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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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