

Ask for the order

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Introduction

Asking for the order is a critical element of the sales process. Inside this Strategy Guide you will:

- » Discover why it's important to ask for the order in face to face and written marketing situations.
- » Learn valuable trial close and closing techniques to increase your success rate.

Ask for the order explained

In an ideal world marketers could give a customer all the information they need to make a purchase and those customers would put their hand up and say, "Yes, I want to buy. How do I pay?" Great thought but in reality, it doesn't always happen that way.

Believe it or not, for a sale to occur, whether it's as a result of reading some marketing material or in a face-to-face situation, people need to be asked to buy.

If your salespeople aren't asking for the order, you're missing out on a truckload of sales.

If your ads, sales letters, emails, website and your brochures aren't asking people to buy or at least take the next step, you're wasting advertising money.

If you were to monitor every sales presentation that occurs in your city you'd probably find that with more than half of them the sales person doesn't ask the prospect to buy.

In many of those presentations the salespeople do an absolutely brilliant job. They get the customer excited about the product. They handle all the objections. They conduct "trial closes" along the way. Then – once the customer is at their peak excitement for the product the salesperson says something like ...

- » "Okay, well if you don't have any questions, just take some time to go through what we've talked about and call me when you're ready."
- » "Well, call us if you need anything".
- » "You don't want anything today, do you?"

WRONG!

Instead, if you had actually asked them to buy or asked them how they would like to pay for that OR when they would like it delivered, their sales would go through the roof.

Think of it in this way ...

If you don't ask the answer is always "NO"!

And – to coin a quote from Brian Tracy, "The world belongs to the askers."

Many sales people assume that potential customers know a salesperson is there to encourage them to buy something. With that, they believe that if the customer wanted to buy, they would tell the salesperson.

Many people simply don't ask for fear of offending someone ... putting them out ... interrupting them. And with that, they often don't get what they want in life. Simply because they don't ask.

WRONG!

If you don't ask for the order you won't get a sale. Full stop.

So – start asking your people for commitment to the next step. It's vitally important to spell out what action you want a person to take – be as specific as you can be.

When a potential customer is listening to your sales presentation or reading your marketing piece they're in their own world day dreaming about what their lives will be like (or won't be like) once they start using your product/service. In other words, they're in a semi-hypnotic state.

It simply doesn't occur to most people to snap out of that hypnotic state, pick up their credit card and act.

They need to be told what to do.

How to ask for the order

Introducing the "trial close"

Before asking for the order it's important that the salesperson performs trial closes all the way through the presentation.

A trial close is when a salesperson asks questions to "gauge the temperature" of the buyer. In other words, see how interested or excited they are about your product. They are non-threatening questions just to gauge the prospect's opinion.

You see, from the time you begin your sales presentation to the point where you think it's appropriate to ask for the order, your sole objective should be to get feedback.

Positive feedback indicates you're on the right track.

Negative feedback indicates that there are some areas you need to address (see "Handling Objections" Strategy Guide).

Without asking trial close questions you'll never have enough information to be able to gain commitment to the sale.

Here are some example trial close questions:

- » "Mary, how do you feel about what you've seen so far?"
- » "Mary, can you see how the cost savings in our plan will more than outweigh the installation costs?"
- » "Can you see how this approach can save you money?"
- » "What do you think of [benefit]?"
- » "How would that affect your...?"
- » "What is most important to you about our product/service?"
- » "How does that sound?"

When people give positive feedback to your trial closes it is then very difficult for them to then say "no" when you ask for

the sale or for the next step, at the end of your presentation.

A trial close will tell you what you need to adjust to close a sale. It measures the temperature of the prospect's desire whereas the close asks for a decision.

Here's why a trial close is very important ...

If a salesperson doesn't perform "trial closes" throughout the presentation he/she will experience new objections from the prospect when he tries to close the sale. This is because they weren't given the opportunity to express their feelings during the presentation.

Asking simple questions like "what do you think of [benefit]?" and "How would that affect your ...?" flushes out what people think.

Be aware of buying signals

So ... you've performed your trial closes throughout the sales presentation. This has laid great foundation for the call by gathering valuable information about the prospect's needs and their desire for your product.

Now it's time to look out for the signals that they are interested in buying.

Here are some of the most common buying signals:

- » Asking questions about the product like "How soon can your technician come out and install it?"
- » Asking you to repeat a statement
- » Asking clarifying questions about a particular feature of your product
- » Asking questions about satisfied customers

Here are some more techniques to help you successfully ask for that order:

- » After you ask for the order be completely silent.
- » Give them an added incentive for ordering today – free delivery, a bonus item thrown in, 10% off the initial purchase.
- » Create a sense of urgency by stressing that you only have limited territories or that seats are selling fast.

Tell people WHY

Before you ask for the order (whether it's in a face-to-face situation or in your sales copy) always summarise the reasons why they should order. In other words, summarise the most powerful benefits and in particular, the benefits they will receive.

For instance ...

"We have covered a lot of ground today. Let's take a minute or two and review what we have discussed. You may remember we talked about [insert details]. We also talked about [insert details]."

If the next step you want them to take is to request a consultation, summarise the benefits of the consultation.

Exercise:

Using the above wording as a guide, spend a few minutes writing a script that summarises the benefits of your product or service.

Tell people HOW

Make it easy for people to purchase or act. When you make it easy and give people as many options as possible, you'll experience an increase in sales.

Make it easy for people to pay and your sales increase. So – feature as many payment options as possible – all the credit cards, direct debit, financing, lay by, monthly payments.

Tell people WHEN

Many buyers tend to shop around, compare different products and offers then think about things for awhile.

When it comes to making a decision on what to buy then handing over money they tend to procrastinate.

To maximise your sales success, it's vital then to stop that procrastination from occurring so they DO buy.

The way to do that is to create a sense of urgency. Create a sense of urgency by making them a limited offer that offers them savings or other kinds of benefits if they purchase right now. And/or you might also mention the pain that will occur if they don't act now – if they DO wait too long.

That pain might be something associated with NOT experiencing the benefits of the product now ... like enduring more arthritis pain by not using your product ... like missing out on more fun activities with their kids because they're too unhealthy/unfit/overweight to participate.

Or it could be the fact that you only have a small number of products available in stock at this price and if they don't act now they'll miss out.

Exercise:

What offer or incentive can you make to encourage people to buy today? Brainstorm a list of offers.

How to close

Some salespeople use a scripted way of asking for the order. Instead, by listening to what your prospect says, you can then use information that is specific to their situation, to ask for the order.

A standard and very direct close is to say:

- » "So, would you like to move forward with this?"

Once you find out what their buying motives and needs are you could say instead:

- » “So would you like to move forward with this so you can start saving some money today?”
- » “... so John and Julie can start excelling at their schoolwork starting today?”

Listen carefully to what the prospect says in the presentation and make a mental note of the key points.

In particular, what were the key points that would convince the customer to say “yes”?

What did they like most about the product, the price, the ongoing service? What objections (if any) do they still have?

So – make a mental note of all these things.

Then – when you ask for the order you can mention them.

For instance, mention the benefits of the product again THEN give a quick rebuttal of their objection and simply gloss over it then ask for the order.

Better still, take the decision AWAY from the prospect.

Prospects need to be TOLD and not ASKED what to do.

Quite often the prospect doesn't know what they want. Nor do they know what's best for them or how you can help them fulfil their needs. The key then is to take the decision AWAY from the prospect so you're making the decision for them.

Here are two examples that illustrate how to do this ...

First – a typical close:

“Well, that's the system, John. Would you like to get started on the 15th or the 30th of May?”

Even though you are assuming the sale by giving the prospect just two options, you are still asking them to make a decision. Instead, try this:

“John, let's get you started on the 30th of May, is that okay?”

This close makes the big buying decision for them and all you are asking the prospect to do is to decide on the starting date. It's a subtle twist but will have a profound effect.

See the difference?

Here are some other examples:

- » “Would you prefer to give me cash or cheque as a deposit?”
- » “If you were to proceed with this purchase, when would you want to start?”
- » “Can you see where this will [insert benefit]? If you were going to start [insert benefit] when do you think would be the best time to begin?”

Exercise:

Review the above closing statements and write down some closes that you can use in your sales presentations.

Key points summarised

- » In a face-to-face sales presentation, ALWAYS ask for the order. Never assume that people will ask to buy if they're interested. They won't.
- » In a face-to-face sales situation use trial closes to gauge feedback. This will help you identify areas that may need adjustment.
- » Take the decision AWAY from the prospect. Assume the sale by deciding on a start date for them.
- » Create a sense of urgency to encourage people to make that decision today.
- » Look for buying signals.

Action plan

What	Why	Who	When
Review your advertising material and amend it so all marketing pieces ask for the order or has a call to action.	Increase your response rates and therefore increase sales.	You and your team	
Educate your salespeople to the importance of asking for the order	Increase your sales conversions.	You and your team	
Train your entire team about the importance of gaining commitment towards the next step	Increase your sales conversions.	You and your team	
Ask your 10X Coach for assistance	Identify ways to enhance your closes, trial closes and call to actions	You and your 10X Coach	