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# The Mathis Group's Messenger

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## Knowing Your Customers

Last month we looked at how everyone within an organization has a part in sales. This month we will give you a few suggestions on how to accurately read your customer and effectively close the sale.

In sales, typically, the 80/20 principle applies. This simply means that 80% of the prospects will equal 20% of the sales. Conversely, the majority of your sales will only come from 20% of your prospects. Knowing how to read your customers will allow you to effectively pull out that 20%. The following are the five most common attitudes of a customer.

### *Refusal to Buy*



Often times, when a person is very uninterested in the product or service you are selling, it is quite obvious. He/she may have arms crossed, hands made into fists, or mouth closed tight. There will be very little or no eye contact made and distance increases during conversation. This type of customer is also unwilling to give any information. When you run into this type of person, you have two options. One, you could render the meeting a loss and move on or you can try to find out the underlying problem. If you decide to find the reason for the negativity, you may say something like, "I have picked up the impression that this doesn't impress you. Is our meeting at a bad time, or is it me?" While this statement can be beneficial, be very cautious! **You** don't want to come across as having an attitude. Speak in a soft tone and demonstrate extreme kindness. Using this method will get the prospect's attention, and he/she will respond with new information.

### *Apathy*

An apathetic person is one who really doesn't care a lick about what you are offering. The person's face will be non-responsive and non-expressive. The prospect

will shift in his/her seat and sometimes show agitation. Again, you have the same two options on how to handle the situation: end the conversation or try to find the underlying problem. When choosing the later option, you can use the same question as when the customer was uninterested. However, please remember the cautions!

### *Fibbing*

There may be times where a person doesn't want to buy, but won't come right out and say so. He/she may say, "We don't have money to do it", which may seem to be a nicer way to say no. To spot a Fibber, watch the mannerisms. The prospect will touch his/her cheeks or face, shift in the seat and may show agitation. If standing, he/she will sway back and forth. Usually he/she will not look at you or make eye contact.

### *Pre-occupied*

There are times where a prospect may be interested in your product or service, however, it may just not be a good time to discuss it. The customer may have a frown or non-expressive body movements. He/she will become distant and have a lack of engagement during the discussion. Even with these negative signals coming remember this: The prospect must understand fully in order to make a wise decision to buy. Signs of this are when the prospect says, "I'm not interested right now" or "I want to think about it". There are a couple of things you can say that might help the situation: "Let me summarize what this product or service offers" or "When do you think you will have a decision? This is an excellent

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*There is but one secret to success--never give up.*  
Ben Nighthorse Campbell  
U.S. Senator

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product or service, and I would hate for you not to be part of it. Why don't we talk on \_\_\_\_\_, at say \_\_\_\_\_? How does that sound?" The customer will appreciate your sensitivity to the fact that he or she is busy and schedule a more convenient time. During the next meeting, he/she will be able to give you his/her full attention.

## Attentiveness

This is the type of prospect everyone wishes to encounter. This person is very interested in what you have to say and focuses on every word. He/she will move closer to you physically or verbally. The face is alert and expressive while the voice reflects interest. Information is freely given and easily collected, making it easy for you to know the exact needs being sought. Make every effort to answer all questions and give as much information as possible. At the end of the conversation, ask him/her if he/she is ready to make a decision.



Listed below are six options of closing from which you can choose when making a sale.

### 1. Close by giving them a choice

Making a choice creates ownership of that product or service. Choice allows you to reframe the next benefit or feature to highlight.

### 2. Close by filling out the paperwork:

Filling out the paperwork means you think the prospect will buy. This reduces the chance the prospect will need to think about the purchase. You can end by saying, "Ms. Walters, all I need you to do is OK this, and you are set."

### 3. Close by telling a story or testimonial:

True or inspirational stories will move people. Make sure the story relates to the product or service being offered.

### 4. Close by reinforcing a special offer.

Special offers must have deadlines to help move the prospect. They are great motivators because the prospect will receive something not otherwise offered. You can use special offers in association with many of the other closings.

### 5. Close with a summary of hot points

Summarize all the benefits, sales, specials, and features that match the prospect's hot buttons. Bringing special attention to those benefits helps the customer feel that he/she is making a great deal that solves his/her personal problems.

### 6. Close with a direct appeal for the sale

If prospects are looking for a product or service, he/she expects to have someone ask them to buy. Simply directly asking if he/she is ready to buy may be enough incentive to buy from you.

Knowing your customer and how to close a sale is vital in order to successfully gain a customer. Once you start paying attention to the mannerisms of a prospect, it will become natural to know the best method in reaching him/her. After this skilled is perfected, your customer base will dramatically increase!



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