

You Don't Buy from "Hard Closers", Neither Do They

By: Bob Burg

After a recent speaking engagement at a sales conference one of the attendees, brand new to the profession of sales, confided in me, that he felt he needed to get better at doing a "harder close."

I suggested that, instead of a harder close, it might be better for him to reframe it as a "helpful close". (Of course, even better would be a helpful open but let's take it one step at a time.)

Often, those who've never before held a professional sales position equate sales effectiveness with high-pressure closing. This couldn't be any further from the truth.

"After all," I asked, "do you tend to buy from someone who 'hard-closes' you with lots of self-serving pressure?"

"Absolutely not!" he replied. "I'd never buy from someone like that!"

"Why then," I responded, "do you feel anyone would want to buy from you that way?"

I could see he was relieved, as a high-pressure, hard close was not in alignment with his personal value system. He had simply accepted the pre-conceived notion associated with sales being this way. I'm sure that he was very glad to learn that sales are not something you do to someone, but rather something you do with and for someone.

Why People Buy

Keep in mind; people buy because they perceive a worthy enough benefit to owning your product or service and how it will meet their needs (fulfill a desire or solve a problem). They believe that the solutions your product or service will provide them will be much greater than any price or costs they must pay.

Mainly, they believe that, in buying from you, it will bring them closer to happiness than would not buying. Yes, it really does come down to that.

On the other hand, they don't buy because you need the money, have a quota to meet, believe it's in their best interest to do so, or because you are pressuring them to make a decision they feel would be wrong.

Of course, as a sales professional, you already know this. Hey, life can be strange: every so often a high-pressure, hard-closing salesperson makes the sale. Some do this quite consistently. However, not only is their rescission-rate high, they typically cannot maintain the relationships with their customers that earn them repeat business and/or steady referrals. That is one difference between the average and the super-successful salesperson.