

7 Terrible Sales Lines That Have to Go

It's no secret that salespeople have been given a bad rep. Many organizations will remove the word "sales" from their titles. They are called account managers, territory managers, consultants, etc...

One reason salespeople have this reputation is because of the phrases they use. Some are good, some could be better, and some are just plain lousy. Here is a list of the seven worst phrases salespeople use.

"You're probably not interested, but..."

Before you even make a pitch, you tell the customer that you don't believe in your solution. You are also putting words in the customer's mouth which is never a good idea. Professional salespeople let the customer decide and only make a recommendation if they see the value. If you don't think the customer is interested, why would you mention it?

"Do you have a few minutes to waste?"

Who would answer "yes" to that question? This question tells the customer you bring no value to the exchange. This question labels you as a time-waster not a value-creator. When you ask the customer for a few minutes, do it in a professional way. Ask for the specific amount of time you need and give the customer a reason to meet with you.

"What do I have to do to get your business?"

This phrase screams desperation. Customers don't want to do business with a desperate supplier or service provider. There are better ways to let the customer know you are eager to work with them. If you plan on using this technique, try replacing the phrase "get your business" with "earn your business." That sends a better message.

"Our competition is a bunch of liars"

Never bad-mouth the competition. When you bad-mouth your competition, it sends the wrong message to the customer. The customer could have a relationship with this supplier. The customer will then feel the need to defend their current supplier. It is okay to positively compare yourself to the competition. You do this by highlighting your strengths compared to a competitor's weakness.

"Our company doesn't know what they're talking about."

Never bad-mouth your internal team. First of all, it's completely unprofessional, and it destroys any credibility you have as a salesperson. The customer has no confidence in your ability to take care of them. Why would they want to do business with you?

“I’m just checking in...” or “I was in the area...”

If you are just checking in or in the area, you are an interruption. Salespeople struggle to find a reason to get in front of the customer, so they will use these phrases to give them a reason. Instead of leading with these phrases, try adding value by sharing an article, inviting them to an event, sharing new product info, or a new idea. Ask yourself, “What can I do to provide value for this individual?”

“I’m not here to sell you anything.”

It pains me to even type this phrase. This is hands-down the worst sales line ever. The customer knows you’re a salesperson; you know you’re a salesperson. Just admit it; you’re a salesperson. Customers don’t like being misled, be honest.

If you find yourself using these phrases, please re-read this article. If you catch other salespeople using these phrases, please share this article with them. Customers want transparency in the message; they don’t like being misled. They also want value from the meeting. Sometimes that means a sale is made, or the customer is given new insights that help their business. The customer doesn’t want a cheesy or cheap pitch. They want something of value.

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