

Be a Good Listener by Lynn Giuliani

Sometimes sales people become so involved in what they have to say about their product and their company that they inadvertently monopolize the limited time they have with their prospect. The best way to make their time count is by listening attentively to the prospects needs and concerns and then address each one. In selling, the better your listening skills are the better the results. Follow these tips and become a skilled listener.

Improve your EAR-Q!

- 1) Think before you speak. Many people are in such a hurry to make their point that they rush into a description of their products or service. Taking a few seconds to prepare your thoughts will provide you a solid return.
- 2) Silence is a sales ally. Silence can be a tool to control the flow of conversation and draw the prospect out. Many feel uncomfortable during moments of silence and feel the need to fill the air with just any words that come to mind. Instead of talking nod and provide positive body language. Silence is a valuable sales tool.
- 3) Any interruption discourages listening. If you interrupt a prospect while he or she is talking it may very well cost you the insight of valuable information. Before you make judgments, comparisons, or proposals be sure you have heard the point of view the prospect is trying to make.
- 4) Concentrate on the topic of the discussion. It is so easy for any of us to be thinking of any number of other things rather than what the prospect is saying. Our minds tend to wander thinking did I put the steak out to defrost? Did I remember to give Sally her lunch money for school? Providing total focus and concentration is an art!
- 5) Don't be distracted. When you're making a presentation to one or more people it can be difficult to listen to all that's happening. Be sure to make direct eye contact and physically turn your body in the direction of anyone that is speaking. This simple act reassures someone of your undivided attention.
- 6) Active listening demonstrates interest. Summarize points back to the client to illustrate that you have paid close attention.
- 7) Listen for little subtleties. All too often people jump to conclusions before hearing the entire story. Listening means tuning yourself in to the fine differences of the other person's point of view and illustration.
- 8) Take notes. Courteously ask your client if he or she minds if you take notes to make certain that you collect all the valuable information.

9) Concentrate on listening to one topic at a time. Cultivate the ability to stick to one topic. Don't let your involvement in a sale break your listening concentration.

10) Be patient and avoid mannerisms that can be distracting such as pencil tapping, looking at your day timer or other small tasks. The more attention you give to your client the more you're saying you are there to help them accomplish their goals. When you show interest you naturally develop rapport.

Being a good listener simply improves one's relationships, whether at work or with your family and friends. When we listen intently it demonstrates that we care and are genuinely interested in those around us. "Seek first to understand," says Covey, "then be understood."

Here's wishing you new and improved relationships through effective listening skills.

To your success!

Lynn Giuliani



*Lynn Giuliani · Progressions, Inc.
P.O. Box 28172 · Bellingham, WA 98228
www.progressionsinc.net · (360) 733-6557*