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Sales Scripts That Sell

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Act II

ACTION!
Scene 1

Why Prospecting Is Important: There's Gold Out There

The tide is going out. The shore is littered with empty shells and one or two beached whales. Where are you? Riding the wave of the future, or stuck in the sand? If you're stuck in the sand, it's time to take action to get unstuck. If, however, you're riding the wave of the future, then you're actively working to increase your share of sales. You're actively working to find those prospects who can use what it is you have to sell. You're actively working to locate prospects to whom you can tell your exciting sales story. You're actively working to stay afloat. Where does your buoyancy come from? It comes from people.

In sales, people are your business. If you're stuck in the sand, you can't go out and find people; you have to hope they come and find you. And, as you know all too well, that's not the way things work. Rescues are a rarity. Only if you're willing to ride the wave and take the risk of being rejected do you truly stand a chance of having some extraordinary things happen to you during your sales career.

To succeed, you must be able to create demand in decision makers. You need to put yourself in the position to create sales opportunities, not merely be in position to respond to them. So it's time to get on the phone, or get in your car. It's time to find, talk to, see, and sell to people. After all, before you can sell something to someone, you have to have someone to sell it to. Makes sense, doesn't it? Yes, and it's called "sensible selling." And it works. Here's why and how.
Why Prospecting Is Important: There's Gold Out There

If You Don't Have a Prospect, Closing a Sale Becomes Highly Improbable.

Why Sensible Selling Works

Finding a first job in sales isn’t terribly difficult, is it? Rumor has it that if you pass the “living, breathing, moving, talking, driving test,” you can have your choice of companies to work for. Thus you are a marketable commodity. Many sales managers are willing to take a chance on you. They either train you formally or they train you informally by allowing you to learn (not necessarily earn) by making expensive mistakes. So getting hired as a sales rep by a company is not usually a taxing problem; however, being certain that at the time you’re hired by a company, you also remember to “hire yourself,” is.

What does it mean to hire yourself? Picture this. It’s Monday morning. You arrive at the office for a regional sales meeting. Other reps are milling around talking about how productive or frustrating their territories are. The sales manager calls the meeting to order. New reps are introduced. Those who landed new clients or made big sales are recognized for their superior performances. All are urged to increase their efforts and produce more. Tips and encouragement are passed out freely, as are sales rep excuses. It’s the excuses you have to watch out for. Why? Because sensible selling is “no excuse” selling.

Excuse Selling

Next time you’re in the company of a group of sales reps, list (but don’t take to heart) the excuses they offer to explain why they haven’t closed enough business this year. After identifying each excuse they use (of course, you never use those excuses, do you?), indicate how the negative excuse could be turned into a “positive plan for action.”
"Excuse selling" provides sales reps with just what the meaning of the words suggests. "To excuse" means "to make apology for" and "to try to remove blame from." So a sales rep who offers excuses for inactivity or a lack of production is trying to hold him- or herself blameless for the lack of results. Instead, the finger of blame points away from the rep and is aimed at—well, you name it: market conditions, the sales manager, the dealer, the end-user, the advertising, a lack of support, the weather, anything and everything but the sales rep. In fact, a very common excuse offered by sales rep after sales rep is, "I'm trying as hard as I can." Although most people say that, in truth they are not.

So what do sales reps who are stuck in the sand have to teach you? The answer is "the art of excusing." And what does the art of excusing lead to? The answer is "losing."

Help Enough of Your Prospects
Get What They Want, and You'll
Get What You Want Too.

So wipe excuse selling from your slate of appropriate strategies and in its place substitute "doing what produces results." For the truth is that excusing yourself for a lack of results may make you feel better in the short term, but it won't turn you into an effective sales machine. It won't turn you into salesperson of the year. Riding the sales wave and doing what advances your career will. For this reason, let's equate "hiring yourself" with "no excuse selling," and let's equate "no excuse selling" with running your own Career Advancement Program (CAP). Now that you know the why, it's time to look at how.

Prospects Don't Want to Work With
People Who Have to Be Told Their Job
Is to Provide Service. They Work With
Service-Conscious People.
How Sensible Selling Works

First, consider all your work time as business development time. Doing this will prevent you from thinking of yourself as a passive recipient of business and will cause you instead to see yourself as an active creator of business.

Second, think of business development time as prime time. Consider every business development minute as true "opportunity time." Use the time to develop leads, follow up inquiries, build rapport with potential customers and referrals, and establish your credibility as a source with the people whose business you desire.

Third, keep yourself on track. Track your daily business development results on a form like the one provided in Figure 1.

**Figure 1**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Day:</th>
<th>__________________________</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Time:</td>
<td>From ___ to ___</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Number of cold calls made to solicit new business ____

Number of cold calls made in response to inquiries ____

Number of cold calls made as a result of referrals ____

Number of calls made to existing accounts ____

Number of calls made to previous accounts ____

NUMBER OF APPOINTMENTS SCHEDULED AS A RESULT OF THE ABOVE ____
Examine your results to determine if your prospecting time is well spent and productive. Usually, it takes at least ten prospecting calls to get a single appointment with a decision maker. How many calls does it take you? If you’re making lots and lots of calls and landing very few appointments with decision makers, you may be turning prospects off rather than on to you and your product or service. The scripts that follow will help you prospect more efficiently, enabling you to double, triple, or quadruple the sales call appointments you actually make. Doing this will also help you increase your sales, and increasing your sales increases your income. You can do it! You can ride the wave to success.

You see, when you hire yourself, you take responsibility for your performance. You chart your progress and you monitor your results. When you hire yourself, you give up waiting, you give up complaining, you give up passivity. When you hire yourself, you increase your chances of succeeding beyond your wildest dreams. You no longer sit back and watch, you jump in and do.

Prospects Need to Believe
They’ll Be Better Off If They Buy.
Scripts to Prospect With

COLD CALLS TO NEW CUSTOMERS

The "Basic" Script

Hello, [Mr./Ms. Prospect].

This is [your name] from [your company].

I’m calling to introduce you to our [your product/service].

If there were a way I could help you meet your goals or objectives or even surpass them, you’d want to hear about it, wouldn’t you?

Pause two seconds, but don’t expect a verbal answer.

What I’d like to do, [Mr./Ms. Prospect], is talk about that with you in person. Can we meet on [day], or would [another day] be better? Would [time] in the morning be good, or is [another time] in the afternoon better? I’m looking forward to meeting you.

The "Better Way" Script

Hello, [Mr./Ms. Prospect].

This is [your name] from [your company].

Say excitedly:

I’m calling to offer you a better way of doing business. When we meet I’ll show you how our [your product/service] will get you the results you’d like to see. Now, can we meet on [day], or would [another day] be better?
The "Sold to Another" Script

*This statement carries a risk with it. Be aware that many companies want exclusive supply or limited distribution.*

Hello, [Mr./Ms. Prospect].

This is [your name] from [your company]. I'd like you to know that last week I sold [your product/service] to [another company]. Since both [the other company] and you are in the same business, I thought you might want to have the same competitive advantage they have. Having that same advantage is important to you, isn’t it?

I’m available to meet with you on [day] at [time], or would [another day] at [another time] be better?

The "What Do You Look For?" Script

Hello, [Mr./Ms. Prospect].

This is [your name] from [your company]. Do you have a minute to talk?

A positive response or silence gives you permission to continue.

[Mr./Ms. Prospect], have you considered that you could benefit from using [your product/service]? What do you look for in a [your product/service]? If I can show you that our [your product/service] meets or surpasses those requirements, that would interest you, wouldn’t it?

Always close for the appointment when you can.

Would you like to meet with me on [day] at [time], or would [another day] at [another time] be better?

The "Add to Your Business" Script

Hello, [Mr./Ms. Prospect].

This is [your name] from [your company]. Have you ever thought about how you could add to the business you’ve
built by using [your product/service]? I'd like to show you just that.

Can we get together on [day] at [time], or would [another day/time] be better?

The "Leader" Script

Hello, [Mr./Ms. Prospect].

This is [your name] from [your company]. How are you today?

My company is regarded as a leader in [your product/service], and I thought you'd be interested in learning how our [your product/service] can enhance the leadership image your company has as well.

_Say with a sense of authority:_

Being perceived as a leader in your field is important to you, [Mr./Ms. Prospect], isn't it?

The next few scripts require you to insert a dollar figure [$x] that your product or service will save the buyer or user.

The "Important Facts" Script

Hello, [Mr./Ms. Prospect].

I'm [your name] from [your company].
I have some important facts to share with you.

_Go right on._

My company's [product/service] will save you [$x] a year. I'd like to show you how. [Mr./Ms. Prospect], you are interested in saving [$x] next year, aren't you? It's worth just [number] minutes of your time to find out how, isn't it?

The calendar indicates that a good time for us to meet is [day] at [time], or would [another day/time] be better?
The “Increase the Bottom Line” Script

Hello, [Mr./Ms. Prospect].

I’m [your name] from [your company].

In just a few minutes I can show you how you can increase your bottom line by at least [number] percent.

Increasing your bottom line is something that you’d like to do, isn’t it?

The “Give You Dollars” Script

Good day, [Mr./Ms. Prospect].

I’m pleased to be able to give you [$x].

At this point, the prospect asks how you can do that, and you have the opening you need to give the rest of your presentation.

The “Make Life Easier” Script

Good day, [Mr./Ms. Prospect].

I’m [your name] from [your company].

It’s a pleasure to be [speaking/meeting] with you. How important is it to you to increase your bottom line?

Few prospects will say “not very.”

Good. I’d like to introduce you to our [your product/service]. It will help you reach your goal and make your life a whole lot easier. You are interested in reaching your goal?

The “Companies Like Yours” Script

Hello, [Mr./Ms. Prospect].

I’m [your name] with [your company].

You’ll be interested to know that our [your product/service]
is being used by [number] companies like yours. You’ll discover that you and [prospect’s company] can benefit from using it too.

The calendar suggests we get together on [day] at [time], or is [another day/time] more convenient for you?

This next script is easy to remember and makes it hard for the prospect to answer no.

The “Higher Profits” Script

*This is a real interest arouser.*

Hello, [Mr./Ms. Prospect].

I'm [your name] with [your company].

Does the possibility of higher profits next year appeal to you? If we get together, I can show you a number of ways you can increase those profits.

Let’s do it on [day] at [time], or is [another day/time] better?

The “Economy Is Impacting All Business Today” Script

Hello, this is [your name] with [your company]. Has the economy impacted your business, making it absolutely necessary to do more with less? I would like the opportunity to meet with you to demonstrate how our [your product/service] can help you accomplish that goal.
CALLS TO REFERRALS

The “We’ve Worked For” Script

Say confidently:
Hello, [Mr./Ms. Referral]. [Name of referring source] suggested I call you. We’ve done quite a bit of work for [referring source]. [He/she] and [referring company] found our work helpful and thought we might be of service to you too.

The “Client of Mine” Script

Say assuredly:
[Mr./Ms. Referral], my special reason for calling on you today is at the suggestion of [your referring source], who has been a client of mine since [year]. [Your referring source] is really happy with the [ideas/programs] we’ve implemented especially for [him/her].

In [his/her] opinion, these [ideas/programs] helped increase [his/her] company’s [profitability/production/morale]. [Referring source] felt certain you’d like to consider what we have to offer too. Was [he/she] right?
CALLS TO FORMER CLIENTS

The "In Charge" Script

Hello, [Mr./Ms. Former Client]. This is [your name] with [your company]. I am now in charge of this territory for my company. I understand that at one time you used our products. Is that correct?

Why did you change suppliers?

Wait for response.

We have made a number of improvements in our [your product/service] recently that I think would be of interest to you. When can we get together so I can share them with you?

The "Glad I Found You" Script

Hello, [Mr./Ms. Former Client]. I am so glad I found you in today. I know you are now using our competitor’s [product/service]. Is that correct?

Communicate that you are about to do the person a favor.

We have made some significant modifications in our product line that you should be aware of. I would be glad to demonstrate them to you so you are brought up-to-date on the latest technology in our industry. Can we get together this afternoon?
EFFECTIVE DISCUSSION OPENERS

The “Share an Idea” Script

Work to create curiosity.

My special reason for wanting to meet with you is to share an idea that our clients tell us [makes them more money/cuts costs/reduces turnover].

The “Increasing” Script

Share your excitement with your prospect.

Does increasing [profits/morale/productivity] interest you?

The “Important to Increase” Script

How important is it to you to increase [profits/morale/productivity]?

The “Employees Motivated” Script

How important is it to you to keep your employees motivated and productive?

The “Help Save” Script

We’ve been helping companies like yours save time and money. Would you like to know how?

The “You’ll Appreciate” Script

Say confidently:

You’re really going to appreciate what our [your product/service] can do for you.
The "Intrigue" Script

*Enthusiasm is the key here.*

The next fifteen minutes are going to intrigue you. You’ll be astonished at the benefits our [your product/service] offers, and our time together will fly by. Let’s begin to explore the possibilities.

The "Like to Save" Script

You like to save money, don’t you? Then we need to talk as soon as possible!

The "Most People" Script

Most people in a position like yours feel that they need to have a [your product/service] like ours to accomplish their goals.

The "I’m Not Certain" Script

*Say forthrightly:*

[Mr./Ms. Prospect], I’m not certain whether or not my ideas apply to your situation. But let me get your answer to a question. If your answer is yes, it’s unlikely what I have to offer will apply. But if your answer is no, then it will truly be beneficial for both of us to spend some time with each other in an effort to discover how I can help.

*Pause. My question is this: Are you totally satisfied with [the amount of business your company is doing/the time it takes your employees to complete their assignments/the profits generated by your unit/what you are paying for... ]?*
GETTING BY THE SECRETARY

The “Prospect Would Want to Know” Script

*Take command!*

This is [your name]. May I speak with [Mr./Ms. Prospect]? I’m calling because I’m sure [Mr./Ms. Prospect] would want to know how our [your product/service] can benefit [the company you’re talking to].

The “You’d Be Helping” Script

*Say politely but firmly:*

This is [your name]. May I ask your name? The [your product/service] we want to share has worked very well in companies like [the company you’re talking to]. I really think you’d be helping your company if you let me demonstrate for [Mr./Ms. Prospect] the kinds of benefits to be derived from using it.

The calendar indicates that a good time for us to meet is [day] at [time], or would [another day/time] be better for you and [Mr./Ms. Prospect]?

The “Materials Needed” Script

*Say with authority:*

I’m [your name] with [your company]. Is [Mr./Ms. Prospect] in? I have the material [he/she] needs.

The “First and Last Name” Script

*Be direct. Do not become unnerved.*

This is [your name] from [your company]. [First and last name of prospect], please.
The "Company's Future" Script

_A sense of urgency is key here._

I am [your name] with [your company]. This call is about your company's future. It's important that I speak to [your prospect]. Please put me through now.

The "Appreciate Your Interest" Script

_Say with strength; be sure to communicate impatience, not anger._

This is [your name] with [your company]. Who am I speaking to?

I appreciate your interest in the reason for this call. Does your boss want you to prevent [him/her] from finding out about an important opportunity to increase profits? I'm certain [he/she] would be grateful if you'd connect us now.

The "On the Line" Script

Good Morning. Would you please tell [your prospect] that [your name] from [your company] is on the line.

The "Special Reason" Script

_Say kindly but directly:_

My name is [your name] from [your company]. The special reason for my [call/visit] today is to meet [your prospect], state my business, and see if it will be beneficial for us to meet. Could we do that now?

The "Just Suppose" Script

_Say inquisitively:_

Just suppose I had an idea that would substantially increase your company's [sales/profits/productivity]. Wouldn't your boss want to know about it? Please connect us now.
The “Working on an Idea” Script

A confident air is important here.

We are working with a number of companies like yours on an idea that our clients tell us significantly [improves profits/reduces turnover/increases productivity]. My experience tells me that the [position of your prospect] can quickly determine whether or not your company would want to consider the idea. Could I [speak with/meet with] [him/her] now?

The “Has Boss Thanked You?” Script

The compliment works.

This is [your name] with [your company]. Has your boss ever thanked you for putting [him/her] in touch with someone? This will be such an opportunity. Please connect us now.

The “If There Were a Way?” Script

This is [your name] with [your company]. Please connect me to [Mr./Ms. Prospect].

The secretary will ask you to explain what your call is about and you answer:

By all means. If there were a way to [increase profits/double productivity/boost morale/reduce turnover], [Mr./Ms. Prospect] would probably want to know about it, don’t you think?

The “Help Me Out” Script

Appeals for assistance are hard to turn down.

This is [your name] with [your company]. I’m hoping you can help me out.

How do you suggest I go about setting up an appointment with [your prospect]? I know I can count on you to
let [your prospect] know how important it is that we get together. I’m relying on you to help me out.

The “Boss Will Know Me” Script

Is [Mr./Ms. Prospect] in? This is [your name] with [your company].

[He/she] will be familiar with my name.
The following scripts are responses to a variety of sample prospect statements you’ll find throughout this chapter.

"I'M TOO BUSY TO TALK TO YOU RIGHT NOW."

Most prospects think they are too busy. Don’t let that deter you.

The “Invest Minutes” Script

I appreciate how important time is to you. You’ll be pleased to discover that our [your product/service] will save you time and money. If you can invest just [number] minutes, I can help you save [$x]. That’s a fair exchange, isn’t it?

The “Profit Margin” Script

*Hard sell and confrontational; use with caution.*

I understand your concern for time, but are you too busy to increase your profit margin?

The “Short Presentation” Script

Other people in your [industry/business/field] have told me exactly the same thing. And so I invested my time to shorten my presentation so it takes no more than [number] minutes of your time. Let’s share those few minutes together. You’ll find that your investment in those few minutes was a very wise decision.

The “Realize Value” Script

*You can turn the prospect’s excuse around and make it work in your favor.*

It’s because you’re so busy that I want to see you. It’s the busy [executive/manager/businessperson] like yourself who realizes the value of what we have to offer. Let’s talk.
The "Demonstrate Profits" Script

You know, [Mr./Ms. Prospect], that others in your [industry/business/field] have answered exactly as you just did before I had the chance to sit down with them and demonstrate how our [your product/service] would increase their profits. I wonder if we might meet.

*Don't pause here.*

Would [day] at [time] be good, or is [another day/time] better?

The "Wise Decision" Script

You know [Mr./Ms. Prospect], a lot of people have said that. But once I had the opportunity to meet with them and share how our [your product/service] would help them, they made the wise decision to give us a try. My calendar indicates that [day] at [time] is clear. Or is [another day/time] better?

The "Your Best Customer" Script

*Say this with a sense of astonishment:*

Would you say that to one of your highly valued customers? If you spend just a few minutes with me, you'll discover that I can help you make as much money with our [your product/service] as you now make from your best customers.

The "Another Interruption" Script

*Let your sense of humor show here. Humor can help you sell.*

I understand. You probably think of me as just another interruption. Therefore, you'll be pleased to find out why this is not your run-of-the-mill sales call and why what I have to tell you will positively affect your company's
bottom line. If you absolutely, positively can’t talk right now, when can we get together?

The “Very Busy” Script

This script requires a very serious tone to match a prospect’s tone.

You’re very busy, and I’m very busy. Wasting your time would be wasting my time. I don’t talk to people unless I’m convinced they can use what I have to offer. So the time you spend with me will be time well spent. The same things are important to us. Let me show you how I know.

The “Remind Me” Script

This script is designed to arouse prospect curiosity.

You remind me of [another decision maker] at [a competitor]. Your competition also thought [he/she] was too busy to talk to me. But after meeting with me for [number] minutes, [he/she] was glad to have done so. Would you like to learn what [he/she] discovered during our brief time together?

The “Takes Longer to Read” Script

Don’t use this if you’re less interesting than a piece of paper!

I’d send you information in the mail, but it would take longer for you to read it than for me to explain it. And I’m so much more interesting and effective than a piece of paper. If time is really of the essence to you, let’s talk face to face. That will save you time.

The “More Important Than Profits” Script

This one is simple, direct, and effective.

What could be more important than learning how to increase your profits?
The "Motivated Employees" Script

What could be more important than discovering how to make your employees more productive and motivated?

The "Eliminate Words" Script

My goal is to eliminate those words from your vocabulary. My [your product/service] will give you more time, not steal time from you.

The "Lack of Time" Script

This script isolates the time problem so you can deal with it effectively.

I understand. Is a lack of time your biggest problem right now?

The "Same Complaint" Script

That's the same complaint that [a referral known to your prospect] had at first. After investing a small amount of time with me, however, [he/she] was pleased to have taken that time to learn more about [your product/service]. I believe you'll have the same reaction. The calendar shows that next [day] at [time] is good, or would [another day/time] be better for you?
"YOU'RE WASTING YOUR TIME."

The “Appreciate Thoughtfulness” Script

_Thanking the prospect for showing concern is disarming._

I appreciate your thoughtfulness. I understand the value of time too. And that’s why I think it’s critical we get together for fifteen minutes. What I have to share with you could significantly affect your company’s profit and productivity. Could you free up fifteen minutes on [day] or is [another day] better?

The “Still Friends” Script

_This script reduces prospect fear of being captured by a zealous sales representative._

Why don’t we agree to spend fifteen minutes together? If after investing that small amount of time, you don’t believe we have anything further to share with each other, we’ll end our discussion—still friends. If, however, you do believe that I just may be able to help you solve a problem you’re facing, we’ll continue sharing ideas.

We could schedule that fifteen-minute meeting next [day] at [time], or on [another day] at [time]. Which is better for you?

The “I’m Impressed” Script

_This script simply turns the argument around._

I’m impressed that as busy as you are, you are still concerned about me. I appreciate that. My job is to save
you time. Agreeing to invest just ten minutes with me could save you time and money tomorrow. That won’t be a waste of my time, and it won’t be a waste of your time either.
"I'M NOT INTERESTED."

The "Just Those Words" Script

Say assuredly:

Many of our loyal customers began our relationship with just those words. It wasn’t until I demonstrated how [your product/service] could help increase the bottom line that they became really interested. I’ll share that same information with you now.

The "Company’s Interests" Script

Be surprised.

How come? You are concerned about your company’s interests, aren’t you?

The "What Interests You?" Script

Use parallel structure for emphasis.

Does saving money interest you? Does improving productivity interest you? Does cutting down on problems interest you? If you answer yes to any of these, then you need to learn how we can help.

The "Don’t Interest You” Script

How is it possible that saving money and saving time don’t interest you? Wouldn’t doing both make your business stronger?

The “Reaction” Script

Say this understandingly:

That’s a reaction we all have at one time or another. We use it on stockbrokers, realtors, insurance agents, and so
on. But often when we learn more about their products or services, and how they can benefit us, we change our minds and we become interested, and when the time is right, we buy.

I have a feeling that the same is true for us. Let me share how [your product/service] can work for you.

The "Not Today" Script

First, speak understandingly; then sound confused.

If you’re not interested today, I understand. If you think you’ll never be interested, then I’m confused. I thought you were in business to make money and increase profits and productivity. That is true, isn’t it?

The "If I Communicated" Script

Search for feedback.

If that’s so, I’m really sorry. I must have failed to get my message across. If I was effective in communicating the many ways [your product/service] would positively affect your operation, you would be interested. What didn’t I get across?

The "Until I Demonstrate" Script

Say matter of factly:

I understand. Until I demonstrate for you how [your product/service] will help increase profits and improve performance, I wouldn’t expect you to be interested. I just need fifteen minutes to explain how we can deliver results.

We could get together [day] at [time], or is [another day] at [time] better?
The “Consider Your Company” Script

May I ask you to consider your company’s interests for a moment?

Pause.

I believe our [your product/service] will help increase [profits/morale/productivity]. Let’s look at the evidence together.

The “Never Hear That” Script

Be astonished!

We hardly ever hear that. Could you explain how you could not be interested in increasing [profits/morale/productivity]? I thought that was a key goal.

The “Surprises Me” Script

Isolate the problem.

It surprises me to hear that because our [your product/service] would have [a benefit of your product/service]. Nonetheless, I’m sure you have a good reason for not having an interest. Will you share it with me?

The “Good Reason” Script

I’m sure you have a good reason for saying that. Please share it with me.
"SEND ME LITERATURE."

The "Faster to Meet" Script

*Communicate concern.*

I wish the literature told the whole story. You’ll be able to evaluate our [your product/service] a lot faster by meeting with me. It will take just fifteen minutes for you to judge whether or not our [your product/service] will be profitable for your firm. Shall we schedule that meeting on [day] or would [another day] be more convenient?

The "Interested or Not Interested" Script

*Say authoritatively:*

Whenever someone asks me to send literature instead of making an appointment, I find that one of two things occur. Either the person is very interested in what I have to share and wants to know as much about it as possible, or the person is not at all interested and is asking me to send literature as an easy way to let me know that.

Just so I don’t waste any of your time, because I tend to be real persistent, would you mind telling me which of these possibilities you’re in?

*If it’s the latter, say:*

I’m sure you have a good reason for feeling that this isn’t of interest to you. Would you please share that with me?

The "Fifteen Minutes" Script

Literature frequently raises more questions than it answers. I know your time is valuable. In just fifteen minutes I can demonstrate how our [your product/service] will benefit you.

The calendar shows that [day] at [time] is good for us to get together, or is [another day] at [time] better?
The “Unfair to Both” Script

*Become the diplomat.*

Doing that would be unfair to us both. The literature may raise key questions that I could easily answer. You’ll have a much clearer picture of the kinds of benefits our [your product/service] delivers if we meet for just fifteen minutes. Which day is more convenient for you—[day] or [another day]?
Scene 2

Controlling the Sale

Sales Professionals Control Buyers, They Don't Just Visit With Them. If You're Visiting Your Buyers, You Are Taking a Selling Vacation.

Right now, you could probably name a number of things you’d like to do differently when working with buyers. Some of these changes, if you actually followed through on them, might well mean the difference between your earning $30,000 per year and $300,000 per year! The point is that if you change the way you work with buyers, if you take steps to control the sale, you also take steps toward earning more money.

Controlling the Buyer: The Key to Your Success

As a prelude to “taking charge” of the buyer, it’s important to examine those behaviors or forces that can prevent you from doing so. Some are psychological, such as your fears or insecurities, whereas others are habits, such as failing to adequately plan for a sales call. What we do know for sure is that if you believe what you conceive, personal achievement usually follows. If you convey the message that your time is valuable and important, then prospects will believe that what you have to say and to sell are valuable, too. Developing your ability and agility to work with buyers will also increase your profitability. And that’s sensible selling.
The Purpose of Qualifying Is to Get the Order.

To control the buyer, of course, you need to have a full understanding of your product or service. Your company probably has invested a great deal of time and money teaching you all about what it is you are selling. If you're an automobile salesperson, for example, you probably learn about your models, fuel efficiency, aerodynamic capabilities, antilock brakes, and so on. If you sell stocks and bonds, you probably learn about financial planning, tax laws, and economic indicators. In others words, companies arm you with the hard data they believe you need to successfully sell their product or service. The question is, is that enough? The answer in a nutshell is no.

Prospects Pay for Value.

Most salespeople fail to skyrocket to success, not because of a lack of product knowledge, but because of a lack of people knowledge. What propels successful sales representatives, in addition to product knowledge, is the ability to understand and establish rapport with buyers—all types of buyers—as well as the ability to understand, handle, and overcome those personal fears and insecurities that keep them from asking tough qualifying questions. Instead of taking action to orchestrate acceptance, unsuccessful reps perpetuate the art of avoidance. What is it they avoid? Selling! They find ways to avoid asking those questions that they fear could result in a no. They go out of their way to avoid feeling uncomfortable, so they practice the art of "beating around the bush" instead and ultimately are faced with answering the question "what went wrong?"

Mark Twain said, "If a cat sits on a hot stove, he will never sit on a hot stove again. But he will never sit on a cold one either. The fact is, the cat just gets out of the business of sitting on stoves!" Some salespeople are like that. They choose to leave the selling field rather than profit from lessons learned;
they give in to failure rather than build for success. Salespeople who do not do what needs to be done to control the buyer become victims of circumstances, when a few critical behaviors could have transformed them into victors of circumstances instead. The salesperson who does what needs to be done to control the buyer turns people into sources of opportunities rather than into sources of frustrations. And that’s sensible selling.

**Self-Survey**

Ask yourself if any of these fears keep you from asking qualifying questions to prospects. Place an X in the box that applies to you.

- ■ Fear of being rejected by the prospect
- ■ Fear of embarrassing the prospect or yourself
- ■ Fear of failing to elicit appropriate responses
- ■ Fear of succeeding and actually having to follow through with a close

When any or all of these fears get in the way of doing your job, you, rather than the prospect, commit sales sabotage. You, rather than the prospect, erect sales barriers that prevent a successful transaction from occurring, and thus you short-circuit your sales performance.

Two key behaviors that directly contribute to sales short circuits by keeping you from controlling the buyer are (1) procrastination and (2) disorganization.

When we procrastinate, we don’t do what needs to be done in a timely fashion. Why do we procrastinate? Usually because of fear, and any of the fears identified in the above self-survey could be the personal procrastination culprit that’s limiting your performance.

Disorganization, in like fashion, is also counterproductive to successful selling. When we fail to have at our fingertips and on our lips those qualifying questions that elicit the information we need to use our time wisely and become more
productive, we are disorganized. When we fail to keep track of previous discussions with prospects, or when we fail to locate data we should have on file on our prospects, again disorganization is getting in our way and might actually be destroying our ability to sell.

What’s interesting is that procrastination and disorganization feed on each other. They support each other. If we conquer one, we stand a better chance of conquering the other, thereby releasing our productivity.

_If You Can’t Change the Price, Change the Value That Your Product or Service Has for Your Prospect._

What the sensible salesperson does to control the buyer is to find out what the buyer really needs. Only when armed with that information can the salesperson give the buyer what he or she is hoping for. How do you arm yourself with that information? You ask questions and listen carefully to the answers. It’s your job to find out what’s on your prospect’s mind and to uncover requirements and areas of dissatisfaction. If you do all the talking, the only mind you’ll enter will be your own. But what’s more important, you won’t be able to determine the seriousness of your potential buyer, his or her desire to use your product or service, or his or her ability to purchase it.

**Quality Qualifiers**

How many of these qualifying questions are part of your sales presentation? Score ten points for each X.

- □ If I can demonstrate how [your product/service] can improve productivity, quality, or profit, this is probably something you’d want to have or use. Am I correct?
- □ Have you considered how great it would be to increase your productivity or profit next year?
How long have you been thinking of [owning/using] [your product/service]?

Who besides you will be making the decision?

How is the purchase decision made?

How soon do you plan on making the decision?

What will I need to win your approval? To win the approval of others?

If you had carte blanche, describe your ideal [product/service].

What is not [owning/using] [your product/service] costing you now?

What is keeping you from [owning/using] [your product/service] now?

The major benefits of [your product/service] are [benefits one, two, three]. Which interests you most? Why is that? How might having that advantage solve at least one problem you’re facing? What sense of urgency do you feel about solving that problem?

If you scored 80–100 percent, you understand the value of questions, and consciously or unconsciously you use questions as sales tools. When you use questions as sales tools, you help your prospects explain to themselves their reasons for buying your product or service. That’s controlling the buyer. And that’s sensible selling.
ESTABLISHING NEEDS AND WANTS

The "Learn Needs" Script

_Say eagerly, with real enthusiasm:_

I'd love to learn more about your company's needs. Could you tell me how you evaluated the [name of product/service] you're using now?

The "Key Question" Script

_Be sincere; let them know you care._

I want to help you. Before I can do that, I need to ask you a key question. If you could invent a product or service to solve all of your company's problems, what would it do?

The "Decide to Buy" Script

How did you decide to buy your last product or service? What do you like best about the product or service you are now using?

The "Major Benefits Are" Script

_Know the benefits._

The major benefits this [your product/service] delivers are [benefits one, two, three]. Which interests you most? Why is that important to you? What would that do for you?
QUALIFYING THE BUYER FOR YOUR PRODUCT OR SERVICE

The “Next Step” Script

Lead prospects step by step by step.

[Mr./Ms. Prospect], if you believed that your company would profit by using [your product/service] what would be your next step?

The “How Long to Approval?” Script

A trial close.

[Mr./Ms. Prospect], if you felt that using [your product/service] would save your company time and money, how long would it take you to get the purchase approval?

The “Can You Approve?” Script

Isolate the decision maker.

[Mr./Ms. Prospect], can I assume that if you like [your product/service] and our prices, you can approve the purchase?

The “Features and Benefits” Script

What features and benefits are you most interested in?

The “Other Products” Script

What other products or services are you considering in this area?

The “Who Else?” Script

Who else are you talking to?
The "So Special" Script

Do you fully understand what makes our [your product/service] so special?

The "Someone Else in Decision" Script

Is someone else involved in making this decision with you?

The "Prevents" Script

Is there anything that prevents you from making a decision today?

The "Trial Close" Script

This will help you uncover any latent objections.

If our [product/service] meets all of your criteria or requirements, when can we [get started/install the system/make the delivery]?