

Make It Stick

*Activity Pack*

Sales Training

 **Helping lessons learned through training become part of *how we work*.**

**To the Learner Leader…**

This suite of activities has been designed to reinforce the key learning from the **Sales Training** course. They have been designed to be led by team leaders or designated trainers and do not require training experience, though for best results we recommend that whoever is leading the activities understands the principles of adult learning and has some experience in leading learning activities.

The suite of activities will provide you with up to six months of learning reinforcement. We recommend that an activity is run each month following the Sales Training course.

Each activity will take 10-15 minutes to run depending on the size of the group.

When running each activity:

* Ask the group to reflect back on the original course they attended:
  + What takeaways did they have?
  + What have they tried to implement?
  + When revisiting some of these activities for a second time, ask them what additional ideas or thoughts they had in applying the concepts and tools in the activities to their job.

There is one activity to a page. Each activity has a brief introduction followed by instructions for the learner leader.

We suggest the following to optimise your learning experience:

* Have the group meet away from their normal workspace
* Make sure mobile devices are switched off so that everyone fully engages
* Make the environment ‘safe’ and encourage everyone to contribute
* Run these activities with everyone standing – try running them outdoors in the fresh air
* Have other team members take the lead and run an activity – this will build confidence and leadership skills
* Don’t be afraid to improvise – the learning needs to be about you and your group so make it meaningful
* When debriefing an activity get the group to reflect on what the activity means for them and what they will do differently or continue to do that underscores the learning points from the activity

**Activities in this pack**

1. Creating BANT questions
2. Transitioning to business rapport
3. Earning trust through listening
4. Responding to objections
5. Closing the sale
6. Asking for a referral

**Activity 1: Creating BANT questions**

**Introduction**

BANT refers to a series of questions you can ask a prospect to further refine their likelihood of buying from you. It focuses on four areas:

* Budget – Does the prospect have a budget to purchase?
* Authority – Does the person you are engaging with have the authority to sign off on a purchase?
* Need – Does the prospect have a demonstrable need for your product/service?
* Timeline – When is the prospect planning to buy? Is there a sense of urgency?

**Instructions**

Below is a list of possible questions to qualify a prospect. Use the space on the right for the group to craft a series of questions that suit your industry and your product/service.

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Focus Area** | **Sample Questions** | **Your questions** |
| Budget | * Do you have a budget set aside for this purchase? What is it? * Is this an important enough priority to allocate funds toward? * What other initiatives are you spending money on? * Does seasonality affect your funding? |  |
| Authority | * Whose budget does this purchase come out of? * Who else will be involved in the purchasing decision? * How have you made purchasing decisions for products like ours in the past? * What objections to this purchase do you anticipate encountering? How do you think we can best handle them? |  |
| Need | * What challenges are you struggling with? * What’s the source of that pain, and why do you feel it’s worth spending time on? * Why hasn’t it been addressed before? * What do you think could solve this problem? Why? |  |
| Timeline | * How quickly do you need to solve your problem? * What else is a priority for you? * Are you evaluating any other similar products or services? * Do you have the capacity to implement this product right now? |  |

**Activity 2: Transitioning to business rapport**

**Introduction**

Establishing personal rapport is based on starting a conversation. The topic of conversation will depend on whether you know the person or of the person in a local community context or industry context, or whether you don’t and need to find a common external link such as current events.

Business rapport is using the same approach with the questions aimed at generating conversation around the prospect’s business but not about the objective of your call or conversations. Things to keep in mind:

* The focus should be on the customer, not you
* Share something about yourself, then immediately focus the attention back on the customer
* Spend 5-8% of the call time on rapport
* Rapport can extend beyond words and gestures to actions such as sending a card or allowing yourself to be contacted out of standard hours
* If a customer expresses no interest in rapport, then take their cue
* Beware of cultural differences in approaches to rapport and its importance

**Instructions**

In groups of two or three, practise establishing personal rapport, transitioning to business rapport and then into the purpose of the call. One person is to observe, one is to be the seller and one the buyer. The seller is initiating the contact. Use one of the scenarios below as a guide.

**Scenario 1 – Conference2Go**

Conference2Go is an event marketing and hosting company. The seller from Conference2Go is prospecting for new business and is following up several leads that have requested to attend a free event being hosted by Conference2Go, at which a few international guest speakers will talk about the future of the corporate event industry. The buyer (prospect) is the marketing manager at National Constructors, a building company that operates across the country and internationally.

**Scenario 2 – Desk-O-Glide**

Desk-O-Glide manufactures electrically and manually operated ergonomic desks that allow people to sit or stand at a desk as they work. They sell to office equipment retailers and direct to large corporate and government departments. The seller, who is new to Desk-O-Glide, is contacting buyers on Desk-O-Glide’s database that haven’t bought any Desk-O-Glide products for more than 18 months.

**Activity 3: Earning trust through listening**

**Introduction**

Listening is the essential complementary skill to the skill of questioning. Some salespeople struggle with listening because they feel an urgency to keep the conversation moving lest they lose the initiative or worse still lose the prospect altogether. There are four steps in active listening:

**Step 1 - Truly listen to the prospect**

* To their words
* To their feelings
* To their body language

**Step 2 - Feedback what you have just heard**

* Either verbatim
* Or by paraphrasing
* Or using your own words

**Step 3 - Confirm that you have heard the prospect correctly**

* Have I understood you?
* Did I miss something?
* Did I get something wrong?

**Step 4 - Ask a relevant follow up question**

* Ask an open question
* It confirms you have listened

**Instructions**

Discuss the four-step model above with the group.

Split the group into threes – one person is the seller, one a prospect and a third person observing and providing feedback.

The prospect is to lead in with a statement that then allows the salesperson to use the four-step process above and explore the situation with the prospect. Use one of the following lead-in prospect statements or improvise:

* I’m very frustrated that we didn’t achieve our goal of X this year. I thought about it all last month. This really set us back. Worse, I’m just stuck on what to do next year.
* I’m not quite positive that you have the right expertise. I’m concerned that you’re not the best provider for a company like ours.
* I don’t really need help with X.
* I’m really concerned about plan F. I worry it won’t work well for our team.

**Activity 4: Responding to objections**

**Introduction**

You can use a four-step process to respond to buyer objections.

**Step 1 – Acknowledge -** acknowledgement is not agreement, it is part of building rapport and showing empathy.

* Don’t be defensive
* Empathy neutralises the situation
* It shows the buyer you are listening
* It gives you time to think about your response

**Step 2 – Ask questions**

* Move from a general objection to the specifics so that you don’t work off assumptions
* It helps in finding out the buyer’s actual concern
* Ask open-ended questions to probe the objection
* Listen for key words to clarify their meaning

**Step 3 – Position your response**

* Reflect the buyer’s concern and language in your response
* Use your technical knowledge and link it to the concern or need you discovered
* For major objections, include relevant examples or stories

**Step 4 – Ask for feedback**

* Always check whether your response has satisfied the buyer’s concern before moving on
* Probe until you as the seller are satisfied that the objection has been dealt with

**Instructions**

Go through the four-step process above and give an example of an objection and how to respond to it.

Split the group into triads if practical.

Ask each person to think of at least two objections they struggle to deal with. Ask them to plan how they will respond.

* How they will acknowledge the objection
* What clarifying questions they will ask
* How they will customise their response
* Questions they will ask to receive feedback from the buyer

Then have the group in turns practise responding to their objection – one person to play the buyer and one person observing and giving feedback.

**Activity 5: Closing the sale**

**Introduction**

Salespeople should be prepared to use one of several different closes depending on the situation:

Direct Request

* You simply ask for the order
* "Can I get you to sign and send through the acceptance page on the proposal?"

Benefit Summary

* Summarise the benefits of what has been discussed
* Add a commitment phrase on the end

Assumptive

* Asks a question where the response indicates a commitment to the sale
* "Shall we go ahead and put that payment plan in place?"

Alternative Choice

* Gives the prospect a choice between two buying options rather than buying or not buying
* "Would you prefer Model A or Model B?"

Compliment or Vanity

* Where the purchase appeals to the person's ego or identity
* "You offer your customers exceptional value and I know that our product will only make your value proposition better."

Higher Authority

* Having to gain approval from another person (manager) to go ahead
* Essential that you get commitment before "going to" the higher authority

Combination

* Combine two or more of the above

**Instructions**

Briefly go through the types of closes (see above) that are pertinent to your business.

Split the group into pairs and have each person in the pair practise a minimum of five different closes with their partner being the client.

Regroup and debrief questions:

* Which closes are you most comfortable with?
* Which closes do you need to work on?
* What are you going to do to gain confidence in closing?

**Activity 6: Asking for a referral**

**Introduction**

Asking for referrals is valuable and worthwhile because it removes many barriers to the sales process.

If you have established a trusting relationship with a client and have delivered value over time, that client will be more open to providing referrals to you. The following process can be adopted when structuring a referral script:

Here is an example:

You: “I have a favour to ask you, but only if you’re comfortable with it.”

Client: “Sure, what is it?”

You: “You are so great to work with, and I would love to find more clients like you. Do you know any other people in XXXXXXX that need help with YYYYYY?”

Client: “Yes, I do. I can think of a couple people right off the top of my head.”

You: “That’s great. Would you feel comfortable introducing me to them? I would really appreciate a quick email intro. I even have an intro email template written if that makes it easier for you.”

Client: “Sure, I’d be happy to do that.”

You: “Thank you so much. I really appreciate it! I also have a referral program – if one of your referrals becomes a client, I offer 10% off my services for the next month.”

**Instructions**

Split the group into threes. One plays the part of the salesperson, one the client and one observes and provides feedback. Allow a couple of minutes for each person to prepare a script.

Then have each person practise delivering their referral script. Rotate roles so that each person has the chance to be the salesperson.

Regroup and debrief:

* What were the challenges you experienced?
* What would make the conversation flow more freely?