

1. Every “no” you hear - means you’re one no closer to a yes. You won’t make the sales if you don’t make the calls.
2. The Sales Interview vs. The Sales Monologue. Conduct a sales interview - don’t give the customer a monologue about your company. When you conduct a Sales Interview rather than give a Sales Presentation, you develop the information you need to zero in on the prospect’s specific “hot buttons.” You’re using a rifle a rifle approach to developing customer needs, instead of simply hoping you hit the mark, as is the case when you give a monologue. Questioning your prospect is far more effective than telling your prospect. Instead of telling, ask your prospect, “Tell me about it.”...and then listen.
3. Ask and you shall receive. Ask for the order! And ask again! I must regretfully admit that there have been times in my selling career, (hopefully, on in days long gone), when I was so absorbed with myself and my masterful selling skills that I failed to ask the customer for the order. If I had listened more and talked less, I’m sure I would have picked up on closing signals, asked for the order more frequently and closed the sale more often. Ask and you shall receive.
4. The little things make a difference. Send a hand written thank you note after every sales interview.
5. Cold calling can be fun but it’s up to you. Cold call in-between appointments. Cold calling can be fun! It depends on your attitude but what doesn’t? Shoot for a sales interview on every cold call but at the very least you can fact find and gather data to follow-up on the phone to set an appointment. I’ve received many orders from the business cards I left behind on a cold call, when a prospect did not have time to see me. Leaving your business card with a note on the back can be a future door opener. “Ms Prospect - sorry I missed you, I’ll phone you for an appointment in a few days.” Try it. It works! I’ve even had prospects phone me to set a time for an interview. Leave those business cards!
6. How your sales presentation won’t appear to be canned. Role play, tape yourself and practice until your sales interview questions become a part of you. Salespeople are the world’s greatest actors.” A great performance on the stage or on film is preceded by many hours of practice. A great performance by an actor or a salesperson does not appear to be staged. It

smacks of “professionalism.” Practice with a peer or a friend and your improved skills will increase your close ratio.

7. Selling on target to control the sales interview. Know your company, the features and benefits you offer customers. The connotation in the words “canned presentation” is negative. Yet - you must have a track to run on, a path to follow so that when the prospect interrupts with a question you are able to respond and smoothly regain control. Then you can head in the right direction - to the close and another sales. One key to more sales is the ability to maintain or regain control of the sales process. Know the services you offer and develop how your services will benefit your prospect.

8. Qualifying the prospect with questions. Make sure up front that you are talking with the decision maker. Qualify your prospect! Have you ever discovered at the end of a sales interview that the person you were trying to sell was not the person who could say yes - was not the decision maker? I have!

Question: What are the buying motives?

Answer: Loss of time and peace of mind. Ask questions and develop buying motives. You’ll find it will either be time and/or money and/or peace of mind. Develop the buying motive(s) if you expect to move to a successful close.

11. Determining how unsatisfactory service affects the prospect. Determine if unsatisfactory service causes the prospect a loss in money, time, or peace of mind. Does the unsatisfactory service cause the prospect anxiety or aggravation? What about the lost time to placate a supervisor and the time involved in getting replacement? It’s up to you to determine by questioning how unsatisfactory service impacts on the customer contact’s time, money and/or peace of mind.

12. How being understanding leads to the close. Be the understanding interviewer. “Tell me more about it.” “How did you feel?” Identify the prospect’s buying motive by placing the prospect back in an unpleasant situation resulting from unsatisfactory service. Learn how the prospect was personally affected by poor service. Identify the buying motive or motives. Time, money or peace of mind. Now you can begin to sell benefits.

13. The prospect will give you an order, only when you show that it is in his/her best interest to buy from you. When you have identified buying motive(s) and can show your prospect how your company can minimize problems that will adversely affect him/her personally - on the job- then and only then will the prospect order from your company. Giving a monologue about your company's features will not make the cash register ring. Answering the prospects unspoken question "what's in it for me" will cause your sales to soar.

14. The initial objective of your sales call. The initial objective of your sales call is to get the prospect talking. It is an accepted fact that people, particularly salespeople love to hear themselves talk. Too much talking kills more sales than if a salesperson sat like a mummy and simply nodded "yes" as the prospect talked.

Other than your name and your company's name, the initial and continuing process of the sales interview is open ended questioning, active listening and paraphrasing the prospects answers to verify what the prospect means by what he/she is saying. Listen twice as much as you speak.

15. What every prospect wants. People love to hear themselves talk. Give your prospect the opportunity. For several years I held a monthly luncheon at my office. I would invite 3-4 customers, 2-3 prospects and 1-2 ringers (an attorney, a stock broker, etc.) As we sat down to a catered luncheon I would tell the attendees that we were gathered to get to know each other and each person would be given five minutes to discuss their job, hobbies, backgrounds, etc. Quite often the customers voluntarily made reference to the fine service my company delivered. Many times a customer or prospect would become so involved, when it came their turn to speak. For five minutes they would go on and on for 7-8-12 minutes. I learned early in my selling career that people love to talk and when the prospect would open his/her mouth, I had better close mine.

16. How to regain control of a sales situation. Control the sales interview by using who, what, how, why, when - probing questions and listen! You can always regain control of the sales interview from the prospect who has gotten off the track by asking a probing question. Information is your ally! By probing and active listening, you gain the involvement of your prospect, you give the prospect ownership in the sales situation. You and the prospect become co-consultants, working together to best satisfy the prospect's needs.

17. Sales presentations. The words sales presentation should be stricken from the sales vocabulary. If you approach each sales situation as a sales interview, can be deadly. The next time you sit down with a prospect, remember the word - *interview*, you will gather the facts necessary to intelligently uncover the needs of the prospect and thereafter how he/she will benefit by using your services. In a sales situation interview, don't make a presentation.

18. The prospect's buying motive is never the desire to use your service, but to gain what your service will provide. The prospect will buy only if it is to his/ her self interest.

19. What the prospect is thinking in a sales situation. A prospects' thoughts as you describe your company's features: "What's in it for me?"

The importance of breaking down your company's features into advantages and ultimate benefits to your prospects is well illustrated if you imagine the prospect saying "so what?" to your remarks.

Prospect: "So what?"

You: "The fringe benefits we offer..."

Prospect: "So what?"

You: "You save money."

Prospect: "Oh!"

20. One key to developing buying motives. Listen for volunteered comments by the prospect that will help you identify if the buying motive is time, money or peace of mind.

The prospect says: "I often wish I had more time to get my job accomplished in a normal work day, instead of skipping lunch and working late." Perhaps the reason the prospect is skipping lunch and working late is because he/she needs/requires something you sell? Listen for volunteered comments and ask for clarification on unclear statements. Ask additional questions.

21. How to sell the true cost of your services. If you charge more than your competitors, sell the prospect on productivity, and your company's ability to fill last minute job orders.

Show how everything you do that financially benefits your customers.

22. Converting company features to customer benefits. Convert your company's features into ultimate customer benefits when planning a sales interview. Set up three columns:

#1 Features, #2 Advantages and #3 Benefits

Under #1 Features, write a feature your company offers (the service characteristic. This answers the question, "What is it?"

Under #2 Advantages, write the advantage that the feature offers your company.

Under #3 Benefits, write down the ultimate benefit to your prospects. It saves the prospect time, money and/or gives peace of mind.

List every feature you offer and the corresponding advantage to your company and the ultimate benefit to your prospect.

23. The sales success formula. The difference between success and failure could be one more sales call a day!

I've seen salespeople who had it all together. People who should have been consistently at the top of the sales charges, taking all the prizes, winning all the contests but one ingredient was lacking. They didn't like to work. "A poor selling performance done consistently is more effective and brings greater results than a super selling performance done inconsistently." Do the extras that the other guy/gal fails to do and you'll move mountains. You'll be a sales leader!

24. Why self assessments are critical. Successful salespeople take that extra step and do the little things that others discard or fail to do. Too often, successful salespeople drift into a self defeating cycle of diminishing activities. The original concepts of thoroughness are abandoned or neglected. In the flush of success, the attention to details is viewed as less important and short cuts frequently replace methods that made a person successful in the first place.

Mark on your calendar, a day and hour, once a week where you will spend 0 minutes in self critique. Make this your quiet time for self assessment.

Question your thoroughness, tighten your activities and increase your sales.

25. You're most effective when...Keep on rolling You're most effective when you've had a successful sales interview. Make another sales call right away.

There have been several times in my life when playing basketball, everything I threw at the basket went in. I was in a zone and could not miss. I remember seeing Mickey Mantle, making a winning pitch, after a fantastic Dodger's game. After one spectacular pitch, the camera zoomed in on him and as he came up court he shrugged and smiled. He was in a zone. There's also a selling zone, when you're in it - keep calling That's when you're most effective. That's when you can really score.

26. The make-up of a sales pro. Consistency, persistence, thoroughness and doing the little things well, identifies the sales pros from the also rans.

The sales pro is detail conscious. The sales pro keeps accurate sales call records. The sales pro follows-up by phone, by mail and in person. The sales pro sets aside 2-3 hours a week to telephone for appointments. The sales pro keeps his/her promises. How about you - are you a sales pro?

27. Where you can get a reasonable gross profit. Don't forget to sell the small to medium users. That's where you can get a reasonable gross profit. Cultivate a broad base of customers and don't spend an excessive amount of your time trying to sell the "biggies" at a low mark-up.

Too many salespeople put themselves in the position of concentrating on new business development primarily with big accounts. When a big account goes with a competitor it's not only discouraging, but because not enough time has been spent trying to develop the small to medium user, where price is not always paramount, there is a dip in sales. Sell to a balanced group of prospects, small, medium and large users. Your sales will be more consistent and your overall gross profit will be higher and you'll increase your personal income.

28. What you should not forget when bidding on a contract. When you bid on a contract emphasize: If you are locally owned, say so If you bank locally, say so if your staff is stable, has tenure, say so. Spell out your identity and local connections, civic, business and charitable associations.

Your local ownership gives you a competitive edge. Use it.

29. Your best sales assistant. Follow-up to small intermitted users. Where you cannot make consistent call-backs, send post cards or other mailers.

Direct mail is still the least expensive and one of the most effective method of staying in front of your prospects and customers. It is the most personal of all advertising mediums. Develop and maintain a consistent direct mail program, at least one mailing piece a quarter. Make your company, “The name to remember” with at least a quarterly mailer. Consistency will bring in unexpected orders for vacations, peak periods and emergencies. In your direct mail piece, always ask for an order!

30. The 2-4 hours a week that will increase your sales
Sell by appointment to be most effective and cold call in-between.

When phoning for appointments, sell the sales interview - ***not your services***. Studies have shown that a significantly higher number of new accounts are opened when a salesperson sells by appointment rather than cold calling. It’s just common sense. When you sell by appointment the prospect has dedicated time to discuss his/her needs and to hear your solutions to problems they are experiencing. Set aside 2-4 hours a week telephoning for appointments and remember, sell the interview appointment you want and not the services you offer.

31. Your degree of sales success depends on...You only have 4-5 hours a day to sell. Make your first appointment no later than 9:00-9:30 a.m.

Subtract the time you spend going from one appointment to another, the time spent waiting in reception areas, lunch hour, etc. and your actual selling have been cut in half. Schedule appointments in the same localities to minimize travel time. Cold call in-between appointments to maximize your sales efforts. How you control your time will determine your degree of success.