

Steps to closing the deal [checklist]

Closing the deal is the most important part of a sale.

It doesn't matter if you conduct an amazing discovery, deliver a fantastic presentation, and go through all the hard work if you don't manage to get the prospect to sign the dotted line and seal the deal after everything is said and done.

While you can learn from your mistakes if you don't close a deal, it's even better if you don't make those mistakes in the first place!

PMA has created this checklist for you to keep in mind when you're approaching those critically important final moments, giving you the best chance of successfully closing the deal and bringing home the bacon.

The list isn't definitive, but it should help you start hearing more 'yes' responses from your prospects!

Step 1

Ensure a **smooth transition** from presentation to close. Don't change your attitude just because you're now in "close mode".

If you've been friendly and chatty with the prospect all the way to this point, keep that up! If you've maintained a business-like demeanor, stick with it.

A consistent approach is less likely to confuse or throw a prospect off.

Step 2

Remain **confident**. Often salespeople may get nervous when asking for a sale, or be too scared to ask for a sale at all. The truth is, the more confident you are in yourself, the more a prospect will be likely to say yes.

Confidence radiates, and if you have a confident aura a prospect will sense that and will be more likely to trust you.

Step 3

Lots of **small yeses lead to a big yes** in the end. Research has shown that people are more likely to say 'yes' and commit to something big (like a deal), if they've said 'yes' to smaller things beforehand.

Use this knowledge to help you close! Throughout the process, ask the prospect questions that tee up these smaller yeses. For example, ask '*are you frustrated by X?*', or '*do you wish doing Y was easier?*'.

The cumulative effect of this will help you get that final, oh-so-important **yes** to close the deal.

Step 4

When you close, shift from highlighting features, to **highlighting/emphasizing benefits**. While this sounds similar, there is a difference. A feature is simply a thing your product/service does. A benefit is *how that feature helps your prospect*, and that's twice as important.

Your prospect might not be totally sold on a feature that you've said uses '*X technology to calculate Y*'.

But if you explain that '*using this feature, you can increase productivity by 20%*', all of a sudden the prospect is more likely to sign on to take advantage of the benefit the feature brings.

Step 5

Reveal any volume discounts (or similar bonuses, add-ons) before a pricing objection. The reason for this is: if you bring up a discount or bonus only after a pricing dispute, the prospect will think '*hey, why wasn't this being offered to me from the start?*'.

Pricing is often the final hurdle, so avoid creating friction right at the end!

If you have any such bonuses, revealing them as a deal-sweetener during close, rather than as a deal-saver will win you the trust and respect of the prospect.

Step 6

Frame your ask in a positive way. You don't want to intimidate your prospect and ask them if they're *'ready to spend X amount of dollars?'* or if they *'want to buy now?'*.

That's too blunt and frames the closing of the deal as a negative thing, in which the prospect will lose money.

When you're ready to finalize, prompt your prospect in a way that suggests they'll be *gaining something* from saying yes. Phrases like *'are you ready to start your journey with us?'*, *'are you ready to join the team?'*, or *'all you need to do is sign and we're ready to start working together'* all create a sense of optimism and excitement in your prospect and will have them saying yes more often.

Step 7

After you ask, be quiet! This is where many a salesperson has snatched defeat from the jaws of victory.

Once you've asked a prospect to accept the offer (and framed it positively), don't say anything. Even if the silence feels awkward, provide the prospect with all the time they need to think it over.

Interrupting the silence to start pitching to them 5 seconds again just after you've asked them to sign off, you'll take the pressure of making the decision away. Ask, and let the prospect respond, regardless of how long it takes them.