

# Master These Two Crucial Moments in Every Sales Call.

Set a goal before you go in, and interview yourself right after you leave.

## Uncommon Value

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Good advice for success in many endeavors is to start strong and finish with a bang. You see that play out many times in movies, books, keynote speeches, and the same can be said for sales calls.

With sales calls, starting strong means beginning with a plan. I call that plan a Sales Objective, and it's defined as *what action do you want this customer to take as a result of the call?* Like a house, sales calls should be built on solid foundations, and this is great place from which to start.

Examples of Sales Objectives involve getting: a second appointment, an opportunity to quote a job, an order, a referral etc. There are many benefits to setting Sales Objectives, not the least of which are improved time management and not talking yourself out of a sale.

How many times have you been on a sales call that should have lasted 20 minutes, but 45 minutes later you're still there talking about things that have little to do with the reason you came? In contrast, when the Sales Objective is achieved, you know it's time to shake the customer's hand, explain the next step, and say goodbye. This will give you more time in every day to spend on activities that drive sales and put money in your pocket.

Having a Sales Objective also minimizes the possibility of talking yourself out of a sale. This is a common issue and one that can be avoided by setting clear objectives prior to showing up. Think about it: The customer is talking because you're talking... and you're talking because they're talking... and you both walk away with negative thoughts about the interaction. In a way, you're both just being polite, but you walk away saying "Man, I have to watch myself next time I meet with them..."

that person is a TALKER. And they are saying "Gosh, TYPICAL SALESPERSON... I don't have that kind of time to spend in my busy day. I need to try and avoid him next time."

Each sales call should be closed out by replaying the call once you get back to your vehicle. Ask yourself questions. What did I do well? What needs to improve? What's the next step? What did I commit to do next? Where do I document that so I remember to follow through?

Asking such question is a great habit to develop for two reasons. The first is continuous improvement. If you're not constantly striving to get better, you're getting worse. That's because your competition - the good ones, anyway - are working to improve.

The second benefit pertains to organizational skills. There is a laundry list of skills that salespeople have to master in order to be effective, and organizational skills are near the top. People want to deal with salespeople who are on top of things, handle issues, and generally get things done. Properly replaying each call gives you the chance to document and schedule follow through on items you need to get done in order to move a sales relationship along.

Although there are multiple parts of a sales call, the beginning and the end are fundamentally important. There is relevance to the old saying that a goal without a plan is just a wish. You will see the effectiveness of your sales calls increase by starting each one with a sound objective and ending each one with a retrospective look at future improvement. You owe that to your customers, your co-workers, your family, and yourself.



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