

Jeb Blount



Closing Lines

Secret to closing a sale can be summed up in one word

It doesn't matter where I go or what I do, I can't get away from salespeople who quiz me about closing techniques, and sales managers who beg me to teach them how to get their salespeople to close, while complaining that this rep or that rep "is not a closer."

I do my best to avoid these conversations because philosophically I believe that closing is a process that depends on excellence throughout the entire sales process rather than a point in time where a manipulative line or tactic gets the prospect to say yes.

I understand their queries, though, because if you're in sales you're looking for the edge that will help you close more deals.

Unfortunately, most people want the easy way out so they spend their time looking for shortcuts and silver bullets that will miraculously deliver huge commission checks. This is why so many of the questions I get begin with: "What's the trick..." or "Can you tell me the secret...."

Sadly, salespeople seek closing techniques in the same vein that golfers pursue the perfect putter.

From superstitions (I'll admit that there was even a time when I would wear my special closing tie on sales

calls) to an endless stream of cheesy scripts, there seems to be no end to the "experts" who are quick to claim that they can lift away the mystery to "closing the deal every time." It's why so many salespeople have been duped into buying into seminars and sales systems that promise to deliver the secrets that will deliver them into the Promised Land of closing.

Here is the brutal truth: All of those so called "experts" are wrong.

On your quest to find the holy grail of sales, there is only one closing technique that really works and for the first time I'm going to share this secret with you. Get your note pad and pen ready. Here it is.

The silver bullet, the sacred secret, the mystery revealed, the magic closing pill is:

Ask.

That's it. The only closing technique that really works. Just ask for:

- the appointment
- the next step
- the decision maker
- the business
- what you want

The fact is, if you are having a hard time getting the next appointment, getting to decision makers, getting information from your prospect, or closing the deal, nine out of 10 times it is because you are not asking.

Why? Because nine out of 10 times you are afraid to hear "no."

Rather than admitting fear and working to overcome it, salespeople too often blame their failure to close on everything else. They blame the product, the engineers, the stupid customers, the company, economy, boss and bad luck.



Instead of owning up to their shortcoming they look for secrets, tricks, silver bullets, and turn to cheesy closing scripts that make them and their prospect feel even worse. And they wait in line after my keynotes to ask me to whisper into their ear the one technique that will close them all.

Instead of facing their fear of "no" and asking anyway, they hide behind justifications like not wanting to "seem too pushy" or it's just bad timing.

Along the way their self-esteem deteriorates, belief in self suffers, confidence falls to the floor and, ultimately, they either fail to reach their true potential or end up carrying a box, with the stuff from their desk in it, to their car on the way to the unemployment line.

Getting past the fear of "no" isn't easy. The first step is to at least acknowledge that your fear is real. I've been selling

my entire life and have been incredibly successful at it, yet today I still have to remind myself, from time to time, that "no" won't kill me.

Once you admit that you fear "no," you can then begin to pay attention to your behavior in front of prospects and customers. Start by learning to anticipate the anxiety that comes right before asking for anything you want. Then practice overcoming your fear by doing it anyway. You see, courage is like a muscle. It grows stronger when exercised.

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Jeb Blount is the founder of Sales Gravy in Thomson. He helps sales teams across the globe reach peak performance fast through keynote speeches, boot camps, seminars, and on-site and online training experiences. Hire Jeb to speak at your next sales meeting or conference. Call at 1-888-360-2249 or visit Jeb-Blount.com for more information.

Marin Rose



Habit Forming

Create good habits for yourself and team to support your goals

There are a lot of misconceptions about habits. The notion that there's a magic period of time after which actions become habits, for instance, is wrong.

Changing old habits and forming new ones is hard and can take awhile to establish. But there's no question that developing those good habits is well worth the effort – as long as they're applied to the proper tasks.

On both the individual employee level and team-wide, common business problems arise when habit is applied in the wrong places. Habit works great when it comes to daily tactics.

For team managers, this means regularly checking in with employees, treating customers consistently and automating systems for activities like communications and product delivery. Efficient habits that are internalized team-wide result in excellence, efficiency and productivity.

For individuals, habitually archiving emails, tidying up at the end of each day and preparing for meetings ahead of time all lead to better organization at

work, which translates into better performance and a more satisfying work life.

Where can you put habits in to place so you and your colleagues are not constantly re-inventing the wheel or catching up on work that has piled up and become overwhelming?

Unfortunately, even as the benefits of habit are overlooked when it comes to repetitive tasks, the downside of habit is often ignored when it comes to high-level strategy. High-level strategy is often based upon long-time ingrained practice – habit – when it should actually be developed thoughtfully and intentionally. When it comes to major themes, rather than unthinkingly accepting the status quo, sit back and question your mission and methods.

Whether it's your overall business strategy or your individual career goals, stop relying on automatic thinking. For

success in business and in life, make conscious choices about where you want to go. Then form healthy daily habits to support those goals.

Free Document Shredding Taxes are done. Now what to do with that mass of old, unneeded documents? Take advantage of free, unlimited, on-site shredding courtesy of Libra Organizing. Saturday, May 2, 8-11 a.m. at The Cleveland Group, CPAs, parking lot on Davis Road. Shredding and recycling provided by Augusta Data Storage, Inc. Stop by Marin's table for free refreshments and organizing tips.

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Professional Organizing Coach Marin Rose of Libra Organizing is celebrating five years organizing people's spaces and lives to help them become happier and more productive – and less stressed. Contact Marin at libraorganizing.com to schedule a free organizing assessment in your home or office, or to hire her as a speaker.