

10 Steps to Solution Selling

Step 6

Everyone is selling something to someone!
How to sell solutions and get win-win outcomes

Questioning and Listening

Solution selling is all about achieving common understanding, between both parties, about what the actual challenge, need or opportunity is

To achieve this we first need to diagnose what the actual challenge or opportunity is. We do this through a series of questions – but not just any questions. We need to ask the RIGHT questions to fully uncover all the unstated needs below the waterline.

Visualise yourself having a friendly game of bat and ball on the beach. Your intention when you hit the ball, is to do so in a manner that the receiving party can return the ball... and so as long as the ball is in play – you have a healthy dialogue going on and you will eventually drill down to those most important needs that you can meet with your solution!

QUESTIONING

Asking OPEN questions instead of CLOSED questions ensures that the ball will come back to us.

OPEN Questions start with the 5 W's and an H.

What.
When.
Who.
Why.
Where.
How.

But this can be somewhat challenging to remember.

A great trick to help you remember OPEN questions is the acronym **TED**

Tell me a bit more about that
Explain that situation to me
Describe what happens when ...

As you ask these questions run this check list:

- Have I got the REAL need – in other words, the big picture, the context?
- Have I got the unstated needs – the 5 needs aligned with the SCARF profile – do they have an intrinsic need for Status, Certainty, Autonomy, Relatedness or Fairness?
- Did I discover their Delight need – something they may really want but don't know that I can actually provide it – so they cannot know to ask for it? AND finally
- Did I capture the real gem – the SECRET need – the thing that maybe they are ashamed or awkward about mentioning - but IS something they really want met?

Once you believe you have unearthed all of these needs from below the waterline – you need to prove to your target audience that you have truly heard and understood EVERYTHING that they have shared with you. This not only builds trust between the two of you – but also gives you a wonderful opportunity to match your solution to the very needs that they have vocalised and requested help with.



LISTENING

This technique is the 3 step listening technique and it goes like this

Step One

“So what you are telling me is.....”

Step Two

A summary of everything you can remember hearing

Step Three

“Is that correct OR is there anything I have left out or misunderstood?”

*** This step three is the most important step and is often left out – but it can lead to a whole lot more information being shared.**

You repeat this technique until your target audience finally says – “That’s it - I think you have all the information, I don’t think there is anything else I need to tell you.”

So to give you an example of this 3 step technique in action – it would sound something like this.

STEP ONE:

“So Wendy – what I am hearing from you is that....

STEP TWO:

You have some concerns about your mom’s ability to manage her house work and cook healthy meals for herself. You also mentioned that she gets quite lonely as she can no longer drive and she is dependent on you to visit and take her out. You also mentioned that her health has been declining and you are worried that something could happen to her and you would not be able to attend to her. And of course, as you mentioned this is taking quite a toll on your own family life and you really wish you could find a solution where mom would be happy, well looked after and you could get a bit of respite.”

STEP THREE:

“Is that correct – is there anything else I should know or anything that I have misunderstood?”

You are now perfectly positioned to move into the seventh step of Solution selling – which is Selling your Solution!

By matching your Solution to all these needs, that you have now uncovered and paraphrased, you are in a far better position to be heard and seen as credible.

So if you would like to know how to present a solution, in a way that your target audience receives it as a solution to their specific situation...

..join me for STEP SEVEN -

Selling Solutions.

No more Pitch Fests!

Until next time.

Be Bold. Be Curious.

Jacqui Perkins.

