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Opening a Sales Dialogue

Prepare and Engage



The Leadership Institute

Lighting the Way



Welcome to Opening a Sales Dialogue!

- ✓ **Congratulations, you've secured an appointment with a customer—where do you go from here?**
- ✓ **You have about 3-10 seconds to make a great impression.**

Today's Topics Include:

- Opening Basics
- Engaging Conversation
- Setting Agenda/ Establishing Buy-In



What you bring to the call

How do you look or sound?

You can only make a first impression once!

- ✓ **Your first impression is more than just an expensive suit or fancy shoes!**

Remember that your smile, bounce, enthusiasm, and tone of voice help build a positive image.

Opening a Sales Dialogue

Don't forget to...

- ...treat every employee as if he or she is the owner—they might be!*
- ...pay special attention to the receptionist—a valuable friend.*
- ...get to know the gatekeeper.*
- ...find anyone else involved in the decision-making process.*
- ...watch for non-verbal signs and listen for verbal signs.*
- ...organize your presentation materials.*
- Telesales: you need to have all mail, electronic or faxable info ready to send.*



Pre-Call Prep

Review any previous customer info available to you.

✓ A review of the customer's buying history will contribute to the success of your opening.

✓ You need an opening for EVERY sales call.



Pre-Call Prep, *cont'd...*

- ✓ **Put yourself in your client's shoes.**

What would you want as an outcome if you were the customer?

What service expectations would you have as the customer?

- ✓ **Prepare your opening with these answers in mind.**

Build an Agenda

- ✓ **Never enter into a sales call without a purpose.**
- ✓ **Your agenda may be overridden by your customer.**
- ✓ **Be flexible and adaptable with your agenda.**



Build an Agenda, *cont'd...*

✓ **Always carry the following materials– or have these items ready to email, mail or fax:**

- ***Business Cards***
- ***Pen & Notepad for taking notes***
- ***Marketing surveys & Audits***
- ***Sell Sheets/ Promotional Flyers***
- ***CLEAN copies of Newspapers***

✓ **Your level of organization can make or break your opening!**

Engaging the Customer in Conversation

- ✓ **Make them comfortable enough to talk to you.**
- ✓ **Find their HOT BUTTONS.**
- ✓ **Search for clues that illustrate the customer's problems.**



Engaging the Customer in Conversation, *cont'd...*

✓ In addition to encouraging conversation, the purpose of the opening is to:

- Review the agenda you've set for the meeting.***
- Discuss the objective of the meeting.***
- Ask for any additions the customer may have to the agenda.***
- Obtain the customer's permission to move forward.***



Identify yourself to the customer

✓ Introduce yourself and your company.

✓ Use the customer's name.

✓ Thank the customer for taking time to speak with you.

Establish Common Ground



✓ Find common ground with the customer.

- *Talk about something from a prior conversation.*
- *Mention something that drew you to his or her business.*
- *Focus on a new product or service the customer wants to sell.*



Opening a Sales Dialogue

**No matter what
the reason,
be genuine in
your approach.**

**Customers can
sense false
interest.**

Tell Them Why You're Calling

✓ Tell the customer why you are calling.

What would you expect as an outcome of the call?

✓ Propose an agenda.

✓ Give the customer a chance to contribute and agree with the agenda.



Move Ahead- With Approval

✓ Your customer may not be able to continue with the call. Ask permission before you move ahead.

“Given the agenda we have covered do you have any questions or is it ok if I move ahead?”

✓ Don't forget to take notes as you begin the next stage of the process—the questioning phase.

Possible Objections

- ✓ If an objections occurs, do not force the conversation forward.
- ✓ An objection is not the end of the call!
- ✓ You may not know enough about the customer's needs to answer the objection at this point.

How to Manage Possible Objections

- ✓ Ask questions to find out the nature of the objection.
- ✓ If you can't answer the objection at this point, tell the customer you understand the concern, but would like to ask a few more questions before you address the situation.

Responding with Features & Benefits

- ✓ **Feel free to interject information about the features and benefits of your product that might be important to your customer.**
- ✓ **Remember that a feature is a “what” and a benefit is a “why.”**

These should be used in combination to illustrate how your product can help your customer.

Summary

- ✓ Remember the following key points when building a great opening:
 - *You have 3-10 seconds to make a great impression.*
 - *Establish an agenda, ask for buy-in and permission.*
 - *Engage the customer in the process.*
 - *Use features and benefits to remind the customer why your product will help them.*
 - *Manage objections thoroughly.*

Questions & Discussion

On behalf of The Leadership Institute, I would like to thank you for attending this training and wish you the best of luck in all of your future endeavors.



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