

Sales Tip!



Sell Today, Educate Tomorrow

Have you ever given a presentation to a prospect who seemed ready to buy... but found that, for some mysterious reason, the opportunity went nowhere once your presentation was complete?

Maybe before your big meeting, you were getting only “green light” signals from the prospect. Maybe you decided that, because things seemed to be going so well, and because you’d done such great work up to this point in the sale, you were going to go all out and share everything you had in your arsenal – even adding some new “bells and whistles” that the prospect had not seen before, but was sure to love. Maybe you thought the presentation went quite well. Maybe you expected a “yes” answer on the spot. Why, then, did the prospect tell you that it all seemed very interesting, that there was a lot to think about, that the two of you would be in touch? Why did the sale feel further away at the end of your presentation than it did at the beginning?

One possible explanation: In your excitement to go all out for this prospect, you threw in new elements, new features, new benefits, new pricing, or even entirely new solutions. You added one or more topics of conversation that the prospect had never discussed with you before. And when you did that, you gave the prospect the best reason in the world to postpone a decision: too much information. If you had left the educating for after the close, you’d have been better off.

Many salespeople make the mistake of believing that one of the objectives of a presentation is to educate the prospect in all the various aspects of the solution, even those that have played no role in the discussion up to this point. Actually, there should be only one objective for a formal presentation - secure a buying decision.

If you have effectively qualified this opportunity - discovered what the prospect wants, why he or she wants it, all the budget issues, and all relevant aspects of the decision process—the only thing left to do is close the sale. How? By demonstrating to the prospect how specific features of the product or service address the specific issues (and only those issues) uncovered earlier in the selling process.

The presentation is not the place to introduce other features or benefits of the product or service that were not previously discussed or don’t specifically address the needs and wants of the prospect. Yet, many salespeople do just that—bring up additional features and benefits, often in an attempt to demonstrate “added value.” What they actually do is introduce added confusion –which leads to a “think-it-over” response. That means no decision and no sale!

Avoid the temptation to throw in lots of new information. Even one piece of new information about a feature, service, or plan that is unfamiliar to the prospect is enough to stall your forward momentum with the prospect. Don’t try to educate today. Sell today! After the prospect becomes a client or customer, you can take all the time you want to educate him or her on other aspects of your product or service.

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