

# 6 Powerful Sales Techniques Even Non-Salespeople Should Master

If you are unsure of your own sales skills, here are some game-changing sales techniques that will not leave you feeling like a slimy snake oil salesman.

Even if you are not looking to 'close the deal' and get that sweet commission check, knowing how to sell is a skill that always comes in handy, regardless of whether you are in the sales business or not.

Think about it. You are selling yourself every day. Whether it is trying to get your coworkers to back up your ideas or convincing your spouse why your restaurant pick is the better choice, we are constantly selling ourselves.

Knowing some good sales techniques is not only a salesperson skill, but it is also a life skill. If you walk into a job interview feeling confident and knowing how to sell yourself to the employer, you are going to have an advantage over the competition. From dating to getting a loan or landing a promotion, learning how to put solid sales techniques into practice can be a real benefit.

Selling comes naturally to some people, but for others, it can feel awkward and even insincere or opportunistic. If you are unsure of your own sales skills, here are some game-changing sales techniques that will not leave you feeling like a slimy snake oil salesman.

## 1. Change Your Sales Perception

Before we jump into sales techniques and practices, you must first change your perception of what sales is and is not. Sales techniques are not about pushing somebody into something they do not need, want or cannot afford.

Take the word 'selling' out of your vocabulary for a second and replace it with 'motivating' because that is what you are doing. Selling is motivating somebody to take action.

Learning how to motivate others to take action that benefits both you and them will pay dividends throughout all stages of your life. To motivate others to take action, you have to actively listen to their needs and know the right way to persuade them into taking that desired course of action.

Slicking your hair back, throwing on a pair of mirrored sunglasses, and adopting the loud-mouthed and pushy approach is not the way to go about this.

So, what works?

## 2. Know the Customer

This might sound obvious, but it can be easy to mess up. Knowing the customer means listening genuinely. Research shows most people are not the greatest at active listening. We might seem like we are listening, but we are really just waiting to talk.<sup>[1]</sup>

Learning to be an active listener takes some practice, but it can help you better know the hypothetical customer that you are selling to. Bill Clinton might not have been a salesman, but he probably would have been a great one. The former president was known for being such a good listener that he made whoever he met feel like they had his undivided attention.<sup>[2]</sup>

The best salespeople take a genuine interest in the problems that need to be solved. If you fail to know the customer, the rest of your sales pitch is going to be a real uphill climb.

Listening is only part of the battle. There is also preparation. Whether you are trying to sell yourself at a job interview or pitch an idea, going in unprepared is just foolish. Both teams in the Super Bowl know the strengths and weaknesses of the other team. They study their plays and develop a strategy long before the coin toss.

Do some research on your intended audience, and learn to understand what drives and motivates them. You want to find something that allows you to connect with them and speak their language. People want to work with those who they like and who understand their needs.

### **3. Show Them the Benefits**

A big part of learning how to motivate somebody is to communicate what's in it for the other person. You already know what's in it for you, but you need to put yourself in their shoes. You have to convince them why they should hire you for the job or sign on to your idea.

Do not focus on your own agenda, but focus on why it is in their best interest to agree with you. When people buy from a salesperson, they do not do it because they want to make the salesperson happy. They do it because they have a need or problem that requires a solution. It is your job to understand that need and tailor your message to meet their needs.

This is where some of that research and preparation we discussed comes into play. The better you know the other person's problem or goal they are trying to reach, the better you can convey how your background, talents, and ideas make you the right person for the job.

### **4. Keep Your Cool**

We've all heard of the expression 'don't let them see you sweat.' This is sometimes easier said than done, however, and nerves have a real way of throwing a monkey wrench in a sales pitch. There is no magic solution to keeping your cool, but there are certainly a few things that you can do that will help.

Practice what you want to say. This does not mean that you need to memorize verbatim every word of what you plan to say. Nobody likes the feeling that they are being lectured to. Just take a few minutes to get a feel for how your pitch feels coming out of your mouth. The pitch for an idea might sound great in your head, but it may feel disjointed rolling off the tongue.

Even with some practice, it is easy to find yourself in the middle of trying to convey your great idea when the adrenaline kicks in and starts to get the best of you. This is often around the time that people start to get flustered

and find themselves rambling or bragging. This sort of thing is a real turn off, and the person you are speaking to will pick up on this.

Slow down for a second and do your best to be conscious of your tone and speed. Take a deep breath and carry on.

## **5. Create Small 'Yes's' Along the Way**

If you want to get that final yes at the end of your sales pitch, it helps to shoot for smaller yes's along the way. This helps with psychologically establishing a connection with others. It allows them to see your point of view and why your idea is a good one.

In the 1960s, a team of psychologists wanted to explore what would become known as the foot-in-the-door technique. They canvassed a neighborhood and asked each house if they could put a large 'Drive Carefully' sign in the front yard. Only 20 percent of the residents agreed.

The researchers went back a few days later and asked if the residents would agree to put a much smaller sign in their window. More people agreed to this smaller request.

When the researchers returned a few weeks later, 76 percent of the residents agreed to put the larger sign in their yards.<sup>[3]</sup>

So what does this mean?

By getting a yes to a smaller request first, you are establishing a connection and asking the other person to make a smaller mental commitment. While trying to motivate somebody, ask them questions along the way that touch upon their need or problem and result in a 'yes.' By doing this, they are that much more likely to give you a final 'yes' at the end.

## **6. Close the Deal**

Alright, you have listened to the customer, kept your cool and conveyed a message that speaks to their needs. Now, it is time to close the deal. A lot of salespeople try to create a sense of urgency with a now or never approach. This can come off as both pushy and desperate.

Yes, the idea that you are discussing may indeed relate to a specific deadline, but being too pushy can backfire pretty easily.

It is rare for somebody to immediately say yes right away. Everyone has their own set responsibilities, and people often need a bit of time to think things over.

It is always a good idea to ask the other person if they have any questions about what was discussed or if they have any concerns about moving forward. This gives you a chance to clear things up.

Finally, ask if you can follow up at a specified point in the future. This avoids leaving things open-ended and allows you some time to tweak your message.

## In Conclusion

Remember that good sales technique is not about trying to push somebody into something that is not right for them. It is about understanding their needs and conveying why you have an effective solution.

If you can master the sales techniques outlined above, you will succeed even if you never technically sell anything.

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