

R's of Resistance

I have identified what I call the “Three Rs” for solid closing. After the first impression, your next focus is to effectively weave your close throughout the entire presentation. That is, the three Rs are at work throughout your presentation, aiding your prospect in becoming more and more inclined to buy. These three Rs are reason, resources and representative. Let’s look at the first R. “Reason” must be viewed from two different angles—first, from your prospect’s and then from your own. Early on in the persuasive setting, seek to understand exactly what your prospects’ needs are. That is, determine what their reason is for coming to you or listening to you in the first place. Then, you have to give them the *reason* to buy. Essentially, their problem and your solution match. Do not fall into the trap that many rookie salesmen do of spouting off a laundry list of features, benefits or all the reasons why *you* think they should buy. This sales strategy is useless because your prospects have come to you with their *own* reasons for buying already in mind. If you talk too much about what *you* think the reasons are to buy, you’re going to talk your bewildered prospects right out of the sale. When the sales representative talks too much, s/he sucks the emotion right out of the sale. It is draining and frustrating for prospects to hear a salesperson’s incessant babble about all of a product’s bells and whistles when they just want their own key questions answered.

There is a great story that illustrates the importance of your reason to buy ringing true with your prospects’ reasons to buy. A gentleman by the name of Airman Jones was assigned to the induction center, where he advised new recruits about their governmental benefits, especially their GI insurance. It wasn’t long before Captain Smith noticed that Airman Jones had an extremely high success rate, selling insurance to nearly 100 percent of the recruits he advised. Rather than asking him about his successful track record, the Captain stood at the back of the room during one of Jones’s presentations and listened to Jones’s sales pitch. As he presented, Jones explained the basics of GI insurance to the new recruits and then said, “If you are killed in a battle and have GI insurance, the government has to pay \$200,000 to your beneficiaries. But if you don’t have GI insurance and get killed on the battlefield, the government only has to pay a maximum of \$6,000. Now,” he concluded, “which group do *you* think they are going to send into battle first?”

The resounding secret to his sales success was that Airman Jones gave the new recruits a compelling reason to buy.

The second R of solid closing is “resources.” Resources cover all those things that factor in to whether or not your product is appropriate for your prospect. Resources would include time availability, financial backing, support from family, physical ability, etc. For example, investing vast amounts of time and energy into selling annual ski passes to nursing home residents would not really be giving wise consideration to such prospects’ resources.

The third R of solid closing is the “representative.” This is where you, as a person, factor into the selling equation. How readily can your prospect feel a strong rapport with you? Is there an instinctive sense of trust? Does your style rub this person the wrong way? Whether you realize it or not, you are a part of the selling package. There have been many times when a prospect walked away from a sale, not because of the product—in fact, the product might have been just what s/he was looking for—but because of the rep s/he had to deal with. Be sure you conduct yourself in such a way that your prospect can *like* you. People buy from people they like. They don’t buy from people they don’t like. It’s that simple.

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