

Sales Process and Script Generation

As you know, questioning skills are paramount in your sales success. The simple fact is that unless you employ your own sales system, you will find yourself neck-deep within the prospect's buying system! A prospect's buying system is designed to collect information, get free consulting, put off the decision, and lower the price. That's not a good thing! Far too often, we are so happy or nervous (or both!) about simply be sitting in front of a decision maker that we forget why we are there – to *help* the prospect. They would not be wasting their time to sit with you if they were not interested in the possibility of opening a relationship with you.

This particular exercise is based on the SPIN selling model which was developed by researchers who studied and followed tens of thousands of sales representatives over a number of years. If you haven't read SPIN Selling (Neil Rackham) yet, we would suggest that you pick up a copy and incorporate it into your coaching sessions. The researchers found that the "old" selling methodologies of presenting, closing, and overcoming objections does not work with sophisticated prospects – particularly in the sale of high priced goods or services.

The acronym "SPIN" stands for:

- S – Situation
- P – Problem
- I – Implication
- N – Need/Payoff

Since the emphasis is on *helping* the prospect, you must *learn* about: the prospect's **situation**; the **problems** that they are encountering; the **implications** of the problem; and finally, upon resolving the voids previously mentioned, what **needs** will be met, and the **payoff** that will result from getting what they want.

The questions on the following pages are to be used as a learning tool and a reference guide. This is not intended to be a checklist!!! By rehearsing and imprinting these questions, as well as other questions that you may add, you will naturally improve your questioning skills over a period of time. It all depends on you to commit to developing your questioning skills, rehearsing, and role playing with your sales force and peers, and practicing.

A great tool to use when you enter a prospect's office is this:



Jot this simple diagram in the upper corner of your legal pad. Every time you ask a question, make a mark on the "Q" line, and when you answer a question, mark the "A" line. By the time you are done, you will see how well you controlled the call by asking questions rather than answering questions.

Practice, Practice, Practice!!!

Problem Questions

Upon receiving a negative response to any of the above (Dig deeper):

- Tell me more about that
- Does that frustrate you?
- Can you be more specific? Give me an example...
- When you say that – what do you mean?
- Do you think that there is a better way to handle that?
- How do you plan on overcoming that challenge?
- What have you tried to do about that?
 - Did that work?
- How long has that been a problem?

List five more questions that you might ask to get to the Problem that they are experiencing that has led to this meeting:

Please Note: Sometimes, you will need to bring the “problems” up in a direct way. Use questions like the following to uncover some of these things:

- Obviously, I’m here for a reason, why is it that you aren’t *thrilled* with (your current provider)?
- Do you feel that you receive a tremendous value for the money with (your current provider)?
- Do you feel that (your current provider) helps you with...?
- Does (your current provider) keep in touch with you on a regular basis?
- How can I help you the most?
- What do you see as your biggest challenge with (your service/product)?
- Are there any other challenges that you are facing that (your product/service) might help?
- Can you describe two of the major problems facing your industry regarding a service similar to mine?
- If there is one thing you would like to change about your business (in regards to what you provide) what would it be?

Please list five additional questions that you might ask to uncover some problems that they might be experiencing relative to what you provide:

Implication Questions

When the prospect has identified a problem, implication questions quantify it for them:

- What effect does that have on your bottom line?
- How much time does that cost you?
- What does that mean as far as limiting your potential growth?
- When you say that, what effect do you think that it will have on your business in the short term as well as the long term?
- If you don't change that, what will it mean to you?
- Where do you think this path is leading to?
- Could that process lead to increased costs?
- Why does that worry you?
- Have you become comfortable now with these problems?
- Why is it important to solve this problem?
- If you continue like this how much longer can you go on?
- Are you making personal sacrifices?
- Where do you think you'll be in three years if this continues?
- That doesn't sound like fun...
- It's not what you want, right?

Please list five additional questions that you might ask to help them to quantify what these challenges are actually costing them:

Need/Payoff Questions

Once you have identified the problem(s) and have dug deeper to put them in a position of pain, you will now finish by showing them that by working together, you will solve their needs and provide them a payoff.

- What would it mean to the *business* for us to work together to solve that challenge? What would it mean to you *personally*?
- We have seen this type of situation literally thousands of times. What would it mean for you and your business to solve these problems?
- We specialize in the exact areas that you have identified. Would it help you to run your business better by working with experts such as our firm? In what ways would it help?
- If we were able to work together to solve that problem, how would that help?

Please list five additional questions to bring them to a point where they quantify the payoff of solving their problems:

CONFIRMING THE SALE

Once again, we will not be trying multiple trial closes and overcoming objections. However, it is important to remember that ANYWHERE in the process, the prospect can give you buying signals, and you should act on them when they are presented. For example, if they start asking about costs, talking about the pain of switching providers, or creating scenarios of working together, you should immediately respond with a closing statement such as: “What is the next step for us to begin working together?”

You must make it as easy as possible for them to switch providers. Tell them that your transition program is seamless, and that you will provide all of the letters and forms for them to send to their prior providers (if that is normal in your industry). The important thing is that they know that change is easy and normal, and you will be there to help them along the way.

Please list ten statements or questions that you might ask to confirm that a sale has taken place. In addition list some statements that detail the process moving forward to working together.
