



THE NEPQ BLACK BOOK _____ of _____ QUESTIONS

N.E.P.Q. BLACK BOOK OF QUESTIONS

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WHAT NEPQ QUESTIONS DO FOR YOU

Let's look at what NEPQ Questions (the New Model of Selling) will do for YOU ... which is actually quite a lot.

First, questions gather, analyze, and diagnose. They help uncover what their problems are, if any, and find out if they want to change their situation. They also help analyze and diagnose problems, their causes, and how these have affected prospects.

Questions involve the other person. It makes them feel that they are part of the process. When they answer you and you listen and respond to their answers by asking additional questions to go deeper in the conversation, you will gain more understanding. And they will feel that their ideas, comments, and concerns are respected and validated.

Questions internally persuade your prospect. By answering your skilled questions, your customers experience a very powerful internal motivator that will make them automatically feel like taking action now instead of 'someday'. You don't have to try and persuade them anymore. Just ask your NEPQ skilled questions that I will give you access to and then listen. You can literally "ask and listen" people into buying from you.

Questions put you in complete control of the conversation. Not for power or manipulation, but for you to keep the sales conversation on the right path.

Questions persuade the other person. By asking easy to answer questions, your prospect not only tells you what their problems are, why they have those problems (what caused them), and how these are affecting them, but most importantly, they are telling themselves!

Their answers can give them a different perspective on why they keep allowing their problem to happen. And, these answers internally motivate them to want to change their situation.

Your questions empower your potential customers to get in touch with their emotional feelings about their present circumstances to want to do something about it. They will want to change and they will want to make that change with YOU. They now view you as a 'trusted authority'.

A good doctor or chiropractor does the same thing. He/she does not just walk in the room and give you a prescription (their solution) without first asking you questions about your problem, what caused it, and how it's affecting you, right?

Why? Because it would be the doctor's answer, not the patient's. The patient who is answering the doctor's questions knows the circumstances and will discuss them. They know their pain.

The patient knows what their symptoms are, but they might not know the solution to their problem, but the doctor will. The patient feels like they are part of the process and because of that will more than likely accept the prescription (solution) the doctor gives them.

It can be the exact same thing with you, once you break the 'old model' of selling and learn how to communicate in the 'new economy'. Your prospects will discuss their situation with you as a 'trusted advisor'.

They will work with you to overcome any concerns they might have. They get to see problems they never thought they had by answering your skilled questions. It makes them want to move forward with you. And, at the end, they are more likely to look at and accept what you are offering them, and will purchase what you sell.

What else do questions do? **Questions reveal consequences.** Your questions will open up your prospects to really think about the consequences of not making a change. How will they be affected if they don't do anything about solving their problems?

Questions create value in you and what you product/service. By asking the right questions at the right time in the conversation, you automatically create value in who you are and what you represent. Your prospects will buy into you first and the strength of how much you understand them from listening to their answers.

Let's look at an example. Say you sell franchises and you have a booth set up at a trade show. Someone comes up and asks you to

tell them more about what you do. Instead of going into a classical sales pitch, find out why they asked. Briefly answer the question with your personalized introduction. This is where you tell them two to three generic problems they would associate to their industry and how what you do helps people solve those problems.

You could say something like this:

"Well, you know how a lot of people nowadays are finding it harder to get by with the corporate downsizing, the lack of job security, and the higher cost of living? What we do is, we help people set up their own franchise business so they can start taking care of themselves and their families and have that control themselves"

What should you do next?

You would IMMEDIATELY follow up with a question, what's called a situation question such as ... *"Tell me what do you do for a living?"*

You are now in a 2-way conversation. You will then start asking them situation questions about what they are presently doing, how long they have been doing it, what they like, what they don't like about it, and how they feel about it.

If you know the right skilled questions to ask them at the right time in the conversation, they will look very seriously about changing their situation. This is what I mean by questions create value in you and what you sell.

NEVER assume they are looking to start their own business just because they approached you. Find out what they are looking for by asking what problems they have, if any, why they have those problems, what it's doing to them, and whether or not they want to change their situation.

Now, there are a few more ways questions help you out.

Questions get them to become open to your ideas. You can make

suggestions like ... *"What if it wasn't what you thought it was? Would you be open to looking at it from another perspective?"*

THIS is a big one. **Questions help your prospects overcome their own concerns.** This is key if you want to be at the top in sales in the 'New Economy'. When you're faced with a prospect that has a concern, instead of handling it like an objection, address them by asking questions to get behind the concern so that you can understand it. And ask skilled questions to help them come up with their own solution to overcome their own concern.

I know this is a lot of information, but just know that all the different types of questions, their sequence and structure will be broken down for you in a easy-to-understand way later on in this training. You'll learn what they are, when to use them to help you and your prospects to clearly see where they are in their present situation, revealing any problems they have.

One simple trick I can give you right now is ... **to turn your statements into questions.** Instead of telling your potential customers about what you know and what you have, ask questions that will uncover and explore what they know about the subject first.

If you tell your prospects your solution outright, you can be the one who ends up owning the problem and the solution. This would mean that your potential customer would be far less attached, as opposed to when they feel that they are part of the process and they owned it. This is far less persuasive.

Watch what happens when your prospects start listening to themselves answering your questions. They start to process the information internally as they are talking. Their answers help them think about their problems and to own the idea that they want to solve those problems. As they consciously and subconsciously internalize what they are saying to you, their answers help them look at and challenge their beliefs as to why they keep allowing their present situation to continue.

When you ask these questions and people tell you their problems,

they are also telling themselves why they have those problems, what's causing those problems, and how important it is for them to change their problems.

People will start saying to themselves things like: *"Gosh, why do I keep putting off buying life insurance for my family?" ... or ... "Why do I keep investing my money with this firm, maybe I should look at what this guy is going over with me ... maybe I could probably get a higher return?" ... or ... "Why do I keep commuting to work an hour each way when I could be like this lady working from my home ... or ... "Wow, why do I keep advertising my business this way when I could be getting leads that have higher conversions for my sales team?"*

They will keep questioning themselves. *"What's preventing me from doing this, what's holding me back?"* They will question why they allow themselves to stay in that same situation. Then, they will start to think about doing something to change their situation. When your potential clients get to this point, because of your questioning skills, they will start to persuade themselves on being ready to make that change now, not in 6 months, or a year, but NOW.

Which kind of persuasion is more powerful? When your prospect persuades themselves on wanting to make a change with you, or when you try to persuade them to make a change with you? I think you know the answer by now.

When someone persuades themselves, they're INTERNALLY motivated ... or motivated by their reasons. There's a big difference between internal and external motivation. Do you know what the difference is? External tends to wear off, right? It's like jumping in the shower and you get all wet, but then you get out and you dry off quickly. But internal motivation NEVER dies. Do you see the difference there?

So, later in the sales conversation, after you've listened ... you can suggest that you might know of a solution that could take care of their problems or help them get where they are wanting to go in their lives. Do you think most of your potential customers would be open to listening to you? Of course they will, and you know what?

A very interesting thing will happen. **Your potential client will like you.**

Prospects will start calling you back and chasing you rather than you chasing them. The reason for this is you have become what I call a “trusted authority”, or “trusted advisor” in their eyes. Because for the first time in a long time they know that you are genuinely interested in them and what they are looking for. You’re not just another salesperson trying to stuff your solution down their throat.

DIALOGUE FRAMEWORK QUESTIONS

Now I am going to give you the Dialogue Framework questions you can use from A to Z.

CONNECTING QUESTIONS

These questions put the focus on them and their world.

Have you found what your wanting, or are you still looking for ... ?

I was just curious, what was it about the ... that attracted your attention?

Anything else that attracted your attention?

SITUATION QUESTIONS

What is their present situation?

Note: You will only use 3-4 situation questions at the most.

What are you doing now ... ?

What are you using now ... ?

Who do you use for ... ?

What type of ... ?

What type of ... are you ... ?

How long have you been ... ?

What got you involved with ... ?

What got you involved in ... ?

PROBLEM AWARENESS QUESTIONS

These questions help answer: do like they their present situation, and what is their past history? You will ask as many of these questions as needed. On average its usually 3-4, but sometimes a few more, depending on the answers you receive back.

Do you like what your.....?

What do you like/don't like about....?

Why do you like/don't like....(plug in what they do like or don't like here)

Is there anything else you like/don't like about.....?

Why do you like/don't like.....(plug in what they do like or don't like here)

TWO TRUTHS QUESTION

Use this only if you need it.

Note: You will only use 3-4 situation questions at the most.

It sounds like things are going fairly well for you, is there anything you would change about ... if you could?

Why would you change that?

Why is that important to you now though?

Has that had an impact on you? In what way?

How would you feel being able to do that...

What has stopped you from getting what you're looking for?

SOLUTION AWARENESS QUESTIONS

What would they do to change if they could? These questions involve their ideas, and lets them own their problems emotionally. On average, you would probably ask 2-3 solutions questions in the conversation - sometimes more or less, depending on the answers you're getting back from your prospect.

Have you been out there looking for anything that would give you what you're wanting?

Have you been out there looking _____ that would _____ for ?

What have you done about changing this, if anything?

How do you see your life being different then it is now?

You solving this problem, how would it be different than it is now for you? How would that make you feel?

What have you done about this, if anything?

What would you do about it if you could, though?

How do you see the benefits of you actually solving this problem?

What's prevented you in the past from changing your situation?

What did you find? How did that work for you?

What's prevented you from making a change in the past?

What's preventing you from changing your situation?

CONSEQUENCE QUESTIONS

What will they do if they don't change their situation? Ask 1-2 of these normally in the conversation.

What if you don't do anything about this problem and your situation gets even worse?

What if this product/service your thinking of didn't get you the results you thought it would?

Have you considered the possible ramifications about not doing anything about your situation?

Have you thought about what would happen if you don't do anything about this?

What if ... ?

What are you going to do if nothing changes, if you keep doing the same thing for the next 5-10 years?

What if you don't do anything about this and you keep ... ? (plug in what they said they don't want to keep happening)

What are you going to do if nothing changes, if you keep using the same product/service your using now the next 5-10 years?

QUALIFYING QUESTIONS

How important is it for them to change their situation? Ask 1-2 of these normally during your conversation, depending on the answers they are giving back to you.

How important is it for you to change your situation and start

... ? Why is that important to you now though?

How would that make you feel to do that?

How important is it for you to solve this problem?

How do you see this being beneficial to you and your company?

What are some ways this could help you?

If you could ... what would it do for you personally?

TRANSITION QUESTIONS

Based on what you told me, what we are doing, might actually work for you, because you know how you said ... (plug in their logical problem)

... and because of that, it's making you feel ... (plug in their emotional problem, feelings)

This is what we do ... (briefly describe the advantages and benefits of how your solution can solve their problem)

Does that feel as if it might be what you're looking for?

Why do you feel like it is though?

COMMITTING QUESTIONS

Commitment to take the next step and purchase.

Do you feel like this could be the answer for you? Why though?

Do you feel like this could be what you are looking for? Why do you feel it is though?

Do you feel like this is something you can (have, do) that will get you where your wanting to go? Why do you feel like it is?

Well, I don't have anything to go over with you, it looks like we possibly covered what you are looking for. Really, the next step is we make some type of arrangement for your (whatever your selling) _ you can do wire or card, and at that point we will ... (tell them the next steps after they purchase).

Would that be appropriate, or how would you like to proceed from here?

Here are more examples of NEPQ questions you can use for different situations in your sales process.

PRE-SITUATION QUESTIONS

These are used if you are in a board room or in the office of a prospect and they are waiting for others to join them for the meeting. These are just normal chit chat questions but they do give you an idea of who this prospect is and more insider info on the actual company. These are not meant to be used in an actual sales conversation, just pre sales conversation.

How long have you been with the company? How has your job evolved since you started here? OR How has your responsibilities evolved since you started?

What do you like about your work? What don't you like if anything?

What would your customers say is the biggest reason why they do business with you over someone else? Why do you think that is?

What would your employees say is the biggest reason they work here over working for a competitor of yours? Why is that?

These questions help you understand more about your prospect's personality, how they feel about the company and the culture of the organization within a few minutes.

PAST SITUATION QUESTIONS

Asking questions about the past is a great way to understand your prospect's behaviors and priorities. These questions allow you to understand how best to sell to the prospect and dig up their history to allow you to better understand their problems they had in the past. Past situation questions can be used at any point throughout the conversation. They can be used with a variety of different situations depending on what you sell.

These along with Situation questions help you see what their past and present situation looks like how they got to where they are now.

Can you tell me some of the things you like and possibly dislike about the company you're using now?

What's some of the possible hurdles you've had in the past to solve this problem?

Can you give me an example of something recent in which you had to deal with _____ problem?

What is different about your company today from when you started working here if anything?

Can you tell me about the changes your department has gone through recently? Have those impacted you? In what way?

What were some of the expectations the company had for you when you started with them, and how have those changed over time?

What's been your toughest thing you've had to deal with recently? Tell me more....

What have you been seeing lately as far as a market trend? What steps are you taking to adapt to this trend so you don't get left behind?

If you could do this over again (plug in the issue) what would you do differently from before?

MORE PROBLEM AWARENESS QUESTIONS

Here are more examples of problem awareness questions you can ask in the conversation depending on what you sell.

Would you be open to sharing with me your top challenges you are having now? Of these two which one is the most important to solve? Why is it so important to you now though?

How long has this problem been going on?

What's causing the problem? Tell me more....

What barriers are in your way from overcoming this?

Who else in the company is having this same problem?

What were your expectations when you went with your current company/vendor? What results are they getting you? What results do you want if you could though? Can I ask why?

What would you change about your situation if you could? Why change that though?

What's your biggest obstacle you're facing right now that's preventing you from solving this problem?

What areas do you want to improve if you could?

How much do you think this problem is costing you in lost revenue/sales?

Can you tell me what your biggest priorities are for this year within _____? (you would fill in the blank with what is relevant in that conversation)

Can you tell me what your biggest priorities are for this year with your data security? (If you sold data security systems)

If you could change one thing about your current vendor, what

would that be? Why is changing that important to you though?

*How is this problem affecting your company's sales?
Production? Profitability? Scheduling?*

How is the problem affecting your bottom line? In what way?

When you have these problems in _____, how much does it cost you to fix them? Tell me more....

Have you lost clients because of these issues? How much were those clients worth to you financially?

How are these issues affecting other areas of your business?

How much time are you spending each day dealing with this problem? If you were able to solve it, what would you be able to do? What would that mean to you though to do that?

How many employees are having to deal with this problem? How much is it costing you to train and employ these people?

Have people in the company left over these issues? Do you want to change that? Why now though?

How much does it cost to hire and train a new employee? How long does it take to train a new person to be able to do his/her job effectively?

How much does that cost you in lost time? What areas of your business is this affecting? Which one the most? In what way? Has it had an impact on you?

QUESTIONS TO DISRUPT VENDOR RELATIONSHIPS

Can I ask how does your ideal situation compare to what you have now with this vendor you are using?

You've already reached big numbers and milestones, tell me where do you want to go from here in terms of future improvements in ...

Back when you chose to work with that company (current

vendor), what was your selection criteria if, I could ask? In what ways has that (criteria) changed as you look at your needs today though? Can I ask what you'd change if you could?

So to me, it sounds like things are going fairly well for you with what you're using now, is there anything you would change about if you could? (plug in what they currently use now)

Example: So Amy, to me it sounds like things are going fairly well with what your using now, is there anything you would change about your processing if you could? (if you sold merchant processing)

If you could change one thing about who you use now, what would that be?

Can I ask in what ways could your vendor do better for you than what they are doing now though?

QUESTIONS TO KEEP CUSTOMERS

These questions help you keep a monitor of your relationship with your clients. When asking them depending on the answers they will let you know if you are in danger of losing them or the relationship is strong.

How do you feel we are helping you the most? Why though?

What type of changes do you feel we could make to help you achieve even greater results?

What goals would you like to see us help you get to within the next quarter/year?

How do you see us being different than your former vendor you were working with? Why do you feel like we are though?

How could we make your life easier? Tell me more ...

In what ways do you feel we could improve that would help you on your end?

Would you be open to giving me some advice on how we could do better for you?

What do you feel we are doing the best for you that's helping you get where you want to go?

QUESTIONS ABOUT YOUR POTENTIAL CUSTOMERS/"EXTERNAL CUSTOMERS"

These questions get them to think of losing their customers if they do not have your solution. These questions would NOT be used for every industry however. They would only be directed to prospects who have significant contact with external customers.

Can you go over who your most valuable customers are for your company?

What's the typical customer look like for you?

How would your clients measure success from doing business with you? Why's that though?

What would they expect from you as far as results so they don't go somewhere else?

Have your clients expectations changed over the last few years? In what way?

How do you see their expectations changing over the next few years?

What are you doing now to make sure you keep these clients from going somewhere else?

What would be the main reasons why your customers go with you over someone else?

What's the main reasons why some of your prospects go with your competitors over you? Why do you feel they do that? Has that had an impact on you? In what way? Do you want to change that?

What would you say your biggest strengths are as a company?

What are some of your weaknesses? How long has that been going on?

Has it had an impact? In what way though? What if you don't do anything about this though and you start losing clients because of it?

CLARIFYING/PROBING QUESTIONS

These questions help you clarify what your prospect is saying so you uncover the true meaning. They also help you probe deeper to pull out your potential customers emotions which psychologically gets them to want to change their situation now with urgency rather than waiting down the road. These questions have some of the most persuasive powers you will ever ask.

How do you mean exactly?

What's causing this issue?

What's causing this to happen?

What's prompting you to look into changing this?

Can I ask what originally led you to this decision in the first place? What is this important to you now though?

Why so important now?

Can I ask why?

Can you be more specific? Give me an example ...

What do you mean by that?

Could you share with me what is motivating your decision to ... ?

What would this do for you personally? In what way?

What are you hoping to accomplish by us possibly working together?

Tell me, what's driving the need to change your situation now though?

Can you walk me through the steps that led you to this conclusion?

What would it mean for you to be able to solve this problem?

What would it do for you? In what way?

What's in it for you to implement this for the company?

What would it do to you personally if you were not able to solve this problem? Are you willing to settle for that?

If you were able to solve this, what would it mean for you? How would it make you feel though?

How long has this issue been going on for? Has it had an impact on you? In what way?

Which of these problems are impacting you the most? Why this one though?

Let's suppose your needs could be met; what are you hoping to accomplish?

EXAMPLES OF CLARIFYING QUESTIONS

Prospect: We have been trying to get both these projects off the ground for months now.

Clarifying question: You mentioned you've been trying, what hasn't worked for you so far?

Trying is the key word here. This work represents human feelings of frustration about not being able to accomplish the goal. This is your golden opportunity to bring the prospects problems to the surface of his/her mind. To have them relive the PAIN and their feelings and then be open to your solution to solve that pain.

Prospect: My company has been having some problems with the vendor we use and we are looking for something better now.

Clarifying question: Can you give me an example of the problems that you've been having with them?

Most sales people would miss asking this powerful clarifying question here. But this is where the emotion comes out if you ask the right question. A potential customer who reveals to you and more importantly themselves past problems will experience that pain of that problem again in their mind. They will then start to confide in you about their business, problems and what they are looking for in a new vendor to work with.

Prospect: The new CEO wants us to reduce costs in our department by close to 10% just this year, but we have found this very challenging to do and keep up with bringing on new business.

Clarifying question: When you say challenging what do you mean by that?

The work challenging is a word that represents aggravation of not being able to achieve a goal. This clarifying question can help the customer vent their emotions/feelings and specific issues that help them relive that pain, which in turn, opens them up to wanting to solve that pain and do that with you.

DECISION MAKING QUESTIONS

These NEPQ questions help your prospects to shift from the "lowest price" way of thinking to "results" based thinking. By using these questions it gets them to look at the value of your solution solving their problems, (getting results) over lower prices solutions that might not solve the problems they have. Value always outweighs price, if you can pull out emotion from your potential customer.

Can you walk me through the criteria you use when picking a company to solve these issues you had talked about?

How do you measure success with who you use now? (current vendor)

Let's suppose you are looking at several different companies who all meet your criteria, including price. How would you then decide what to do?

You had mentioned that the most important thing to you is cost, can I ask how that compares to you actually getting results and being able to solve this problem though?

Let's suppose we were able to make these changes for you and get you that type of increase in profitability what would you do with all the extra profit? What would that do for you personally though?

You had told me that your company has budgeted _____ to fix this problem. Can I ask how that was determined?

Do you feel the budget you have been given is sufficient to solve this problem?

Based on what we just went over, what resonates with you the most? Can I ask why?

EXPANDED PROBING QUESTIONS

How do you get your prospects to "expand" their answers to bring out more emotion. You do that by asking "Expanded probing questions". As you now know prospects buy on emotion 100% of the time and justify it with logic.

Tell me more ...

Can you walk me through your company's decision making process?

Can you give me a specific example so I can understand this better?

Can you go over with me the qualities you look for when choosing a company to work with?

Walk me through the criteria you use to make a decision on something like this?

Describe for me what you're possibly looking for just to see if I could help you.

Explain that to me in more detail just so I understand ...

And did that work?

How did you feel about that? In what way though?

Expanded Probing questions should be with phrases like these:

Walk me through ...

Tell me more ...

Can you share with me

... Describe for me ...

Explain to me ...

These questions show your prospects that you are there for them, you want to hear their pain. You not only want to hear their pain, but you want them to hear their pain right? You want them to relive the experience of the pain they associate from not having the problem resolved yet.

So what is the most intense emotion? It's PAIN! Without pain there is no sale. Without you pulling out pain from the prospect with NEPQ questions your potential customers will continue living that pain, doing what they always have done, maintaining the status quo. Unless you learn to uncover a prospect's pain with NEPQ, you will continue to sell using traditional selling techniques, playing the numbers game, losing sales you could be making.

MORE SOLUTION AWARENESS QUESTIONS

Solution Awareness Questions involves your prospect and their ideas to find out what they have done in the past to solve their problem so they start to own their issues/challenges emotionally rather than you the salesperson owning their problem emotionally.

These questions help them look at what their present situation and future will look like once they take action and change their situation and do that with you.

Solution awareness questions can open up several avenues for you with your potential customer:

Decision Makers:

Solution awareness questions all you to gain access to the decision making process of the company you are selling to. They allow you to uncover competing or conflicting interests among multiple decision makers within the organization.

They also allow you to influence key employees who can influence the decision. They allow you to find out who is on your team to help you and who in the company might resist your offer. They open up the decision making process and give you access to the company politics.

Once you know the company politics you become aware of those who will resist your solution and help prep your influencer whose on the inside to help overcome that resistance.

Vendor disruption:

Solution awareness questions open the door to new solutions for your prospect that they might not of ever considered. They can uncover any dissatisfaction with their current product/service and in turn position you as the trusted authority and how your solution can solve their problems.

Time:

Solution awareness questions help uncover your prospects hopes for the future as well as what they have tried in the past to solve their present day problems. What worked, what didn't.

Competitors:

Solution awareness questions can help the prospect become open about your competitors who are also vying for the account. Once you learn more about how your competitors are and where your prospect is with each one, it will give you a competitive advantage in your sales process

Could you share with me what you're hoping to accomplish in the next 3mo/6mo/12mo? How does this compare with where you are right now?

Can you go over what qualities you are looking for in a vendor? How does that compare with what your CEO/boss/department heads looks for in a vendor?

What differentiates your company over your competition? Why is that?

What is more important to your company cutting costs, or increasing sales and revenue? Why though?

Can you share with me your long term goals and how they compare to where you are now? What's prevented you from achieving them though?

What have you tried to do about this in the past? What worked? What didn't?

How much do you think this has cost you? In what ways?

Have you given up trying to deal with this problem? Why is it important to deal with this now though?

Have you given up trying to solve this issue? Why though?

How long has this been going on in the organization?

How long has this been a problem for?

What's prevented you from solving this in the past? Why now though?

How much do you think it's costing you in lost sales each year? How much do you think it's costing you in lost revenue each year?

You've already reached big numbers and milestones, tell me, where do you want to go from here in terms of future improvements in ... ?

Can you tell me what your biggest priorities are for this year in your ... ?

Before today were you out there looking for _____ or what were you doing about _____? What prevented you? OR How did that work out for you?

Just to see if what we do would work for you but besides _____ and _____ what are you looking for in a _____?

What would be your idea criteria to solve this problem?

What would this do for you personally to solve this problem/issue/ challenge? Would it?

How serious would you say this issue is for you?

What were you hoping I could do for you though?

How do you see this working for you the most?

How long has this issue/problem been going on?

How would I be able to communicate to you that you might be making the wrong decision without you getting upset with me?

Why am I even here? (If prospect is not opening up to you during the conversation. Warning - Only use this question once you have a firm understanding of NEPQ)

Why did you even want to see me? (same as above)

How long has this been on your mind?

How much is this problem costing you in lost revenue?

How do you feel about that?

In addition to you, who else recognizes that this is a major problem in the company?

What steps have you taken to resolve this in the past?

If there was a way to eliminate this problem you talked about, I think you had mentioned it was costing your business over a million a year in lost money, what effects would that have on your company at that point? In what way though?

How would implementing this change help you? What would it do for you personally though?

If you came to your CEO with a possible solution that could save the company nearly 3 million a year, what would that mean for you? What would he/she say?

If those changes were to happen to solve this for your company, how does that help you the most? In what way though?

If you were able to have this problem solved, what would it allow you to be able to do? How would that make you feel?

If you were able to accomplish this objective what would that do for you personally? In what way though?

If you were able to help solve this in what ways would this benefit your company? What would it do for your department? What would it do for you personally though?

MORE CONSEQUENCE QUESTIONS

If you don't decide to address this problem now, how much will it cost you this year in lost profit/revenue/sales?

If you don't solve this issue, what is the impact it has on your business? Can you afford to take that risk?

Can you achieve your goals without addressing this problem?

What would the impact be if your company decides to do nothing about solving this problem (repeat the problem they said they had)

and you stay with your current vendor?

What if you don't address this problem right away. What would that cost you in lost revenue this year? (If they say; well I'm not sure, you say: Well if you really thought about it what would it cost you?)

What's the potential impact on your business if you don't do anything about this? Are you willing to settle for that?

Can you company achieve its goals without solving this issue?

What type of effects will this have on your business if you don't do anything about this?

BUDGETING QUESTIONS TO ASK IN A COMPLEX SELLING ENVIRONMENT

If it takes multiple visits to make a sale, and your product or service is a higher-priced solution that requires multiple decision makers within the organization.

Reminder the more PAIN the prospect experiences, the more money the prospect will pay for your solution!!! They can only experience that pain by the skilled questions you are them to bring out their emotions.

Could you go over with me your budgetary process?

Just to see if I could help you what budgetary parameters are you working with?

Can you tell me how the funding for this project will be determined?

What obstacles would you possibly encounter when trying to get financial approval to solve this problem?

Who else besides you would be involved in approving the budget to solve this?

How will you get financial approval from the company to solve this issue you have talked about?

What type of budget do you have to put into this so you can start _____? (plug in what they said they wanted)

If the prospect says they do not have any money/budget/funding for your solution you simply ask:

Tell me if you did have the funding/budget/money is this something that would work for you? (They will usually say yes, if you have done a good job in the engagement process with your questions.) Why do you feel it would though?

And I can appreciate that money might be an issue from what you told me, how do you think you can resolve that so you can find the funding so that you can ... ? (repeat back what they told you they want)

At this point, if they still cannot come up with ways to get the funding, you ask:

What other avenues do you have to find the budget/funding/money so that you can ... ? (plug in what they said they wanted again)

If they still cannot find ways to find the funds you can make a suggestion like this:

Can I make a suggestion? What other clients do that we work with if they are short on funds is they go out and they ... (list ways your other clients have found funds, 401k, bank loan, home equity, moved around funds in the company budget, sold things, credit cards etc.)

What of those avenues do you have so that you can solve this problem?

THE PROPOSAL PROCESS

RULE NUMBER 1:

Never give a prospect a proposal without understanding what their problems are, and do they have the budget/funding/money to solve the problem.

You should live by this, there are no exceptions to this rule. Even if you have a prospect that says "Can you just send me over a proposal with your pricing in it"? You must never fall prey to this with a prospect. If a potential customer asked for a proposal upfront before you have discovered what their situation is, you simply will say this:

I'd be open to putting together a proposal for you but I'm not quite sure I could even help you yet, could I ask a few questions about your situation to be able to put something together for you that might be useful? Would that be appropriate?

Then you start asking your situation questions to find out more about their present situation. It's as easy as that!

RULE NUMBER 2:

Your proposals should lay out the key two to three problems they told you during the engagement stage of the sales conversation. This reminds them of the issues they want to solve and brings back pain they feel from those problems.

The proposal should also have the key two to three objectives they are wanting to accomplish as a company.

This creates a proposal that shows that the salesperson was present in the conversation, showing the prospect that you have a complete understanding of their situation and how to solve it for them.

The Proposal restates the value to the prospect of achieving their objectives by solving their problems.

By restating the value it helps you provide context for the sale, so that the price for your solution seems tiny compared to them being

able to achieve their objectives by solving the issue, that is holding them back.

You always want the value of solving the prospects problems and achieving their objectives to be at minimum 10 times the cost of your offer.

For a company solving a problem that is costing them to lose 15 million a year in lost revenue a 350,000 solution will seem quite small to them if you are positioning it correctly.

Going over this value with the prospect during your presentation and the proposal makes it a logical next step for them to do business with you.

Always have more than one option for them to accomplish their objectives

Every proposal you sent out should provide 3 options for them to accomplish their goals. Most proposals I have seen typically only offer one option. This loses many prospects as even with the best questions you still will not be able to read the prospects mind 100%. That is why it's important for you to provide three options for them to work with your company.

Option 1: A basic, lower priced option that is still profitable to your company.

Option 2: A middle of the road option that is your core offering where most prospects fall into.

Option 3: A high priced option that is the premium choice.

Setting up the proposal with these options help your prospect to make a decision.

Now the power of the premium option is not just that its highly profitable to your organization or that some prospects will choose it. It also makes the middle of the road option with your core offering seem like a great bargain to the prospect. This will help you make not only more sales but larger sales.

Make the proposal a basic contract/agreement

You can also make your proposals serve as a signable agreement to get the ball rolling while you are waiting on a contract to be drawn up, which sometimes can take a week or longer. Remember the more steps you add to the sales process there are more chances of it falling apart.

If someone in the organization has to approve the proposal, and then it takes a week or two to draw up the contract, there is more of a chance that the prospect might change their mind and go a different direction.

You should always make the buying process easy for your potential customers. Give your prospect the opportunity to sign the proposal as the first step in doing business with you. Make sure your proposals serve as a contract. They don't have to be legally binding, but it's a smaller commitment to get them started in the process.

HOW TO PRESENT BY NOT 'PRESENTING'

Depending on what you sell you might be sending the proposal before the presentation if it's more of a complex sale or after. You might be going over the proposal face to face or emailing it.

Here are some general rules to follow:

1. Do the presentation around the problems/issues that the prospect mentioned:

So many salespeople try and show the entire solution when presenting to prospects. That is how 50 page proposals and two hour long presentations happen. Doing that will turn most of your prospects off quickly. It goes in one ear and out the other as they lose focus.

Instead your potential customers want to know if you can solve their **problems**. They just care about you solving their key challenges that are holding them back from achieving results. So stop presenting all the features and benefits that have nothing to do with solving the prospects problem. Only present directly to the issues the prospect mentioned during the engagement stage of the sales conversation.

You have to customize each presentation to each prospect's challenges. Never do cookie cutter presentations it will make your prospect feel like you do not understand their needs.

2. Use Case Studies to reinforce solving other prospects problems

This is powerful if done correctly. You can show real life examples of other clients that were in similar situations and how your solution was able to solve their problems.

The case study should show the problems the prospect faced, what your solution did to solve those problems and what the results of the work ended up being for that prospect.

Include real numbers that can be objectively quantified. Remember your prospect cares most about results not features and benefits. But what will your solution do for them, how does it help them get them where they want to go.

3. Ask Checking for Agreement Questions throughout

Most sales presentations are an hour or more monologue with the salesperson talking most of the time about all the great features and benefits of his/her solution, and we have the best company, and the best customer service, and the best quality and the best delivery and the best this and the best that. Basically what every salesperson says about their product or service.

How many salespeople do you know that when they pitch you or present tell you that their product/service is only 4th or 5th best in the market?

No one right? They all say that they are the best so prospects have built up defensive mechanisms when they hear these type of saying from salespeople. It basically goes in one ear and out the other.

Doing this is a disaster if you want to be a top performer in sales.

To avoid this from happening you want to ask what are called:

Checking for Agreement Questions

These questions engage the customer during the presentation and create feedback and buy-in. They increase the effectiveness of your presentations ten-fold. They make you appear credible in their eyes and more of an authority.

Here are some examples:

Does that make sense?

Are we on the same page?

What are your thoughts on that?Are

you with me on this?

Do you see how that works?

Do you see how that could help you?

How do you see that helping you the

most?Any questions on that?

Is there anything else I should add?

These questions help you keep a pulse on how the presentation is going with the prospect. It serves as a dialogue that keeps the prospect engaged in the conversation.

It makes the prospect feel they are part of the process and much more likely to buy. Do you see how that works? (Did you notice how I just asked you a checking for agreement question just now and you probably nodded your head?)

During the presentation you should be asking at least 25 of these checking for agreement questions to make sure the potential customer is on the same page.

Most salespeople present 50% of the sales process. This is way way to much. The presentation stage should only be about 15% of the sale. It should be about presenting back the challenges and problems they told you during the engagement stage and presenting back how your solution can solve those challenges. Nothing more, nothing less.

The amount of information the prospect needs to know will always be much less that what a salesperson thinks it is.

Additional Proposal Questions to ask:

We had planned to cover the following areas for you. What parts of the presentation would be the most important to you that you would want to spend more time on?

What are you hoping to gain from the proposal?

What are your thoughts on what we have outlined so far?

What ways does this capture what you're trying to accomplish?

Can you walk me through your decision making process?

How will your funding/budget to solve this problem be determined?

What aspects of this possibly concern you?

Who besides you would be deciding on which firm to work with?

I sense you have some hesitation about what we have covered. Can you help me understand what is behind that?

What's holding you back?

If you have two vendors that are evenly matched in terms of solving this problem, pricing and experience, how would you make your decision?

Is there anything else you'd like to go over before we finalize our approach?

Qualifying Questions

The way a prospect responds to you should inform you whether or not there is a sense of urgency for them to solve their problem. Because if the need is not important, the potential customer may not feel compelled to purchase your solution.

So how do you determine if they do? Simply ask qualifying questions to probe. Here are some examples:

How important is this issue to you?

*How important is it for you to change your situation and start ... ?
(repeat back what they want)*

How important is it for you to do something about this? Why now though?

Is it important to you to solve this problem? Why?

If you could ... what would that do for you?"

Are you prepared to change your situation so you can ... ? (plug in what they said they wanted)

It sounds like your frustrated with ... (repeat back what they told you

they don't like.) So if you could get what you want, how important is it for you to do that? Why now?

Let me give you some examples of qualifying questions to ask your prospect so you don't waste travel time if you have to travel to appointments by car or by plane. I see so many salespeople waste precious selling time driving hours to see a prospect that might not even be qualified to buy their solution. Stop doing this now if you want to be at the top in sales.

Before you make a trip that takes significant selling time away from you you want to get at least some smaller commitments from the prospect.

Prospect: Can you come to our offices in Dallas and do a demo for the owner to see?

Salesperson: *Let's suppose I do come out to your office for a day. You're able to pull the owner and the other decision makers together for me to do a demo in person and everyone finds that we can solve this problem you've talked to me about. What do you see happening next?*

Now at this point you are going to get one of these answers:

- We would do business with you for sure.
- We would have to run it by our committee, corporate
- We would have to see if we could get the budget for it
- We would have to compare it to what we have now with our current vendor
- I'm not really sure what would happen

If you get the first response then you should make the trip and do the demo.

If you get any of the other responses you should not commit your time and resources because there are too many obstacles in the way over which you have no control. Before you travel to that prospect you need to find a way to remove those obstacles. Removing those obstacles will make it much easier for you to get a commitment once you are meeting the prospect face to face.

Here are some phrases to use to start the qualifying question with:

"Let's pretend we could ... "

"What if ... "

"Just suppose we could ... "

"Imagine for a moment ... "

"Assuming we were able to ... "

At the end of that question you would ask:

What do you feel would happen next?

Or

What do you see happening next?

Or

Where would we go from there?

Or

What would you want to happen next?

How to Address the "Send Me References" Question

References from satisfied customers can be a great tool to help a prospect move forward with your solution. However it can also be just a way for the prospect to get rid of you the salesperson.

You have to ask qualifying questions to really find out if this potential customer is serious about changing their situation, they have a concern or they are just wasting your time.

Here are some examples of questions to ask if they ask the “send me some references” question.

Prospect: Can you send me some references from other clients you have?

Salesperson: *That’s not a problem, I’m curious what would you like to ask them when you call?* (this helps you find out if they have a concern)

OR

Salesperson: *So that I can send the right people to you, what specifically would you like to discuss with them?*

Prospect: Well I want to find out from them ...

Salesperson: *That makes sense, when do you plan on calling them so I can let them know to see if they are available for you?*

Prospect: Well I would probably just call them tomorrow afternoon if that works.

Salesperson: *I can reach out to them to see if that works for them. Now let’s pretend for a moment that the clients you talk to say good things about how we were able to solve the same type of problems your company is having, where do you think we should go from there?*

WARNING: If you simply agree to send a prospect references without a commitment to know what the next step is after they talk to them then you will most likely never hear from that prospect again.

Here is another example:

Prospect: Can you send me a quote?

Salesperson: *Yes, that's not a problem. What is it that you are hoping to see from the quote?*

Prospect: Well I'm just trying to see if we have the budget for your program/XYZ product/service.

Salesperson: *Ok, I understand. It might make sense before I sent a quote if I understood a little bit more about your situation just to see if I could even help you in the first place. For example, what type of ... (you would start off by asking a few situation questions to find out their present situation)*

Now after you have taken them through the engagement stage towards the end of the conversation, you will bring up the question they asked about sending them a quote like this:

Salesperson: *I will get to work on putting together a quote for you if you'd like. Now let's assume for a minute we get you the quote and we were able to meet your needs that you mentioned to me. What do you see as the next step?*

WARNING: If the prospect cannot give you any answers about his or her needs then this is probably a prospect that is either fishing for information, and or doesn't have any funding/budget/money for your solution and is just a waste of your valuable selling time.

Here is another example:

Prospect: Can you send some information to my email?

Salesperson: *That's not a problem, just so I can put together the best information for you, what exactly are you looking for?*

Prospect: Well I'm looking to see how your XYZ product could ...

Salesperson: *Ok and who/what do you use now for your ... ?* (now you simply start going through the engagement stage with your first situation question, it's a very natural way to go from just sending some information to helping the prospect uncover their needs and to start to engage with you)

Now after you have taken them through the engagement stage towards the end of the conversation you will bring up the question they asked about sending them more information like this:

Salesperson: *Ok, I can go ahead and send you more information about how we could solve those challenges you had mentioned. Let's suppose you go through the information and it fits into what you are looking for. What would you want the next step to be?*

WARNING: **Never, never, never** send out information for a prospect without first finding out if this is a serious person wanting to change their situation. Otherwise, you are just wasting valuable selling time.

Here is another example:

Prospect: Can you call me back, I'm too busy right now.

Salesperson: *That's not a problem. I can give you my number and you'll have to call me back if you'd like? My number is XXX-XXX-XXXX. What's your timeframe on getting back to me just to see if I would be available for you?*

Asking them what their time frame on getting back to you is a very powerful question that helps position you as a trusted authority in the market. It makes it appear that you are busy with other clients, you are not needy. They will start to view you more as an expert whose time is valuable rather than just another salesperson trying to sell them something.

Prospect: I can get back to you sometime later in the week probably.

Salesperson: *If you have your calendar handy, I could pull out mine to book a specific time with you just so you don't have to chase me down and vice versa would that be appropriate?*

This also positions you as a trusted authority, whose time is valuable rather than just another salesperson who they can shrug off at anytime.

HOW TO ASK FOR REFERRALS AND ACTUALLY GET THEM

Now, the good news ... if you're following NEPQ or the new model, you'll eventually do less and LESS cold calling, and you'll have a higher percentage of referrals instead. That could depend on your industry ... but a lot of times, I've trained salespeople in this method that end up not doing any cold calling at all.

And you know what's great about that? Referrals are much easier to sell to than a random stranger if you have the right questions in your arsenal ... so pay attention.

So, we're going to start here with ASKING FOR REFERRALS. There's a right way to get referrals, and I'll give you the framework. Here's how to start the conversation.

New Model Salesperson: *"I appreciate the opportunity to be able to help you. Can I ask you ... in your mind how do you feel I've been able to help you the most?"*

Why do we ask this? Because they're going to tell THEMSELVES how you have helped them ... and when they do that, they OWN it.

New Model Salesperson: *"With that in mind, who do you know that might be struggling with ..." ... and then you're gonna plug in the problem you solved for them. An example might look like this. Let's say you sell merchant processing. "With that in mind, who do you know that might be struggling with overpaying for merchant processing?"*

Once they've suggested a friend or business associate, the new model salesperson then asks for more information. Note the way in which this is asked ... or the tone, more specifically.

New Model Salesperson: *"Can you please tell me a little bit more about this person and why you feel I could help them?"*

Why do you want them to tell you more? It goes back to finding more about the person before you call ... but we also want the person to OWN this. That way, they're more likely to contact this person and build you up.

New Model Salesperson: *"Well, how do you think it would be best to approach them? Do you feel like you should communicate to him first that I will be calling?"*

Why would we want to ask this question? Because we want that person referring to reach out to them ... it's more powerful that way ... it's like ... I'm sending you somebody that I think might be able to help you. You're more likely to get a hold of them and convert that referral.

New Model Salesperson: *"What do you think you should say?"*

Now, why do you want to know what they're going to say to that person?

Well, you want to be able to prevent them from saying anything that could create resistance with that person ... anything too technical, or inaccurate, or weird ... it's key that you set this up right. So, offer a suggestion to help communicate the right thing with the right words.

New Model Salesperson: *"Can I suggest something to you? What if you talked about some of the challenges you had and that he's having right now, and how we've been able to solve those, would that be more helpful to him?"*

In most cases, they're going to think this is a great idea.

New Model Salesperson: *"So besides X, is there anyone else YOU FEEL I could help?"*

What's important for you to notice about this statement is the use of the words YOU FEEL I COULD HELP. First, you've made it about them and how they feel, and second, people are more likely to give you referrals if you're in it to help people.

Alright, now let's talk about how to call your referrals.

First, we're going to look at what most salespeople would say when calling a referral ...

Average Salesperson: "Hey Mary, I'm John Smith with XYZ company, and Amy asked me to give you a call and said that you'd be interested in my company's services. She said you're wanting to take your business to the next level. Do you have three minutes to talk right now about how my company can get you the results you're looking for?" If you sold business coaching for example.

Notice who this was focused on ... entirely the salesperson and his solution ... not on the prospect. That was the first mistake.

From what you heard, what do you think the second mistake was?

You never want to ASSUME that just because you get a referral that they're automatically going to be interested.

I've seen salespeople fail at this because when they call, they're so enthusiastic, assuming that the referral is automatically going to be interested.

So from the get-go ... you need LET GO of the outcome of the sale ... and focus on whether you can help them ... whether there's a sale to be made in the first place.

Remember, the top 1% of all sales people are problem finders and problem solvers ... they're not product pushers. If you're a product pusher, you'll always be viewed that way and they'll never take you seriously and will just shop around for the best price.

When this happens (assuming they're interested) ... most people will throw up some sales resistance ...

[Dialog continues]

Prospect: "Ya, I guess this is a good time."

Average Salesperson: *"Ok great, I know you're gonna be excited about what my company can offer you today ... you see, here at XYZ company ... we've been in business for 10 years, we've helped over 4,000 businesses have success ... now let me tell you a few things we can do to help you get where you want to go, and then you can make an informed decision at the end, about working with us."*

When you try using a closing technique right from the very beginning and you tell them what you can do, with a sales pitch, and say that they can then make an informed decision, what do you think that person feels? This automatically creates sales pressure.

If you're still using this phrase ... you've got to get rid of it. It simply DOES NOT work anymore. Why do salespeople keep using this technique?

It's like people who play golf ... if you're not very good ... you might play one really good hole out of 18 ... and the rest aren't that great ... but it keeps you motivated to keep trying, to keep coming back to play ... so like in sales, if you get one out of 18 calls ... you're playing the numbers game ... and by saying "informed decision" ... the prospect already feels sales pressure from you.

We gotta get rid of that old way of thinking. If you want to be the top 10%, 5%, 1% in your company or industry ... we have to think differently from what you thought before that's giving you the results you have now.

So if you say things like "informed decision", prospects are thinking "This salesperson is trying to close me ... what can I say or do to get rid of him?"

And they're probably not listening to what you have to say. You're not involving them in the process, you're not asking them any questions to find out what their needs or problems actually are.

Now let's take a look at what a top salesperson would actually do ... someone who understands NEPQ ... or the new model of selling ... and you're gonna see some drastic differences.

Remember ... never assume that just because you've gotten a referral that they're automatically interested. Your first objective is to find out about the person and what problems they have, if any.

Here's what to say when calling referrals ...

New Model Salesperson: *"Hi, is this John? This is Jeremy. A mutual friend/business associate of yours, Amy, suggested I call you, as I recently helped her with X that was causing them to X, and she mentioned to me that you might be experiencing the same*

challenges with that. Is this an appropriate time to talk?"

Notice that here, the salesperson is focused on solving problems. That's the absolute best way to call.

Now, what do you do if the referral wants to meet you? Here's now to start the conversation:

New Model Salesperson: *"Amy, it's nice to meet you and let's do this ... just so I don't go over things you have already talked about with Jim, perhaps you can give me **your thoughts** on what you have discussed with him and then **what you'd like to cover** so that we could **focus on you** and what you **might** be looking for?"*

MIGHT is the neutral term here. At this point, most people are not looking for a solution ... and in fact, most don't even know they've got a problem. But it's your job to be a problem-finder ... and with NEPQ, those problems will surface.

What's most important now is that you start putting this into practice. Take action on this structure i've provided ... if you do, you'll see massive results.

QUESTIONS TO ASK TO START A BOARD MEETING

Here are some opening questions you can ask that will establish you as the expert in your field. The 'Trusted Authority'.

From your perspective, what would be a valuable way for us to spend this time together?

What would you like to discuss today, so that we could focus on you and what you might be looking for?

I'm must curious what prompted you to want to have this meeting today?

How did you reach the decision to possibly seek outside help to come in?

What were you hoping to get out of this meeting if anything?

What caused you to bring me in just so I can see if I could possibly help you?

What are the important items you'd like to cover today just to see if I could help you?

RESOLVING QUESTIONS

When your customers complain the first reaction with most salespeople is often to argue the point and try to show them that they just don't have all the facts. Rather than you trying to win the argument why don't you ask questions that allow the customer to overcome their complaints?

When a client is upset, maybe the product was faulty, maybe the service didn't work like you said it would, maybe customer service in your company is average or bad, whatever the reason the customer just wants to be heard. They want to be heard and understood.

Arguing with them will do you little to no good. When a customer is upset, their emotions are like facts to them. Arguing will only inflame the situation. Your goal should be to win the relationship with the client not the argument.

During the first phase of the crisis you have to ask NEPQ questions. If you do this you will learn needed information and also create an ally in solving the challenge.

Here are several example questions to ask:

What happened exactly just so I know?

Can you say more about that so I understand?

I appreciate you bringing this to my attention. Can you tell me everything you know about what happened? What has their reaction been just so I know?

What else can you tell me about this?

How do you think it got to this point?

I apologize that this happened. What would you like to see done at this point so we can correct this for you?

This is upsetting to me. How soon can we meet to discuss this in person?

Would it help you if I did some fact finding, and then we got back together to discuss some possible actions that could take care of this for you?

If anything else happens in the meantime, can you come to me so I can help you?

I hope you enjoyed these additional NEPQ Questions in this book!

Now it's time for you to take action. The most important thing you can do is practice, practice, practice. Roleplay, roleplay, roleplay.

The more you do the more sales you will make, the more income you will make for you, your family and the company you represent.

Now go out and ask these questions along with the training in our virtual training center and you will become a master of sales.

A 'Problem Finder' and 'Problem Solver'.