

# **Advanced Selling Skills – Counter Sales**



Freightliner LLC

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## A Sales Story

*“I’ll be with you within a minute, sir.” Joe Clark had been Parts Counterperson at his Western Star dealership for over two years now. He liked the job—it was often like running his own retail business. Sometimes you really had to be on the ball, though. Joe saw that the customer who had just walked up to the parts counter seemed to be in a hurry. He was frowning and drumming his fingers on the countertop.*

*“I’ll call you when that part comes in,” Joe said into the phone as he started to wrap up his conversation. “I expect it by Tuesday morning...OK ...I will ...Have a great day!” He hung up and walked over to the new customer.*

*“Good morning. I’m Joe Clark. How may I help you today?” Joe asked.*

*“I need an alternator.”*

*A quick thought jumped through Joe’s mind. “He’s one of those ‘drivers.’ Let’s see, ‘drivers’ get to the point—make decisions quickly. I need to move fast and stick just to business.”*

*“What do you drive, and what engine is in it?” asked Joe.*

*“’95 Freightliner FLD120. Cummins N-14. I can get a rebuilt alternator across town, probably for a lot less.*

*“Uh huh.” Joe nodded and kept his eyes on the customer.*

*“But I decided to see what you’ve got.”*

*“I’ll need to find out a few more things, including the type of mount you have on your Cummins,” Joe said. “Then I would suggest an Alliance remanufactured alternator. Unlike the part you mentioned across town, it has a one-year unlimited mileage warranty.”*

*The customer was still drumming his fingers. “Don’t Alliance parts cost more?”*

*Joe was ready. “Any price difference is really offset by the quality and availability of the parts. They keep you on the road, not in the shop. You won’t get that across town either. And if you need help, you can go to any Freightliner, Sterling, or Western Star dealer in North America. For example, you’re here, but you probably didn’t buy your Freightliner here.”*

*The finger drumming stopped. “I guess that makes sense.”*

*Joe smiled inside. “Let’s find out more about your alternator mount. And I’d like to ask you about your belt tension, your battery cables, and the age of your battery. Sometimes it’s a good idea to replace it when you install a new alternator.”*

### ***Exercise 1: What Did Joe Clark Do Effectively?***

Joe Clark did a good job of selling to this customer. He used most of the skills that were part of this module's prerequisite, *Selling Skills*. Review the story, and for each of the skills below (all from *Selling Skills*), briefly write what Joe did or said to apply the skill.

1. How did Joe *acknowledge* the customer? How did he determine the customer's probable behavioral style and adjust his approach to it?

.....

.....

2. What did Joe do to *listen* to the customer? How did he show the customer that he was listening?

.....

.....

3. What *open-ended questions* did Joe ask to ensure he knew exactly what the customer wanted?

.....

.....

4. How did Joe present the *features* of the part being discussed, in an effort to convince the customer to buy?

.....

.....

5. How did he respond to the customer's *objection*?

.....

.....

6. What did Joe do to *close* the sale?

.....

.....

7. What *incremental selling* did Joe attempt in this example?

.....

.....

*Check your responses in Appendix 1.*

## Introduction

### The Lesson of the Sales Story

Joe Clark had some effective sales training. And he applied it well with this customer. Which of these would you select as the lesson of this story?

- ☐ *Some people are born to sell. They have a gift, and can apply it, even with intimidating customers.*
- ☐ *Anyone can sell effectively; it just requires learning the basics, practicing them, and then continuing to improve.*

If you selected the second lesson you're ready to begin practicing the basics and continue to improve your selling skills!

### About This Training

This course is part of the *PartsExpert* Professional level curriculum. It follows the course titled *Selling Skills* (part of the Certified level curriculum), which is a prerequisite. If you haven't completed *Selling Skills*, you should do so before continuing.

In this course, you will learn specific skills that will help you achieve better sales results. Some of the material in this course will help you practice the things you learned in *Selling Skills*, to make you more comfortable with them. Other items are new; they will help you enhance your ability to sell.

### Who Can Benefit From This Course?

The intended audience for this course is Parts Counterpeople. These skills are oriented toward interactions with retail purchasers in your dealership.

In addition, anyone who has interaction with retail customers, or who supervises those who do, will find this material useful.

## Learning Objectives

At the conclusion of this course, you will be able to:

- Describe behavioral characteristics of your customers and properly respond to them.
- Be more effective at "active " listening.
- Ask appropriate questions to pinpoint the exact needs of the customer and build customers' desire to buy.
- Respond to objections with confidence.
- Close the sale consistently.
- Suggest incremental sales.

## How You Will Learn

The primary method of learning will be by reading this course material. You should apply your personal selling experiences to put this material in a context that is most useful to you. There will be a number of exercises, and the final Certification Test. The answers to all of the certification questions at the end of this course are readily found within its contents.

When you have completed the course, feel free to talk to others in your dealership who have also done so, or to people who you think demonstrate great selling skills. Ask them what they do to make their selling efforts successful, and adopt those things that work for you.

### **The New Consumers**

Our world has become vastly more complex for the salesperson. Media- and Internet-savvy, product-sophisticated consumers inhabit it. Today's salesperson can't succeed by simply hawking the features of his or her products. Instead, these new consumers expect to be educated about the worth of the product, and the ways in which the product will fulfill their needs.



## Looking Back at the *Selling Skills* Course

### Why Look Back?

The old adage suggests, “Practice makes perfect.” Now that you have completed the *Selling Skills* course, you are ready to enhance those skills through practice. To do that effectively, you should get reacquainted with them. Then, we can add new skills.

### The Six-Step Basic Selling Process

This course will focus on the practice and expansion of the six-step basic selling process outlined in the *Selling Skills* course. The steps are:

- Acknowledge the customer.
- Listen.
- Ask questions.
- Present features through benefits.
- Respond to objections.
- Close the sale.

These are the six skills that Joe Clark used in the story at the beginning of this course.

### How This Course Will Work

The foundation of this course will be the same six steps that are shown above. These six steps contain all the skills you’ll need most of the time. For each of the six steps:

- The skills of the step that were demonstrated in *Selling Skills* will be briefly summarized, as a refresher.
- Advanced material related to the step will then be introduced and described.
- For each step, there will be at least one and sometimes two exercises enabling you to practice the application of basic and/or new material.

Before we get to the six steps, though, let’s take another look at what it takes to be an effective salesperson.

## Getting *Better* as a Salesperson

Effective selling requires that a solid set of skills be learned and used. But that's not enough. After all, a salesperson can do all the things that have been mentioned so far, such as acknowledging, questioning, listening, etc., but still argue, interrupt, and be generally negative. In such cases, the customer sees only the inappropriate behaviors, and the selling skills have no positive impact.

The emphasis in this course is on interaction with retail customers. Their loyalty is one of your dealership's most valuable assets, and serving them successfully is the way to earn their loyalty. Compared to your internal customers and outside sales accounts, there might be fewer retail customers stepping up to your parts counter looking for parts, accessories, and vehicle-care supplies. But serving them effectively and in a businesslike manner will help build and maintain a desirable image for your dealership. Clients are in foreign territory at your counter, and not always sure exactly how to describe the parts they need. Make them feel comfortable and the retail parts transaction will become an event that instills confidence and trust in you and your dealership.

### What Qualities Are Found in an Effective Salesperson?

The *Selling Skills* course described a variety of ways to present a “positive attitude” towards selling and the retail customer. A few of the key ideas presented in that course were:

- Look and act like a professional. Grooming and clean clothes make an important first impression.
- Adopt a service mentality. Your job is to meet and exceed the needs of the customer. Be flexible and strive to be helpful.
- Be natural. Make eye contact and talk “with a smile.” Call the customer by name as soon as you learn it.
- Follow up on and fulfill every commitment that you make.
- Don't talk down to, oversell, interrupt, or argue with a customer.

Each of these approaches to selling provides the basis for successful application of good selling skills. You're not just an order taker. Many customers aren't sure what they want. If they do know what they want, they may not be sure they want it from your dealership (as we saw with Joe Clark's customer). The way you treat the customer often determines whether or not you'll make the sale.

Let's look at some additional characteristics of successful salespeople, by looking at some things customers want from salespeople. Assess yourself honestly to determine your characteristics.

#### **What Will You Do With These Selling Skills?**

If you have been given a bag of cement and a bucket of water,  
you can build either a stepping-stone or a stumbling block.

***The choice is yours!***

## What Are Your Characteristics?

- ☐ Do you provide customers with the facts without engaging in long, drawn-out explanations? Do you get to the point of a conversation?
- ☐ Do you tell the truth about your products and their ability to fulfill the stated need of the customer? When you don't know, do you say so? When you don't know the answer, do you look for it?
- ☐ Do you show each customer a good reason why the product you're offering is perfect for him or her?
- ☐ Do you show customers who don't have confidence to buy that they're not alone—that others have felt like them and bought successfully?
- ☐ Do you give customers a choice where appropriate? When you do so, do you let them decide but still make a consultative recommendation?
- ☐ Do you always reinforce the choice of a customer? Do you help reduce any potential nervousness they may have about their choice?
- ☐ Do you practice ways to describe complex technical products in a way that any layperson can grasp?
- ☐ Do you always avoid telling a customer that a prior purchase made elsewhere was a mistake, even if it obviously was?
- ☐ Do you bring laughter to work? Do you try to make each customer feel somewhat special? Do you take a sincere interest in them?
- ☐ Are you willing to help a customer buy, not just push them to buy?
- ☐ Do you work on your selling skills every day? Do you see “sales excellence” as a journey, not a destination?

Each of the skills that will be presented in the remainder of this course can be used with or without these characteristics. But if these characteristics are absent, the skills won't work.

How did you do? If you feel that you're able to check the majority of these characteristics as being yours, you're ready to continue the journey. If not, consider a few additional thoughts.

- When something happens that is negative, don't blame the circumstances for the situation. It's probably not the weather, or the price of the part, or your manager that is the cause. It's probably you. And knowing that is the first step towards fixing it.
- Work on gaining a more positive view of yourself. From time to time, read a self-improvement book or listen to a self-improvement tape. These things help beyond the job, too.
- Become solution oriented. Spend the same amount of time solving problems as you might spend worrying about them.
- Practice thinking about the things you like about family, friends, coworkers and customers, not the things you might not like about them.
- Believe your instincts. If you really think something is OK, it probably is. If you honestly think it's not OK, it almost certainly isn't.

# Selling Skills—A Deeper Look

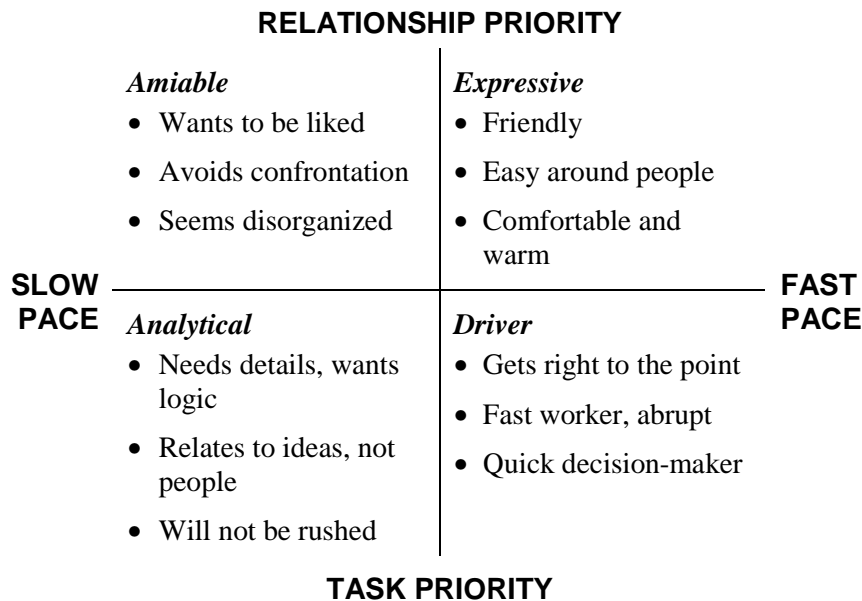
## 1 Acknowledge the Customer

### A Look Back at Selling Skills

In the *Selling Skills* course, you learned that professional salespeople are good communicators. They make a connection. They watch and listen to the customer, and then modify their behavior to best reflect the customer's frame of mind.

- They are never too familiar with any customer, and never too formal. They take cues from the customer and stay within the boundaries set. For example, if a customer introduces himself as Donald Smith, a good salesperson won't call him "Don."
- They take a moment to determine what emotional state a customer is in—angry, relaxed, demanding, or uncertain. They alter their behavior style to accommodate the emotional state of each customer.
- They recognize that people generally are most comfortable with one of four general behavior styles based on the pace they work at and where they put the importance of people and tasks. By understanding the customer's preferred behavior style, a professional salesperson adapts his or her behavior to accommodate it. In the earlier story, Joe Clark recognized that the customer preferred the "driver" style, at least at that moment.

The four styles are **driver**, **amiable**, **expressive**, and **analytical**. They are depicted below.



There are clues for each of these styles and a preferred method of response by you.

| <b>Behavior Style</b>   | <b>Their Approach</b>   | <b>Your Response</b>   |
|---|---|--|
| <b><i>Amiable</i></b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Maintaining relationships</li><li>• Slower pace</li></ul>       | Appear uncertain, confused, shy, lacking confidence, perhaps expressionless, anxious, unable to look in the eye, evasive, barely answering questions, and not telling you what they want. | Smile warmly. Have all the time in the world (no darting eyes or heavy sighs). Provide reassurance that you can help them. Carefully explain anything they don't understand. Do not talk down to them. Do not rush them. |
| <b><i>Analytical</i></b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Task and process oriented</li><li>• Slower pace</li></ul>    | Questioning (perhaps maddeningly so), seemingly hard to "pin down," don't make eye contact often, ask for complete explanations and proof for claims. Settle in.                          | Answer questions fully, concentrate on step-by-step logic. Take your time, give them something physical (like a part) to hold on to and handle. Offer evidence, get agreement, and summarize before moving on.           |
| <b><i>Expressive</i></b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Interacting in relationships</li><li>• Faster pace</li></ul> | Relaxed, friendly, chatty, calm, interested in your advice, cooperative, and helpful.   | Let them know they are appreciated. Give them more service value than they expected (and they will telegraph that they don't expect much).   |
| <b><i>Driver</i></b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Tasks, focused on the results</li><li>• Faster pace</li></ul>    | Assertive, insistent, authoritative, barking out orders briskly, abrupt, interrupting you, and talking fast.  | Take immediate action. Listen and move fast. Show readiness and responsiveness but don't hesitate to bring up additional things that support their needs. Stay calm but alert.   |

### ***Doing More with Behavioral Styles – Exercise 2***

Knowing how to respond to the customer's behavior style and approach is very useful. However, picking up on the preferred style of a customer quickly is sometimes more difficult.

Read each of the customer conversations on the next page. Then, decide whether the customer is displaying *Amiable*, *Analytical*, *Expressive*, or *Driver* behavior. Use the table above for help. When you have selected a behavioral style, note why you selected the style and how you would treat this customer at this point in the conversation. Be as detailed as you can. You can also use Appendix 2 for help in formulating the ways you would treat each customer. It contains more information about each behavioral style.

Appendix 3 contains suggested responses for this exercise.

| Customer Conversation  | Probable Style | Your Analysis and Approach |
|--|----------------|----------------------------|
| “I can get that part for you next week.”   | ___Amiable     |                            |
| “ <i>What day would it arrive?</i> ”   | ___Analytical  |                            |
| “I’m pretty sure by Wednesday.”  | ___Expressive  |                            |
| “ <i>Could it be here earlier?</i> ”   | ___Driver      |                            |
| “Well, it might. I can’t tell you for sure.”   |                |                            |
| “ <i>Tuesday before 2 p.m. would be better.</i> ”  |                |                            |
| “I can’t guarantee Tuesday.”   |                |                            |
| “ <i>Here’s why I need it on Tuesday...</i> ”  |                |                            |
| “I can get that part for you next week.”   | ___Amiable     |                            |
| “ <i>I need it Tuesday.</i> ”  | ___Analytical  |                            |
| “I can’t guarantee Tuesday.”   | ___Expressive  |                            |
| “ <i>Well, that’s when I need it.</i> ”  | ___Driver      |                            |
| “I can get that part for you next week.”   | ___Amiable     |                            |
| “ <i>That’s great. Glad to hear it. You must get a lot of parts through here.</i> ”                            | ___Analytical  |                            |
|  | ___Expressive  |                            |
| “Wednesday is a big day. That’s when most orders arrive.”  | ___Driver      |                            |
| “ <i>Wednesday. Hmmm. You know, I’m going to be away on Wednesday. Fishing. What do think about Tuesday?</i> ” |                |                            |
| “I can’t guarantee Tuesday.”   |                |                            |
| “ <i>Well, you can only do what you can do. Is there anything I can do to help?</i> ”                          |                |                            |
| “I can get that part for you next week.”   | ___Amiable     |                            |
| “ <i>Wednesday?</i> ”  | ___Analytical  |                            |
| “Does that meet your needs?”   | ___Expressive  |                            |
| “ <i>Well, uh, I suppose...I mean, it’s OK but it’s not the best. But I guess it’s OK.</i> ”                   | ___Driver      |                            |

Appendix 2 contains additional information about behavioral styles and the ways in which they manifest themselves. Appendix 3 includes sample responses for Exercise 2.

## Another Element of Customer Preference

Customers usually have options about whether to buy, and where to buy. Your job as a salesperson is to build a relationship with the customer, even if the transaction is very short, as many retail transactions are. There are several reasons why a relationship is so important.

- It makes the customer want to buy from you.
- It makes the customer want to come back to you the next time he or she needs something.
- It enables you to effectively deal with customer concerns, such as price.
- It builds the trust necessary to help you sell incremental products—sales that are related to the intended purchase but that were not anticipated by the customer.

One of the ways to build a relationship with customers is to behave in a way that meets their individual style preferences. That's why the ability to detect a preferred style and react to it is so important. An *amiable* customer wants you to be pleasant and patient—to take your time. Behaving that way with a *driver* would probably result in a lost sale.

There is another layer of preference exhibited by many customers in their speech, which you can pick up if you get the chance to listen to them for a while. Look at the following conversations of people who have read several descriptions of homes for sale.

### It's Not Just the Skills...

Good selling skills aren't enough. They need to be used *the right way*. Applying good skills with a growl and a scowl won't result in sales; it will result in the customer's remembering what an unpleasant person you are!

*"I liked the description of the first house the best. I could see myself in it. It's the way a house should look."*

*"I liked the description of the first house the best. It sounds the way I talk about houses that I like."*

*"I feel good about the description of the first house. That kind of house fits my style."*

Did you notice what made them different? Think about three of our senses—sight, hearing, and touch. Do you see it now?

- Many people think in *visual* terms. They use language similar to the first example above, with visual words such as "see" (*"I see what you mean"*) and "look." They make lists (to look at) and like to learn things by seeing it done by another. They like to be shown catalogs and pictures.
- Other people think in *auditory* terms, and use language similar to the second example above. They say things like, *"That rings a bell,"* or *"I hear you."* They like to listen, and to talk. They remember names, but often forget faces.
- Still other people trust their *feelings* and *intuitions* the most. In this context, "feelings" includes the sense of touch as well as emotional feelings. They use phrases like the third example above ("feel" and "fits"). They prefer to touch samples of merchandise. Their speech is filled with action words. *"I can handle that."* *"I get the picture."*



Think about some past U.S. Presidents. Bill Clinton “*felt our pain*” and connected with those of us who prefer the feeling style of language. George Bush (the elder Bush) used a visual style with his “thousand points of light.” People who prefer visual language often don’t fully express their thoughts verbally; they “see” their vision. And President Bush had a lot of detractors who didn’t “see” his vision at all. Richard Nixon typically used an auditory style; he liked to “say *this about that*.”

Interesting, but how does that affect your ability to sell? Remember, effective selling is about building relationships, sometimes right on the spot.

*People feel more comfortable around people who think like them. And you can increase that comfort by verbally responding to customers in a way that mirrors the way they think.*

If a person is using a lot of visual terms in his or her speech, you should respond with visual words. If they are auditory, it’s in your best interest to modify your language to respond in kind. It takes some practice, but studies have shown in numerous ways that trust is built when the speech patterns of two conversing people match, and in most cases, *neither knows why* the trust is higher.

By the way, our two other senses are reflected in speech also (“*Something **smells** funny here*” or “*That leaves a bad **taste** in my mouth*”). However, in Western cultures there are few words to express smell and taste, so these are poor indicators of the way people think or process information.

### ***How Might You Respond? – Exercise 3***

The exercise on the next page contains three sentences. For each, rewrite the sentence using visual, auditory, and feeling/intuition style language.

Appendix 4 contains some examples of phrases for each language preference that you can use to help you complete the exercise. Appendix 5 shows some sample responses for this exercise.

Once you’ve completed the exercise, practice picking up on language styles—with family members or your favorite television programs, for example. Then, select a response that matches the style.

***Exercise 3 – Visual, Auditory, and Feeling Styles***

| The Sentence  | Visual Style | Auditory Style | Feeling Style |
|---|--------------|----------------|---------------|
| It's a good idea, but it needs some changing.             |              |                |               |
| Do you get my point?                                      |              |                |               |
| We have a great product that will help your productivity. |              |                |               |
| This part has a one-year unlimited mileage warranty.      |              |                |               |

## Selling Skills—A Deeper Look

### 2 Listen

#### ***A Look Back at Selling Skills***

The *Selling Skills* course suggested that you eliminate distractions, and focus on the person in front of you. If you are the only one handling the phone, excuse yourself, ask the caller to hold, and return to your customer.

You can also recognize nonverbal signals that may help you determine and meet the needs of the customer. Body language or an uneasy response may provide clues about what they need or want.

Finally, listen more than you talk. That's how you get the information necessary to fulfill their needs. Show you're listening with nods or simple phrases such as "*uh huh*."

#### ***Why Is Effective Listening Important?***

A married couple is seated on opposite sides of their kitchen table, having breakfast. The husband is buried in the sports pages of the local newspaper. His wife is speaking. He never looks up.

*"It looks like it's going to rain today, Jim."*

*"Uh huh."*

*"Sally next door must have gotten a new car."*

*[Silence]*

*"I just don't know what to make for dinner tonight."*

*"Mmm."*

*"Did your team win yesterday?"*

*"Huh?"*

One obvious reason to listen is to gain important information. That's what you probably think of when you think about listening while you're selling parts. "What does this customer want? I better listen carefully."

Most people would agree that Jim's wife wasn't providing any crucial information over breakfast. So it wasn't important that Jim listen for information. Yet the same observers would also likely agree that their relationship will suffer if Jim doesn't change his listening habits. So, another important reason to listen is for *involvement*. Good listening builds relationships, trust, and understanding, even if the information isn't always critical.

The same is true between you and your customers. The good news is that a specific skill of listening exists and can be learned.

### ***What Prevents You From Listening?***

Before we get to the skills, let's look at some of the things that may prevent you from listening well. Check each item that you find yourself doing from time to time.

- ☐ I don't clear my mind of other things or take steps to prevent interruptions.
- ☐ I open mail, work on the computer, etc. while others are talking.
- ☐ I assume what the person is going to say and tune out.
- ☐ I finish sentences for other people when they don't talk as fast as I'd like them to.
- ☐ I tune out when I hear things that I don't like or that I disagree with.
- ☐ I think about what I want to say in response while the other person is still talking.
- ☐ I pretend I understand what I'm being told rather than be embarrassed by asking for clarification.
- ☐ I think about the way people look or are dressed instead of what they are saying.
- ☐ I use body language that discourages good communication, (for example, crossed arms).
- ☐ I don't pick up on nonverbal forms of communication, such as tone, pace, and posture.

If you are like most people, you checked off several of these behaviors that contribute to poor listening. Having done so, you are now more aware of those things that you need to work on to improve your listening capability. Then, you can begin to apply the listening skills.

## ***“Listen” Is an Action Verb***

Listening is more than staring at a speaker and “paying attention.” It involves periodic response to the speaker in a way that clarifies what is being said, and prompts more detailed information. To that extent, it is a skill of *action*, not inaction.

There are three steps to effective listening.

1. Show that you are interested in what the speaker is saying, both with your own body language and by brief verbal inserts. Nodding, eye contact, and phrases like “I see” or “That’s interesting” demonstrate your involvement with the speaker. Use of this skill tends to make the speaker provide more information than he or she normally would, to your benefit as a salesperson. It also begins the relationship of trust. (Think about the improved interaction Jim might have had with his wife if he had put the paper down and done some of these things).
2. Ask questions to gather additional information, to clarify what has been said, or to control the conversation. This part of the listening skill also begins the third of the six basic selling steps, “ask questions,” that we’ll look at later. The questions you ask should be open-ended, unless you want to shorten the dialogue.
3. From time to time, show that you have understood what the person is saying. Use phrases like “What I hear you saying is that...” (to the *auditory* style speaker) or “It looks to me like...” (to the *visual* style speaker) or “I’ve got a sense that...” (to the *feeling* style speaker).

## ***How Do the Listening Steps Work?***

Read the conversation on the next page as if it is between you and a customer. The customer is not convinced about what you’re saying, but that’s not immediately evident. When you come to a blank, insert an appropriate response **from those listed below**. The numbers by each blank indicate the kind of response you should insert based on the three steps to effective listening. (For example, a number 2 next to the blank indicates a question to gather additional information—see Step 2 above). When you have completed the exercise, you can check your responses against the suggested responses shown in Appendix 6.

- “Mmm-hmm.”
- [Nod]
- “OK, *that’s interesting.*”
- “*You don’t sound totally sure.*”
- “*What do you think makes this one more difficult to use?*”
- “*Sounds like you have some concerns.*”
- “*What concerns you about that?*”

## Exercise 4 – Listening Practice

| Speaker     | Conversation and Activity   | Use Step         |
|-------------|---|------------------|
| <i>You:</i> | <i>This new test equipment is really great. You can set all these parameters. It will do a lot of new things we couldn't do before.</i> |                  |
| Customer:   | Uh huh. Looks interesting.  |                  |
| <i>You:</i> | <i>You can print out the results, and even log them in the memory of a computer that you can attach through this port.</i>              |                  |
| Customer:   | Uh, the old testing unit? You don't have that model any more?   |                  |
| <i>You:</i> | <i>That's right. We're phasing it out.</i>  |                  |
| Customer:   | I see.  |                  |
| <i>You:</i> | <i>This one is intuitive. You don't even need an instruction manual.</i>  |                  |
| Customer:   | Yeah, it's very impressive. So you're not making the old unit anymore?  |                  |
| <i>You:</i> | <i>No. Don't you think this is great?</i>   |                  |
| Customer:   | Uh, sure. I guess.  |                  |
| <i>You:</i> | _____   | 3                |
| Customer:   | Well, there was something to be said about the simplicity of the old unit.  |                  |
| <i>You:</i> | _____   | 1                |
| Customer:   | That's probably just me.  |                  |
| <i>You:</i> | _____   | 3                |
| Customer:   | Maybe a few. It seems more...difficult.   |                  |
| <i>You:</i> | _____   | 2                |
| Customer:   | Well, it's got a much thicker manual.   |                  |
| <i>You:</i> | _____   | 1, 2             |
| Customer:   | Who's got time to read all of that?   |                  |
| <i>You:</i> | _____   | 1<br>(nonverbal) |

The conversation in the exercise would continue, of course. But through your application of listening skills, you have to this point begun to draw a lot of information from the customer that might not have been provided otherwise. And you've done so in a way that has strengthened your relationship with the customer.

### **Tips for Listening: Step 1**

To show interest in the speaker, lean forward and maintain eye contact.

Allow the speaker time to elaborate.

When the speaker pauses or hesitates, use short verbal cues (“And?” “So what happened next?”) to encourage continued communication.

### **Tips for Listening: Step 2**

Questions that probe for more information should be open-ended.

(“What else was happening?”)

Questions to gather specific facts and details should be closed-ended.

(“How much is it?”) Focus the conversation with directive questions.

(“Would you say more about the timing?”)

### **Tips for Listening: Step 3**

Don’t check for understanding by repeating the speaker’s words exactly (parroting). Instead, restate what you understand in your own words.

Keep restating what you’ve understood until the speaker acknowledges that you’ve got it right.

## Selling Skills—A Deeper Look

### 3 Ask Questions

#### ***A Look Back at Selling Skills***

In *Selling Skills*, you learned that good salespeople ask lots of questions.

- Open-ended questions are those that cannot be answered by a “yes” or “no.” They usually start with **who**, **when**, **what**, **where**, or **how**. For example:

*“What are you hoping to accomplish by adding that feature?”*

- Closed-ended questions help you get specific details, or control a conversation. For example:

*“Is delivery on Tuesday OK?”*

#### ***Why So Many Questions?***

Selling takes communication. Communication is a two-way street; it's defined as an *interchange* of information. So the customer needs to talk, not just you. In fact, the more the customer talks, the better. Your job is to start and maintain the process of communication. You do so by asking a lot of questions. Questions, of course, usually have a *purpose*. They aren't just “small talk.”

- Questions are used to discover what the customer wants from you.

*“Tell me more about what happens when you try to start your engine.”*

(In this case, the question is really a statement, but it has the same effect).

Don't assume that all customers know what they want—at least not specifically. They're not all technical experts. Sometimes, they'll simply give you a vague objective, such as, *“I really wish I could be more comfortable on long trips.”*

- Questions can uncover a customer's objectives and opinions.

*“How much had you planned to spend?”*

*“What do you think of these wooden bead seat covers?”*

- Questions find out what the person's objections are. Sometimes the stated objection is the real objection, and sometimes it isn't. Either way, you can't deal with an objection until you fully understand it.

*“So if you were more comfortable with the durability of these seat covers, you'd be willing to try them?”*

- Questions can give you good clues about incremental selling opportunities.

*“How long has your battery been in service?”*



- Questions can find out where the person has concerns or questions.

*“What questions do you have?”*

- Questions can help determine the person’s ability to do a replacement job. One of your more sensitive roles is to judge the retail customer’s technical capabilities, through normal conversation. If you feel the customer is getting in “over his or her head,” you might ask some simple questions that could result in the job being transferred to your service department.

*“Have you ever replaced an injector before?”*

*“Do you have a copy of the service manual for your engine?”*

### ***The Problem/Effect/Solution Form of Questioning***

So far, we’ve looked at a number of reasons why you would ask a question. You might just need to know what the customer wants. You might want to see if there are any incremental sales opportunities with the customer.

There is a much more fundamental objective of questioning when you’re trying to sell to a customer. Here it is:

***Questions should always lead the customer to the point where he or she says, “I really need to buy that!”***

A method to accomplish this objective is called the *problem/effect/solution* form of questioning.

#### **The Problem**

These questions are meant to find the details of the issue that brought the customer to your dealership—the nature of the *problem*.

*“Under what conditions does the smoke usually appear?”*

*“How long has this symptom existed?”*

#### **The Effect**

Once you’re fully comfortable with the issue, you can begin to raise the customer’s awareness of the real effect of the issue. **These may be questions or statements.**

*“How important is fuel economy to you?”*

*“Did you know that dirty injectors could really rob you of both power and fuel economy?”*

## The Solution

When the customer has gained some sense that the issue might be bigger than he or she first imagined, you're ready with a solution. **Again, these may be questions or statements.**

*"We can run tests that will help us determine which injectors are faulty, and return your engine to peak performance."*

You can't "paint a picture" in the customer's mind of the effect of his or her problem until you know it. And if you do a good job of showing the effect, the solution you propose will seem much more reasonable to the customer.

Realistically, you won't use this form of questioning with every customer. Some will show up with very specific requests. But keep the goal in mind at all times.

The use of this technique will also provide you with a means to fulfill the remaining three elements of effective selling that will be covered later in this course.

- Presenting *features through benefits* is a natural element of the "effect" and "solution" style of questions. The "solution" shows the "benefit" of eliminating the "effect" caused by the "problem."
- *Dealing with objections* often becomes unnecessary if you have done a good job of showing how the problem really affects the customer.
- And *closing the sale*—getting the customer to commit to a buy—is the reason the technique is used in the first place.

Before we continue with these last three elements of effective selling, there will be two exercises to give you more practice with questions.

### Power Questions...

- ...are clear and concise.
- ...cause the customer to think before responding.
- ...make you seem more knowledgeable than your competitors.
- ...produce answers that lead the customer toward the sale.
- ...relate directly to the customer's objectives.
- ...cause the customer to ask you a question in return.
- ...make the customer think of something he or she has never thought of before.

### Exercise 5 – Open-Ended Questions

Open-ended questions result in full answers. Closed-ended questions result in “yes” or “no” answers. The benefit of asking open-ended questions is that you get more information.

Read each of the closed-ended questions below and convert it to a corresponding open-ended version. Remember that open-ended questions usually start with **who**, **when**, **what**, **where**, or **how**. They may also take the form of a statement, such as, “Tell me about...” Appendix 7 has some suggested responses.

| Closed-Ended Question                      | Open-Ended Version of the Question |
|--|------------------------------------|
| Do you have any questions?                 |                                    |
| Will Tuesday be all right for the work?    |                                    |
| Are you able to replace an injector?       |                                    |
| Are you going to use a credit card?        |                                    |
| Is your engine a Caterpillar?              |                                    |
| Did you buy your truck at this dealership? |                                    |
| Is the problem a faulty alternator?        |                                    |
| Are you going to do the work yourself?     |                                    |
| Do you need two of this part?              |                                    |
| Is the part number _____?                  |                                    |

**Exercise 6 – The Next Question Is...?**

For each question or statement below, decide whether it is a *Problem*, *Effect*, or *Solution* question or statement. The correct responses are shown in the footnote<sup>†</sup>.

| The Question or Statement                            | Is it...?                |                          |                          |
|--|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|
|  | Problem                  | Effect                   | Solution                 |
| How much do you spend on fuel each year?             | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Would a cleaner running engine interest you?         | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| When does it do that?                                | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Have you ever considered the cost of a spilled load? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| We guarantee our repair work.                        | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| That can lead to less time on the road.              | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Would you consider these tie downs?                  | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| How often does that happen?                          | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Tell me more about that.                             | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |

---

<sup>†</sup> E, S, P, E, S, E, S, P, P

## Selling Skills—A Deeper Look

### ④ Present Features Through Benefits

The telephone rings.

*“Hello?”*

*“Good afternoon, Sir. I’m calling you today with an unbeatable offer on an outstanding new product, Ajax Hair Coloring, and I just need a moment of your time to tell you about the fantastic features of Ajax Hair Coloring.”*

*“Uh, I’m not...”*

*“Ajax Hair Coloring is all new. It’s not yesterday’s product in a pretty new package. No sir, Ajax Hair Coloring is packed with features.”*

*“Look, this is a...”*

*“Check out these features. We’re the lowest priced hair-coloring product on the market. We have the widest selection of colors. Ajax is nonallergenic. Won’t stain clothing. It’s the closest to your natural coloration, (big breath) and... it lasts 40% longer than its competitors.”*

*“I really don’t...”*

*“Aren’t those features great?”*

*“Um, I suppose...”*

*“Are you ready to try Ajax hair coloring?”*

*“No.”*

*“Uh, no?”*

*“I’m bald.”*

### **A Look Back at Selling Skills**

Talk benefits. Always aim to describe “what’s in it for the customer.” Explain the benefits, not just features. A feature is “what it is” but a benefit is “why it fits this customer’s need.” Use your knowledge of features to personalize the benefits to the customer. A bald person won’t find any benefits in the features of the best hair coloring.

Customers are drawn to benefits because benefits make features come alive. They can feel benefits. Features are points that describe a product from the outside. Get inside. Deliver the benefits. The key is to listen, probe, and ask the right question so you know what benefit will stir their interest.

### ***Exercise 7 – Where’s the Benefit?***

The left column contains features of parts or Freightliner LLC trucks. Match each feature with its corresponding customer benefit in the right column. The correct matches are shown in Appendix 8.

| <b>Feature</b>  | <b>Benefit</b>   |
|---|--|
| _____ North American warranty on Alliance™ parts      | A Allows for largest Class 8 diesel engines                                    |
| _____ Large range of adjustment on seats              | B Replacement is possible at any Freightliner LLC dealer in the U.S. or Canada |
| _____ Magnafluxed parts                               | C Ensures top design performance   |
| _____ SmartShift (e.g., Sterling)                     | D Easy fluid checks  |
| _____ Quality standards                               | E Larger payloads  |
| _____ Long hoods (e.g., Freightliner)                 | F Good food, modern amenities  |
| _____ See-through reservoirs                          | G Restful living environment when stopped                                      |
| _____ Partnership with TravelCenters of America       | H Ensures structural integrity   |
| _____ Remanufactured parts prices                     | I Reduces driver fatigue through less frequent clutching                       |
| _____ Dyno tested parts                               | J Better fit for taller or shorter drivers                                     |
| _____ Low center of gravity (Western Star LoMax)      | K Lower cost of operation  |
| _____ Lightweight rear suspension design              | L Reduced downtime when parts are needed                                       |
| _____ Strategically placed parts distribution centers | M Long performance life  |
| _____ Noise reduction materials                       | N Improved road handling, better aerodynamics with lower loads                 |

## Selling Skills—A Deeper Look

### 5 Respond to Objections

*The salesperson patiently watched the shopper inspect the garment. She had tried it on, and was apparently not yet convinced to buy.*

*“Well, what do you think?” the salesperson finally asked.*

*“I think it’s the wrong color, too expensive, and it really doesn’t fit right. Also, I really don’t need a dress of this length. And I think I have something at home that will do just fine.”*

*“Great!” the salesperson beamed.*

*“What do you mean, great?”*

*“Well, you haven’t left yet! Let’s talk more about your concerns.”*

### A Look Back at Selling Skills

In the course *Selling Skills*, you learned two fundamentals about responding to objections. First, recognize objections as a request for more information. It’s human nature to be wary about spending money. If the buyer absolutely didn’t want the item, he or she is more likely to walk away without objecting. Objections are really buying signs. They show that the customer is considering your product but just isn’t ready to purchase, yet.

Second, practice self-management to keep your emotions in check. The objection is not about *you*. You’re not under attack. It doesn’t have to be confrontational; it’s up to you.

With that foundation, we’re ready to look at a specific process for dealing with objections, and then do some practice.

#### The Sale Starts...

...when the customer says *no*.

## A Process for Handling Objections

Handling objections effectively requires you to extract the actual objection from the customer (it's often not clearly stated) so you're able to deal with it. A six-step process can help you do that.

1. Listen carefully to the objection. Use the skills covered earlier in this course about listening. It's critical here to start to judge what the actual and unstated objection might be. Here are a few examples.

| If the stated objection is...  | It usually means that...   | And you should prepare to...  |
|--|--|---|
| ...that the price is too high  | ...the customer doesn't see enough benefit for the cost.         | ...show the value of the item—benefits to the customer that justify the cost. |
| ...that the customer needs to "think about it"                             | ...the customer fears making a bad decision.                     | ...show the customer why this decision is the correct one for him or her.     |
| ...that the customer needs to look elsewhere before deciding               | ...the customer is unsure that you are meeting his or her needs. | ...show how your product perfectly meets the needs of the customer.           |
| ...that the customer currently gets his or her parts from another supplier | ...the customer doesn't see you as an improvement.               | ...show how you are different from the other supplier.                        |
| ...that there was a bad experience with a parts supplier                   | ...the customer sees you as the same as "them."                  | ...show how you have improved or are better than other suppliers.             |

2. Acknowledge and empathize with the *stated* objection. Don't try to answer the objection, yet. First, you must alert the customer that you actually heard their concern by using a sentence of this structure:

*"What I hear you saying is..."*

*"So you're concerned about..."*

*"My understanding is that..."*

This step is *not agreement* that the objection is warranted. And it is *not sympathy*. (Sympathy is *experiencing* another's pain. Empathy is *understanding* another's pain). Showing that you understand the customer's stated objection helps the customer move to the next stage, which is a discussion of the objection.



3. Ask at least two probing questions of the customer. Your objective is to learn as much as possible about the objection, and to give yourself time to think.

*“Tell me more about your concerns.”*

*“Would you elaborate on that?”*

4. Summarize what you heard. Remember, this is a fundamental step in good listening skills. It shows the customer that you heard him or her, and helps them move to the problem solving steps. Also, you might not have gotten it exactly right, and the customer has a chance here to correct your interpretation of the objection.

Up to this point, you’ve been acknowledging and summarizing the customer’s *stated objection*. But we saw in the first step of this process that the stated objection often is a mask for the true concern. At the end of the summary, you can use a *transition statement* that now brings out your interpretation of the real objection and announces the nature of the solution. It goes like this.

*“So you’re concerned that the price is higher than you’ve found across town.”*  
(Summary)

*“And you’d feel more comfortable if I can show you value that justifies our price.”*  
(Transition statement that brings out your interpretation of the objection [see the table in Step 1 of this process], and that announces your transition to answering the objection, which is the next step.)

5. Answer the objection. In the example above, you’d talk about the added value of your product. Typically, the answer would be structured to show how your product provides superior *benefits* to the customer.
6. Confirm with the customer that your answer dealt with their objection. The objection is gone only when the customer says it’s gone.

*“Does that satisfy your concern?”*

If the answer to this question is “no,” or “yes, but...” go back and continue the process from Step 3.

**Exercise 8 – Handling Objections**

The two columns to the left show your most recent statement, and the customer's response to it. Decide what step you're at in the six-step process for handling objections, and then decide what the next step is and write a reasonable next statement in the third column. Suggested responses are in Appendix 9.

| You said...  | The customer responds...   | What do you say next? |
|--|--|-----------------------|
| <i>So shall I complete the sale?</i>   | <i>I'm not convinced that your quality justifies your price.</i>               |                       |
| <i>Does that answer your concern?</i>  | <i>Yes, but I have another.</i>  |                       |
| <i>So I hear you saying that your current parts supplier is located closer to your shop and that it's more convenient for you.</i> | <i>That's right.</i>   |                       |
| <i>And if I can show you value for your money, your concerns might be answered?</i>  | <i>I suppose.</i>  |                       |
| <i>It sounds like you've got some real worries about this part.</i>  | <i>Some, yeah.</i>   |                       |
| <i>Tell me more about what you're thinking.</i>  | <i>I came in to replace one injector. Now you're suggesting I replace six.</i> |                       |

## Selling Skills – A Deeper Look

### ⑥ Close the Sale

#### ***A Look Back at Selling Skills***

Sales don't often happen by themselves. Salespeople who otherwise perform all of the selling skills covered up to this point in this course sometimes find themselves puzzled that they didn't get the sale. That's usually because they didn't *ask for it*. Asking for the sale is called *closing the sale*.

*Selling Skills* mentioned three aspects of the close:

- A close, or decision to buy, is often the natural result of good sales techniques. If you ask effective questions, show the benefits of the product to the customer, and effectively counter objections that may be raised, barriers to a buying decision are usually removed.
- That said, asking for the sale is still necessary. It's just easier if the process has properly led to that point.
- A close should only be made when the customer has given a *buying cue*—a behavior that signals his or her willingness to finalize the purchase. Several buying cues were shown in the *Selling Skills* course. This course will suggest others.

#### ***Good Sales Techniques***

Most people have reasonable concerns about making poor decisions. That's why the decision to buy can be difficult. They will ask themselves questions like, "*Is this a quality product? Will it be reliable? Does it do what I hope it will do? Have I looked at enough other alternatives? Does it look OK to me? Does the price reflect value? Do I recognize this brand?*" These questions all reduce to "*If I buy this, will I have done the right thing?*"

Good sales techniques answer these questions before the decision to buy is reached. Discovering the exact needs of the customer tells you what the customer hopes the product will do, and often some of the customer's concerns. Questions give you the information you need to show the *benefits* of the product to the customer, not just its features. Questions can also draw out objections – and you've seen that objections are an opportunity for you.

Good sales techniques should cause the customer to display one or more *buying cues*.

## ***Buying Cues***

Think of a time when something like this may have happened to you. You're shopping for a gift for someone special in your life, and you're having a hard time finding just the right thing. You're standing at a counter in a department store, and you've asked to see a product. While examining it, you're asking yourself, "*Will he (or she) like this? Is it the right color? Does he (or she) already have something like this?*"

You look up at the salesperson behind the counter, who says to you, "*Shall I wrap it for you?*"

How do you feel at that moment?

If you're like most people, you feel rushed, as if the salesperson is getting impatient with you. And you're likely to say something like, "*I think I'm going to keep looking around,*" and walk away from the sale.

In this case, the salesperson's closing question ("*Shall I wrap it for you?*") was premature; there had been no buying cue from you.

Contrast the last scene with another.

You're standing at a counter in a department store, and you've asked to see a product. While examining it, you're saying to yourself, "*I think he (or she) will like this. It's the right color. And I'm pretty sure he (or she) doesn't already have something like this.*"

You look up at the salesperson, and ask, "*Do you take Visa?*"

"*Yes, we do. Shall I wrap it for you?*"

It is the same closing question, but delivered *after* you've provided a very obvious buying cue—asking about a payment option. And now this scene sounds perfectly natural.

Here are some typical buying cues.

- Requests for a reference
- Questions about other satisfied customers
- Questions about quality (not challenges to the quality of your products)
- A request that you repeat something
- Questions about the operation of a product
- Questions about price or terms (not challenges of price or terms)
- Questions about delivery details
- Requests for more information about your company and other products/services
- Questions about the qualifications of support staff
- Questions about warranty
- Questions about features or options
- Requests to see a sample
- Any *buying noise*, such as "Oh, I didn't know that!" or "That's really interesting!"

### **Buying Cues**

Buying cues are the link between your conversation with the customer and the customer's agreement to buy.

Miss a buying cue and lose a sale.

## ***Closing the Sale***

One example of a close was used on the previous page—the salesperson asking, “if it should be wrapped.” There are thousands of ways to close a sale. The method you choose depends on the conversation you’ve had with the customer. But they all have one thing in common.

*A close is a question, the answer to which confirms the sale.*

Let the buyer decide, but try to not give the buyer the choice of “no” as an answer to your question. (So you shouldn’t ask, “*Would you like to buy this?*”)

Typical closing questions for consumer products in a retail environment are:

- Would you like to take this now or have it delivered?
- Which color would you like?
- How will you be paying for the item?
- When would be a convenient time for delivery?
- How many will you need?

Finally, be confident. Allow silence while the buyer makes his or her final decision.

## Incremental Sales

As you're closing your sale, new opportunities arise for *incremental* sales, the inclusion of additional products that are often related to the item being sold, but that the customer hadn't intended to buy. Effective salespeople always look for incremental sales opportunities.

Incremental sales come from two sources:

1. The incremental item may be related to the item being purchased. If a person is buying hot dogs, hot dog buns are an obvious related incremental sale (and maybe mustard, relish, an onion, a knife to cut the onion, paper plates, plastic utensils, potato salad, charcoal, charcoal starter fluid, soft drinks, mosquito repellent, a baseball scorecard—the list is almost endless). This course can't give you all the options that you will have for incremental sales; your knowledge about the products you sell and their applications make you the best person to decide what additional sales to suggest to the customer.
2. The customer may unwittingly "tell you" through words or behaviors what he or she might consider if you were to present an option. For example, a customer who is buying the Sunday paper at a corner convenience store, and who is wheezing, sneezing, and blowing his nose, might react positively to a recommendation for a product that relieves cold symptoms. These opportunities arise at the parts counter through careful listening to the customer, and interpretation "between the lines."

Remember, you have more to sell than "parts." Don't miss an opportunity to sell service or any other product or service available at your dealership.

### Exercise 9 – Incremental Sales

For each product in the first section, suggest at least two related incremental sales items. Then, for each customer comment in the second section, suggest at least one item that might deal with the issue. Remember, there are no “right answers,” so get creative. Some possible responses are listed in Appendix 10.

#### Product-Related Incremental Sales

|                       |  |
|-----------------------|--|
| Brakes                |  |
| Filters               |  |
| Muffler               |  |
| Air Compressor        |  |
| A/C Compressor        |  |
| Radiator              |  |
| Alternator            |  |
| Wheel Seal            |  |
| Fifth Wheel Top Plate |  |

#### Customer Comment Incremental Sales

|   |  |
|---|--|
| <i>I saw a load shift on a flatbed similar to mine the other day. That's one of my nightmares.</i>                |  |
| <i>I saw this great rig on the turnpike—lights and chrome everywhere!</i>   |  |
| <i>At the end of a day on the road, I can barely feel my legs anymore.</i>  |  |
| <i>I'm not looking forward to filling my tanks again. It seems like I'm doing that a lot more than I used to.</i> |  |
| <i>I actually got pulled over the other day. The ticket was for smoky exhaust. Can you imagine?</i>               |  |

## Summary

Anyone can sell effectively. It's not an art, nor is someone born with the skill. It just takes dedication to learn the basics, then apply them, and continue to learn more.

Selling has become more complex in some ways, but also more rewarding. Complex in that consumers are much more savvy, with access to more and more information about the products that you sell, and access to more places where they can buy them. They often know a great deal about the products you sell when they enter your dealership.

Selling can be rewarding, though, because you are in a position to apply your knowledge of the products you sell, and show how they benefit the stated needs of the customer. All you have to do is find out what those needs are and then match the benefits to them. Done well, it's a lot of fun.

Good selling skills come from the application of the six-step basic selling process of this course.

- Acknowledge the customer.
- Listen.
- Ask questions.
- Present features through benefits.
- Respond to objections.
- Close the sale.

The outcome of good selling skills is higher revenues through more sales. But it's more than that. Earning the loyalty, trust, and confidence of your customers, so that they will return time after time, ensures the ongoing health and growth of your business.



# Appendices

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## Appendix 1 – Suggested Answers for Exercise 1

1. How did Joe *acknowledge* the customer? How did he determine the customer's probable behavioral style and adjust his approach to it?

*"I'll be with you within a minute, sir." ...Joe saw that the customer who had just walked up to the parts counter seemed to be in a hurry. He was frowning and drumming his fingers on the countertop.*

*"He's one of those 'drivers.' Let's see, 'drivers' get to the point—make decisions quickly. I need to move fast and stick just to business."*

2. What did Joe do to *listen* to the customer? How did he show the customer that he was listening?

*"Uh huh." Joe nodded and kept his eyes on the customer. From time to time he nodded.*

3. What *open-ended questions* did Joe ask to ensure he knew exactly what the customer wanted?

*"What do you drive, and what engine is in it?"*

4. How did Joe present the *benefits* of the part being discussed, in an effort to convince the customer to buy?

*"... I would suggest an Alliance remanufactured alternator. Unlike the part you mentioned across town, it has a one-year unlimited mileage warranty."*

5. How did he respond to the customer's *objection*?

*"Any price difference is really offset by the quality and availability of the parts. They keep you on the road, not in the shop. You won't get that across town, either. And if you need help, you can go to any Freightliner, Sterling, or Western Star dealer in North America. For example, you're here, but you probably didn't buy your truck here."*

6. What did Joe do to *close* the sale?

*"Let's find out more about your alternator mount..."*

7. What *incremental selling* did Joe attempt in this example?

*"And I'd like to ask you about your belt tension, your battery cables, and the age of your battery. Sometimes it's a good idea to replace it when you install a new alternator."*

## Appendix 2 – Other Elements of Behavioral Styles

|                                  | <b>Amiable</b>                       | <b>Analytical</b>                         | <b>Expressive</b>                              | <b>Driver</b>                        |
|----------------------------------|--------------------------------------|---|--|--------------------------------------|
| <b>Openness:</b>                 | Open                                 | Self-contained                            | Open   | Self-contained                       |
| <b>Directness:</b>               | Indirect                             | Indirect                                  | Direct   | Direct                               |
| <b>Theme:</b>                    | Steadiness                           | Compliance                                | Influencing others                             | Dominance                            |
| <b>Appearance:</b>               | Casual, conforming                   | Formal, conservative                      | Fashionable, stylish                           | Businesslike, functional             |
| <b>Pace:</b>                     | Slow and easy                        | Slow and systematic                       | Fast and spontaneous                           | Fast and decisive                    |
| <b>Priority:</b>                 | Maintain relationships               | The task, the process                     | Relationships, interacting                     | The task, the result                 |
| <b>Fear of:</b>                  | Confrontation                        | Embarrassment                             | Loss of prestige                               | Loss of control                      |
| <b>Behavior under tension:</b>   | Submits, acquiesces                  | Withdraws, avoids                         | Attacks, is sarcastic                          | Dictates, asserts                    |
| <b>Seeks:</b>                    | Attention                            | Accuracy                                  | Recognition                                    | Productivity                         |
| <b>Needs to know:</b>            | How it affects him or her personally | How to justify the purchase; how it works | How it enhances their status; who else uses it | What it does; by when; what it costs |
| <b>Gains security by:</b>        | Close relationships                  | Preparation                               | Flexibility                                    | Control                              |
| <b>Wants to maintain:</b>        | Relationships                        | Credibility                               | Status   | Success                              |
| <b>You should support their:</b> | Feelings                             | Thoughts                                  | Ideas  | Goals                                |
| <b>Achieves acceptance by:</b>   | Conforming                           | Being correct                             | Stimulating, playing                           | Leading                              |
| <b>Likes you to be:</b>          | Pleasant                             | Precise                                   | Stimulating                                    | To the point                         |
| <b>Irritated by:</b>             | Insensitivity                        | Surprises                                 | Boredom  | Inefficiency                         |
| <b>Decisions are:</b>            | Considered                           | Deliberate                                | Spontaneous                                    | Decisive                             |

## Appendix 3 – Sample Responses for Exercise 2

| Customer Conversation   | Probable Style  | Your Analysis and Approach   |
|---|---|--|
| <p>“I can get that part for you next week.”</p> <p>“What day would it arrive?”</p> <p>“I’m pretty sure by Wednesday.”</p> <p>“Could it be here earlier?”</p> <p>“Well, it might. I can’t tell you for sure.”</p> <p>“Tuesday before 2 p.m. would be better.”</p> <p>“I can’t guarantee Tuesday.”</p> <p>“Here’s why I need it on Tuesday...”</p>  | <p>___ Amiable</p> <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <b>Analytical</b></p> <p>___ Expressive</p> <p>___ Driver</p> | <p>This <i>analytical</i> customer is asking detailed questions, and is beginning to provide details that don’t even matter.</p> <p>Provide a logical explanation of the delivery system and show why the scheduling is what it is. Be as precise as possible. Say, “It sounds like Tuesday is really important to you,” and acknowledge that the customer’s reasoning is credible.</p>  |
| <p>“I can get that part for you next week.”</p> <p>“I need it Tuesday.”</p> <p>“I can’t guarantee Tuesday.”</p> <p>“Well, that’s when I need it.”</p>   | <p>___ Amiable</p> <p>___ Analytical</p> <p>___ Expressive</p> <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <b>Driver</b></p> | <p>This <i>driver</i> customer is interested only in the results he wants, and under tension will dictate his expectations.</p> <p>Don’t get into an argument about why Tuesday is impossible, or try to control the customer. Quickly identify alternatives if they are available (FedEx, for example). If there are none, state so directly, and keep the customer in control by asking him what he wishes to do.</p>  |
| <p>“I can get that part for you next week.”</p> <p>“That’s great. Glad to hear it. You must get a lot of parts through here.”</p> <p>“Wednesday is a big day. That’s when most orders arrive.”</p> <p>“Wednesday. Hmmm. You know, I’m going to be away on Wednesday. Fishing. What do think about Tuesday?”</p> <p>“I can’t guarantee Tuesday.”</p> <p>“Well, you can only do what you can do. Is there anything I can do to help?”</p> | <p>___ Amiable</p> <p>___ Analytical</p> <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <b>Expressive</b></p> <p>___ Driver</p> | <p>This <i>expressive</i> customer knows what he wants, but tries to get it through the relationship, by influencing you. He is usually chatty and cooperative. He might be spontaneous.</p> <p>Don’t be lulled into thinking that the Expressive customer’s cooperation means that he will accept anything you offer. Thank the customer for his cooperation. Then, look for ways that you can provide superior service to him. Let him feel that he has status with you.</p> |
| <p>“I can get that part for you next week.”</p> <p>“Wednesday?”</p> <p>“Does that meet your needs?”</p> <p>“Well, uh, I suppose... I mean, it’s OK but it’s not the best. But I guess it’s OK.”</p> <p>“Shall I place the order?”</p> <p>“I don’t know.”</p>  | <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <b>Amiable</b></p> <p>___ Analytical</p> <p>___ Expressive</p> <p>___ Driver</p> | <p><i>Amiable</i> customers are casual, relaxed, and conforming people. They fear confrontation and are likely to submit to your proposal to maintain the relationship.</p> <p>Let this customer talk through his concerns about the delivery of the part. Don’t rush him. Offer assistance with a smile.</p>  |

## Appendix 4 – Language Preference Phrases

### ***Visual Phrases***

|                         |                      |
|-------------------------|----------------------|
| Look at this            | Visualize the idea   |
| See it                  | Picture the scenario |
| Watch this              | Observe that         |
| Illustrate my point     | Show me              |
| Envision the following  | Draw conclusions     |
| Shed light on the issue | Look into it         |

### ***Auditory Phrases***

|                      |                    |
|----------------------|--------------------|
| Sounds good          | I hear you         |
| Let's talk about it  | Call me            |
| Let me tell you      | Loud and clear     |
| I'm in tune with you | Voice your opinion |
| We're in harmony     | It rings true      |
| Amplify that point   | Chime in           |

### ***Intuitive/Feeling Phrases***

|                     |                   |
|---------------------|-------------------|
| Get a feel for      | Kick it upstairs  |
| Point it out        | Toss this around  |
| I'm not comfortable | A concrete idea   |
| Go for it           | What's the impact |
| Manipulate the data | A solid base      |
| Tough to deal with  | Make a connection |

## Appendix 5 – Sample Responses for Exercise 3

| The Sentence  | Visual Style   | Auditory Style   | Feeling Style   |
|---|--|--|---|
| It's a good idea, but it needs some changing.             | <i>I like the way this looks, but let's try to polish it up a bit more.</i>                  | <i>I like the sound of it, but let's talk it over a bit more.</i>  | <i>It feels OK, but let's iron out a few wrinkles.</i>  |
| Do you get my point?                                      | <i>Can you see what I'm saying?</i>  | <i>Do you hear what I'm saying?</i>  | <i>Are you catching this? Do you feel my concern?</i>   |
| We have a great product that will help your productivity. | <i>I'm going to show you a product that will help you get closer to the vision you have.</i> | <i>People tell us we have a great product. It gets people to sing from the same page. Want to talk about it?</i> | <i>Our product raises the bar on productivity. It will knock you over.</i>                              |
| This part has a one-year unlimited mileage warranty.      | <i>Let me show you the warranty on this part. It's one year with unlimited mileage.</i>      | <i>Let me tell you about the warranty on this part. It's one year with unlimited mileage.</i>                    | <i>You're going to feel good about the warranty on this part. It's one year with unlimited mileage.</i> |

## Appendix 6 – Suggested Responses for Exercise 4

| Speaker   | Conversation and Activity   | Use Step         |
|-----------|---|------------------|
| You:      | <i>This new test equipment is really great. You can set all these parameters. It will do a lot of new things we couldn't do before.</i> |                  |
| Customer: | Uh, huh. Looks interesting.   |                  |
| You:      | <i>You can print out the results, and even log them in the memory of a computer that you can attach through this port.</i>              |                  |
| Customer: | Uh, the old testing unit? You don't have that model any more?   |                  |
| You:      | <i>That's right. We're phasing it out.</i>  |                  |
| Customer: | I see.  |                  |
| You:      | <i>This one is intuitive. You don't even need an instruction manual.</i>  |                  |
| Customer: | Yeah, it's very impressive. So you're not making the old unit anymore?  |                  |
| You:      | <i>No. Don't you think this is great?</i>   |                  |
| Customer: | Uh, sure. I guess.  |                  |
| You:      | <b><u>You don't sound totally sure.</u></b>   | 3                |
| Customer: | Well, there was something to be said about the simplicity of the old unit.  |                  |
| You:      | <b><u>Mmm-hmm.</u></b>  | 1                |
| Customer: | That's probably just me.  |                  |
| You:      | <b><u>Sounds like you have some concerns.</u></b>   | 3                |
| Customer: | Maybe a few. It seems more...difficult.   |                  |
| You:      | <b><u>What do you think makes this one more difficult to use?</u></b>   | 2                |
| Customer: | Well, it's got a much thicker manual.   |                  |
| You:      | <b><u>OK, that's interesting. What concerns you about that?</u></b>   | 1, 2             |
| Customer: | Who's got time to read all of that?   |                  |
| You:      | <b><u>[Nod]</u></b>   | 1<br>(nonverbal) |

## Appendix 7 – Suggested Responses for Exercise 5

| Closed-Ended Question                      | Open-Ended Version of the Question  |
|--|---|
| Do you have any questions?                 | <i>What questions do you have?</i>  |
| Will Tuesday be all right for the work?    | <i>When would you like the work done?</i>                                   |
| Are you able to replace an injector?       | <i>What experience do you have with injector replacement?</i>               |
| Are you going to use a credit card?        | <i>What form of payment will you be using?</i>                              |
| Is your engine a Caterpillar?              | <i>What engine is in your truck?</i>  |
| Did you buy your truck at this dealership? | <i>Where did you buy your truck?</i>  |
| Is the problem a faulty alternator?        | <i>What do you see as the problem?</i><br><i>Tell me about the problem.</i> |
| Are you going to do the work yourself?     | <i>Who's going to do the work?</i>  |
| Do you need two of this part?              | <i>How many of this part do you need?</i>                                   |
| Is the part number _____?                  | <i>What is the part number?</i>   |



## Appendix 8 – Correct Answers for Exercise 7

| Feature  | Benefit  |
|--|--|
| <u>B</u> Nationwide warranty on Alliance parts           | A Allows for largest Class 8 diesel engines                    |
| <u>J</u> Large range of adjustment on seats              | B Replacement is possible at any Freightliner LLC dealer       |
| <u>H</u> Magnafluxed parts                               | C Ensures top design performance                               |
| <u>I</u> SmartShift™ (e.g., Sterling)                    | D Easy fluid checks  |
| <u>M</u> Quality standards                               | E Larger payloads  |
| <u>A</u> Long hoods (e.g., Freightliner)                 | F Good food, modern amenities                                  |
| <u>D</u> See-through reservoirs                          | G Restful living environment when stopped                      |
| <u>F</u> Partnership with TravelCenters of America       | H Ensured structural integrity                                 |
| <u>K</u> Remanufactured parts prices                     | I Reduces driver fatigue through less frequent clutching       |
| <u>C</u> Dyno tested parts                               | J Better fit for taller or shorter drivers                     |
| <u>N</u> Low center of gravity (Western Star LoMax)™     | K Lower cost of operation                                      |
| <u>E</u> Lightweight rear suspension design              | L Reduced downtime when parts are needed                       |
| <u>L</u> Strategically placed parts distribution centers | M Long performance life  |
| <u>G</u> Noise reduction materials                       | N Improved road handling, better aerodynamics with lower loads |

## Appendix 9 – Suggested Responses for Exercise 8

| You had said...  | The customer responds...   | What do you say next?   |
|--|--|---|
| <i>So shall I complete the sale?</i>   | <i>I'm not convinced that your quality justifies your price.</i>               | Step 2 – Empathize.<br><i>I understand that you have concerns about price.</i>  |
| <i>Does that answer your concern?</i>  | <i>Yes, but I have another.</i>  | Step 3 – Ask questions.<br><i>Tell me about it.</i>   |
| <i>So I hear you saying that your current parts supplier is located closer to your shop and that it's more convenient for you.</i> | <i>That's right.</i>   | Step 4 – Summarize, use a transition statement.<br><i>So if I can show you advantages of doing business with us, you'd feel better?</i> |
| <i>And if I can show you value for your money, your concerns might be answered?</i>  | <i>I suppose.</i>  | Step 5 – Answer.<br><i>Alliance parts have a one-year, unlimited mileage warranty that...</i>   |
| <i>It sounds like you've got some real worries about this part.</i>  | <i>Some, yeah.</i>   | Step 3 – Ask questions.<br><i>Tell me more about what you're thinking.</i>  |
| <i>Tell me more about what you're thinking.</i>  | <i>I came in to replace one injector. Now you're suggesting I replace six.</i> | Step 4 – Summarize.<br><i>So you're concerned that the cost has escalated beyond what you had anticipated.</i>                          |

## Appendix 10 – Possible Responses for Exercise 9

The responses listed below are just examples. You probably thought of other excellent examples.

### Product-Related Incremental Sales

|                       |  |
|-----------------------|--|
| Brakes                | Drums, wheel seals and bearings, slack adjusters, brake cams, bushing kits, wheel studs and nuts |
| Filters               | Oil and grease, grease gun, oil analysis kit   |
| Muffler               | Clamps, cab insulators, exhaust shields  |
| Air Compressor        | Filter, air lines, coolant line  |
| A/C Compressor        | Receiver/dryer, R134a  |
| Radiator              | Radiator mounts, hoses, anti-freeze, water pump  |
| Alternator            | Belt tensioner assembly, cables, belts, pulleys  |
| Wheel Seal            | Inner and outer wheel nuts, seals, lubricants  |
| Fifth Wheel Top Plate | Mounting bushings, release pin, fifth wheel grease   |

### Customer Comment Incremental Sales

|   |                                |
|---|--------------------------------|
| <i>I saw a load shift on a flatbed similar to mine the other day. That's one of my nightmares.</i>                | Load control equipment         |
| <i>I saw this great rig on the turnpike—lights and chrome everywhere!</i>   | Chrome or lighting accessories |
| <i>At the end of a day on the road, I can barely feel my legs anymore.</i>  | Seat covers that “breathe”     |
| <i>I'm not looking forward to filling my tanks again. It seems like I'm doing that a lot more than I used to.</i> | Tune-up                        |
| <i>I actually got pulled over the other day. The ticket was for smoky exhaust. Can you imagine?</i>               | Service                        |

## Certification Questions

1. Which of the following is a reasonable incremental sale item if an alternator was the primary purchase?
  - a. Belts
  - b. Exhaust shield
  - c. Wheel nuts
  - d. Filters
  
2. Which behavioral style is being displayed by a person who wants to be liked and avoids confrontation?
  - a. Amiable
  - b. Expressive
  - c. Analytical
  - d. Driver
  
3. What is the purpose of open-ended questions?
  - a. To get a person to stop talking
  - b. To gather specific facts
  - c. To focus the conversation
  - d. To probe for more information
  
4. Which of the following is **NOT** an appropriate business reason to ask a question?
  - a. To discover what the customer wants
  - b. To uncover a customer's opinions
  - c. To find incremental selling opportunities
  - d. To engage in "small talk"
  
5. What are the first three steps of handling objections, in the correct order?
  - a. Acknowledge and empathize, listen, ask probing questions
  - b. Listen, acknowledge and empathize, ask probing questions
  - c. Acknowledge and empathize, ask probing questions, listen
  - d. Ask probing questions, listen, acknowledge and empathize
  
6. What are the two objectives of good listening?
  - a. Intuition and information
  - b. Instruction and information
  - c. Information and involvement
  - d. Intuition and instruction

7. What is an incremental sales opportunity?
  - a. Making unplanned related sales
  - b. Making planned unrelated sales
  - c. Making future sales
  - d. Making a sale in smaller increments
8. What is a potential benefit of the feature of strategically placed parts distribution centers?
  - a. Replacement at any Freightliner LLC dealership
  - b. Easy fluid checks
  - c. Ensured structural integrity
  - d. Reduced downtime when parts are needed
9. How should you check for understanding when you are listening effectively?
  - a. Parrot the speaker's words exactly
  - b. Restate in your words what you heard
  - c. Nod and say things like "uh huh"
  - d. Ask additional questions
10. Which behavioral style is being displayed by a person who is friendly and comfortable around people?
  - a. Amiable
  - b. Expressive
  - c. Analytical
  - d. Driver
11. Which of the following is **NOT** a *buying cue*?
  - a. A question about delivery details
  - b. A question about payment options
  - c. A question about warranty
  - d. A question about store hours
12. What should you view customer objections as?
  - a. A confirmation that they won't buy
  - b. A statement that the price is too high
  - c. A request for more information
  - d. A request for a price reduction

13. How does a person who has the “*driver*” behavioral style tend to view *pace* and *priority*?
- Slow pace, priority on the relationship
  - Slow pace, priority on the task
  - Fast pace, priority on the relationship
  - Fast pace, priority on the task
14. Which of the following is an example of a “*solution*” question?
- Would a cleaner running engine interest you?
  - When does it do that?
  - Have you considered the cost of a spilled load?
  - How much do you spend on fuel each year?
15. What is *closing the sale*?
- Looking for a buying cue
  - Wrapping the product
  - Asking for the sale
  - Accepting a credit card
16. In what terms is a person who says, “*I see what you mean,*” thinking?
- Auditory
  - Feeling/Intuition
  - Visual
  - Digital
17. What are the three steps to effective listening, in the correct order?
- Show interest, ask questions, demonstrate understanding
  - Ask questions, show interest, demonstrate understanding
  - Show interest, demonstrate understanding, ask questions
  - Demonstrate understanding, show interest, ask questions
18. According to many successful salespeople, when does “*the sale start*”?
- When the customer says “no”
  - When the customer says “yes”
  - When the customer gives a buying cue
  - When the customer pays for the purchase
19. When a person says, “*I can handle that,*” in what terms are they thinking?
- Auditory
  - Feeling/Intuition
  - Visual
  - Digital

20. Which of the following questions is *open-ended*?
- a. What are you trying to accomplish here?
  - b. Will we close earlier today?
  - c. What time is lunch?
  - d. Will you be taking vacation time next week?
21. What is the *ultimate* goal of questioning a customer?
- a. To show how much you know about the issue
  - b. To get them to want to buy
  - c. To show them they need to learn more
  - d. To build rapport with the customer
22. What does it usually mean when a customer objects that he or she has had a bad experience elsewhere?
- a. Customer doesn't see benefits of your product
  - b. Customer doesn't view you better than his or her current supplier
  - c. Customer is unsure that you are fully meeting his or her needs
  - d. Customer views you as the same as everyone else
23. Which of the following is an example of a *"problem"* question?
- a. Would a cleaner running engine interest you?
  - b. When does it do that?
  - c. Have you considered the cost of a spilled load?
  - d. How much do you spend on fuel each year?
24. What does it usually mean when a customer needs to *look elsewhere* before buying?
- a. Customer doesn't see benefits of your product
  - b. Customer doesn't view you better than his or her current supplier
  - c. Customer is unsure that you are fully meeting his or her needs
  - d. Customer views you as the same as everyone else
25. What is a potential benefit of the feature of magnafluxed parts?
- a. Replacement at any Freightliner LLC dealership
  - b. Easy fluid checks
  - c. Ensures structural integrity
  - d. Reduced downtime when parts are needed