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## Gaining Commitment

*Listening – the Closing Super Power*  
*Triple A of Closing*  
*Circling Back & Handling Not Now*  
*Special Closing Situations*  
*Exiting with an EDGE*



# Sales and Business Marketing Program

WESTERN MICHIGAN UNIVERSITY

Module 8

Another Chapter in the Journey to becoming a Sales Pro!

# OnSELLING

current topics >>>

## LISTENING – the closing super power!

Too often salespeople turn off their ears and only try to close with the mouth. Yet, listening is a critical part of successful closing. Specifically, listen for three things....

**BUYING CUES:** A buyer's wording indicates they are mentally trying out the solution as if they already bought it. For instance, they speak about using it or how to deal with the logistics or schedule of purchasing.

**HOLDBACK ISSUES:** The buyer highlights the reasons that the purchase might not occur and gives you a chance to go into problem solving mode!

**PROCESS PREVIEWS:** The conversation turns towards the decision process and the people that need to be involved. This can often indicate the person is liking the idea enough to move things forward and gives you a path to follow by sharing the process / people.

Mark your calendars...

## Great Lakes High School Sales Challenge

Two Events: Speed Selling & Role Play  
Two Rounds: e-Round and  
On-Campus. Dates & details can be  
found on the GLHSSC web site:

[www.wmusaleschallenge.com](http://www.wmusaleschallenge.com)

## Gaining Commitment

### Earn It – Ask – Deal with the Answer

*Don't over complicate your close. Learn to ask directly and cleanly and then deal with the answer. No tricks. No pressure.*

There is a major mistake salespeople make when it comes to closing; they don't earn it! Did you truly understand the customer? Did you smartly connect your company's capabilities in order to solve the customer's challenges? Did you move past barriers based on understanding? When the answers are a series of yeses, then you have earned the close. And if you have arrived at this point by honestly and smartly working with the customer, don't blow it now. Ask for the next step! That step may be a next meeting, a trial purchase or a full deal, but in each case, you have earned the right to ask, so do so. Ask directly, ask cleanly. And just like you, the customer has earned the right to say yes or no. Wait for that answer by using silence, and then deal with the answer. Obviously a yes, is a great outcome, but a no isn't the end of your work. Dig back in: gain understanding and adjust. Ask again. If the answer is a final no, be sure that you have done the work necessary to know that the no is a worthy one. You have tested that no, you have worked to get past it. If it still exists, keep the long-term door open and exit graciously.

Closing 101.... Keep it simple and both parties win!

Earn it

Ask for  
It

Deal with  
Answer



# The TRIPLE A of Closing

## ASSUME

You are the seller, they are the buyer. You are meeting to determine whether what you sell is a worthy purchase for them. Thus, it is absolutely normal, and expected, that you will ask for the sale (or needed next step).

Don't fear this ask, it is the normal next step.

DO NOT assume the buyer has said yes and thus DO NOT use a forced choice close. But assume you will ask and go ahead and do it!

## ASK

Ask the buyer to commit to the next step, which might be a next meeting or might be a final sale. Follow three rules...

### SPECIFIC

Make your request specific. Ask for a specific meeting date & time, or a specific quantity, or a specific product package

### DIRECT

Use direct wording, keep it concise, and unambiguous. Don't go back into "selling," keep your words focused only on the ask.

### CLEAN

Be sure not to hurt your ask with filler words and especially avoid diminishing words like maybe or possibly.

## ASSERT

Being assertive means keeping both parties' best interests in mind as you proceed. Being submissive is giving up too easily, and being aggressive is only focusing on your interests and ends up coming across as pushy.

Your first and most important assertive behavior is to SHUT UP after the ask. DO NOT keep talking & DO NOT jump in after a brief silence. WAIT for an answer then ...

## The Winning Process >>> Dealing with a NO or the NOT NOW Problem

Three east words: Clarify, Respond, Confirm. This might be the easiest process in selling, but it is also one of the hardest to consistently apply. You want an "easy" way to set yourself apart and win more often.... Pay attention to C.R.C.

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## CIRCLE Back

In the complex decision-making situation that surrounds many products & services, sometimes the answer you must deal with is "Not Now"!

You ask & get a no or a maybe...

**Treat a NO or a MAYBE as a problem to be solved.**

1. Start by **seeking understanding** as to any specific issue holding the buyer back. Note: this may require multiple questions + discussion.

2. Then, like you do after understanding, **connect a solution** to their issue. Or if the negative issue they express can't be changed, consider discussing whether the **overall package is still a winner**

(very few solutions are only wins)

3. **Re-Ask for the close.** Roll directly into this after making your case above and then like all closes, deal with the answer again.

## CHECK PULSE

The buyer needs more time, this is legitimate (AFTER you have tested the waters via an assertive circle back). But that doesn't mean you should just walk away at that point. Test the waters again & find out...

### THE SCORE

Ask where you stand to determine how close you are to the real close.

"If you had to make a decision right now, where would we stand?"

### THE TIME & PROCESS

Learn the time frame and the process of the future decision.

"I appreciate the need to discuss with others, can you share that process and time frame with me?"

**There is potential, based on what you learn to earn a new ask for the close, otherwise move to step 3**

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## TIGHTEN THE GRIP!

Take or suggest actions that improve the chances that even with time between now and a final decision, you will eventually hear a yes.

### PROCESS INSERT

Based on your check pulse you know the buyer's decision process. Attempt to get directly involved.

"Since you are meeting with your partner next week, can I join you for that meeting to directly answer questions she may have?"

### PROCESS SUGGEST

You are aware of the process & concerns so suggest a new step aimed directly at dealing with the issues.

"With you being concerned about how your employees will react, can I come in and host a lunch and learn and answer their questions?"

# Two Special Closes

## THE NEXT STEP CLOSE

Often you are going to have multiple interactions with the buyer which means needing to gain commitment to that next step. In these cases, follow the following process:

**Big Key Summary:** Quickly review the most important components of the current interaction as a reminder that the time has been productive. Keep it brief and squarely focused on the BIG keys, not every detail.

**Reassurance:** You don't need to go into the details, but stress that you have a winning solution to whatever this next phase is going to be. Take the mystery out of the next step and help the buyer see that the process is leading somewhere productive!

**Sell the Next Step:** Why should the buyer move on with you? Sell that answer related to why the next step is valuable to THEM! (it's not about you!) Again, be brief and on-point, but don't assume they automatically see value in the next step.

**Ask for Next Step:** Go ahead and ask directly and cleanly and like already stressed, deal with the answer!

## THE SUBJECT-TO CLOSE

Sometimes there is one holdback issue that is not going to be able to be resolved at the current moment, but that doesn't mean you have to fully wait to close.

A "Subject-to" close involves you asking for the close pending the resolution of that outstanding issue. It isn't a final close, but it is a better outcome than simply waiting until that issue is resolved.

"If you call the references we have provided and those conversations go well, can we count on your business?"

"Assuming we can get the facility available on your preferred dates, can we consider this a done deal?"

## E.D.G.E. Model

### ENDORSE

A decision is made, and normal humans have two reactions: yeah! And Oh Crap! So, endorse the decision to help the buyer feel positive about it

*"Today was time well spent and the proposal we send will meet all your needs."*

*"Your members are going to love the meeting and their time at CMR"*

### DETAILS

There are often still details to lock down to ensure the next stage is truly going to happen. If those details are simple, lock them down now. If they will take some time and effort at least review the process and schedule by which those details will get finalized.

*"And I will have that proposal to you by the end of the day."*

### GRATITUDE

Never forget that the buyer had options and they decided to go with you. Directly thank the buyer for whatever you accomplished. Keep it short, simple and genuine!

*"I know you had options and we are very excited and thankful that you chose us"*

*"Thank you for spending the time today to work through the details, I am grateful."*

### EXTEND

Take the time to preview a positive outcome of the next step. This requires you to think ahead and suggest a winning outcome to the buyer.

*"And when you review the proposal and it lines up well with your needs, we will be excited to welcome to CMR!"*

*"And after we work together to put on a great event, I hope we can continue working together over the long-term."*

## Three Rules for Price Negotiation

### BE STRONG!

If you are hesitant about your price or imply the value is not strong, the buyer will read that and will run the other way. Be confident and the buyer will be too!

### PRICE +2

Never make it only about price. Always stress at least two value points that make the price worth it. People buy on value so make sure you negotiate on that too!

### TRADE

If you must alter your price, then do so as part of a trade, not as a giveaway. Gain more volume, or better conditions, or anything that keeps the overall deal strong.

ask the alumni >>>

**Q:** What is most critical in closing?

**A:** "Listening smartly and recognizing the first no answer is just that, a first answer. And if you approach it smartly and honestly, you have a good chance to change that first answer!"



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## final thought.

Both you and the buyer want to get a decision made, so work smart and help achieve that win-win outcome!