

**TIPS:
SALESFLOOR**

QUESTION TIME

→ All good sales people know the power of questions, not just to find out what a client really wants but as a tool of persuasion. Think of Ronald Reagan's query, "Are you better off now than you were four years ago?" The reason, according to a study out of Ohio State University is that when the facts are clearly on your side, asking a question is more effective than making a statement. "People receive statements passively. But with questions, they summon their own, more autonomous reasons for agreeing," writes Dan Pink in his newsletter.



PHONE OUT OF SIGHT

→ Get that phone off the table! Newly published research by a team at Virginia Tech University suggests that the mere sight of a phone near two people having a conversation can divide attention and lessen the quality of the interaction.

ADD ROMANCE

→ Want an ultra low-cost way to add personality and romance to your bathroom? Tack pages of your favorite poetry up on the walls. For Liz Lambert, owner of the hip Hotel San Jose in Austin, TX, this was a cost-saving idea that eventually became one of the hotel's most popular features. (Extra tip: If the pages start disappearing, it could be a sign that you're not stocking enough toilet paper.)

FRESH IDEAS TO BETTER YOUR BUSINESS



Shane Decker
on Sales Strategies

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FIND OUT THEIR BUDGET (WITHOUT ASKING FOR IT)

Coming up with the right questions can make the difference between a defensive client and a lifelong customer

WANT TO KNOW what's worse than assaulting a client with bad breath or smelly body odor? Asking them what their budget is!

OK, maybe it's not *quite* that bad, but you get the point. One of the biggest mistakes that salespeople make is asking clients, "How much do you want to spend?", "What is your budget?", or "Do you have a particular price point you want to stick to?" Asking these questions makes clients think you only care about the money they're spending; you don't care about them. If you ask this of a male client who is there with a wife or girlfriend, you've embarrassed him by putting him into a price box in front of her. He doesn't want her to think he's cheap. You've put him on the defensive. Asking about budget can also make clients feel pre-judged on their spending ability, which can keep them from coming in again.



So how do you discover how much the client wants to spend? By asking the proper questions. There are two types of questions: Relationship-building and selling-specific (finding out what the client wants). Never make the presentation about yourself; always make it about the gift and the person receiving it. Here are some questions and openers:

- Are you looking for a gift for someone special?
- Did he or she give you any hints?
- What did you have in mind?
- I can tell you're on a mission.
- What's in your notes?
- I can tell you're in a hurry.
- Do you know what size diamond you want? (Then you can follow up with "Do you know what shape?", "Do you know about the four C's?", and "What clarity do you want?")

Once he's answered these questions, you know what he wants

and you can figure out what he wants to spend.

Let's say you ask, "Do you know what she wants?" and he replies, "Yes, 2-carat total weight studs." You then show him a pair that's \$3,995. Now he says, "I can't spend that much." You then reply, "What are you *comfortable* with?" (Remember, you don't use the words *money* or *budget*.) Now you're being respectful of his buying ability, it sounds like you really care about him and not his money, and the word "comfortable" makes it easy for him to say the dollar amount. This changes the client's attitude about what he thinks is important to you.

Do not sell out of your own pocketbook. Never pre-judge. Always assume that every client you wait on is a millionaire. Assume you will close the sale and that you'll have an add-on — and that you'll wow them before they leave. Have them thinking on their way out that this jewelry was the greatest they've ever purchased and that yours is the best jewelry store they've ever visited. Make it about them, the item or the event — it makes their gift-buying idea more important in their mind.

LINETIME

Tell me, do you really love it?

WHY SAY IT? Because it allows you to find out if you're wasting your time showing a particular piece — and because you want your customers to leave overjoyed with any purchases they make. If the customer says, 'I'm not sure,' they are telling you that either they don't love it or they can't afford it. So follow up with, "OK, if you're not sure, let's put it away and find something you will truly love." If they resist that suggestion, you know you're close to a sale or need to work on a payment plan.

Source: **INSTORE Brain Squad**