



## Sales Catechism : Establishing The Information Gap



The prospect is an enigma. No matter how well we prepare, no matter how professional and likeable we present, knowing what the prospect is thinking is always a best guess.

You've all been there, wearing your best smile and duds; presenting your offering in the most positive light all the while wondering if you're going down the right road with the presentation and what it is they're thinking behind the facade.

Oh sure, they'll sit there giving you the bobble-head nod in response to your information packed presentation all the while wishing they were on the 1st tee at the club. Incidentally, you may believe that the nodding means that they're in agreement with what you are saying but surprisingly if the recipient is entertaining any negative thoughts nodding actually strengthens their disapproval. (body language 2.0)

So, how do you unravel the enigma?

How do you find out what's keeping them awake at night?

How do you know if they're just being polite?

Or are they simply smiling and nodding because the Imodium finally kicked it.

Two things; first you must show confidence, demonstrating that you are an authority in your field and second you must learn to become a master interrogator.

Seldom will a prospect be forthcoming with their needs, worries, fears or truth.

Not that they intend to lie to your face; more that they wish to appear congenial and contribute to the presentation either positive or negative whichever makes them feel meaningful or knowledgeable.

Your challenge is to engage them in thought provoking dialogue.

The best way to establish your authority is to ask questions that you already know the answer to that will make them think or say, "Hmmm nobody's ever asked me that before."

The object is to establish your credibility and demonstrate that you know more than the other guys and maybe even more than the prospect.

The challenge is that you can't demonstrate the value of what you are offering if you don't know what the prospect's needs are; and you can't find that out unless you can engage them. This is the information gap.

Why would anyone engage in an information sharing relationship if the seller demonstrates no credibility?

Credibility is what every relationship is based on; the more you demonstrate your credibility the more the prospect will want to engage with you.

One of the most powerful keys to getting prospects to engage is to pique their curiosity. Sales pros that know how to effectively apply curiosity to the prospect will always have one up on the competition.

Here's how easy it is; remember when you were a kid and you'd ask a friend "guess what"?

Virtually everyone will say "what". No-brainer, right?

Or if you say "can I ask you something?" Without exception the target will want to know what it is you want to ask and say "yes". These are both icebreaker type questions but you can see how effective the concept can be to begin the engagement process.

The more curious the prospect becomes the more likely they will want to engage with you.

One more.

"Can I ask a couple of specific questions about your training strategy?"

The more they engage the more likely you will close the information gap and discover their needs. At that point you can begin the process of establishing the value of your offering.

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