

The one point of difference that positions you as just another sales person or as a consultant

What if we lined up 100 of your customers and asked this question: What is the one thing you don't like about sales people? What do you think they would say. Well, I did ask - not 100 but 500. And this lesson will tell you what they said.

What is the one thing eighty percent of all buyers dislike about sales people. The answer is not surprising: we talk too much. One of the most difficult things for many sales people to do is listen to their customers. The reason we talk too much is understandable. We called on the customer and asked for some of their time. This sets up a professional expectation on the part of the buyer. "You asked for my time, now tell me why you want it."

The pressure then falls on the sales person to deliver a presentation. This is the point in the selling process that separates the amateur from the professional. The amateur mistakenly believes that selling and talking are the same thing. The professional knows that you cannot sell anything until you first know what the customer wants. How can this be accomplished?

Instead of starting off the meeting talking about our products, services or company, start off by asking a few questions. "I am here to talk about how some of our services might be of benefit, however, before I start do you mind if I ask a few questions?"

The initial questions should always try to uncover any overriding objection the prospect or customer might have. Until we clear this objection away, our presentation, no matter how good or convincing it is, will fall on deaf ears.

Many times it is necessary to make more than

one call on a prospect before they are ready to buy or before we qualify them as someone who would be profitable for us to work with. The initial call should always start by gaining information.

Many sales presentations are designed to go through the entire presentation before handling the objections that are sure to arise. Once again any objections your potential customer has for not giving you an order should be handled first. The reason is simple: If there is some obstacle that seems insurmountable, your prospect will not hear anything else you have to say until you deal with it.

In the back of the prospects mind, maybe not even consciously, they will be thinking that whatever you say doesn't really count, because there is an overriding reason they cannot give you the business anyway. As long as an obstacle blocks your path, you will never get past it until you bring it out in the open and deal with it. The only way you can bring this obstacle out in to the open so you can deal with it is by asking questions.

Asking questions rather than talking and making positive statements puts us in the category of a consultant. The true purpose of a consultative sales person is to find out what your customer wants and help them get it. To accomplish this we have to listen more than we talk.

The bottom line: simply encourage your customer to talk-and to keep on talking,-- ask carefully thought out questions and listen. If you can get them to talk enough, they simply cannot disguise their real feelings or real motives.