

Why Qualifying and Closing are Interconnected

We have all been through the experience of buying a car. Much dread the thought of having to replace their car because of what they feel they need to go through. They dislike the experience so much that they hire professionals to do the job.

In my case I thought I would do it myself. Research the internet to select the type and brand and go see a dealer to drive, validate and buy the vehicle. After all, how difficult could it be? I was conscious not to evaluate any salesperson, just drive and decide yes or no, however it wasn't that simple. I did end up evaluating because I couldn't believe what my wife and I were experiencing.

The dealership had a sales weekend complete with sausage sizzle, balloons etc. The salesperson greeted us in a friendly manner and we expressed an interest in two models of the same type and we told him we wanted to make up our mind which one would suit us better. He didn't acknowledge our statement and proceeded to show us the first model and didn't draw breath. He explained every detail of the vehicle even things that we didn't care about. We followed him to the other model and he went through all the differences between the two vehicles. It didn't take long to decide on the one we preferred so we then took it for a test drive. We were impressed. So let's negotiate.

We sat in an interview room where he proceeded to write our name on an order form and listed the 'free' promotional items. He then asked if we would buy the car today...but we were not quoted a cost. After some back and forth about price he left the room to confer with his sales manager. The salesperson wasn't prepared to quote a price unless we decided to buy that day. The best he could do (after many trips to the sales manager) was to quote a range of numbers that could have fluctuated by as much as \$5,000. We ended up insisting on leaving.

This may sound like whinging but it isn't. It's an unbelievable account of what happened. So what could this salesperson have done differently? He could have:

- **Asked questions to build rapport** - "Why are you interested in this brand/model... What is most important to you when buying a new car...Do you have any preference with colour?"
- **Offered a beverage** such as coffee or tea to create a relaxed inviting sales environment
- **Qualified** – "Do you have a budget range...When do you intend to buy a car...Do you have a trade in?"
- **Used structured sales language** based on what we were wanting in a new car – "This vehicle has leather seats which you mentioned was important because it is low maintenance"
- **Introduced us to his sales manager** so we could have spoken to the price decision maker and got a definitive cost
- **Made us feel that he cares** a little and is not just trying to get a sale

What he shouldn't have done was to use old school closing techniques such as "If I were to get that price for you will you buy the car today?"

If he would have asked questions, qualified, tried to build some rapport with us he wouldn't have had all the difficulties he experienced in trying to close the sale. Qualifying and closing are interconnected. Qualify properly and closing in almost every instance becomes much easier.

If you would like to discuss this topic or any other on sales or sales management then contact Kurt Newman direct on 0412 252 236 or email info@salesconsultants.com.au.



Kurt's expertise is in sales strategy, sales management development; group structured sales training and infield sales coaching. As a sales person he has successfully sold products and services in 4 major market/product segments: new product sales, consultative sales, relationship sales and retail. During his selling career he created sales records for three companies in two industries and won many sales awards for outstanding performance.