

# 'Why Me?'

## Why Indeed

Know above all what makes you special

**M**any years ago, I traveled to a shop in rural North Carolina where a co-worker named Austin Crawford taught me a lesson about selling that I use to this day.

Crawford was selling to this business pallets of Fypon PVC in 4x8 sheets. The company was building wooden columns and covering them in PVC to create virtually maintenance-free columns for area builders.

After our call, I asked Crawford, "Why would this guy buy Fypon from us? He certainly has better, cheaper options available to him."

"I asked myself that same question, before I originally went to meet the guy," Crawford replied. He agreed that his product cost \$1 to \$2 a sheet more than another supplier, so if that had been his value proposition he would have had no chance.

But Crawford won the sale because he had made a different proposal: "Buy a pallet of the sheets from me at this higher price," he had told the customer, "and one day a week I will come to your market and call on builders selling your columns. If, after working through the pallet, I have not proven to you the value of this service, then don't buy any more from me."

When it came time to order another pallet, the column builder realized he had sold more columns and had worked through that pallet faster than he ever had before.

As a result, this relationship continued for a few years. Crawford also picked up several builder customers in the area, selling products they needed besides columns, so this was a lucrative arrangement for all involved.

In essence, what Crawford had done was turn a commodity item into something he could differentiate and leverage.

I began calling this the "Why Me" principle, and it demonstrates the importance of thinking strategically.

Too many times, salespeople fly from sales call to sales call without giving much thought to how they'd approach a prospect until they're practically at the customer's door.

You know the type. These sales reps ask the same old questions: What products are you using? Where are you buying them? How much are you paying?

Many years after my experience with Crawford, I worked with sales trainer Jim Pancero (learn more about him at [pancero.com](http://pancero.com)). Pancero believes that each prospective customer you meet is asking themselves, "Why, based on the alternatives available to me, should I buy from you?"

It didn't take long for me to realize that Pancero's question basically was the same as asking, "Why me?"

If you can't answer that seemingly simple question in a meaningful and impactful way, then people will make their decision based solely on price. And you will have driven that prospect to a price decision by the way you conducted yourself.

I advise you to have an answer to "Why me?" before you make another sales call. It's that important.

Being a successful salesperson requires many capabilities—product knowledge, organizational skills, knowledge of the competition, how you're different, stellar questioning skills, and, of course, confidence. Confidence comes from experience, preparation, planning, and success.

Grow your confidence by exploring the Why Me principle. Pretty soon, it will turn into "Why not me?"



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