

All That you can choose for better selling results

Closing Techniques

DAWOOD FAMILY TAKAFUL LIMITED HAROONABAD

One of the most important stages of selling is *closing the deal*, which is the actions taken by the sales person to gain agreement to the sale. There are many closing techniques in sales, which are prescribed actions that sales people take to persuade the customer to make the necessary commitment. Here are some of these:

1. 1-2-3 Close - **close with the principle of three.**
2. Adjournment Close - **give them time to think.**
3. Affordable Close - **ensuring people can afford what you are selling.**
4. Alternative Close - **offering a limited set of choices.**
5. Artisan Close - **show the skill of the designer.**
6. Ask-the-Manager Close - **use manager as authority.**
7. Assumptive Close - **acting as if they are ready to decide.**
8. Balance-sheet Close - **adding up the pros and the cons.**
9. Best-time Close - **emphasize how now is the best time to buy.**
10. Bonus Close - **offer delighter to clinch the deal.**
11. Bracket Close - **make three offers - with the target in the middle.**
12. Calculator Close - **use calculator to do discount.**
13. Calendar Close - **put it in the diary.**
14. Companion Close - **sell to the person with them.**
15. Compliment Close - **flatter them into submission.**
16. Concession Close - **give them a concession in exchange for the close.**
17. Conditional Close - **link closure to resolving objections.**
18. Cost of Ownership Close - **compare cost over time with competitors.**
19. Courtship Close - **woo them to the close.**
20. Customer-care Close - **the Customer Care Manager calls later and re-opens the conversation.**
21. Daily Cost Close - **reduce cost to daily amount.**
22. Demonstration Close - **show them the goods.**
23. Distraction Close - **catch them in a weak moment.**
24. Doubt Close - **show you doubt the product and let them disagree.**
25. Economic Close - **help them pay less for what they get.**
26. Embarrassment Close - **make *not* buying embarrassing.**
27. Emotion Close - **trigger identified emotions.**
28. Empathy Close - **empathize with them, then sell to your new friend.**
29. Empty-offer Close - **make them an empty offer that the sale fills.**
30. Exclusivity Close - **not everyone can buy this.**
31. Extra Information Close - **give them more info to tip them into closure.**
32. Fire Sale Close - **soiled goods, going cheap.**
33. Future Close - **close on a future date.**
34. Give-Take Close - **give something, then take it away.**
35. Golden Bridge Close - **make the only option attractive.**
36. Handover Close - **someone else does the final close.**
37. Handshake Close - **offer handshake to trigger automatic reciprocation.**
38. Humor Close - **relax them with humor.**
39. Hurry Close - **go fast to stop them thinking too much.**
40. IQ Close - **say how this is for intelligent people.**
41. Minor points Close - **close first on the small things.**
42. Never-the-best-time Close - **for customers who are delaying.**
43. No-hassle Close - **make it as easy as possible.**
44. Now-or-never Close - **to hurry things up.**
45. Opportunity Cost Close - **show cost of not buying.**
46. Ownership Close - **act as if they own what you are selling.**
47. Price-promise Close - **promise to meet any other price.**
48. Puppy Close - **acting cute to invoke sympathy and a nurturing response.**
49. Quality Close - **sell on quality, not on price.**
50. Rational Close - **use logic and reason.**
51. Repetition Close - **repeat a closing action several times.**
52. Retrial Close - **go back to square one.**
53. Reversal Close - **act as if you do not want them to buy the product.**

54. Save-the-world Close: - **buy now and help save the world.**
55. Selective-deafness Close - **respond only to what you want to hear.**
56. Shame Close - **make not buying shameful.**
57. Shopping List Close - **tick off list of their needs.**
58. Similarity Close - **bond them to a person in a story.**
59. Standing-room-only Close - **show how others are queuing up to buy.**
60. Summary Close - **tell them all the things they are going to receive.**
61. Testimonial Close - **use a happy customer to convince the new customer.**
62. Thermometer Close - **they score out of ten, you close gap.**
63. Think About It Close - **give them time to think about it.**
64. Treat Close - **persuade them to 'give themselves a treat'.**
65. Trial Close - **see if they are ready for a close.**
66. Valuable Customer Close - **offer them a special 'valued customer' deal.**
67. Ultimatum Close - **show negative consequences of not buying.**
68. Yes-set Close - **get them saying 'yes' and they'll keep saying 'yes'.**

This is a big list, but the real list of closing techniques is almost endless. You can go to each need, for example, and invent several closes around satisfying or threatening them. Here are closing tips to help you further.

'Sell on the tangibles, close on the intangibles' is good general advice. Note how many of these methods follow this rule.

Don't forget the caveat in all of this. If people feel tricked or otherwise betrayed, they will not only not buy from you now, they may well never buy from you ever again or even turn all their friends against you. In particular beware of using unsubtle techniques with professional buyers, who can usually see them coming from miles away.

1-2-3 Close

Technique

Summarize in sets of three items. We will give you this, that and the other.

This may be features of the product, benefits or add-on sweetener items.

There are two ways to do this: they may either be closely related (to reinforce a single point) or may be quite separate (to gain greater coverage).

Most customers want products that are free, perfect and available now. This is the classic business measurement trilogy of cost, quality and time.

Examples

This product is cheaper, faster and more reliable than the competition.

The houses here are better-looking, better-built and better-equipped than those on the other development.

If you buy today, we will give you insurance, tax and a full tank of fuel.

How it works

The 1-2-3 Close works through the principle of triples, a curious pattern where three things given together act as a coherent set of three hammer-blows that give a compelling message.

Adjournment Close

Technique

Do not go for the sale now. Give them time to think. Tell them that they probably need time to consider the offer you have made.

Use this when:

- You can see that they are not going to decide now.
- You have set up enough tension that you are reasonably convinced that they will indeed seriously consider the deal and are likely to come back.
- Given some more time, it is likely that they will buy more (for example if they are at the edge of a budgetary period and their current funds are low).
- The relationship is important to you, and them making a wrong decision now would affect the chances of making sales in the future.
- You do not need to make the sale today (for example you have made your quota and this sale would be just fine for next month).

Combine this with setting up the next meeting, when perhaps you will be able to solidly close the deal.

Examples

This is an important decision for you and I think you need time to consider how important it is. Shall we discuss the details further next time I see you?

I can see you're thinking very carefully about this. Shall I come back next week to see how you are progressing then?

How it works

In many sales situations the relationship is very important as the sales person will be going back to the customer with more sales to make. It is thus a bad idea to push them into a decision when they are not ready and may later be unhappy about this.

Offering an adjournment can be a nice surprise for the customer, who may be expecting a harder style of selling. This sets up an exchange tension, encouraging them to pay back your offer of time with later agreeing to the deal.

The Adjournment Close is particularly easy to manage when the sales person visits the customer, as opposed to having to hope that they will call back

Affordable Close

Technique

Close out any objections they have about price by making sure they can afford it.

Find how much they can afford. Then show that you have a finance plan that fits their capability to pay.

Bring in other factors to reframe the real price, such as lifetime costs.

Show the price of *not* buying - for example the cost of continued ownership of the current car.

Strip down what is being sold to the bare minimum. Remove all the options (and maybe sell them as separate items).

Sell them something else they can afford.

Last option: bring your price down to what they are prepared to pay.

And always remember the caveat: do not close people into debt they will not be able to repay.

Examples

How much per month can you afford...yes, we can make a deal for that...

The initial costs seems high, but by the end of the year you will have recouped the costs.

The basic model will fit into your price range.

The maintenance costs on this are very low.

The cost per page of this printer is the lowest in class.

If we can bring the price down to what you say, will you buy today?

How it works

The Affordable Close works by structuring the finance of the deal to fit into the other person's ability to pay.

'I can't afford it' is often more of an excuse than a real objection. If they really do not want to buy, you will find that they will immediately jump onto another objection.

Alternative Close

Technique

The alternative close works by offering more than one clearly defined alternative to the customer.

The number of alternative should be very few - two or three is often quite adequate. If you offer too many alternatives, the customer will then be faced with a more complex problem of how they choose between the many alternatives offered.

Note that this technique works well in many different situations where you are seeking agreement, and not just selling products.

An extra technique that can be effective is to add a slight nod when offering the preferred choice. This can be accompanied by subtle verbal emphasis on the words.

Examples

Would you prefer the red one or the yellow one?

Would you like one packet or two?

Which of these three instruments seems best for you?

Shall we meet next week or the week after?

How it works

The Alternative Close is a variant on the broader-based Assumptive Close and works primarily through the assumption principle, where you act as if the customer has already decided to buy, and the only question left is which of a limited number of options they should choose.

Artisan Close

Technique

In the 'Artisan Close', the sales person emphasizes the art, skill and ability that has gone into the creation of the product or service that is being sold.

Examples

This Kitchen Mixer has been designed by skilled engineers and designers who have literally thousands of hours of study behind them.

It may seem like a simple adjustment, but it took three years of training to know how to make the right adjustment.

How it works

When we are going to buy something, we evaluate it in terms of the work that went into it. If we think it was easy to make, then we value it less. Often we do not realize the effort and skill required to produce something and hence think it is worth very little.

Selling with the Artisan Close adds perceived value simply by describing the skill of those who made the item and the time spent in producing it.

There is a similar and slightly different effect in service, where the perceived value can be enhanced by explaining the training and skill of those who will be delivering the service.

Ask-the-Manager Close

Technique

Tell the customer that you only have limited authority to give discounts and that you will have to ask your manager to give more. You can at this point ask if the customer wants you to do this.

Then go to speak with the manager. Come back and say you have managed to persuade the manager to give an extra discount.

Example

I'm sorry that's all the discount I'm allowed to give. But we're a bit below target and I'm sure if I ask my manager she might shave a little more off for you. Is that ok?

(Goes to rear of store where animated conversation with much hand-waving can be seen. Then returns).

Well, she took some persuading but I said we are nearly there so she agreed to an additional discount of one point seven five percent...

How it works

The basic principle here is that in approaching their manager, the sales person is setting up an exchange: they have put themselves out for you, so you are now obliged to do something for them -- like buy the product. This is amplified as the manager can be a fear-inspiring figure of authority, thus making the salesperson a courageous warrior, fighting on behalf of the customer.

Having to ask the manager also puts a break in discounting and some people will pay the given price rather than add the hassle of the manager's intervention.

There are several variants of what happens when you go to speak with the manager, including whether the manager is visible and whether the manager comes to speak with the customer. A simple but effective method is that the customer can see you arguing with the manager and clearly taking some heat on their behalf. You then return with the final offer.

Assumptive Close

Technique

Act *as if* the other person has made the decision already.

Turn the focus of the conversation towards the next level of questions, such as how many they want, when they want it delivered, what size they need, and so on.

Examples

When shall we deliver it to you?

What will your friends say when they see it?

Will 20 cases be enough?

Where will you put it?

How it works

The Assumptive Close works by the Assumption principle, where acting confidently as if something is true makes it difficult for the other person to deny this. For them to say you are wrong would be to cast themselves as an antisocial naysayer.

Note: This is one of the most common closes used. Many other closes, such as the Alternative Close are variants of the Assumptive Close.

Balance-sheet Close

Technique

List both the benefits of the purchase (the pros) and also the costs (the cons). Of course, the pros (the reasons to buy) will win.

You can even write it down like a balance sheet. Make sure the 'pros' column is longer and more impressive, of course.

Cons include things they wanted but are not getting.

Start with the cons and keep them short. But do make it sound credible, as if you are giving them fair consideration.

Then cover the pros. Perhaps sound pleasantly surprised as you describe them.

Sound reasonable, as if you are on their side.

Sound almost as if you are talking to yourself.

Examples

Well, although it costs this much and is a bit big, it will sound really good and fit well into your house decor.

Let's weigh things up. You're not getting ..., but you are well within your budget and will have ..., ... and Hmm. That's good!

How it works

The Balance-sheet Close works by building Trust through appearing to taking a balanced and fair approach. It guides the other person's thinking and hopefully saves them the trouble of weighing up the pros and the cons.

This is also known as the *Abraham Lincoln Close* (Lincoln was a lawyer and often used this technique in his cases) or the *Ben Franklin Close*.

Best-time Close

Technique

When people are procrastinating or will 'be back', emphasise how *now* is the *best* time to buy. All sales people know that 'there are no bebacks'.

Invoke seasonal effects, such a Summer, Christmas and other holidays.

Remind them of other short-term reasons, including sales, weather, and so on.

Find out other personal reasons why it is good to buy now, such as their partner's birthday, etc.

You can even do a reversal on 'never the best time to buy' by showing how this makes now as good a time as any.

Examples

We only bring these into stock for the Christmas season.

Summer is coming. Do you have all the garden furniture you need?

The forecast for next week is for sun. We have limited stocks of sun lotion.

The best time to buy is now, whilst...

There is no 'best time to buy' which makes now the best time.

If you were going to start saving money, when would you start?

How it works

The Best-time Close works by emphasising how now is the best time to buy and how delaying is not the best thing to do.

Bonus Close

Technique

When they are dithering close to a decision, offer them something unexpected and un-asked for that delights them.

All it needs to do is make them say 'Ooh, that's nice'. Or something like that.

A simple equation: delight = expectation + 1

Try and figure them out before using this close: for some people it will open them up again as they seek to gain more concessions.

Examples

You know, I've had a good day and am going to give you batteries for free.

Hold onto your money: I'm going to add an extra towel to the pile.

Well, you're a good customer so I won't charge for delivery.

How it works

The Bonus Close may work in several ways. First, the bonus is a temptation that

When they emotionally close on the bonus, the sensation of closure may also leak across to the main subject.

When they feel they have got something for nothing, they may agree to the deal for fear that you may take it away from them again.

You may also create a sense of exchange, where because you have given them something.

The Bonus Close is also known as the Delighter Close or the Extra Close.

Bracket Close

Technique

Make the other person three offers.

First offer them something sumptuous and expensive that is beyond their budget. Not so far beyond them that they would not consider it. Ideally, it is something they would look at wistfully but just couldn't justify (if they do, it is your lucky day!).

Secondly, offer them a solid good deal that is within their price bracket. It may not have all that they wanted, but it is clearly good value for them.

Finally, offer a severely cut-down deal in which very little of what they want is included.

They should, of course, go for the middle option.

Examples

Well I can do you a full kitchen system with Neff units, brass tops and hand-cut ebony edging. It's a bit pricey but is amazing quality.

A really good option is with Bosch units, hardwood tops and matching edging. This is remarkably good value.

If you are on a very tight budget, we do have some basic units, a nice laminate finish and matching surrounds.

How it works

The Bracket Close works by contrasting the preferred option both upwards and downwards.

Rejecting the higher option lets the other person feel good about not spending too much. By comparison, the option they choose seems quite prudent and they may even feel they have saved some money.

Rejecting the lower option lets them feel they are not a cheapskate and can afford something of value

Calculator Close

Technique

Rather than just quoting a price, get out a fairly large calculator and bash away on the keys for a while. Mutter things like 'less discount' and 'I'll take another 2% off, just for you'.

Then either read out the price or turn the calculator around to show the customer.

Examples

Right, the label price is 1200. Hold on a minute ... right, with the sale reduction and the extra discount for today ... does that look right to you?

How it works

Working on the calculator implies that you are not just quoting any price, but working out something special for this customer. You are also performing what seems to be a difficult task and exude an air of authority. Both of these invoke the exchange principle, where the customer feels more obliged to agree to the sale.

Showing the price also gives a finality to the action. To ask for a further reduction would mean you would have to recalculate and so oblige the person further.

This close is popular in particular professions and places, particularly in high-value sales such as jewelers and car sales. It is also useful to people who do not speak well the language of their customers.

Calendar Close

Technique

If they are not ready to close now, agree a future date when you can meet to discuss further. This at least keeps the deal alive and you return to fight another day. It may also be just what you are seeking to take you to the next step in the deal strategy.

Putting dates in the diary may also be an assumptive method, assuming that closure has taken place and that it is just a matter of when.

Examples

When shall we make the next coaching meeting?

Are you free next Wednesday at 3pm?

What new things shall we discuss next week?

How it works

Putting a date in the diary is easy for the other person, and may be agreed as an exchange for you not pressing further for a close now.

Dates in the diary also get them thinking about the future, which may be a good thing as this attention will then keep them engaged in your subject-matter.

Companion Close

Technique

Rather than sell directly to the person you are targeting, sell to a person they are with.

This can be a husband, wife, child, friend, grandparent, etc.

Start by being friendly with them (the target person won't mind this) then gradually increase the selling to them.

Cast them as an authority (particularly as they buy into your idea).

When they are making approving noises or say they would like one, start selling to the real target of the sale.

Rope in the companion as a sales assistant.

If you are lucky, you might make two sales!

Examples

Hello young man, that's a nice hat! Do you like shoes too?...Do you like these?

Good day sir, madam...You seem to like this too, madam...Which shade is best?...

How it works

The Companion Close works because the companion to whom you are selling the idea does not have to make a financial or other commitment and so will be more ready to agree with you.

When the real target of the sale sees that the other person has agreed, they are more likely to also agree, in order to maintain consistency with their thoughts of their companion being intelligent and to maintain harmony in their relationship with them.

Compliment Close

Technique

Be nice to them. Tell them how wonderful they are. Be amazed and impressed by them.

Cast them as the expert so they sell to themselves.

Tell them how good they look or sound.

Tell them how others will be impressed by them.

Tell them how impressed you are with them as a person. Admire their integrity.

Then ask for the sale.

Also compliment them on previous decisions. If you are selling cars, admire the car they already have, although you can also appreciate their need for a new one.

Examples

Wow. You really know your stuff. Would you like to buy this now?

Well, as you are the expert, you will understand how good this is.

That dress looks really good on you, madam.

Your friends will be impressed when you show it to them.

How it works

The Compliment Close works by flattering the other person, massaging their ego so they are more concerned with feeling good than parting with their money.

It can help to associate the person with the product, so they feel their sense of identity becoming attached to the product.

It also works by being nice to the other person so they feel obliged to be nice to you and buy your product.

Putting the other person on a pedestal and admiring them encourages them to live up to the high expectations you have of them.

Complimenting them on a previous purchase is telling them that they make good decisions (and hence can make a good decisions this time too).

The Compliment Close is also known as the Vanity Close, the Ego Close or the Flattery Close.

Concession Close

Technique

Offer a concession of something they want in return for them buying the product.

You can be explicit about wanting an order in return for the concession or you can give the concession without asking - the other person will very likely still feel they owe you something for it.

Examples

If I reduce the price by 10%, will you take the product today?

Well, I think you deserve a free case with this.

Listen, I'm going to throw in a free tank of fuel.

If you are ready now, I'll make sure it is delivered by the end of the day.

How it works

The Concession Close works by offering the other person something and either requesting or implicitly expecting something in return - usually the sale.

The Concession Close is also called the Trade-off Close.

Conditional Close

Technique

When the other person offers an objection, make it a condition of resolving their objection that they make the purchase.

You can also use this approach to make any trade - for example if you want them to watch a promotional video, offer a cup of coffee.

Always, by the way, phrase it in the form 'If I...will you...' rather than 'Will you...if I...'. This is because our brains work very quickly and starting with 'will you' causes them to begin thinking immediately about objections and they may miss the exchange. On the other hand, starting with 'If I...' will cause psychological closure on what you are offering thus drawing them in to the close.

Examples

You say you want a red one. If I can phone up and get you one, will you take it today?

If we can figure out the finance for you, will you choose this one?

If I get you a cup of coffee, would you like to sit down and look through the brochure?

How it works

The Conditional Close uses the Exchange principle to build a social agreement that if I solve your problem, you will buy the product in return.

Cost of Ownership Close

Technique

Do not talk about price. Instead, talk about the total cost of ownership, including service, replacement and so on.

Then compare this cost against that of competing products.

It is often good to scale this price to annual, monthly or weekly cost, where the overall cost may appear scarily high.

Examples

Competing systems may seem cheaper, but when you take into account installation, maintenance and the lifetime of the product, this system is about half the price!

Because we are so confident about the reliability of our systems, we charge only half the price of our competitors. That means the monthly cost is far less.

If you buy a competing product you'll be replacing it in two years. This product will last you twice that.

How it works

People often focus on the immediate price and miss the longer term cost that may be incurred. The Cost of Ownership Close works by comparing costs over time rather than up-front payments. If possible, this can be put into effect with staged payments.

Of course you do need a more reliable product if you are going to offer lower service costs. It also helps to have evidence of superior quality.

Courtship Close

Technique

Woo the other person like you were wooing a mate. Pay attention to them. Give them sincere compliments. Buy them dinner, if that is appropriate. Put them on a pedestal.

Generally treat the other person as if you like *them*, as a person, and that selling is a secondary issue.

If the sale is taking place over a period of time, work hard to develop the relationship. Call them often enough to show your interest. Make them welcome when they visit. Be someone who makes them feel special.

The final request for the sale is like proposing marriage to them. If they truly love you (or at least how you have been treating them), they will, of course, say yes.

Beware of harassment, stalking and other unwanted attention, of course. You want to attract them, not frighten them away.

Examples

You know, it's just so wonderful how you look in that coat.

It's so lovely talking to a person like you...No, it's no bother at all...Let me take that for you...Ho ho, you're witty, too...

I have a couple of tickets for the game on Saturday. Would you care to come as my guest?

How it works

Selling is very close in many ways to courtship. Or maybe it is the other way around. Whatever, the Courtship Close works by using many of the methods that young men use to woo young women. Or women men, or men men. Or whatever. Courtship varies around the world and even around one country. So know the triggers and press the right buttons and the other person will be flattered enough to buy you, hook, line and sinker.

Customer-care Close

Technique

After a meeting that does not result in a close, call up the customer as the Customer Service Manager. Explain that it is a normal follow-up call to check the quality and customer-orientation of the sales staff. Ask about the appearance, courtesy and knowledge levels of the sales person. This, in itself, is highly valuable information.

Then ask for reasons why they did not buy. This gives you objection information you can then address. For example, you can say that because they have been so helpful, you (as the manager) can offer an extra discount.

Examples

Hello, Mr. X. I'm the Customer Service Manager at XYZ. I believe you spoke with one of our sales representatives on Monday? We have a strong customer service policy in the company and regularly check to ensure we are helping you at every step of the way. Could you take a couple of minutes to help answer a few questions?

Mr. X, I can understand why it seemed expensive. Well, as you have been so helpful, I can offer you an extra discount today.

How it works

The Customer-care Close shows that you care about the person, building trust and creating a bond between the customer and the Service Manager. It also gives you information that you can use to both improve your sales technique and also handle objections in this sale.

Daily Cost Close

Technique

Reduce the total cost to how much it costs per day (or week, or month). This is particularly useful for a product or service that has a limited lifetime.

Examples

The phone contract adds up to only 2.00 per day. Pretty inexpensive, eh?

Would you pay 10.50 a week for complete peace of mind? Our insurance package covers a lot for not very much.

How it works

When people estimate cost, they often do so as a single 'chunk'. By reducing the apparent cost to the smallest possible unit, the person has to do a complex calculation to work out the total cost, which many people will not bother to do.

Demonstration Close

Technique

If you are able to, do a spectacular demonstration of your product that really makes them 'wow'. If you can't do it with them there (which is by far and away the best), then use a video or otherwise add impact.

Give them a go. Let them try and find out for themselves.

Examples

I sell bullet-proof vests. Let me demonstrate...

You won't believe this. I didn't either when I first saw it. Just watch...

How it works

The Demonstration Close works by giving them evidence that they cannot deny. The visceral experience of sensing a product being used cannot be beaten by talk or even explicit pictures.

It is particularly effective if they have already predicted that your demonstration will not work as, being forced to revise a prediction they will also have to revise the beliefs on which it was based.

Distraction Close

Technique

Deliberately distract them or wait for a moment when they are distracted by something else, such as the kids playing up, a phone going or something like that.

In other words, catch them in a weak moment when their minds are elsewhere.

Then press for the close. Ask directly for the sale. Give them the contract to sign.

Examples

(their phone goes off). So you do want it now, right?

(there is a lot of disturbance nearby). Can you just quickly sign here?

Here's a cup of coffee. Would you like some cake? Just sign there...that's fine.

How it works

The Distraction Close works by waiting until they are approaching emotional overload or have only a part of their rational mind on you. At these times, they will not be thinking quite as carefully about objecting, and agreeing to the sale will take some of the load off their minds.

Doubt Close

Technique

Express doubt either about the product or the readiness of the person for the product, but make this a relatively weak and easily challenged statement.

Pause to let the person disagree, which a contradicting person will almost certainly do. If they do not challenge your doubt, then smoothly continue with a summary of everything so far.

Examples

I don't know if this product is the right thing for you.

I'm not sure if you're ready for this. Although it does ... (review benefits).

Although most people do not know how to use these, perhaps you can...

How it works

The Doubt Close works by pre-empting their doubting thoughts. If you echo these thoughts, it saves them from having to think the same thoughts. When they accept these, they will begin to trust you and hence will be ready to accept suggestions of other things to think.

Economic close

Technique

Focus on the overall economic situation, showing how the cost is less by considering certain factors.
Show how buying a larger quantity gives volume discounts, reducing the unit cost.
Show how buying alternatives has hidden costs.
Structure deals for them that will cost less overall.
Talk about the longer-term costs.

Examples

You get more for your money in the family-sized box.
Yes, it is cheaper in the next town, but it will cost you more in travel to get there. And you've already spent money to travel here.
You can buy on credit card, but our financing system has lower interest rates.
This model, sir, is much better value.

How it works

Many people focus solely on price, and this plays directly to their concern by showing you are trying to save them money. By doing this, you also gain trust and may be able to sell them more. Even those who are not so concerned about price will have it as an issue at some level, and again you will impress them by taking up this cause for them.

Embarrassment Close

Technique

Maneuver them into a position where *not* buying would embarrass them.
Dissuade them from buying cheap (rather than 'less expensive') options by pointing out that they are cheap, low quality, etc. and that more expensive options are much better value.
Tell stories of cheapskates who make 'false savings' with the cheap options.
Sell to the people they are with, so the other person would have to disappoint their friends, family, etc. by not buying.
Appeal to their sense of important and affluence.

Examples

This is the cheapest option. This one, however, is much better value.
Hello young man, do you like this? ... Well, madam, I think he's made a choice!
Not many people can afford this one.

How it works

The Embarrassment Close appeals to emotions such as pride. It uses the Alignment principle to get people to align their buying actions with their self-image of kind, affluent, etc.
It works particularly well if the other person is in a social situation where the embarrassment would be particularly strong, from a group of peers to a person of the opposite sex.
Young men, perhaps unsurprisingly, are particularly susceptible to the Embarrassment Close.

Emotion Close

Technique

Play to their emotions, deliberately evoking specific emotions.
Find if they respond more to positive or negative emotions and act accordingly.
If in doubt, go for positive emotions - these are usually better.

Examples

If you took this home now, how would you feel?
Does holding that make you feel good?
People who do not buy this invariably feel bad later.

How it works

The Emotion Close works because all decisions are based on emotions. Even if you go through a logical thought process, the final step is always emotional.

Empathy Close

Technique

Empathize with them. Feel what they feel. Walk a mile in their shoes. Understand their situation completely.
Then, when they are empathizing back, *you* decide like they would decide.
You can even talk about yourself, using 'I' instead of 'you'.
Also empathize with the product you are selling and bring this into the equation. Be a match-maker in bringing this great product to a worthy customer.

Examples

I completely understand...and it makes so much sense to me to do this now.
You know, this solution works so well for me.

How it works

The Empathy Close works by first harmonizing yourself with them and then, when you feel what it is like for them to close, they naturally come along with you.

Done well, you will close at the exactly the right moment and for exactly the right reasons for them, and they will come back again and again.

The Empathy close is also called the Love Close.

If you love the product you are selling and love your customers, you will be a truly great salesperson.

Empty-offer Close

Technique

Make them a very kind offer that they cannot take up.

Offer to do something using a thing you have for sale, and which they might feasibly have but probably do not have.

Then sell them that thing. If they do have one, of course you must complete your offer with good grace - it will still help build social capital for you.

Examples

Shall I fit your spare wipers? ... Oh, you have none. Well fortunately, we have some in stock...

Would you like to come to the race day ... Oh of course, you're busy.

Will you need help setting up the computer? ... Oh yes, of course, your IT people will do that.

How it works

Although the Empty-offer Close does not require that you to giving them something, the rules of exchange means that they still feel that they owe you something in return for your generous offer.

Exclusivity Close

Technique

Explain how not everybody is allowed to buy this item and that some form of 'qualification' is needed.

If they do not meet the criteria, you can quietly 'let them' buy as a special favor.

Examples

This discount is for local residents only. Do you live in the town? ... Yes, of course I can see you have shopping bags from Rio's Store.

This is a membership special, sir. You get 20% off if you're member of our club -- it's very cheap to join.

To start this high-powered course you have to have completed the introduction training. Shall I sign you up for that first?

There is normally a 5% discount for regular customers. Don't tell the boss but I'll give it to you if you can pay cash (he won't find out then).

How it works

When we are told we cannot have something, our sense of control is offended, so we are motivated to take control.

When we find we qualify for something, then our sense of identity is boosted as we gain a sense of belonging to a 'special group' (and which makes our satisfaction with the purchase higher).

Extra Information Close

Technique

When they are prevaricating, give them some additional information that will help them decide now.

If they look uncertain, and you do not have extra convincers to hand, you can ask them if they need more information.

Examples

I forgot to tell you that this model has additional flange brackets that offer double the safety of previous models.

This is the last one we have, by the way. There's been quite a run on them this week.

You look like you need more information -- What else do you need to know before you decide?

How it works

How much information a customer needs before they decide is very variable. It is easy to overload them and scare them off, so generally it is better in the first instance to err on the side of caution. This can leave them with not enough information and this is what you may see in their hesitation to close.

It may also be that in their rationalizing of your arguments and their needs, they may have reached a position where they need more information again to get to the finish line. In any case, your job is to find what they need and to give it to them so they have no reason not to buy.

Fire Sale Close

Technique

Explain how this is a one-off opportunity and that prices are low because of a particular circumstance beyond your control. Also point out how time-scales are limited.

Emphasize your misfortune with your manner, being down at heart rather than up-beat.

Examples

We had a break-in at the weekend and a lot of stock was damaged. Insurance covers us so we're just getting rid of this at base price.

Our supplier went out of business so we grabbed their stocks in lieu of payment. So this is the last lot and we're just selling them off.

We had a leak in the basement and the boxes are a bit out of shape. The product is fine but we're having to sell these last at reduced prices.

How it works

In a real fire sale, goods are variously damaged and sold off at knock-down prices to make what little you can from the damage (the alternative is to scrap them). Other things can damage goods, such as storms and floods. You can also use the same principle for such as a bankruptcy sale.

In a fire sale the buyer also feels they have the upper hand as the seller is going out of business or otherwise disadvantaged.

Future Close

Technique

If they are not ready to close today, then close on a future date.

Perhaps they want to think it over. Ask how much time they need. Ask if they may be ready to buy then. After thinking about this, they may be ready to close now. If not, do a Calendar Close so you can meet up next time.

Examples

How much time do you need to think about it? ... As you consider having thought about it now, what do you think?

When you have thought about it, do you think you may be ready to buy?

When we meet next week, will you have thought it through then?

How it works

The Future Close works by getting them to think in the present about the future, hence bringing the future to now so they can 'compress time' and possibly close now.

Give-take close

Technique

Offer them something attractive, then retract the offer, taking it away.

Then make them work to get it back. You might find they're desperate enough to pay full price.

Examples

Here's what you were looking for. Oh, hang on, it's already been reserved for someone else. ... Well, if you want to pay cash now, maybe I could order a replacement in time for the other customer.

Ladies and gentlemen, would you pay 20 for this potato peeler? Of course you would and many have, but I'm not going to let you have it. Not yet. Now I'm going to add this utility knife and this apple corer, both worth 15 each and only ask 25 for the whole lot. Now I've only a few left, who's going to take them? Thank you madam! Yes sir, one's for you...

How it works

When a person sees something desirable, they start to psychologically close on it. Even paying attention creates a weak sense of ownership. When you take the product away, you affect the person's need for a sense of control with the result that they will likely fight back, figuratively trying to take back what is 'theirs'.

The scarcity principle says that people want what is scarce, and the more scarce it is, the more they want it.

Golden Bridge Close

Technique

If you want a person to take a particular option, do not mention it directly, but show how all other options are not feasible or undesirable.

Then let them choose the option themselves.

Examples

Sorry, we're out of that one...Oh that one is really expensive...And that one has got really bad reviews and I wouldn't recommend it...

How it works

Sun Tzu, the famous Chinese General who wrote the classic text about winning wars without fighting, said 'Build your enemies a golden bridge'. By this he mean you corner them, and then rather than fighting (whence they, having nothing to lose, would fight to the death), you back off a little and let them leave with dignity - just in the direction that you want them to go.

The Golden Bridge Close thus works by closing off all options except the one you want.

Handover Close

Technique

When you are getting near to closure or if you are having problems, hand over the actual closure to another person.

You can frame this as a different process, for example where your job was to help the customer choose and the next person is to agree final details, agree price or just take down details.

Examples

Right. Now that we've got the fit right, Mr. Jones here is going to help sort out the paperwork. You have said that price is important to you and Mrs Williams is our senior manager and is going to take over now.

How it works

When the new person takes over, they may act as if everything else has been agreed. The new person is not encumbered with any baggage and the customer may be reluctant to go over any previous detail and effectively give in when faced with a person who may not understand objections raised.

There is a danger, of course, that the buyer will go backwards to re-negotiate detail already agreed. Other problems can also occur, such as the customer backing out because they have bonded with the initial sales person. This method must therefore be used with care.

This process can be used when junior people are used to explain the details of a product whilst a senior person takes over the price negotiations.

Handshake Close

Technique

As you make a closing offer, extend your hand for a handshake. Smile and nod as if the deal is done. Look expectantly. If necessary, raise your eyebrows slightly.

Examples

(Extending hand) So, are you ready now to do the deal today?
(Extending hand) We have a deal?
(Grasp their hand) Well done. You've got a good deal today.

How it works

When you offer your hand to somebody in greeting they will automatically feel obliged to shake your hand in return, often doing this without really thinking.

When they do shake your hand, they may realize that they are also agreeing to the close. Most people will not then feel able to retract their agreement.

Humor Close

Technique

Get them amused by telling a joke or otherwise making witty remarks. Then either go for a relaxed close with another closing technique or weave closure into the joke.

This is particularly useful when they are tense for some reason.

Beware of politically-incorrect humor unless you are sure it will be effective.

Self-deprecating humor is often a safe bet and shows you to be confident and likable.

Examples

This carpet was personally woven by the Queen of Sheba.
Oh go on. It'll make both our wives very happy.
If you don't buy this now, I'll be told to go and stand in the corner!
I'd better not sit down in case the boss sees me.

How it works

Relaxed and happy people are less likely to object.

When you make someone laugh, they will like you more. And we are more likely to buy from people we like.

Hurry Close

Technique

Hurry them up. Speed up the proceedings.

Talk fast, move fast. Encourage them to do the same.

Hint (every so gently) that slower thinking is not very clever.

Say that if they cannot decide quickly then others might get the deal.

Examples

Yes sir, this is the best. The very best you can get.
Absolutely dootley. If you can keep up with the Joneses you can keep up with the best deal. If you want to succeed you must speed, or others will get there first.

How it works

Speeding people up stops them from pausing to think about reasons why they should not buy.

IQ Close

Technique

Imply that intelligent people make this purchase.

This is particularly useful in selling technology where people may shy away from the complexity.

The intelligence can also be associated just with doing a good deal.

You can also imply that it is stupid not to buy.

Examples

I sold one of these to a doctor yesterday.

This is a really clever solution.

It's a bit complex, but you look like you can handle that sort of thing.

It would be stupid not to buy it at this price.

How it works

The IQ Close works by associating intelligence with closure. Thus, if people think they are intelligent (and we all do) they will be attracted towards purchasing the product and hence feeling that they are intelligent.

If the person has an avoidance preference, then implying they would be stupid not to buy makes them aim to avoid the stupidity.

Minor points close

Technique

Ask them about minor points, getting decisions on things they might consider if they were really going to buy the product.

Ask about size, shape, shade, delivery times, fitting options and so on.

Then go for the final close on purchase.

Examples

If you chose this one, which model would you prefer?

There are five shades available. Which do you like the best?

Do you have a click-fit system already? ... Good, that will make it easy to install.

How it works

The customer knows they need to decide on many factors, and this complexity of decision may be holding them back. By getting the easier decisions out of the way, this greatly simplifies the final decision.

After several closures on minor points, the customer gets accustomed to the pleasure of feeling of closure. They can continue this by making the purchase.

Never-the-best-time Close

Technique

When people are procrastinating or dithering over whether they should buy now or buy later, show them that delaying will either get them no advantage or may even be to their disadvantage.

Talk about what they will miss by not having it over the coming period.

Give examples of people who waited for the best moment, which never came.

Examples

If you leave it until next year, you'll have one year less to enjoy it.

The best time to buy is when you need it -- which I'd say is now, wouldn't you?

My friend spent his whole life looking for the perfect partner.

How it works

The Never-the-best-time Close works by reframing delaying tactics as value-destroying procrastination.

No-hassle Close

Technique

Make completing the deal so completely easy for them that any thought that might put them off is not there.

Fill in all forms for them. Do all the paperwork.

Include delivery, installation and setup.

Examples

I've filled in all the paperwork and all you need is to sign here.

It will be delivered Tuesday, when you are in, and fully installed by qualified fitters.

How it works

The No-hassle Close works by being so simple and easy for the other person that any anticipated difficulty or hassle that may be holding them back is blown away.

It also encourages them to return the favor as an exchange for your help with the completion.

Now-or-never Close

Technique

Make them an offer, but make it short-term to the point that they must choose to buy now. Thus they cannot come back tomorrow, when the price will be higher.

Show how this is the last day of the sale.

Say that you need to make your numbers by tomorrow so you are decreasing the price more than you would otherwise.

Examples

I should get approval to do this for a customer, but hey, my manager is out.

This is the last one on the sale. They have been selling so well.

If you sign today, I'll give an extra 2% discount.

We are only in the area until the end of today.

Take it or leave it. This is your only chance.

How it works

The Now-or-never Close works by hurrying them up with a one-off deal. With less time to reflect or seek alternatives, they have to choose, and the thought of losing out will push them towards deciding now.

Opportunity Cost Close

Technique

Highlight the cost of not buying and hence show that the actual cost is not as high as appears from the price.

Use 'cost' in its broadest sense, including hassle, dissatisfaction and problems. Time, in particular, always costs.

Examples

If you keep your existing fire system and it fails, what would that cost you? What would it do to your reputation? The cost of not upgrading looks much higher than getting the latest system installed now.

This suit really does make you look smart. Think of the other fellow, losing sales in a shabby suit. You don't want to be like him, do you?

I know it looks expensive now but I would hate for you to look back in a year's time and realize how much you have spent in maintenance of your current system and how much you could have saved by upgrading at the right time.

How it works

There is always cost, whether you do or do not do something. In business and finance, the 'opportunity cost' is the name given to the cost of not doing something.

Price is not the same as cost. Price is what the customer pays in cash. Cost is a whole range of problems that may or may not be translatable into money. Cost is the sales person's friend.

Ownership Close

Technique

Act as if they already own what is being sold.

Talk about 'your' product and what they are going to do with it. Discuss how it already fits into their lives. Admire it.

Do not talk about whether they are ready to buy or have already bought it. Just act as if it has always been theirs.

Examples

Now where will you put your new wardrobe?

What will people say about your car here?

What do you like most about your camera?

You've got a really lovely picture here.

How it works

The Ownership Close uses the assumption principle, acting as if they already owned the product. This seeks to create mental closure on the principle of already owning it.

Price-promise Close

Technique

Promise a refund if they find the product elsewhere at a lower cost.

The refund can be the whole price (and you take back the product).

It is often the difference between the two prices, so they effectively get it at the lowest price.

Sometimes, for emphasis, it is 'double the difference' (although you have to be particularly careful with this, of course).

Put boundaries on the offer, for example 'only valid for other shops in town', 'within the next two weeks', 'internet offers not valid'.

Examples

Never knowingly undersold.

If you can find the same product cheaper locally, we'll refund double the difference!

Our price promise to you is...

How it works

Many people when they are buying fear finding somewhere else afterwards where the product is cheaper, and hence do not buy. The Price-promise Close eliminates this fear.

In practice, extremely few people take up on this type of offer, because the difference is small, they are embarrassed to ask for money back or the confidence it gives them actually stops them from looking at other prices!

Puppy Close

Technique

There are a number of variants of Puppy Close.

Give them the product to try out. If possible let them take it home. Like a puppy, it should sell itself.

Be charming and cute, just like a puppy dog.

Flatter them. Be very nice. Act something like a good child who deserves a reward.

Another variant is to frame what you are selling in the same cute and fluffy light.

Examples

Can I leave it with you for the week?

It would be so nice if you bought one from me today.

You know, I just love meeting people like you who know what they want now.

Oh, go on, spoil yourself.

Just look at it. Isn't it so loveable?

Would you like to hold it? Doesn't it feel sooo good?

How it works

The Puppy Close, when you give them the item to try out, works by the investment principle, where as they spend time with it they grow closer to it as they associate their identity with it.

The Puppy Close, when you are acting in a cute way, works by appeal principle, where you appeal to their kind and gentle nature. By framing the other person as good and kind (with which, of course, they agree), you also invoke the consistency principle, where they then feel obliged to act in alignment with the way you have described them (and they have accepted as an accurate and true description).

Acting in a child role is playing the Parent-Child game from Transactional Analysis. Where you act as a needy and deserving child, you invoke the Nurturing Parent in them.

Quality Close

Technique

Emphasize quality over other factors, particularly price.

Talk about how other people will be impressed by the quality of the product.

Talk about how quality products last longer, wear less, require less maintenance, etc.

'Sell on Quality, not on Price'

Examples

For a one-off payment you get non-stop quality.

The quality of this shows really who you are.

This will last for ever.

Once you try this, you will never want another brand.

This product is far more reliable.

How it works

The Quality Close works by appealing either to the other person's vanity or to their sense of longer-term value. For vanity, you are associating their identity with 'quality'. For value, you are reframing price across time.

Rational Close

Technique

Use logic and reason to persuade. Show them evidence that the product works well and that other customers were satisfied. Leverage science and irrefutable proof. Explain reasonably why buying is the right choice.

With care, you can construct a powerful argument that uses a traditional and proven structure for persuasion.

Examples

Well now, we've gone through all you needs and the product meets these well, right? ... And the price is good, true? ... Now is there anything else that would stop you buying today? ...

No? So let's do the paperwork.

Do you want a carpet that will wear well with your children and your dogs? That will repel the dirt and stay fresh, even in doorways? This product uses a scientifically-proven formula that lets us offer you a ten year anti-wear guarantee.

How it works

This approach works simply by using rational reasoning that calls upon logic and science. As we are brought up in a social and educational system that defines science and reason to be correct, such an approach is powerfully persuasive.

Some people decide by thinking and other more by feeling. This approach works well with many people, though it is most effective with the thinking decision-makers.

Repetition Close

Technique

Achieve the close by repeating a closing action several times.

Show them the product, then other products, then come back to the product, ... and repeat this three or four times.

Tell them several reasons why they should buy.

Ask several questions that remind them about the product.

Tell them about several different other people who bought the product.

When they refuse, go back to the product several times.

Examples

Look at this...you could try that...but this is good too...and another...but this...

I know you're not going to buy, but I just want to show you one more thing...

How it works

The Repetition Close works because many people need to repeat things a few times before they 'get it'. In a shoe shop, for example, they may have to pick up and put down a pair of shoes three times before they decide to buy.

Many people have a certain number of times they need to repeat things before they achieve personal closure. If you can find this number (often around three or four), then you know how many times to repeat your close.

Repetition is a very fundamental pattern that affects us in primal ways.

Retrial Close

Technique

When things are not going your way, and perhaps when your customer has already said 'no' (and perhaps a number of times), then seek to reset the clock by obviating any past decisions through new data or proving that decisions were shaky or incorrect.

Examples

I have looked deeper into this and found that we were using the wrong information.

I'm sorry but I lost my notes from last time. Can we go over a few things again?

After talking with Jan, it seems the requirements have changed...

How it works

The Retrial Close works in the same way that a retrial is forced in a court of law, where evidence that was accepted in the original trial is proved to be unsafe.

Perhaps it seems it is not so much a closing technique as a unclosing technique? The actual closure is in the decision to open the negotiations again.

Reversal Close

Technique

Act as if you do not want them to buy the product.

When they are objecting, just take the product back and put it on the shelf (or worse, give it to another sales person).

Suddenly remember that this is the last one and it was reserved by someone else.

When they object to you 'deciding for them', do not give in easily. Let yourself be persuaded by them, and only take the product out again when you have a much firmer interest or commitment.

This is particularly useful if they seem to have a contrary nature.

How strongly you do this reversal depends on how much they pull back. It's a bit like fishing - too much tugging and the fish will swim away, whilst a delicate touch will bring the fish inevitably to the shore.

You can also use the idea of reversal in other ways, for example to elicit objections by asking them why they would *not* buy from you.

Examples

This is clearly not for you. Thank you for coming in today, anyway.

Oh no! This one was reserved for another customer and we have no more.

I really don't think this is your style.

I'm not going to get it out again unless you are sure this is the one for you.

How it works

The Reversal Close works by causing reactance, where your autonomous actions cause them to take an opposite stance.

It can also be useful when they are suspicious of you trying to sell them something. By refusing to sell, you appear to be on their side or, at the very least, you will have broken their stereotype of a typical sales person.

Save-the-world close

Technique

Suggest that if they do what you ask, this will somehow lead to a significantly bigger gain being made. Use phrasing such as 'If you...then...' to show causal connection.

Examples

If you contribute now you will be helping to save the lives of whales around the world.

A small savings each day will give you a life of luxury in retirement.

How it works

People generally are persuaded when a causal connection between two things is stated, even though it may be tenuous.

We all like to dream and the thought of somehow achieving these dreams with relatively little effort is very attractive.

Selective-deafness Close

Technique

Also known as the Selective-deafness close, you ignore anything that the other person says or does that does not lead you towards a close. Well, not so much ignore it as act as if it has not been said (you actually think hard about why they are saying what they do and seek ways to lead them away from it).

Examples

(they say it is too expensive) - Won't it look great in your house?

(they start to walk away) - Just look at this feature!

(they ask about things you do not have) - Would you like a cup of coffee?

How it works

The Selective-deafness Close works by the principle that you get what you talk about. If their attention is on why they cannot buy, then they are likely to not buy.

It also is related to the locus of control. If you are talking about what they want, you are on their agenda and they are in control. What you want is for them to *think* that they are in control, but they are actually walking down the path you control.

Shame Close

Technique

Make them ashamed of the current product they have or their inaction over not buying.

Show how unfashionable they are and how others may laugh at them.

Frame not buying as 'stingy' and miserly.

Highlight other social rules that they are breaking.

Examples

Can your mobile cell phone access the net at mega-speeds?

Are you wearing last year's fashions?

I think your son really deserves a new one, don't you?

How it works

The Shame Close works by highlighting social rules that the person is breaking. It also may work by appealing to their vanity.

The Shame Close is also called the Guilt Close.

Shopping List Close

Technique

First elicit the buyer's needs, including product features and other elements such as service levels, usability and so on.

Write these down and verify with the buyer that this is what they want. Of course ensure that what you write down is something that you can supply.

Then show the customer the items on the list. The 'shopping list' close is done as you check off each item as you show it.

If you can't cover everything, make sure the things you can't cover are (a) few and (b) relatively unimportant.

Examples

OK. So what you want is a yellow shirt that can be hand-washed and which is going to last for a long time. Here's the ideal thing from our 'everlasting' range: Yellow (check),

Handwashable -- see the label? (check), and everlasting means at least five years -- guaranteed.

Here's your list. Let's see if we've covered it. 200db (check), noise reduction (check), onsite service (check), ... That's it. We've got it all. So what do you say?

How it works

The Shopping List close works first by convincing the buyer that the list itself is all that they need, which is done by careful questioning and writing in a form where the seller can demonstrate compliance.

The convincing part of the close is in the way that you check off each item. The effect is that each time you do this, it causes the buyer to experience a psychological close. The repetition is like a series of hammer-blows that create a strong final close.

The completed list is also means that the buyer cannot have any objections.

Similarity Close

Technique

Tell a story about a person who is 'just like' the target customer, with similar problems and concerns and who bought what you are selling and is now very happy.

Make sure the customer will empathize with person in the story. Also be subtle - do not make the person in the story *too* similar. Where possible, use a real person and a real story.

Examples

You know I had a woman in here yesterday who asked the same question and who was also concerned about the effect on the environment. She looked us up in EnviroList and came back this morning to place an order.

There was a guy here a few weeks ago who also lived near the airport and needed something to keep out the noise. We sent around our specialists and we haven't heard from him since. I guess he may still be catching up on sleep. Those jets are pretty noise, but our triple glazing is more than up to the task.

How it works

When we read stories or watch movies, we associate with the protagonists and others in the story, taking on a part of their character into our selves. We thus bond with fictional characters and easily do so with people in real life (how often have you empathised with people on the news?).

Once attached to the person in the story, the customer will then more likely agree with that the character thinks and does and may well follow suit with similar decisions.

Standing-room-only Close

Technique

Show how other people are all queuing up to buy the product.

Indicate that the other people are known to or are like the other person.

Hint at how they may be left behind by others or even seen as slow and backward by not buying the product sooner.

Combine it with hints of scarcity, showing how the product is so popular you may run out soon.

Examples

I had six people in here yesterday and every one of them bought several of these.

Other departments are applying. I'd get my application in quick.

They are jumping off the shelves like hot cakes, sir.

I don't know how many more people will be here tomorrow.

How it works

The Standing-room-only Close works by the Evidence principle, where the evidence of other people's interest in the product socializes it.

It shows that the person is not an early adopter but runs the danger of being in the late majority or even seen as a laggard.

Summary Close

Technique

Summarize the list of benefits that the other person will receive, telling them the full extent of what they are getting for their money.

Make it sound impressive, using full phrases and attractive words.

Go into detail, separating out as many sub-items and features as you can.

But also fit the description into a reasonable space of time. Your goal is to impress them with what they are getting, not to bore them with excessive detail.

Examples

So as well as the basic product, you are getting free delivery, a five-day exchange assurance plus our comprehensive guarantee.

This comes in an easy-carry box and includes a remote control, with batteries included, of course!

How it works

The Summary Close works by repeating what has already been agreed. Putting it all together makes it seem like an even bigger package. This is particularly true when

Testimonial Close

Technique

Use a happy customer to convince the other person.

Show them letters from happy customers. Have the letters on the wall.

If you are using the name of the happy customer, make sure they agree to you doing this. Otherwise you will have to use an anonymous reference, such as 'satisfied customer from Birmingham' or 'major airline'.

Persuade happy customers act as references, that the other person can either call up or they can visit.

Reward the happy customer with appropriate thanks, which may range from a simple letter to a small present to a discount. Be very careful here to ensure the customer feels valued and does not feel they are being bribed.

Examples

I regularly receive letters from happy customers. Here are a few.

XYZ Corporation are regular customers.

We have several customers who are happy to act as reference sites for us. Would you like me to arrange a visit for you?

How it works

The Testimonial Close works by providing evidence from a credible source. If they do not trust you, they are much more likely to trust someone who is similar to them.

The Thermometer Close

I'm not a big fan of so-called tricks of the sales trade but here's one that is worth mentioning called the thermometer close.

This is what I would call an upfront closing technique, by using the technique the salesperson is not trying to close the sale out but merely attempting to move the conversation and the opportunity forward.

It goes like so:

Salesperson: Hi (Prospect), this is (Salesperson). How are you today?

Next the stall:

Prospect: Oh Hi (Salesperson) I'm good, unfortunately I didn't make a decision yet so perhaps if you could leave it till next week that would be great.

Here comes the upfront closing technique, which allows the salesperson to test where the sale is relative to a successful close.

Salesperson: No problem, I will put you down for a call on Tuesday. Obviously (Prospect) I would like it be a yes on Tuesday but if was to ask you say on a scale of one to ten, ten being we definitely will be doing business and one being we definitely won't be doing business, where would you say you are right now?

Depending on the number, the salesperson knows how much convincing is left to do. An Answer of five or less means lots and an answer of six or more means not so much.

Prospect: Oh I say a seven or eight.

This is good, but there are still some issues/objections remaining, next the salesperson needs to find out what these concerns are.

Salesperson: Great, can you tell me what are the concerns that remain or how might I help to get you to ten.

Prospect: Well (Salesperson), really the concern relates to delivery times, and while you may have a more cost effective solution, our current supplier never misses a deadline so we feel there is an element of risk involved.

Now the salesperson has found out the remaining concern(s) and has an opportunity to do something about that.

Salesperson: Thanks (Prospect) for your honesty and I appreciate and *understand* your position, How's about to help you resolve this concern, I set up a call between you and one or two of our major and longstanding customers, you can ask them how we have performed in relation to meeting their deadlines.

Prospect: Yeah, for sure that would help.

Salesperson: OK so, Ill speak to them immediately and set up the calls before the weekend.

That should leave you with enough time to consider what's been said before our call on Tuesday. Does that sound reasonable to you (Prospect)

Prospect: Yeah, that sounds good, Ill look forward to speaking to them.

Try the thermometer close for yourself. Remember its most effective in situations where the opportunity is stalled or when the prospect is not forthcoming with concerns or issues that they still may have.

Think About It Close

Technique

After you've said what you can, give the person a little time to think about what you have told and shown them.

Don't leave them for too long (a couple of minutes is often enough) and preferably go where you can keep an eye on them. A way of handling this is to ask them how long they need.

When you return, watch their body language to see if they are showing signs of being ready to buy. If necessary, use an assumptive method to nudge them over the edge.

Examples

I can see you're carefully thinking about. I'm going to step outside for a couple of minutes so you can decide in your own time.

How long would you like to think about it? Can I get you a cup of coffee whilst you decide?

Perhaps you'd like to talk about it together. Why don't you sit in the car and see how it feels.

Take as long as you like -- I'll be here.

How it works

Not everyone decides quickly and many, and if pressed many will back away or react against the sales methods being used.

Decision-making is often a complex thought process pros and cons are weighed up and the person may not decide until they have gone through this process. This is particularly common in sales which involve significant money or other commitment.

Sometimes it just takes a little time to sink in. You have given them a lot of information which they need to process it and fit it in with their current models of the world.

Of course there is a danger when the person thinks about it that they will say no. Depending on the sales context this could be a bad or good thing. People who buy only because they are pressured are unlikely to return or recommend you. On the other hand this final 'soft sell' stage may well convince them that it is they who are in control and so will make the decision to buy.

The Think About It close is in some ways a form of Assumptive Close, as you are assuming that all they need is time to decide.

Treat Close

Technique

If you are selling something that you know they would like but cannot justify to themselves that they should buy it, then persuade them that they deserve a treat.

Point out how hard they have worked and that this would be a good reward.

Find out if they have given things to others. Point out that they need to be good to themselves as well.

Give them the excuse they need. Give them a reason they can tell themselves why it is a good thing to buy now.

Examples

I can see that you like it. You know, I really think you deserve it. Go on, treat yourself!

You have worked hard all your life. Don't you think you could do with some reward?

Look at all the things you have done for other people. Don't you think it's time to do something for yourself?

How it works

The Treat Close evokes the need for fair play, showing the other person as needing something to make up for other things they have done. It leverages the exchange principle with the other person as the deserving recipient.

Trial Close

A Trial Close is not a normal 'closing technique' but a test to determine whether the person is ready to close.

Use it after a presentation or after you have made a strong selling point. Use it when you have answered objections.

The Trial Close may use other closing techniques or may be a more tentative question.

Ask 'If...' questions.

Ask questions that assume they have already bought the product.

When you have asked the Trial Close question, as with most other closes, be quiet, watching and listening carefully for their response.

'ABC' is a common abbreviation: Always Be Closing. It means that you should always be heading towards a close, although you must also be careful about over-doing this. If people are nowhere near ready to buy, this will just annoy them.

Examples

It looks like you really like this. Is that true?

If you took it home, would you be proud to own this?

Do you prefer the larger or smaller version?

How would it look on the shelf back at home?

How it works

The Trial Close works by putting the idea of closure into the person's mind. Their response will tell you whether they are ready or not.

Valuable Customer Close

Technique

Find a reason to show that the customer is of particular value to you, and then offer them a special, one-off discount. You may, of course, start with a particularly high price (that reflects the quality of your product, of course).

Say their installation will be a model example that you want to photograph as a reference site for use in brochures and offer a discount in return.

Say that you need one more sale to complete your quota for the month/quarter and that you will offer an extra discount to get the sale.

Call back later as Sales Manager and say the customer is so valuable, you are able to offer an extra discount.

Examples

You are clearly well-connected in the area. Tell you what, I'm going to offer you an extra discount because I believe that you will be so impressed you will tell all of your friends.

Hello, I'm The area Sales Manager for XYZ. Your house is in a prime position and I'm prepared to cut out the sales person (don't tell him!) so we can reduce the price and get you on board.

How it works

The Valuable Customer Close works by flattering the customer into believing that the discount that you are offering is more than they would normally get, and hence offers unusually good value.

Ultimatum Close

Technique

Show that if they do not agree to the deal now, then there will be significant negative consequences.

The most common structure for this is 'If...then...'

You may be the person who implements those consequences. You may also be the friend who warns them of the consequences that they may not have realized.

Examples

If you don't sign now, I'll have to talk to your manager.

Don't forget: this is the last day of the sale.

If you sign today, you will sustain your no-claims bonus. If you leave it until tomorrow, you'll have to start all over again.

How it works

This can be a very negative method, in that it is based on threats and fear, although the threat may be cloaked in a veil of friendship.

The ultimatum, when it comes from somewhere else, may indeed be real, in that you and they have no control over whether it happens or not.

It would seem that this kind of close is not a good idea, yet it is surprisingly common, especially in one-off selling.

Yes-set Close

Technique

Ask them several questions where the answer is easy to answer and is 'yes'. Then tag on the question at the end for which you *really* want the answer 'yes'.

The minimum set is usually three questions. You also do not want to over-do this, so either space out the questions or limit the number (although one research showed that eight yeses were needed overall before closure).

Encourage them to say yes by nodding your head gently as you talk with them.

If you need to hide the question, you can bury it amongst other questions.

Examples

Do you like coming to shop here?

Is it easy to find us?

Did this product catch your eye?

Are you ready to buy it now?

Will you want to take delivery next week?

How it works

The Yes-set Close works by setting up a repetitive pattern of 'yes' answers that gets the other person into a habitual response. When the pattern is established and they are automatically answering 'yes', then the question that you really want 'yes' to is slipped in.

Many people also do not particularly like to answer 'no' as they believe that it is impolite.