

How to Sell to Anyone

Let's face it. We all have those difficult customers to whom we are required to sell. From the demanding, abrasive buyer to the individual who never seems to make a buying decision, we encounter challenging people on a regular basis. Part of the reason this happens is due to the disconnect we have because of conflicting personalities. This article will look at the four key types of people and how to improve your results with each.

Direct Donna. Donna is very direct in her approach. She tends to be forceful and always wants to dominate or control the sales call. Her behavior is aggressive, she points at you while she talks, interrupts you to challenge you, and she seldom cares about hearing the details of your new product or service. Instead, she demands that you “cut to chase” and “tell me the bottom line.” Donna is very results-focused and goal-oriented and hates wasting time.

To achieve the best sales results with this individual you need to be more direct and assertive. Tell her at the beginning of the sales call or meeting that you know how busy she is and how valuable her time is. Tell her that you will “get right to the point” and focus your conversation on the results she will achieve by using your product or service. Resist the temptation to back down if she confronts you because you will lose her respect. To Donna, it is not personal, it's just business.

Lastly, be direct in asking for her business—you don't have to dance around this issue.

Talkative Tim. Tim is a gregarious and outgoing person but very ego-centric. He is often late for your meetings and his constant interruptions and long stories cause your sales calls to go beyond the scheduled time. He appears to be more concerned with listening to himself talk which is frustrating because you don't always get enough time to discuss your solution.

Relationships are very important to Talkative Tim so invest more time in social conversation. Even if you don't see the point in this, he will appreciate the gesture and will like you more. This person often makes buying decisions on intuition and how he feels about the sales person.

Be careful not to challenge Tim because he will feel rejected and when this happens he will “shut down” and become unresponsive. During your sales presentation, tell him how good your solution will make him look to others in the company or how his status or image will improve. In other words, appeal to his ego.

Steady Eddie. Soft-spoken, Eddie is a “nice” fellow who seems more focused on his team and coworkers than on

his personal results. He is very quiet compared to some of your other prospects and can be difficult to read. But most frustrating is his reluctance to make a buying decision. Eddie's mantra seems to be “I'm still thinking about but thanks for following up.”

Structure and security is important to these people and it is difficult for Eddie to make changes. He often contemplates how the decision will affect other people within the organization. That means you need to slow down the sales process, demonstrate how your solution will benefit the team, and remove as much risk from the decision-making process as possible. Soften your voice and make sure your sales presentation flows in a logical manner. Use words like “fair” “logical” and “your team” in your presentation.

Analytical Alice. She reads every point and specification about your product or service and regardless of how much information you give Alice, she always wants more, including written guarantees and back up documentation. She is very difficult to read and it is extremely difficult to get her engaged in an open conversation because personal feelings and emotions do not enter the picture when Alice makes a decision.

Whenever possible, give Alice a written, bullet-point agenda of your meeting—beforehand. Ideally, email it to her a few days in advance so she can prepare herself. Make sure it is completely free of typos, spelling mistakes and punctuation errors. When you meet, follow the agenda in perfect order and if you make any type of claim, have supporting documentation available for her to read.

While the approach to use with each of these people may not make sense to you or seem completely rational, it is critical to recognize that how you naturally and instinctively sell may not be the best way to get results with someone else. Modifying your approach and style, even briefly, will help you better connect with your customers and prospects which means you will generate better sales.

© 2008 Kelley Robertson, All rights reserved.

*Kelley Robertson, author of **The Secrets of Power Selling** helps sales professionals and businesses discover new techniques to improve their sales and profits. Receive a FREE copy of **100 Ways to Increase Your Sales** by subscribing to his free newsletter available at www.kelleyrobertson.com. Kelley conducts workshops and speaks regularly at sales meetings and conferences. For information on his programs contact him at 905-633-7750 or Kelley@RobertsonTrainingGroup.com.*

