

# Selling Essentials: What to Ask & How to Listen

PREVIEW



**HRDQ.**<sup>®</sup>

# Course Objectives

**Upon completion of this course, you will be able to:**

- Identify types of questions to uncover customers' needs
- Identify typical needs and challenges that customers have
- Describe challenges we have with listening
- Demonstrate how to use active listening techniques
- Identify and implement strategies for listening and questioning clients about their business needs

# Module 1

## Getting a Perspective on Listening

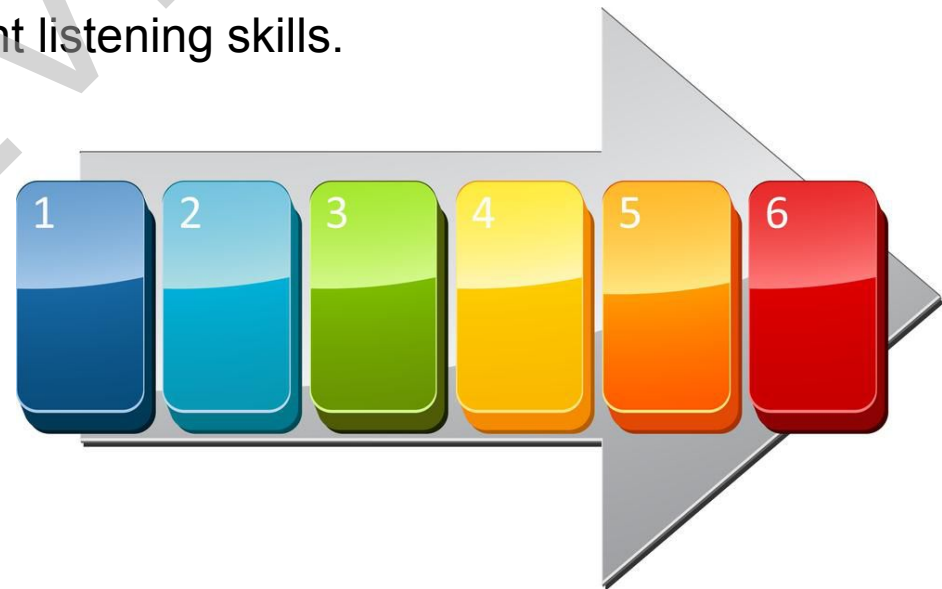
PREVIEW

## Where Are We in the Sales Process?

So far, you have spent time prospecting and identifying a qualified lead. You convinced the prospect to spend time with you. Next, you set up an initial meeting. After you open the sales call, it is time to ask questions and learn more about your prospect's specific needs.

When you listen carefully and uncover the prospect's needs, you can determine whether you have a solution to present that meets those needs. This course focuses on those important listening skills.

1. Prospecting and Territory Management
2. Opening the Sales Call
- 3. Listening and Questioning**
4. Presenting Solutions
5. Overcoming Objections and Closing
6. Cultivating the Relationship



## Listening and Questioning

Now we know where listening and questioning fit into the sales process. But, where do they fit into the sales call? How do we know when to ask questions?

It's easy! The next slide shows the framework for an initial sales call. You will ask the majority of your questions during the *Business Discussion*. Therefore, that's also where you will spend the most time listening!



# Framework of the Initial Sales Call


## Opening the Sales Call

- Make introductions
- Confirm agenda
- Provide an overview of your company

## *Shift to focusing on the Customer*

## Listening and Questioning

- **Business discussion**
- Summarize
- Advance to next step



*Most listening and questioning take place in the **Business Discussion!***

# Potential Customer Needs

The purpose of asking questions is to uncover customer needs. Customer needs typically fall into two categories: what they need to increase and what they need to decrease.

Customers may not even be aware of their needs. Questioning plays an important role in helping them understand their situation and uncover hidden needs. Here are typical needs that your customer may have.

<b>Your customer may need to increase:</b>	<b>Your customer may need to decrease:</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Profits</li><li>• Understanding/knowledge</li><li>• Dependability</li><li>• Productivity</li><li>• Time available</li><li>• Ease of use</li><li>• Confidence</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Cost</li><li>• Complexity</li><li>• Difficulty of doing business</li><li>• Time spent</li><li>• Errors</li><li>• Worries</li><li>• Stress</li></ul>

# Understanding Customer Needs

**It is important to understand and clarify customers' needs.**

***Questions help you do this!***

For example, one customer thought he needed to improve his sales reps' closing skills. He thought they weren't confident in closing sales.

He had a conversation with a sales rep from a training company. Upon further exploration and questioning, they discovered that the reps did have closing skills. They actually needed more product training.

Instead of investing in expensive sales training to improve their closing abilities, he provided the much needed product training. Having product knowledge improved the reps' confidence levels and they closed more sales; it was exactly what they needed.



# Questioning Skills Are an Asset

When you ask your customers questions, you can pinpoint their needs and help them solve their problems.

This meets their needs in a consultative manner and makes you a valuable asset.

***“A sale is not something you pursue, it is something that happens to you while you are immersed in serving your customer.”***

**—Unknown**



## Change Is Difficult

Even when customers realize that there is a problem, finding the time to make the change is challenging!

Making any change is difficult, whether we're trying to lose a few pounds or quit smoking. Until we're really motivated or really feel the pain, it's difficult to make a change. This is especially true for today's busy customers.

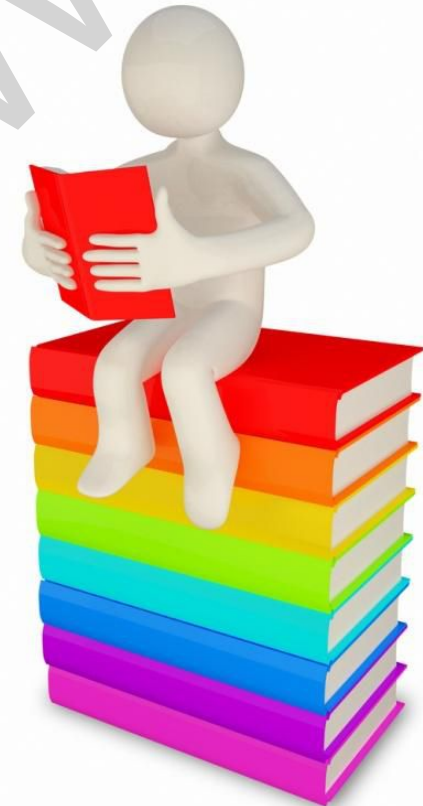
*"We cannot solve our problems with the same thinking we used when we created them."*

*—Albert Einstein*

## Change Is Difficult

It takes a skilled sales rep, one who is adept at asking questions, to uncover a customer's need.

It also takes wisdom to help the customer see that it is time to make a change.



*“The key to wisdom is this—constant and frequent questioning, for by doubting we are led to question and by questioning we arrive at the truth.”*

*—Peter Abelard*

## What to Ask & How to Listen Questioning Practice

Read each question and decide whether it is an open-ended or closed question.

<i>“Are you more concerned with maximizing profits in the short-term or the long-term?”</i>	?
<i>“Is there a reason you are considering other vendors?”</i>	?
<i>“What are your top priorities when considering new vendors?”</i>	?

[Finished](#)

## What to Ask & How to Listen How Meaning Is Conveyed Practice

Identify the step of active listening indicated by the following behaviors:

1. Ask questions to clarify	?
2. Make eye contact	?
3. "Read" the speaker's body language	?
4. Use non-verbal actions like head nodding	?
5. Paraphrase what the speaker is thinking	?
6. Use open and inviting body language	?

### Choices:

Listen  
Empathize  
Reflect

Click the "?"  
boxes to reveal  
the answers.

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