

“Leave me some literature, I’ll look it over and get back to you...NOT”

When prospects don’t want you to go away mad, they just want you to go away.

Every sales person has heard it “Leave me something to look over and I’ll call you.” Inexperienced reps look at this as a buying signal, but veterans know this is just a “nice no.” In 99 out of 100 cases, prospects will use this ploy to quickly chase away the rep. They know if they say they are not interested, that they can’t afford it, that they are satisfied with their current program etc. that the rep will attempt to overcome the objection. Most people prefer to avoid confrontation and do not like to hurt others, even strangers. They use the “literature” answer so that they can avoid challenging or rejecting the sales person and still not buy anything from them. They send the rep away with a smile on their face but no order in their briefcase.

Before you plunk down that brochure consider these points:

- People who are genuinely interested in making a purchase will want to get their information first hand from you. They will want the opportunity to ask specific questions about how we can help them.
- Sales are made when a customer sees how a product can address their needs. A brochure can describe features, and even explain some generic benefits. It can not show how our products relate to the customer’s specific needs.

Brochures and leave behinds are tools to help you make a sale; they can no more make a sale than a carpenter’s hammer can build a house.

The request for literature is a stall. You need to get past this stall and get on with the business of making a sale. The best way to do this is to sidestep the literature request and begin the SPIN process to draw the customer into discussing their needs.

Here are some examples:

- I’d be happy to leave you something, first let me ask you a few questions so I know what to give you.
- Great I’m glad you’re interested in learning more about our paper. Let me ask you a few questions so that I will be sure to leave you the right materials.

Sometimes the contact needs the information to pass along to the decision-maker. After establishing this fact, you should make every effort to reach the principle for a face to face meeting.

- Is there someone else you'll be discussing this information with? I would be happy to meet with you both to review the materials and answer any questions that you might have.

You can position this as a means to help the contact person, to take the burden of presenting the program off their shoulders.

In some circumstances you will have to leave information (decision-maker is out of town etc.) When you must leave information make sure you highlight the most important points on the leave behind. Use Post-it® notes to personalize the piece and suggest benefits. Often the prospect will only scan the piece. By making the key points stand out, you increase your chances of a call back. The goal is not to make a sale but to inspire the prospect to call you for more information.

Don't give the prospect too much information, 1 good piece is more likely to be read than 10. Leaving information on too many products will make the choice too complex and may cause the client to "decide not to decide". Leave information on the products/programs that you feel would best serve the client's needs.

When leaving literature, be sure to get a commitment from the prospect. You are leaving something of value, *information*, you should expect to get something of value, *time*, in return. Set a time to meet after the customer has had a chance to review your materials.

- "Here is the information you requested, let's get together next week to discuss it, would Tuesday morning be good?"

This demonstrates to the customer your intention to follow up your interest in their business. You can also use this as an opportunity to gauge the customer's level of interest.

- "Great, I'll leave you the information and we'll meet next week to clear up any questions you may have and to set up your program."

The reason prospects use a stall is that many sales reps do not follow up on customer contacts. Your response to "Leave me something" determines if your call was a waste of time or the beginning of a mutually profitable relationship. Literature can only give part of the story, you owe it to your customers to give them the whole picture.