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Clarity of Vision

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*Patrick McClure
Chief Sales Wizard*

One of my favorite Sales Axioms is the following:

"A confused person will never buy"

Yet, time after time, I witness sales reps who manage to garble, obfuscate, and alter their key sales messages to such an extent that potential buyers stay away in droves! Despite their best efforts, these sales reps manage to confuse their potential buyers so completely that they are losing sales.

What, exactly, is clarity and how does it apply to the sales message? Read on...

How to Confuse your Prospect



Let's start the discussion by looking at the opposite of Clarity, which is Confusion. It should come as no surprise that there is a fine art to confusing your prospect, and yet some salespeople take years to master this skill! Here are the Top 10 reasons why prospects become confused:

1. They didn't understand something.
Whenever you use a term, especially a technical term, it must be defined simply and clearly. Otherwise, your prospect stops right there and can't understand anything else you are saying.
2. They got interrupted.
They were trying to say something, and the sales rep talked over them and overpowered them with their sales pitch. They weren't listened to.
3. They were wondering what was your point?
The sales rep didn't clearly articulate WIFM (What's in it for me) to the prospect.
4. They didn't like your pacing.



Prospects are comfortable with people who talk about the same speed or volume as they do and they distrust people who are either too fast or too slow.

5. Too many product details.

They're not interested in volumes of technical data, but only how it benefits them in their position. Once again, WIFM.

6. They couldn't understand.

They want to see how it fits in their world. They need some stories, analogies, or illustrations to see what it means more clearly. Amplify and illustrate your points!

7. Didn't get their question answered

They asked a question, you didn't really answer it, and so they felt ignored and left out. They weren't important enough to be answered.

8. They felt stupid.

You told them your product was easy to understand and everyone should want it, that it was a no-brainer. Since they still don't want it, they apparently have no brains.

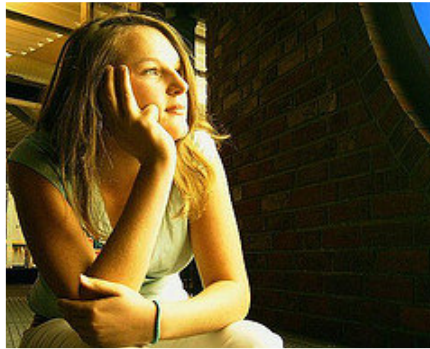
9. They weren't a good fit.

They weren't qualified to begin with. You were trying to sell ice to Eskimos, and they just didn't need what you were selling.

10. Their time was wasted.

Even if they wanted your product, your sales presentation was so poor that they just wanted to get away. Ever sat through a really BORING speech? How did you feel?

Clarity of Vision



Great salespeople take the time to fully understand their product or service. They must possess a superior level of understanding of their product in order to be able to sell it. Studies into retention rates (*Motorola University: Creating Mindware for the 21st Century, 1996) have demonstrated that in order to teach a subject well, you must have over 80% retention rate

of the material. I believe the same holds true for salespeople. If it's not clear to you, you can't make it clear to your prospect.

Let's be clear about this: you don't have to become the world's authority on the product details to be able to sell, but you must absolutely master the Benefits and Value of the product. Every product Feature has corresponding benefit(s) and value(s), and these must be understood with crystal clarity. For this, I always recommend a Features-Benefits-Value exercise be completed as part of sales training. During this exercise, the salesperson will glean a greater appreciation for the VALUE of their product/service, and why it is important to their prospects. They will also eliminate their own confusions, so they will no longer clutter up the sales presentation.

Once the value proposition is clearly defined, it is time to envision it. This is what differentiates the real pros from the amateurs. This requires mental discipline. This is where you begin to see in your mind's eye your ideal prospect, using your product or service, happily receiving the benefit. This is where you see the smiles on their faces, their increased

productivity, their satisfaction, their appreciation.

If they were buying a car, see them driving it with a great big smile. If they're buying a house, envision them moving in with their happy family. See the positive benefits and value, to them, of their purchase. Whatever they are buying, envision them being successful, happy, satisfied, content.

The more you can make the vision come alive, with clarity, the closer it will come to reality. George Lucas, legendary film producer (*Star Wars*, *Indiana Jones*) put it this way:

"You can't do it if you can't imagine it."

To your success!

Patrick McClure

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