from past customers.

Lesson 6: Coaching To the Close

Be Their Decision Coach

Closing a sale can be a real challenge if you dislike the idea of selling. This is the moment when you ask your prospect to make a decision. Think of yourself as their coach - this will help you feel more confident about closing the deal.

If you've used your listening and questioning skills effectively up to this point, you will know when your customer is ready to make a buying decision. Their goal is to make a *good* buying decision and, as their coach, you share this goal.

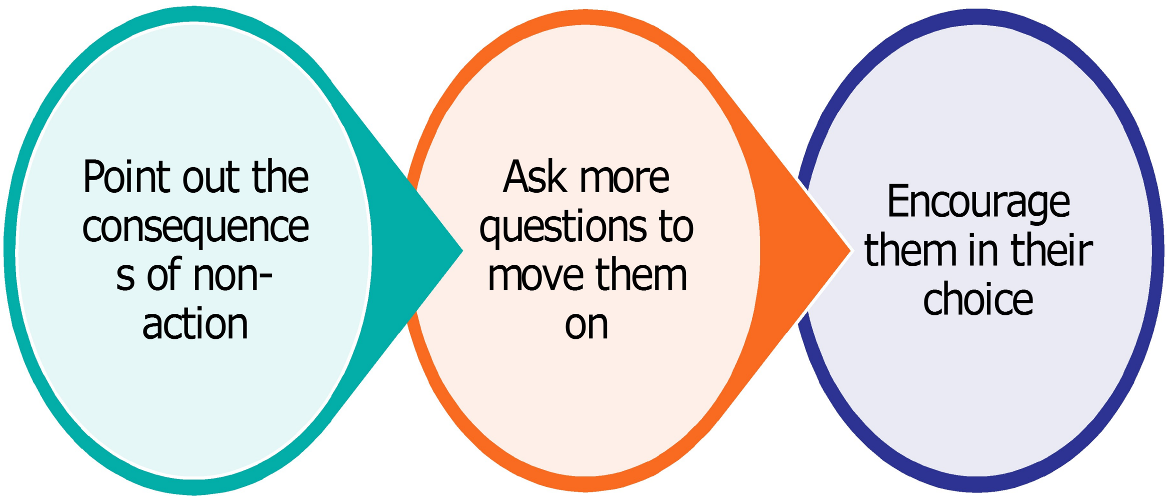
Even if the solution seems obvious to you, prospects often need coaching towards making this decision. Prompt them to remember how valuable this solution will be to them (you identified this in the last lesson).

Explain exactly how the buying process will work and what will happen next. You want everything to go smoothly and you don't want them to encounter any surprises that stop them from buying. But don't promise anything you can't deliver just to get the sale. This is counter-productive, as it will destroy the trust you've been building up with the person.

Ways to Help Them Off the Fence

Many people become stuck in 'analysis paralysis' on the verge of buying, even though they know they've made the right choice. They need you to help them believe in that choice. You're their coach, and you're there for them.

If they are genuinely interested in your solution but are still on the fence about buying, here are some ways to help them take action:



- Point out the consequences of non-action, for example:
    - "You mentioned you wanted this in place in 2 weeks time. If you don't make a decision now, you'll be delaying by 6 weeks. Is that acceptable to you?"
- Ask more questions to move them on, for example:
    - "If you don't solve [insert the challenge here], what kind of difficulties will you face going forward?"
    - "You seem to be hesitating. What's getting in the way of you going ahead right now?"
- Encourage them in their choice, for example:
    - "From all our conversations, it really sounds to me that this solution fits the bill in terms of saving you money/giving you back more time/achieving your goals…"

At some point, you have to be confident and ask for the sale. You did some reframing about people saying ‘no’ to you in an earlier module. But ‘no’ is preferable to “I’ll think about it and let you know.” What this means is that you’ll end up chasing them for an answer and wasting your time. And they’ll probably end up saying “no” in the end.

If their indecision seems genuine, then make an appointment to speak again later that day, or the next day. Once you get the “no,” you can let that interaction go for now and move on.

When to Cut Your Losses with Someone

External factors can play a part in preventing a sale, for example:

- The competition has offered something “better”
- There’s been a change at the company that your buyers didn't know about or didn't tell you
- The budget was spent somewhere else

These may be genuine, overwhelming problems that you can’t help them overcome. But plan to keep in touch in case the situation changes.

Whoever you’re in contact with, you can’t force a sale (and if you do, you’ll likely face problems later). There will be some customers who continue to resist taking the final step.

If you’re working with someone like this, ask yourself if you’re trying to sell them the wrong thing. If that’s the case, learn from it. It’s an indicator that you didn’t listen well enough at an earlier stage.

But you may decide they're not the right fit for you or your offer. If so, choose to walk away. You only want them to say 'yes' if your offer will help them because when it does, this leads to happy customers, testimonials, word of mouth referrals, and other long-term benefits for your business.

Key Takeaways:

- Even if the solution seems obvious, prospects need to be coached towards making a decision by reminding them of the true value.
- As their coach, you share your potential customer's goal to make a good buying decision.

Action Steps:

1. Imagine you have a customer who is ready to make a buying decision. Prepare a final sales conversation with them when you take them through to the purchase. Include:
    a. Clarification of the solution you've reached together
    b. Why that solution will be of value to them
    c. How the buying process will work
    d. What will happen next
    e. How you will ask for the sale.
2. Write down 3 questions or statements you can use with customers to help them off the fence.

Module 5 - Review and Refine

In this final module, you'll bring everything you've covered in the course together. You'll then have all the skills and tactics you need to be confident and successful in selling. You'll also have the opportunity to review the course and plan future action.

Tips To Take Things Forward

Now that we're at the end of the course, here are some final actions for you to take:

- Set aside time in your schedule for selling. This could be for making sales calls, having sales meetings and so on. How much time and when depends on your business and your target market. But regular selling helps you improve your skills and increase your confidence. Organizing your time into blocks will help you get into 'sales mode' and be more successful.

- Keep your pipeline of leads full. There are a variety of ways to do this so focus on the few that work for you. These could be asking past customers for referrals, regularly attending sessions where you target market hangs out, etc.

- Stay on top of the market so you always have current information to share with prospects. Ways to do this include updating your news feed, using keyword research, and keeping an eye on your competitors.

What You Learned

This is a course you can refer back to time and time again to remind you of ways you can build relationships and make sales even when you hate selling. It's important to reflect on what you've learned, so answer these questions and complete the action plan table in your Action Guide:

- What have you learned about developing relationships and using sales skills to find a perfect match for your customers' problems?
- What difficulties have you encountered?
- How do you plan to address these?
- What further steps can you take to become totally comfortable with the process?

Key Takeaway:

- Schedule regular time for selling and keeping your pipeline full.

Action Steps:

1. Choose regular selling time per week or per month and enter it into your schedule.
2. Review the course thoroughly and use the action plan in the action guide to record your goals and what needs to happen next.