**“Closing” is a Funny Word for It.**

There is no business relationship until someone writes you a check.

Early in my sales training career, I ran across this definition of training: “Training is a planned program. Designed to impart specific knowledge, skills and attitudes to increase desired behavior in measurable ways.”

Closing is a skill. But it’s also an attitude.

You see, most closing problems aren't really closing problems. Too many Accidental Salespeople never get to the point in their sales process where closing is appropriate.

They don't keep their sales **open** long enough to get them closed.

Too many sales managers fixate on closing to the exclusion of all the other steps in the process that make closing the "natural outcome" of taking prospects through your sales process.

“Closing” really isn’t the best description of what salespeople do. The word connotes bringing something to an end. And while we *are* completing the sales process, we are only just beginning the business relationship. **There is no business relationship someone writes you a check.**

Here are four better ways to think and talk about closing.

1. *Opening the business relationship*. Now your prospect becomes your customer and writes you a check and starts to enjoy the benefits of your product or service.
2. *Confirming the order*. At this point, it’s not a matter of a closing line, but simply a matter of the details of delivery dates and details. Once these are worked out there’s nothing left to do but write the order.
3. *Implementing the plan or solution*. It’s time to execute instead of talk. This should be as exciting for the buyer as it is the seller. The buyer gets to solve her problem and improve her business.
4. *Acquiring the order*. Gaining a new customer is like obtaining a new asset for your business. Order acquisition describes a complex sale where there is a team of people meeting with the prospects company. That process can include C-Level to C-Level conversations. It may also involve discussions with the both company’s marketing, finance and supply chain experts. In this scenario, you become an “orchestrator” as much as you remain a salesperson. You must orchestrate meetings among members of your team and get them working on behalf of members of the buyer's team.

But first you must get onto a buyer’s radar by seeding, cold calling, getting a referral, or resorting to some other means of making a connection. You have the initial meeting. You open the conversation about problems and needs. You move to demonstrating your company’s capability of solving the problem or improving their business. You present the plan and the pricing, and you acquire an order. But that’s not where it ends.

You now have an opportunity to go to work for the customer you put so much effort into selling. The real success is when you get a second or third order from the same customer and obtain referrals to other people in your chief contact’s network.

Your attitude about selling and closing drive your behavior. If you believe closing is something you *do* to the buyer, then you will act differently than if you believe closing is something the buyer wants as much as you do.

My favorite way to open a business relationship: Say, “I would love to have you as an advertiser. Is there any reason why we can’t get started?”

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