

## 4 SIGNALS THE CUSTOMER IS READY TO BUY

How do you know when to ask for the sale? When the customer tells you to. The customer will tell you when they are ready to buy. They will give you clues. These are called buying signals.

When salespeople try closing the sale before the customer is ready, they are really guessing. Salespeople are left thinking the customer is indecisive. Realistically, the customer is not ready to buy. On the other hand, salespeople that try closing the sale too late are missing an opportunity. Salespeople are again left scratching their heads wondering why the customer is not ready to buy.

Closing the sale is more about timing than style. The right timing is more important than a gimmicky close. In my previous article, [How Not to Close the Sale](#), I recommended using a simple, straightforward approach called the two-question approach. The two-question approach is asking the customer for their thoughts and then asking for their business.

If the customer is ready to buy, they will let you know. Here are some buying signals that indicate the customer is ready to move forward.

- **Nodding their head.** When the customer continually nods their head up and down, they are non-verbally saying “Yes, I would like to buy.” This is the classic non-verbal buying signal. If you have good eye contact and you are listening to the customer, you will easily recognize this signal. When the customer gives you this sign, start moving toward the close. Finish presenting your solution and ask for the business.
- **The customer starts repeating a benefit statement.** If the customer repeats a benefit statement, they want you to validate the information. The customer is also letting you know that this particular benefit is important to them. When the customer gives you this signal, begin moving toward the close. Validate the information they mentioned, finish the presentation, and ask for the business.
- **The customer asks for the price.** Ironically, some salespeople will confuse this request as a price objection. Salespeople mislabel these customers as price shoppers, when in fact, the customer is telling you they are interested in making a purchase. If the customer gives you this signal, begin moving toward the close. But before you ask for the business, ask the customer to validate the value of your solution. Ask the customer, “Does our solution meet your needs?” or “Are we on the right track?”
- **The customer says yes.** This is the most obvious buying signal, but some salespeople talk past the sale. When the customer directly says yes, it is important to move the sale forward quickly. There is no need to continue convincing the customer; they already said yes. If the customer gives you this signal, establish the next steps and get out of there. If they need to sign something, have it ready. If they need a credit application, have it ready. If they need to select a start date, have the dates ready. Be prepared for the customer to say yes.

The customer will let you know when they are ready to buy. It is the salesperson's job to listen. Salespeople should recognize these buying signals and respond appropriately. To improve your awareness of buying signals, conduct a signal review after each call. In this review, ask yourself, "What signals were present?" This review will help you become more aware, and it will also sharpen your listening skills.

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