

An Outline for Your Next Several Sales Meetings

(These agenda items may be divided into as many meetings as you deem necessary)

Disclaimer:

The following information is a basic outline for your next internal sales meeting. Actually, there is enough information for several sales meetings. It is generic in nature and should be applicable in almost any sales team situation. It is copyrighted information so don't even think about stealing it or I will have to send out the posse to track you down and they will slap your hand with a ruler. However, you may reproduce the information on the following pages for your sales team only as long as you keep the copyright (at the bottom of each page) in tact and you give me credit where credit is due. If you have any questions about what I mean, please contact my office and someone will be happy to "read you your rights". Now that we have a deal, wail away with the info.

Note to Meeting Leader:

Set the tone by being excited, encouraging and enthusiastic. One of the biggest challenges sales professionals have is remaining motivated and enthusiastic. Take the lead and set the example with your own enthusiasm. Play some upbeat music, make sure your room smells good, the lights are bright and the temperature is comfortable. Welcome everyone with a warm smile and make them think that you are really up to something special.

A Good Sales Meeting Leader will:

- Be completely organized & prepared with questions for their team
- Be encouraging and up building and give praise where praise is due
- Be specific with feedback and offer solutions to challenges by including all team members in the solution
- Foster an environment of support rather than criticism
- Move the meeting along at a brisk pace and not get bogged down in complaints and problems
- Listen intently to the challenges & successes of the team members
- Make a written or audio record of the meeting and the issues discussed
- Start and finish on time and as promised

Sales Meeting Session #1:

Premise:

The foundation of all sales begins with you. It is your responsibility to shape the decision of your customer. Do not just let your prospect be a buyer. Their entire experience is influenced by you. You must create the "Vibe". It is your sales life, take control by creating the proper enthusiasm and atmosphere for your customer.

Paulism: "Customers buy based on likeability first. Once they think they like you, they are trying to prove to themselves that they are right about you."

"Create the Vibe"

- Enthusiasm breeds enthusiasm.
 - Enthusiasm must be genuine, authentic and transferable.
 - Your excitement (or lack thereof) sends a huge message to your customer.
 - If you aren't excited about what you are doing, how can you expect your customer to be excited?

Paulism: "The first sale you have to make is to yourself. You have to believe in your product and in your ability to sell your product".

Questions to discuss as a sales team:

- How do you specifically generate enthusiasm? What does enthusiasm look like on you?
- Name at least five ways for you to create instant rapport with your prospect.
- How important is authenticity and how do you prospects and customers identify your authenticity?

Sales Meeting Session #2:

Premise:

Your ability to present yourself and your product in a dynamically attractive manner is critical. The customer will have impressions of you from the moment you say hello. They will watch every movement you make. They will study and analyze you for consistencies and inconsistencies. Set yourself up for success with your first impression and continue that impression by being the consummate professional. Send the message that you are a professional that is in control. It isn't fair, but it is real. The first impression is lasting. Use it or lose it. Here are some key elements of a Dynamic Presentation:

Paulism: "Harnessing the Selling Power in You means that you are completely in harmony and congruent with your natural state of being."

Questions to discuss as a sales team about first impressions:

- **Enthusiasm:** What impression do you want to make and what message will your prospect/customer receive?
- **Dress and grooming:** How should you dress as a professional sales person and how important is your dress and grooming? What message is your prospect now receiving and what message would you like them to receive about your dress and grooming?
- **Speaking with confidence and poise:** How often do you use incomplete sentences, word mannerisms, non-descriptive gestures or appropriate eye contact? Do you have any uncomfortable body movements (like swinging arms, clenching hands or flinging your hair) that might distract from your presentation?

Paulism: "A sales presentation is like the big game of a long season. Practice makes a good presentation. Perfect practice makes a perfect presentation."

Sales Meeting Session #3:

Premise:

The responses you receive from your customer will only be as genuine as the questions you ask your customer. Ask sincerely great questions and you will get sincerely great answers. Get curious and get sales. The entire questioning process revolves around your "kid like" curiosity about your prospect and their needs. Preface your questions with opening phrases like these:

- I'm curious...
- I'm interested...
- Tell me, please...
- I would like to know...
- I have got to know...
- Now you have me curious...
- Before we continue, I must know...



Paulism: "The quality of your answers is indirect proportion to the quality of the questions you ask. Ask questions that contain the answers within."

Group discussion about the questioning process. The varieties of questions that help get sales are numerous. Here are the essentials:

- Open ended questions: E.g., "What do you look for when considering a new home?"
- Assumption questions: E.g., "It sounds like you will be ready for a move into your new home in the next 60 days, true?"
- Multiple choice questions: E.g., "Will you be investing in a three, four or five bedroom home?"
- Needs assessment questions: E.g., "So I'm curious, how important is it that each of your children has their own bedroom?"

- Exploratory questions: E.g., "What is one thing you would improve in your home now?"
- Pre-Commitment questions: E.g., "How will you determine which home is right for your family?"
- Interest vs. evasion questions: E.g., "Aren't you impressed with how easy it is to get home financing"?
- Ice Breaker questions: E.g., "Would you like to buy now or just hear my sales pitch?" (thought I would throw that in for fun)
- Pre-supposition questions: E.g., "When, tomorrow, will you make your choice from the homes you have seen?"

As you may note, the variety of questions cross over with other varieties. The key is to be discerning, listen intently and be genuinely curious.

 **Be Natural! Adjust these questions to match your personality and the rapport that you have built with the customer.** 

Questions to discuss as a sales team:

- What questions have you found to be successful in your sales presentations?
- What would you really like to ask your prospect that you are hesitant to ask? How can you ask it in a way that will encourage your prospect to respond?
- How many questions must you ask before you ask for the sale? Why?

Sales Meeting Session #4:

Premise:

Your ability to listen and to be an active listener is one of the most critical skills you possess as sales professionals. The operative word in this description is "active". This means that you are a participant in the conversation with your customer, but at a level that makes them believe that they are the most important person on the planet while talking to you. The irony is that most sales professionals are under the incorrect assumption that "talking" is the objective in the sales process.

Everyone has a story. The most effective way to build trust is to listen to your customer's *STORY*. The law of 'psychological reciprocity' dictates that if you give of yourself and your listening ear to your customer, they will reward you with critical information that helps you make the sale.

Here are some essential benefits to mastering the art of listening:

- You gain respect from your customer.
- You are able to discern their real motives and needs.
- You are engaged in understanding them as a person, not just a customer.
- You are able to clarify misunderstandings before they even occur because you have not jumped to incorrect conclusions.
- You are able to uncover other selling opportunities that may not have even been known from the initial conversation.
- You gain clarity about their buying history and their buying habits.
- They feel validated.
- You feel like you are working on their behalf as their "servant".

Paulism: "The number one mistake that most salespeople make is they talk too much. Get comfortable with listening. It will expand your sales and your world."

Group discussion of the Top 13 strategies for effective listening to elicit information and develop the magic of rapport.

1. Be quiet and still with your entire body.
2. Do not talk or breathe out loud or make noises.
3. Physically close your mouth and be calm with your body.
4. Lean in with your head or body to listen.
5. Verbiage playback - repeat what they have just said specifically or paraphrase.
6. Ask, "How does that make you feel?" Ask this during the conversation to allow the other person to continue to express themselves and feel heard. (Note: Guys just have to get over the fact that you have feelings. Admit it and move on. By the way, what do mascara and men have in common? For the answer send Paul an email at paul@paulmontelongo.com)
7. Verbal cues like: "Yes", "I see", "Ah ha", "Oh", "Really", "No kidding", etc.
8. Physical cues like: Nodding; turning your ear toward them; raising your eyebrows; finger on your chin (as though you are in deep thought about what they are saying)
9. Conversation expanders: "By that you mean..."; "So what you are saying is..."; "Wait a minute, say that again so that I can really get it."; "Let me really get that.", etc.

10. Eye contact: (No Dah) Look AT the other person and not over them or past them. Squint a little while listening as though you are trying to really comprehend what is being said.
11. Avoid rebuttal mentality: Do not be thinking about how you are going to challenge or rebut what the other person is saying in advance of the completion of their thought or while the other person is talking.
12. Avoid the Me-ism mentality: Avoid the temptation to respond to your customer's conversation with, "Well I did...."; or "In MY case....". Instead ask a conversation expanding question so that your customer feels heard.
13. Avoid interrupting - this is the biggest offender. Avoid this at all cost. If the other person rambles, just excuse yourself by saying..."Wait a minute, I want to understand what you just said because I may have a thought about that if I get your point."
14. Turn off your cell phone in front of your customer. Say, "I want to give you my undivided attention, so I am going to turn this thing off until we are through."
15. Combinations of the above. (OK, so there are 15. Gimme a break)

Note: Any of the physical actions noted above will automatically set your mind in motion to be a more active listener and to comprehend more during the conversation.

"Listen four times more than you speak."

...Coach Rick Patino

Questions to discuss as a sales team:

- What will you do to expand the environment of trust and credibility by listening?
- What strategies will you work on?

RESOURCE GUIDE and RECOMMENDED READING

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Get Rid of Those Pesky Objections

(An article reprinted from Paul's syndicated column)



Recently, in a sales seminar I was conducting, a participant posed an interesting question. He wanted to know what was really behind a prospect's objection. In other words, what was going on in the

mind of the prospect when they voiced an objection to your sales presentation?

The gentleman seemed genuinely concerned that the "words" a prospect uses when voicing an objection do not really reflect what is going on in their mind.

As I thought about it, I couldn't agree more.

I am frequently asked how to overcome objections when selling your product or services. The quick answer is that there are many ways to overcome objections.

I will give you my list of top ten ways to overcome objections later in this column.

As I pondered my seminar participant's question even more, I began to think in terms of eliminating objections all together. After all, if you could completely get rid of objections to your sales presentation, wouldn't you rather do that, than have to tangle with your prospect?

One thing is for certain...

If you continually have to jockey around with customer's objections to your sales presentation, YOUR CUSTOMER JUST FLAT OUT DOES NOT TRUST YOU.

The interesting thing is that your prospect may not even know that he/she doesn't completely trust you. They just know at a sub-conscious level that something is amiss. When your prospect is feeling even slightly distrustful of your presentation they will begin to question everything about your sales pitch.

We usually call that an objection. And it is. However, at its core level, it could be taken as an indicator of the lack of trust in the relationship between you and your prospect.

Try to look at it this way for a while....

Objections are a red flag; questions are a green flag. When your prospect continually objects to everything you present, you haven't built enough rapport and trust in the sales relationship. When they are asking exploratory or expanding questions, then you have an agreement of trust in the sales relationship. When your prospect asks questions, they are searching for ways, reasons and proof of their decision to buy from you. This is a good thing. It leads directly to a sale.

When your prospect continually objects, they are searching for a way to let you know that there has not been enough trust built in the sales relationship.

Now, whether you choose to buy into this concept or not, that's just fine with me. If you don't buy into it, perhaps you and I need more time to build rapport and trust. However, just for grins, try viewing objections as a sign that you need to work on the sales relationship for a while. Take the next five customers you have and examine carefully when they object, why they object and what you do to overcome their objection. I will bet you a roll of nickels that when you move toward more camaraderie in the sales relationship, there will be far less resistance. If it works and you make a few extra sales, you can take all the credit.

Does this mean that you will totally eliminate all objections? In a perfect world, I would love to say YES! The reality is that some days you are out of sync or your customer is having a bad day and rapport is much more challenging to establish.

So if you continually get objections, try any or all of these ways to overcome those pesky objections.

1. **Back up to the place where there was total agreement between the two of you. Once you regain the agreement, move forward to the next point of negotiation.**
2. **Ask a "re-direct" question. Get them thinking about what they are objecting to in a different way.**

3. **Get into body language agreement and voice tonality agreement by nodding, gesturing and maintaining an open posture.**
4. **Inquisitively ask..."How did you arrive at that opinion?" Never say the word conclusion, because that closes the mind of your prospect.**
5. **Get them up and moving in a different posture or physically relocate them as possible. This gets the blood and oxygen flow going of both parties and may stimulate some creative thinking to handle the objection.**
6. **Ask..."Do I need to understand something that I missed?" They begin to see that you are genuinely interested in them with a question like this.**
7. **Say..."Please tell me exactly what you mean." Same reason as above. Getting intensely interested in them builds more trust.**
8. **"Is this the only issue of concern to you?" Ask this and it opens the dialogue to more options.**
9. **If they vehemently object to your price, delivery time or warranty, etc., let them spill it all out and release the tension. Let's hope you don't need to go there, but hey, it is an option.**
10. **Admit that you were way off base by assuming they had all the information they needed to make a buying decision. A little humility can be very attractive and help regain their trust.**

There are dozens of ways to build trust with your prospect. I really believe that the more trust you establish in the beginning of the sales relationship, the fewer objections you will face.

One final thought on objections. If you live your sales life believing that you will always have to face objections, then that is exactly what you will get.

On the other hand if you are solutions oriented and focus on the infinite possibilities of creating a "customer served sale", then you will get that, too.

About Paul Montelongo



Paul Montelongo CGR, CSP is a nationally recognized speaker, author, syndicated columnist, and consultant to the housing industry. Paul has built two multi-million dollar construction companies over the last 25 years. His companies have contracted with literally thousands of clients, from Fortune 100 companies to the private investor. Paul's companies have specialized in new home building, design/build remodeling, real estate development and insurance restoration. Paul has earned the prestigious Certified Graduate Remodelor (CGR) and Certified New Home Sales Professional (CSP) designations from the National Association of Home Builders.

Paul is the author of three books for construction industry professionals and a syndicated columnist with his articles appearing in over 25 industry-related magazines in the United States and Canada. Articles have appeared in Design/Build Magazine, Texas Building Trends, Texas Builder, Alabama Construction News, Building Systems Magazine, Houston Builder, World Fence News, Builder/Architect, Hardhat News, Remodelor, Builder Magazine for the NAHB and many other publications. Paul publishes a free monthly electronic newsletter and marketing tip of the week.

Paul is a certified instructor for the National Association of Home Builders University of Housing. Paul is an active member of the following organizations:

- National Association of Home Builders (NAHB)
- NAHB University of Housing Certified Education Instructor
- Greater San Antonio Builders Association (GSABA)
- Greater San Antonio Builders Association Remodelor's Council
- San Antonio Board of Realtors (SABOR) Builder/Realtor Committee
- National Speakers Association (NSA)
- American Seminar Leaders Association (ASLA)

Paul is an avid golfer and a marathon runner and lives in San Antonio (the home of the 2005 NBA champion Spurs) with his family.

Advanced Seminars/Workshops From Paul Montelongo

Integrity Selling® for New Home Sales Professionals

Integrity Selling® is an ongoing, needs-focused sales curriculum. Integrity Selling® helps organizations increase sales, develop more professional sales teams, and decrease the high costs of turnover. Firmly planted in strong values and ethics, Integrity Selling® embodies these features:

- A six-step customer-focused sales system, the AID, INC® System
- Follow-up and reinforcement
- A curriculum that is self-leveling and self-customizing
- Ongoing managers' coaching
- Monthly reinforcements
- Annual review process

SPG Gold® Behavioral Analysis of your Sales Team Members

- The sales preference questionnaire is the only test in the world specifically engineered to detect and measure all twelve types of sales call reluctance®, call reluctance impostors, and more.
- This 110-question computer-scored assessment was developed by behavioral scientists George W. Dudley and Shannon L. Goodson. The most rigorously validated instrument of its kind, SPQ*GOLD® is used by sales-dependent organizations worldwide to help streamline selection procedures, maximize training effectiveness and improve sales productivity. The test is also appropriate for individuals seeking on-target insights into overcoming career-limiting emotions.

Prospecting To the Top® Workshop

The Prospecting to the Top® workshop will provide you with a methodology, the tools and the confidence needed to book more sales appointments at the right level with the right message.

In this workshop you will discover:

- How to apply the Prospecting to the Top® methodology and use it to maximize your visibility with potential clients.
- How to increase your level of confidence and change your perception about contacting "C" level executives and business owners.
- How to become a more successful, enthusiastic new business hunter by utilizing the tools in this workshop
- How to increase both your prospecting success and your financial success by booking appointments with decision makers
- How to convert gatekeepers into allies.