



## BETTER QUALIFICATION OF PROSPECTS

### Prospects vs. Suspects

How are you qualifying your prospects? There is a difference between a prospect and a suspect. Once you understand the difference, you will not be spending valuable time on unprofitable tasks.

What are suspects? Simply, people you think can buy but cannot. Prospects, on the other hand, are those who have the authority to make a decision to buy your product or service. Since I am a big guy on time I first have to ask this question— how many of us spend inordinate amounts of time with suspects that will get us nowhere? Do you realize that most people are scared to death of the qualification process—identifying legitimate prospects — or scared to death that the suspect will not qualify? “What will I do?” you think. “I would rather qualify a suspect than deal with no one.” Wrong answer.

I remember one of my favorite reps when I was in the trade show industry. Great lady except that her whole pitch was, “Can I send you a package? Please let me send you our information. Thank you, it will be in the mail today.” And in the trash can on the other end tomorrow. Sad fact is that 99 percent of the packages that went out landed in the trash. That is a bunch of money. That is a bunch of money you do not have to spend. All you have to do is a little better job of qualification.

Simply put, before I send you anything, I need to know you are a potential buyer. I need to know that you are interested, not just trying to get me off the phone or out of your office. I need to know that you can buy. Based on your industry, you many need to know many additional things, which will allow you to qualify prospects as quickly as possible.

We as a nation spend so much time sending “stuff” to people who will never buy. People who, if we asked them three simple questions, would be eliminated as potential buyers, and we would not send them anything further, nor would we would make further calls.

The great point I need to make here is that I am not talking about people who are happy with their service right now. I’m talking about the potential buyers. Those who are not potential buyers are those who do not use your type of service or product and those who can’t make the buying decision. Learn quickly to recognize that you have the wrong person on the phone; that he or she is not a potential buyer and you need to move on. Thank you very much, next?

Maybe it is just that as sales people we feel so rejected at times that we have to make others feel warm and fuzzy. But it does nothing for your business growth, so move on.

I am telling you that as a sales person, entrepreneur or someone who is selling, you should ask a few questions. What type of questions? Let’s look at some:

1. Are you interested?
2. Do you buy this product?
3. If I meet all your needs can you make the decision to buy?

Why are we so afraid of those simple questions? If I show you something and it is all perfect can you make the decision to buy? Will people lie to you? Yes, some will. But ask the questions, because many people will not lie to you.

When the person says, “I really have to run it by this person and that person. I do not really make those decisions. My boss does,” what do you do?

How about saying, “Great, what is your boss’s name? Could I speak with him/her? Why don’t we set up a meeting with both of us?” This approach is a great ego feeder and if this person loves your product and is a real potential buyer, what do you think will happen when you’re sitting next to him and his boss?

Let’s look at one more scenario. Another question you might ask is, “Do you use this product today?” Never forget one simple fact: the easiest people to sell are those who already use your product, even if they are happy with their present supplier. You do not have to sell them on using the product or service, just on you. They already use the product or service, so they already know they need your product or service.

Personally, as a coach it is much easier for me to sell to someone who already uses or has used a coach or consultant, than to break someone brand new in. They do not know the benefits.

Are you using these techniques to qualify your prospects? They will help you separate the suspect from the prospect. They will save you time and allow you more time to work real prospects.

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