

How to Close a Sale:

1. Do your research.
2. Set expectations.
3. Pitch the solution, not the product.
4. Handle objections.
5. Ask for the sale.
6. Arrange next steps.

Heading into a closing conversation with a prospect is always nerve-wracking. No matter how impressed they seemed during your demo. There's always a chance you'll lose to the competition, they'll decide to postpone their decision until next quarter, or they'll ask for a price you can't deliver.

A “yes” or “no” hinges on far more than just the specific closing sentence or question.

But as you've probably seen, using the right words can definitely make a difference. Read on to learn the closing phrases you should (and shouldn't) use.

The Assumptive Close

What's the assumptive close? It's a manipulative sales tactic where you act like the prospect has already decided.

Here are three examples:

- *"When should we get started on implementation?"*
- *"What delivery date would you like?"*
- *"Which [product, package or bundle] are you going with?"*

Is this the worst way to close a deal? No. If someone isn't going to buy, the assumptive close won't get them to do a 180 -- so it's not as though you're tricking people into handing over their credit cards. You might, however, convince an on-the-fence prospect to walk away. **This technique makes you come across as pushy and self-serving, which isn't the best impression to give when kicking off a business partnership.**

Instead of this strategy, try these closing phrases. I promise they're more effective (and they won't make you feel like a slime ball).

Asking for the Sale

Use these non-aggressive closing questions to make the buyer feel comfortable -- without completely taking off the pressure.

1) "Is there any reason, if we gave you the product at this price, that you wouldn't do business with our company?"

This one turns salespeople into Jedi mind trick masters. If the prospect answers "no" to this question, the rep has indirectly gotten them to agree to the contract. If the answer is "yes," however, the rep has the opportunity to address objections without bringing the deal to a halt.

2) "If we could find a way to deal with [objection], would you sign the agreement on [set period in time]?"

Objections often kill deals. But in this case, handling the objection is actually a way of closing the sale. Of course, this depends on the company's ability to resolve the problem by a given date. But if a fix is possible, getting the customer to commit ahead of time is a clever way of turning a con into a pro.

3) "It seems like [product] is a good fit for [company]. What do you think?"

This question automatically makes your prospect think of all the reasons they're interested in buying. Because you end by asking for their opinion, it sounds genuine rather than self-serving. And once they say something like, *"Yeah, I think it could really help us with X,"* you've got the perfect segue into *"Great, I'll send over the proposal right now."*

4) "Would you like my help?"

It's sort of perfect: gentle and friendly without being obscure or weak. Plus, it enforces the rep's image as an advisor rather than a hard-closing salesperson.

5) "If we throw in [freebie], would that convince you to sign the contract today?"

Clearly, this closing technique isn't appropriate for every situation (it's called "selling," after all, not "giving away"). But for important or very large deals, offering an exclusive or time-sensitive add-on to sweeten the pot might be a smart move. Price discounts could also make sense in competitive markets.

However, it's up to management whether they empower reps to make discount or freebie offers on their own.

6) "Taking all of your requirements and desires into consideration, I think these two products would work best for you. Would you like to go with [X] or [Y]?"

The rationale behind giving two alternatives is that the prospect will be more inclined to choose one than turn both away (a third option that's been discreetly taken off the table). The rep thus increases their chances of hearing a "yes" to something rather than a "no" to everything.

7) "I'd hate to see [negative consequence] befall your company because you didn't have the right product in place. Do you want to take the crucial step to protecting your organization today?"

Fear is a powerful motivator. This closing tactic is most effective in situations where the consequences of not buying will actually harm the business, instead of simply allowing the status quo to continue. It's best to pair this line with external factors, such as new legislation or economic conditions, which prospects can't control.

8) "Why don't you give it/us a try?"

It sounds so simple, doesn't it? The disarming and unassuming quality of this question is precisely why I recommend it. Phrasing the decision as "giving the product a chance" instead of "making a commitment" downplays the risk and ramps up the rapport.

9) "If you sign the agreement today, I can guarantee we can do [special request the buyer asked for]. How does that sound?"

Similar to #2, but with one important caveat. The closing question in #2 assumes that the salesperson will resolve a prospect objection *before* they sign the agreement. This closing technique-- called a "rebound close" -- promises that the rep will grant a special request *after* the prospect provides their John Hancock. This critical change in the closing timeframe reflects the difference between a deal-killing objection (that other vendors might be able to address) and a special favor (that other vendors will likely be similarly hesitant to grant).

10) "I know you said you need to have a solution in place by [date]. Working backward from that day and factoring in implementation and training time, it

looks like we'd need to have a signed contract by [date] in order to meet that deadline. Can you commit to that signing date?"

If you know the prospect has a firm deadline they need to stick to, use it to crank up the urgency. And since you're using the prospect's deadline instead of pulling one out of thin air, this type of reminder-slash-closing line actually helps the buyer instead of unduly pressuring them.

11) "Will you commit to doing business with us today?"

Ah, the old direct ask. Sometimes the simplest closing technique can be best, but other times it can come off as presumptive or pushy. A salesperson has to have a firm command of the situation and a high level of familiarity with their buyer to use this closing line successfully.

12) "Ready to move forward? I can send over the contract right now."

Everyone likes the idea of progress. If prospects associate the purchase with forward momentum, they'll be likelier to commit. This closing line also reduces the friction of buying -- the contract is already ready, so all they need to do is sign.

13) "You're interested in X and Y features, right? If we get started today, you'll be up and running by [date]."

Salespeople can encourage their prospects to make a decision by reminding them the sooner they act, the sooner they'll have their new system. Mentioning specific parts of the product doesn't hurt, either -- buyers will immediately start picturing how much easier their life will be with the new solution.

14) "What happens next?"

Whenever your prospect begins stalling or providing any other excuse for not acting today, you simply reply with (these) three words. It might seem crazy to put your prospect in the driver's seat like this -- but something's preventing them from buying, and you need to figure it out if you want any shot of getting their business.

How to Close a Sale

Want a more assertive approach? Try these closing lines.

1) "Unless you have any more questions or concerns, I think we're ready to get started."

You're leaving the door open for them to get more information while making it clear where you stand. If you've done your job surfacing and resolving objections throughout the sales process, the buyer will answer with something like, *"No, I'm good. I think we're ready too."*

2) "Let's discuss pricing."

With this statement, you transition the conversation from general, abstract topics like ROI and product features into the actual agreement. It's not a very subtle shift, but it works.

3) "Tell me your thoughts."

To gauge how ready your prospect is, say this. If they're looking for the metaphorical pen to sign on the dotted line, they'll usually say so. If they're still unsure, you'll hear some hemming and hawing. This gives you the chance to figure out what's holding them back without trying to close too soon.

4) "We can take as long as you'd like, but I know [you've got another meeting at X time, this call is scheduled to wrap up in Y minutes]. With that in mind, maybe we should move to the actual agreement."

While you don't want to rush your prospect too much, reminding them of the ticking clock gives you a good reason to bring up pricing. Notice this response is framed around their schedule. If they want to continue the conversation you're currently having, you can offer to arrange another meeting.