

# The 5 C's of Successful Sales Conversations

## Connection

People do business with people they like, know and trust. The best way to accomplish this in a short period of time is to show people that you truly care about what is important to them. This also means you need to use a technique to help people open up and share their goals and fears. The following 3 comments/questions have provided me significant success:

1. **Tell me more about that.** This is pure gold! These 5 words give people the permission they need to elaborate on their story and open up about the core goal or concern.

2. **Why is that important to you?** This is the perfect way to either gain clarification or gently challenge the root of a topic.

3. **Why?** Plain and simple, this is the hard hitter. It's wide open, and offers no suggestion in the direction of the response. This means the person will reply with whatever topic is most appropriate to their train of thought, not something you have lead them to. These 3 simple phrases are key in identifying the true need of your client so that you can more effectively make them your #1 priority.

## Contrast

When you are offering a product or service that can have a significant impact on a person's life or business, it's crucial that you help them realize how significant that impact can be. You must allow the clients to identify this impact themselves, but you can help the process along. The idea of contrast in this context is to have the client describe their life, business, etc. both with, and then without having made the proposed purchase. You need to be specific in guiding this exercise. The timeline you use to have the client describe the contrast must be far enough in the future that success in the implementation will be apparent, while keeping it relevant to the client's goals. Here is an example:

*"Picture your business, 12 months from now, after you've had this (product/service) implemented for a year. Paint me a picture of what that looks like."*

Feel free to use "Tell me more" to get the client to go

deeper into the specific details. The goal is to have the client get so specific that they can see themselves experiencing the results.

Next, follow up with *"Now, picture your business 12 months from now with you not having invested in (product/service). What does that look like?"*

Again, help them dig deeper to feel the potential reality. You can even ask, *"How does that feel?"* If your product/service truly has the potential to have a significant positive impact on your client, they are feeling the loss of that impact as they describe the second scenario.

## Commitment

The concept of commitment in sales conversations does 2 very important things. First, testing the level of commitment a client has to achieving a result allows them to verbalize it, making it more real to them. Second, by testing the level of commitment, you can determine if you have identified the client's true need.

The implementation of this technique is very simple - ask the client to assign a number score (out of 10) to their level of commitment.

The conversation looks like this: *"On a scale from 1 to 10, how important is it for you to achieve (insert desired outcome here)?"* If you are on track with your problem identification you will get an 8, 9 or 10. Within the 5 to 7 range usually means there is a burning objection they have yet to raise. Any lower than this and you are off track. Follow their response with *"What would make it a 10?"* This will help reveal any underlying objections. These objections are simply the client's way of asking for more information before making a decision.

## Confirmation

Now that you've identified the true need, and how your product/service can be the solution, you want to help to draw out any additional underlying objections that may remain. This is where many sales people make a huge slip. We are conditioned to politely ask *"Do you have any other questions?"* to which your client can easily answer "No", whether it's actually true or not. The goal here is

to identify any lingering questions or resistance before closing the sale. If you don't get them out of the way now, you will face a much higher level of resistance during the close.

Instead, you will have much better results posing *"What questions do you have?"* With a simple tweak in the traditional wording, we make the question open-ended and inviting for client concerns to be discussed.

Note: If price has not been brought up as an objection (and you should not have proactively raised it before this point - always show the value before discussing the investment when your prospect is qualified to buy), this is where it needs to be raised. You can simply ask, *"Did you have any questions about the investment?"*

## Close

You've gotten your client to lay it all out on the table. All of the concerns are out of the way. Now, you need to close. Let's keep this simple.

*"Are you ready to make (desired outcome) a reality?" is my favorite. As an alternative, I like "Let's make this happen. Did you want to take advantage of the full-pay option, or would you prefer the 3-payment option?"*

Implement the 5 C's into your future sales conversations and you will begin to see the impact very quickly.

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