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Guerrilla Sales & Marketing

Going, Going, Gone

LORI TURNER

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Lori Turner

When most of us hear the phrase “closing techniques,” we immediately think of a pushy car salesman frantically trying to sell us a car, any car, that day. When selling business to business, which many of us are, often a more delicate approach is warranted.

While there are dozens of closing techniques, the following can be most effective when you’ve: one, established a trust relationship with your prospect; two, gotten your prospect to identify a pain point that what you’re selling can cure; and, three, gotten your prospect to believe you offer good value for what will be delivered.

With the assumptive close, you assume your prospect has made the decision to purchase. As a result, your questions focus on future steps. You might ask: “Does a Friday delivery meet your needs?” or “Should we schedule the kick-off discussion for Monday?”

Most sales reps would ask how the quote looks, but the assumptive close bypasses that question entirely. Why does it work? Acting confidently, as though something is true, is difficult for a prospect to deny.

A conditional close overcomes objections and expedites the close. It involves the “exchange principle” – if you do something for me, I’ll exchange the favor. Let’s say you’re selling accounting services, and your prospect is concerned with the 12-month contract. Your conditional close might be: “If I can shorten the contract by three months, are you ready to get started right away?”

With the minor points close strategy, you gain agreement on small points throughout the sales call to get your prospect in the habit of saying yes. The key is asking easy-yes questions. Easy-yes questions might sound like this: “There are three service options. Which do you like best?” or “Is this option important? Do you want it included?” This approach can be particularly effective with a complex sale – when decision-making may overwhelm your prospect. Eliciting small, easy decisions along the way simplifies the final decision, reducing anxiety and, most importantly, gets your prospect in “yes” pattern.

With an opportunity cost close, you gain agreement on the cost of delaying a decision. You might ask, “What is the projected loss in revenue from delaying a decision as little as 30 days?”

The most popular closing technique is the straightforward rationale close. This works best with prospects who base their decisions on logic rather than emotion – and a high percentage don’t.

First, summarize the prospect’s needs you identified and gain their agreement on that summary. Next, recap how your product or service meets those needs and gain agreement on that. Finally, ask if they’re ready to move forward.

To knock your next sale out of the park, identify the closing strategy most likely to be effective with your particular prospect and that feels authentic to you. In the end, if all you do is ask for the business outright, you’re miles ahead of most of your competitors.

Lori Turner is managing partner of RedRover Sales & Marketing, www.redrovercompany.com.

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BUSINESS LICENSES	13	56	4,006
UTILITY CONNECTIONS	71	295	20,744
MARRIAGE LICENSES	25	89	4,171

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