

The

Professional Sales Excellence
Series

Participant Study Guide

"Predicting Customer Behavior"

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Module Outline

Section One: The 4-Minute Barrier

Section Two: Knowing When To Push And When To Back Off

Section Three: Successfully Closing 100% Of The Time

Benefits to Participant

You will:

- *Learn to recognize the 4-minute barrier, and how to break it.*
- *Learn the 3 characteristics every top salesperson has.*
- *Discover when to close and when to back off.*
- *Learn what to recognize on the telephone when people feel pushed and pressed.*
- *Know when to back off, yet not allow people to waste your time.*

Instructions for Completion

- 1) Follow along in your manual.
- 2) Make notes in the margin.
- 3) Highlight or underline key areas.
- 4) Share with others your thoughts and ideas.

Section One:

Notes

The 4-Minute Barrier

Most of us have a great deal of difficulty reading people and developing a relationship in the first 4-minutes. Yet it is the most important part of the sales connection. The reason you may have trouble is due to your inability to read your customers' communication cues during this initial period.

The behaviors of people we observe immediately are the way they look, the way they talk, and the way they use language when we first meet and greet them. Yet, we tend to ignore the way they shake hands with us. Few of us spend much time thinking about how people shake hands, but a lot is communicated by a simple handshake. A prospect can tell whether you are warmhearted, or even untrustworthy, just by the way you shake hands.

- 1) Your prospect uses a 4-minute barrier for protection from disclosing too much about himself.
- 2) If you can't get past this barrier in the first 4-minutes, there is a chance you never will.
- 3) The best and brightest salespeople are able to observe the prospect so well in the first 4-minutes they predict how people will buy, and then control the sales relationship, but not the person.

EXERCISE 1

Notes

Discuss the following questions with the group:

1) What do you notice immediately about someone in the first moments of a sales call? Do you look at their trophies, or their professional designations? Do you make mention of these things when you see someone for the first time?

2) What do you notice about someone when you first meet, their looks, or their use of language? What does it tell you? Do you adjust your sales call depending on what you picked up in the first 4-minutes?

Section Two:

Notes

Knowing When To Push And When To Back Off

When a prospect gives you a limp fish handshake it is an overt indication that he may take longer to make a decision to buy. This is the kind of person you should try to close harder because they will waste weeks or months of your time. Have you ever spent months of time with a prospect only to learn that they never made a decision either way to buy? Isn't it true that even if they say no after you push, it is better than wasting your time with their procrastination? There are certain cues people will give to let you know when you have gone too far, or have pushed too hard.

When prospects or customers feel pushed they will:

- 1) Break eye contact for more than a few moments.
- 2) Blink their eyes rapidly.
- 3) Rub their forehead.

The 2 things that prospects do on the telephone when they feel pushed, pressed, and closed are:

- 1) They will stutter and stammer more than when they first got on the phone with you.
- 2) You will hear a pregnant pause on their end of the line.

EXERCISE 2

Take a moment now to role play what you have just learned. Pick out someone to sell your product or service to. If your product doesn't lend itself well to this exercise, try selling a pencil or pen. If you are the one being sold to, do one of the 3 non-verbal stress cues like rubbing your forehead, breaking eye contact, or blinking your eyes rapidly. Also show the verbal cues of stuttering or stammering when giving an answer, or not saying a word when you are trial closed or asked, "What do you think?" Each person in the group should try to sell and notice the cues the other is giving.

Notes

SECTION THREE:

Notes

Successfully Closing 100% Of The Time

When you see or hear stress cues it means that you are pushing too hard and moving too fast. You should back off immediately and say, "I can tell you have a concern about this. Tell me what it is." Or, "Something seems to be bothering you. What are you thinking?" If you are able to pull out emotions at the perfect time, your prospect will tell you things they may have never told their spouses. When they do this, you will gain their trust. When you gain their trust, you will gain their business.

Self-Practice:

For the next week, practice noticing signs of stress in the people you are selling to. Practice closing hard and watching carefully for any stress cues as you close. If you see these cues, back off and ask what the prospect is thinking.

Also try to notice the 4-minute barrier with the next 5 prospects or customers. Try to sense when you have broken through the barrier, and notice which techniques work best to overcome the barrier.