

CLOSING KEYS TO SUCCESSFUL LEASES/SALES

By S. Robert August

In today's marketplace, leases/sales are more difficult to create than ever before. Tenants have become more sophisticated in their approach to searching for value.

Consumers are constantly shopping for the best "buy"; and it has become apparent that a consumer will study the marketplace with regard to the purchase of any major commodity prior to making that acquisition. Therefore, it has become more important for leasing/sales agents to be order getters rather than order takers!

An order getter is an individual who becomes the most knowledgeable person within your organization about your product. He is kind, courteous, amiable, and interested in the tenants' wants, needs, and desires; and he has the ability to develop his prospects into leasers/buyers!

In order to constantly keep abreast of your product, it is important to continue to educate yourself about the product, learning all of its benefits as well as its detracting points. Then, you can eliminate the negative. Also, it is essential to be aware of who and where the tenants are for your particular product! By having this "market" information, you are better prepared to afford your potential customers the opportunity to become tenants!

In order to sell your consumer through your knowledge, sincerity, and interest, you also have to be knowledgeable about qualifying your customer so that you can "close" your prospect and create more sales!

As one salesperson to another, it is extremely important to constantly critique your presentation for excellence so every prospect becomes your buyer!

Charles B. Roth and Roy Alexander are co-authors of a powerful and educational sales book entitled Secrets of Closing Sales. This informative and masterful exercise of sales creativity will force the reader to learn to take advantages of opportunities to qualify and close prospective buyers.

Upon meeting the customer for the first time, you are beginning the closing process by qualifying the customer's needs. Once you -- as a salesperson -- can define what the customer wants to buy, you can begin the formal closing process! Therefore, it is necessary to uncover the real needs of the customer and begin qualifying him through the following points of interest:

1. Security
2. Self-preservation
3. Convenience
4. Avoidance of worry

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5. Recognition
6. Self-improvement

Often the prospective buyer will be able to provide you with additional qualifying clues through general expression and body language. Take time to study the art of body language as it may often lead you to a quicker sale. Another book entitled Up Your Effectiveness by Judy Riggenschach further teaches us the art of understanding people through their body language. This is an excellent publication and one which can be put to immediate, pragmatic use after studying! Ms. Riggenschach's book covers notable topics such as what it means when someone puts one leg on top of their other leg, or what it means when someone places their hands on their waist. These and other topics help salespeople maintain a better understanding of the people that they are selling.

Salespeople often question when it is time to start qualifying and closing a buyer. The answer: IMMEDIATELY UPON MEETING A BUYER! Therefore, it is important to be on the offense to make the customer comfortable. Understanding body language helps you understand your customer and allows you to make him comfortable through your own tacit communication so that he becomes a buyer!

Authors Roth and Alexander indicate that there are four keys within the master closing formula. The keys are as follows:

1. Make every meeting with a customer a sales meeting.
2. Try early in every sale for a close.
3. Close on every resistance.
4. Keep trying.

In order to master the closing formula techniques, it is important to analyze yourself. Role play with fellow salespeople to ascertain if you are up to date on the four points of the closing formula. If you find a weakness, continue to practice until you overcome the weakness. Knowing about our weaknesses provides us with an opportunity to learn how to improve ourselves so that we can make more sales!

There are basically four types of closings as offered to us by industrial psychologist Dr. Mok of Dallas, Texas. You also fit into one of these types as a salesperson. It is important for you to decipher and understand which type of closer you are so that you can better understand yourself and apply yourself to your potential buyers!

The four types of closers are as follows:

1. The Intuiter
2. The Thinker
3. The Feeler
4. The Senser

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The intuiter is an individual who speculates, imagines, and envisions.

The thinker is one who rationalizes and weighs options.

The feeler is an individual who empathizes, reacts, and relates.

The senser is a person who can make decisions about what his senses tell him about a product or an individual. The senser then acts upon the knowledge that he has gained from his interaction and develops a creative edge to better sell the product and the buyer.

Therefore, by defining whether you are doing business with an intuiter, a thinker, a feeler, or a senser, you can best create your own “offensive sales edge.” Sales will result at a much quicker pace as a result of your own perspicacious tendency towards understanding your buyer!

After determining the type of closer you are, as well as the type of individuals that you will be dealing with, it’s time to turn yourself into a closer! Authors Roth and Alexander point out a number of ways for you to develop your closing techniques.

1. Go ahead ability! You have to have tenacity, understanding, and confidence about your product and know that the people who are coming to see your product are in need of it! The more assertiveness you exert with prospects, the more you will be able to close the sale.
2. Ask for more than you expect! The worst that can happen to you is that you don’t obtain the maximum; but, if you do, you are much better off than you were before. Also, by being aggressive and asking for a little bit more, people will respect you and recognize that you’re a business person who is certainly interested in generating business! You may find the response and experience to be helpful to you in closing additional sales.
3. Desire--Key to closing! Without desire, you cannot close anything! Be prepared to sell. The more excited you are about the product, the more “desire” and “want” you’ll have to sell the product. Also, by having a well-balanced personal plan of attack, your desires become reality!
4. Getting under the prospect’s skin. This is not to become a “nag or an itch,” but it is important to capitalize on interruptions and thrust your points of view to the forefront in order to steer your prospect into becoming a buyer. It is also important to take time to communicate with your prospect via telephone calls and letters. The more people hear from you, the more you become a priority in their life!
5. Family involvement! It is helpful to involve the family in the buying decision. This is a very difficult process and one that is developed through a period of experience. The more people within the family that you can positively relate

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to and create enthusiasm for the product, the better able you are to sell the entire family!

6. The close itself. Above all else, never be afraid to ask for an order! One of the biggest problems that sales managers face is having salespeople who are afraid to ask for the order. Take time to think of the following points while you're closing:
 - a. Be positive.
 - b. Be willing to study your buyers' needs so that you know how to refute their objections and fulfill their wants.
 - c. Respect the buyer's time--do not over kill or over sell a prospect. Negative input can turn away a prospect.
 - d. Be persistent, but be positively persistent.
 - e. Constantly evaluate the prospects carefully.
 - f. Be aware of ads.
 - g. Listen and look for early signals.
 - h. Know when not to talk.
 - i. Create your own power of enthusiasm.
 - j. Know when to slow down and not to push.
 - k. Other closer killers:
 1. over talking
 2. giving the appearance of being too eager
 3. giving a totally unprepared presentation
 4. high-pressure sales
 5. drifting away mentally and physically from your prospective buyers
 6. negativism.

Closing is probably the most important step in the sales process! Therefore, it is imperative that you take time to master the closing keys to successful sales!

If Tennyson were a salesperson instead of a poet, he probably would have been quoted as saying "It is better to have closed, than never to have closed at all!"

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