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Closing a sale -- getting your prospect to say yes -- can sometimes be as easy as asking for it. Once you've laid the groundwork by qualifying your prospect, uncovering their needs, and showing how your product or service satisfy those needs, it's time to ask for the order. Here are five tips to make this procedure simple and successful.

1) Lay the Foundation

As guerrillas you know that an essential element of your job is to determine your customer's needs and help them to understand that what you are selling more than meets that need. If this is done successfully, a "close" may not be necessary. However, if you are encountering difficulties closing, you should probably examine your procedure for revealing your customer's needs and demonstrating the benefits of your product or service.

2) Qualify the Prospect

Does the person with whom you are doing business have the authority to make purchasing decisions? Sometimes a person won't say "yes" to your product or service simply because they're not authorized to do so. If this is the case, urge this person to recommend you and your company to the real decision-maker. To smoke out the gatekeepers from the decision makers, ask for the order and see if she hems and haws. Other approaches are to inquire about budgets or past buying decisions. Her answers will help you determine whether or not she's in the loop.

3) Establish a Deadline

If you have a customer who is indecisive, one way to close is to tell them that your price or service is only available up to a certain date. For example, if a prospect professes interest in utilizing your services but cannot make a commitment, set a deadline date or explain that you will be unavailable for a certain amount of time. Of course this is a risky proposition and can result in a lost sale. But it can separate authentic prospects from prospects who might keep you on perpetual hold without making a decision. Forcing a decision, one way or the other, can be good for your business. If they decide not to buy, it releases you to pursue other prospects.

4) Threaten a Price Increase

If your company plans to restructure pricing in March, start calling people in December to get them to buy before the price increase occurs. Positioning here is crucial - bear in mind that you are calling to provide a service to your prospect, not to intimidate them into buying. Your prospects and present customers will appreciate the advance notice. This should help you close.

5) Discuss the Consequences of Sitting on a Sale

Ask your prospect to estimate what it would cost them NOT TO buy your product or service, for example: the costs of doing business due to an uninsured accident or a disastrous product launch due to insufficient market research. The cost can be measured in financial terms, time, reputation, among other things.

You might use one or all of these tips when closing a sale. Get comfortable with these techniques and try to work them into your discussions naturally.