

The 7 Steps of the Sales Process

6. The Close

Eighty percent of sales are lost because a salesperson fails to close. Closing is about advancing the sales process to ultimately get an order. What you are trying to sell at each stage may be different. For example, a close early in the sales process may be to get an appointment to discuss your product/service, in that case you are selling an appointment not a widget. In a later stage you might need to meet with a committee, in that case what you are selling is a meeting. Seeing the sale process in this light takes a little pressure off of each encounter and makes things a bit more manageable. But don't be lulled into complacency, you must ultimately ask for the order and no sales conversation should ever end without an agreement to some next step. Do not be satisfied with "we'll get back to you", where is the agreement in that? What could you say in response to such a remark in order to advance the sale?

In large part, closing is about discovering obstacles. Have you heard these before: "I'll need to think about it.", "It's too expensive.", "Let me run it by some other people." "Sounds good but I've already got one." What could you say to overcome these objections?

There are lots of ways to close, indeed closing a sale has become a science unto itself. Books have been written on this topic alone. But there is one elemental truth – if you don't ask you don't get. Just for fun, following is a sampling of a few closing techniques from among the many:

- The Ask For It Close. "What do we need to do to get this model into your organization?"
- The If-Then Close. "If I could demonstrate how an XYZ model provides you with, (things you know are important based on the prospect needs assessment) then would you be willing to... demo, rent, buy, switch, etc."
- The Process Of Elimination Close. "So you like the model, you have use for it, it's not too expensive!"
- The Either Or Close. "Will that be cash or charge?"
- The Lost Puppy Close. "I guess I didn't do my job very well."

Additional note: The question "How much does it cost?" Is a great buying signal yet it is a question you want to avoid early in the sales process. What could you say to defer that question politely? When you do mention price, don't be afraid that they are too high, say it with pride. Don't forget to ask for the referral.

Additional note: It's important to hold some follow up ammunition in reserve. Overwhelming your prospects with every piece of information you possess on their first request hampers your ability to stay in touch. Having a stable of collateral materials gives you reason to follow up.

From: Steadysales.com