

## Closing Techniques

In the last section of this chapter, I would like to simply outline several of the many different types of closes that can be employed in your persuasive settings. By cataloging them here, you will have a ready, quick reference for any situation. I have not included many of the old, outdated, offensive, repackaged closes you often hear or read about. The following recommended closes can always be tailored and adapted to fit the style and approach that works best for you. Remember that you should only have to resort to these last-minute closing strategies if you have not completely closed your prospect throughout the presentation. Your goal should be to never have to use these tactics, but in the event that you do, these strategies sure will help.

1. **Direct close**—Simply ask for the sale. “Shall we get the process going for you?” “Sounds like a great fit! Are you ready to move forward?” “Let’s get the ball rolling, OK?”
2. **Assumption close**—Rather than ask if your prospect wants to move forward or not, assume the sale and give her/him a choice of one option or another. This closing technique solidifies the sale. For example, “Would you like the blue or the green?” “Do you want it delivered, or will you be picking it up?” “Will that be cash or charge?”
3. **Take-away close**—When your prospect hesitates, say, “Just a minute—let me make sure we have this in your size.” “Let me see if we have this item in stock.” “Let me check with my manager.” “This product is not appropriate for you.” Closing strategies like these create the impulse to move ahead with the purchase so your prospects don’t forfeit their opportunity.
4. **Summary close**—Restate the list of benefits your prospects have cited as important to them and list them in order of priority. This closing strategy confirms and validates in your prospect’s mind all the valid reasons for the purchase. It also shows your prospect that you have been attentive and understand her/his needs.

5. **Puppy-dog close**—Let your prospects touch, taste, feel and experience the product or service as much as possible. Put them in the actual situation, either literally or through helping them create a vivid imaginary experience. This closing strategy helps the prospect become attached.
6. **Pro-con close**—Walk the prospect through the thinking process. On a piece of paper, draw a line down the middle and write down factors that help your prospects compare and contrast how many more pros your product has than cons. This closing strategy is excellent for analytical personalities.
7. **Order-sheet close**—Fill in the order sheet from the start of the conversation. This closing strategy reinforces a subconscious commitment on your prospects' part. If they hesitate, explain that the form just helps you get all the details. In completing the form, be clear on what your prospects are looking for. Assure them that if they aren't ready to make a decision, the order form will not be processed.
8. **The relevant-story close**—People think in terms of stories. Relate to your prospects the experience of another client in a similar situation who moved forward and was very happy with her/his decision. This closing strategy also works in the reverse: someone who did not purchase and later regretted it.
9. **Ascending close**—Pose a series of questions to your prospects that will all elicit a "yes" response and lead to the point of purchase as the obvious step to take. This closing strategy reinforces subconscious affirmation of the product's benefits and ability to meet your prospects' needs. "Yeses" increase desire, while "nos" decrease desire.

10. **Reduce-to-the-ridiculous close**—Break down your product’s costs into minute units: “For a mere 22 cents a day, you can enjoy the benefits of our product.” “You can change your life by investing only 50 cents a day.”

11. **Real-reason close**—After you have tried everything, thank your prospects for their time. They will then sense that the exchange is ending, so their resistance will subside. Ask your prospect something like this: “Mr. Smith, I tried to present the information the best I knew how. What is the real reason you did not buy today?” After receiving an answer, see if you can address the concern and re-close.

Closing skills will be a great persuasive tool to get under your belt, and the sooner you do so the better. Remember, as the salesperson—whether you’re selling a product or trying to get your teenager to understand your point of view—you are in an advisory role. You are your prospect’s *advocate*. The more you can operate in her/his best interest, the more s/he will sense this and agree to your input. The closing skills you have learned in this chapter will help you to persuade more effectively. Now, knowing the process, you will understand what is happening each step of the way and you will intuitively recognize where to guide your prospect. When you get these skills down, you will be pleasantly surprised that effective persuasion is an easy, fun and natural process.

In the beginning, you will experience moments of awkwardness when you forget exactly what to say or do. There will also be times when your prospects will throw you for a loop and you won’t remember how to respond. When this happens, don’t be too hard on yourself. As time goes on, you’ll experience a natural learning curve. Just make note of areas you’d like to strengthen and work on them along the way. This kind of conscientious attention will soon help you hone and polish your selling abilities. After every sales attempt, take the time to analyze the situation. What did you do well? What could you have done better?

Last but not least, remember that in this process, everyone wins. Salespeople are what make the world turn. You will often be the one who nudges a person just enough so that s/he'll take action. There are countless things that would remain undone if it were not for a sales rep's guidance and instruction. In the end, your prospect is happy because you gave her/him the courage to act, and you're happy because you know you've made a difference.

© 2009 Kurt Mortensen