

LEGACY *Safeguard*[®]



A Guide to Selling Final Expense Life Insurance

AGENT USE ONLY

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Talk about Solving Problems – Not Life Insurance

Life insurance is a problem-solver, **if** the person with the problem is aware that they have a problem. Almost everyone has certain fundamental problems for which the life insurance we sell is the best solution.

Most people are unaware that their loved ones may have had financial problems after death. People live in the moment rather than planning for the future, because it does not occur to them that they may not always be around to provide for loved ones.

Problems exist whether or not a person is conscious of it. People who are satisfied, complacent and undisturbed today do not believe they need life insurance. Why should they be concerned with a solution to a problem they believe does not exist? Often, the only reason a person does not buy life insurance from you is because that person does not realize that he or she has a problem, or if he or she does, they do not feel enough urgency to take action now.

Therefore, the objective of an interview is essentially leading the prospect to realize that a financial problem could arise, weighty and sobering danger could threaten, and that something should be done about it now.

Before you can go very far in bringing to light the potential problems, however, you must not only understand what those problems are, but you must express that you are truly and seriously concerned with the solution. You must first establish the general problems with your prospect, like those we all face. Later, you would get into specific problems that your client faces in his or her life. We are all ready to agree on the truth of a general statement before we are willing to admit that the statement applies to us specifically. We are ready to identify with a certain group and talk about the problems of that group, but we become defensive when singled out, and it is pointed out that the problem under discussion is specifically our own. If you are planning to discuss the ability of life insurance to help me solve the problem of having to pay final expenses due to death, you deal with me first as a group member rather than an individual.

When most people are asked why they have life insurance, they will most likely tell you because they want to protect their loved ones from financial burden. If that is the case, then it would make sense to find out what exactly the loved ones will need and determine if their existent life insurance policy will meet those needs.

Sales Process

The sales process is a series of actions you take to result in the purchase of a product or service. The process begins with prospecting which results in an appointment for a convenient interview, if all goes well. The interview gives you the opportunity to establish the need for financial protection.

In most cases, the sales process continues with **answering specific questions** from the prospect. Almost all prospects will have questions, issues, and concerns that you will need to address before they decide to purchase. Some will have valid reasons for not accepting your insurance proposal. Answer every question confidently and professionally using the “*Feel, Felt, Found*” technique and others described later in this guide.

After answering a prospect’s questions, you are able to move to the final step of the sales process — **the prospect’s commitment to take action**. The next section focuses on how to answer questions and obtain a commitment. These two critical activities finish the sales process by convincing the prospect to act *now*.

The Importance of Attitude

Maintaining the right attitude throughout the sales process makes all the difference, especially when answering questions and attempting to obtain the commitment.

Attitude is so critical at this point in the sales process, because during the final stages of the sale, the prospect will likely struggle to admit his or her own mortality and purchase life insurance. Never get frustrated or angry at the prospect. It is very important to stay positive and focused if you want to help them act on their need for life insurance.

Visualize the situation that exists as you attempt to finalize their commitment. Even at the final moment, almost all prospects will still have reservations, even if they do not express them to you. If you show any sign of impatience, frustration, fatigue, or concern, it could influence the prospect not to do business with you.

You must maintain a positive, confident attitude at all times. And you must also convey your sincere belief in the idea that premiums paid now while the insured is alive and in good health, will provide financial security for their loved ones at a later time -- that life insurance is very valuable.

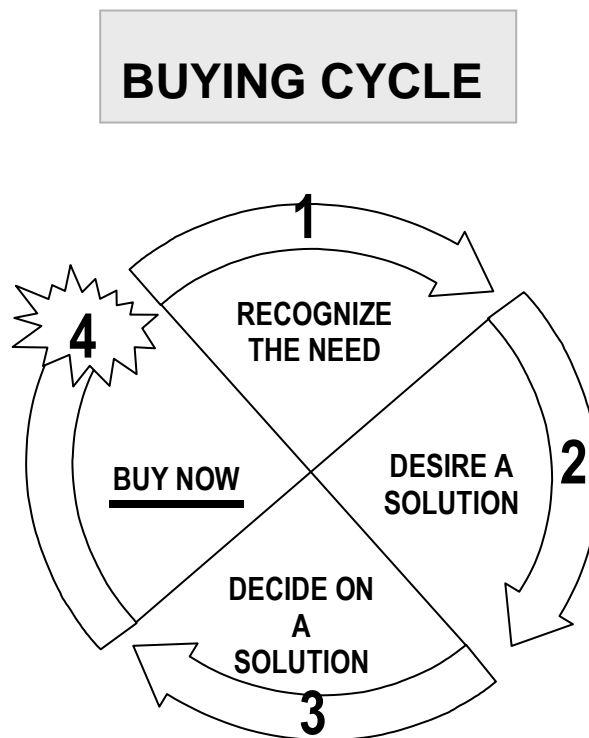
What actions can you take to adopt and maintain the proper attitude? The following is a list of techniques for staying positive and focused as you answer questions and prepare to write the application:

1. **Deliver a compelling and structured presentation.** Have a clear, rehearsed plan, and do not “wing it”! Use company-approved materials to conduct the interview. These materials are designed to provide the critical content and structure of your presentation. They help you walk the prospect through an assessment of his or her needs, which can be one of the most effective arguments for life insurance. They allow you to have control of the interview, which is just as important. When you are in control, you are able to instill confidence in the prospect.
2. **Believe that the prospect will purchase insurance.** Before you even approach the prospect, you should have complete confidence in your ability to help them believe that the decision to purchase life insurance is right. Successful agents can gain confidence from months and years of experience. If you are new, you can draw your confidence from the fact that you are making a powerful difference in the lives of people by opening their eyes to the value of life insurance.
3. **Focus on prospects instead of suspects.** Do your best to make sure a prospect is qualified early in the interview. Ask questions to determine whether the prospect has family (thus a real need for life insurance), is able to pay for that insurance, and has a reasonable chance of meeting the company’s underwriting guidelines. You will be more productive when you work with qualified prospects, and success will increase your confidence dramatically.

Two Cycles that Represent the Sale

Below you'll see the **Buying Cycle**, and on the next page, the **Selling Cycle**. Of course, they are counterparts to each other. When we make the decision to buy a product or service, we go through a mental process illustrated in the Buying Cycle. We:

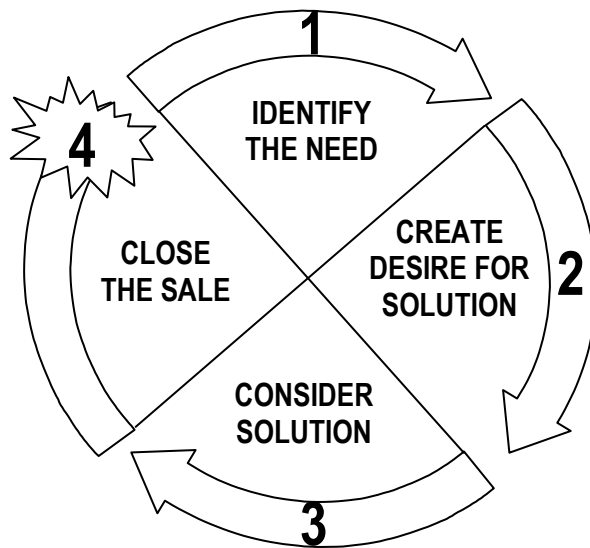
1. Recognize the problem.
2. Desire a solution.
3. Decide on a particular solution.
4. We buy, or more positively, buy now.



The **Selling Cycle** coincides with the Buying Cycle. It is our job when we are selling to help the prospect:

1. Identify the need or problem.
2. Create a desire for a solution to that problem.
3. Consider all of the available solutions.
4. Close the sale; ask for a signature on the insurance application and the first premium.

SELLING CYCLE



Selling Cycle

Let's take a closer look at each step of the selling cycle: how the sale is made, how we motivate our prospect to buy, and the thought process of the prospect when making a buying decision. The Selling Cycle is a logical sequence that our prospect uses to make a closing decision, assuming that they have enough information to influence them to confidently act now. All of these points make up the Selling Cycle. Let's refer back to the Selling Cycle when we identify the problem. **To begin, recognize that you are not the cause of the problem.** Your job is simply to help bring the problem to light where it can be solved effectively. At the appropriate stage in the Selling Cycle, you suggest a solution to create a feeling of peace in the client's mind. At this point, we are only focusing on problems such as an inadequate income for the surviving family, a home mortgage, education for the grandchildren, unpaid taxes, debt liquidation or last expenses if someone should die. So, the first step in the Selling Cycle is to identify the problem.

Now, let's move to step two in the selling cycle, which is to create a desire for a solution. Our mission is not to propose a solution yet, but to create a sense of urgency to solve the problems. Don't mistakenly assume that your prospect will want your insurance solution right away after he or she has seen the problem. This is where you probe to learn who will need protection or income, how much they will need, and when they will need it. When you understand what a client's need entails, you can help your prospect develop the best solution that suits them. This is quite possibly the most important step in the Selling Cycle. This is where you will address the essential element in the selling process: the need from the prospect's point of view.

Needs selling is very important. It differs from selling benefits, policy provisions or low premiums, because the need almost never goes away. So any time in the future, the policy could be resold for the very same need rather than lapsing the insurance coverage. Needs selling is critical for policies to stay on a premium-paying basis longer. In the selling cycle, you light a fire to satisfy the most essential need or needs.

In the third quadrant of the Selling Cycle, we analyze the solutions. As an insurance agent, you help your client by figuring out solutions to the crucial financial problems pertinent to them. You may offer a graded benefit or a permanent solution. In step three of the Selling Cycle, discuss the merits of the appropriate options as your prospect considers each solution.

Step four of the Selling Cycle is the close. You help your prospect feel comfortable enough to buy now. The other three steps in the cycle should be covered thoroughly and in sequence before closing. You must have identified the problem, created a desire for the best solution to that problem, and considered the solution before asking for a signature on the application. You are then able to ask the prospect to buy. If you both have clearly identified and agreed upon the problem, the best way you can help your prospect now is by completing the sale. **Always help the client purchase what the client wants, not what you want to sell. Make it a win/win result for both of you.**

If you follow the process in the Selling Cycle, the only logical answer to the question of whether or not to buy for your client is yes. If you don't receive a positive answer, back track to the previous steps in the Selling Cycle. Be sure that you and your prospect have identified the problem, created the need for your products, and that there is a true desire to solve that problem. Double-check the solutions that you presented. Are they really appropriate? Finally, ask again for their commitment.

Pre-approach

There are two effective pre-approach methods. The first is pre-approach mail and the other is to use the telephone.

Mailings can include company or personal letters, booklets, brochures or some other appropriate material organized to catch the prospect's interest. They may or may not offer to set aside a few minutes for face-to-face dialogue with you. Pre-approach mail doesn't necessarily have to ask for a response from the recipient. Results have shown overwhelmingly, however, that life insurance agents who follow-up with every pre-approach mailing are more successful, whether or not they ask for a response by telephone or a face-to-face meeting.

The second recommended pre-approach method is to use the telephone. A good telephone script, whether informal or memorized, allows you to do nothing more than introduce yourself, state your business and affiliation, indicate that you have something of interest to show, and attempts to schedule a face-to-face appointment. It is not a good idea to make a presentation at this time, because people have a harder time understanding it on the telephone. We can also use the telephone method whether or not a pre-approach mailing preceded it. **Its purpose should be to solely arrange an appointment.** A few hours of practice in this pre-approach method will make you an expert for obtaining interviews on a regular basis.

The approaches, which you will learn about in the next section of this guide, are non-threatening and could work very well for you with your present policyholders. Although they may seem overwhelming at first, once they are learned, they will make you successful.

Approach

There are many avenues you can take to approach quality prospects.

As mentioned before, your present policyowners are probably the easiest group for you to approach about the need for life insurance, because you have established a relationship with them through other health product activities. You have already proven yourself and gained trust. There should be no doubt in their minds that you have their best interests in mind when talking about life insurance. Often you will be able to lead directly from a collection appointment, to a sales approach, and to a sales interview, with just a simple conversational bridge like this:

"You know, Mrs. Prospect, I have an idea I'd like to share with you and your husband that I think you'll find of great value. Do you think we could all get together this evening at 6:45 to talk about it, or would 7:30 p.m. be better for you?"

Notice that you have not asked the prospect whether or not you could come back later, but you assumed consent because of your relationship; so the only question is which time is more convenient. In other words, you've offered the prospect two positive choices and eliminated the chance to say no, which is an important psychological advantage for you.

You also have certain advantages in approaching new prospects that are acquainted with current policyholders. Neighbors of present policyowners may remember seeing you in the neighborhood. Good inquiries to make to current clients about others are the names, work status, what time both spouses are usually at home, and other information like this that will qualify them as prospects and also give you insight into the best time to call. Your present policy owners will gladly allow you to use their names when introducing yourself to their neighbors and friends. This third party acquaintance can make it easier to smooth the way to your next sales interview by gathering qualifying information. Try using this non-threatening and effective approach:

"Mr. and Mrs. Prospect, my name is John Jones, and I'm an agent in this area. I have no way of knowing whether my services would be of interest to you at this time, but I have an idea that your neighbors, the Smiths, have found to be a value to them, and they suggested that it might be of interest to you also. Would you have some time to sit down and discuss it with me now, or would this evening at 6:15 be better for you."

This approach uses third party influence to your advantage so the prospect assumes that it is your job to help solve their life insurance needs.

We've shown how you can approach your policy owners, but what about brand new prospects? How do you go about establishing a relationship with them? The key to successfully selling to new prospects is to work through a referral process. If a current client strongly recommends you to a friend or family member, you're put in an excellent position to approach the individual favorably. However, you won't always have a solid third party influence. In many cases, you'll have to precondition prospects to agree to your request for an interview. Remember that this preconditioning was identified as pre-approach.

CASH FOR FINAL EXPENSES

1. M. (Prospect), in the event of your death, certain expense have to be met – funeral expenses, current bills, income taxes, and medical bills. Is that correct?

[Response]

2. I further assume, M. (Prospect), that you would want them paid with the least disturbance and inconvenience to your family. Isn't that true?

[Response]

3. M. (Prospect), if I can show you a convenient plan that will provide funds to help pay these bills, you would be interested, wouldn't you?
4. Would now be a good time to share this idea with you, or would (day) at (time) be better for you?

FINAL EXPENSE FUND

1. It guarantees that monies will be available to help pay doctor, hospital and funeral expenses, regardless of the economic situation at the time of death.
2. The benefit proceeds are paid to the beneficiary – immediately and in full. Life insurance benefits are usually income tax free.
3. It provides continued self-respect for a widow/widower and family.
4. It is sound foundation for a total life insurance program.
5. It provides peace of mind.

Talk about Life – Not Life Insurance

When the general problem is pinpointed, it will not upset your prospects, there is nothing they can disagree on, and there is no basis for an argument or debate. You're talking with them about life, not about life insurance. As we talk about the problem, we are constructing the path to be able to take the third step in the sales process.

A productive interview is not a monologue, but a dialogue -- purposeful and directed -- but a two-way conversation. ***Your prospect should be doing most of the talking***, and as you probe, you soon develop the proper goal for life insurance benefits. It could be a need for help with the cost of final expenses, for a mortgage fund, or for a desire to leave a donation to their church or an educational fund for the grandchildren. Once you have narrowed down the specific desires, you now want to pitch life insurance as quickly and effectively as possible. The “How Much Could Final Expenses Cost” brochure, IMO-001, is a crucial tool to help with this particular step.

A prepared presentation should be a sales plan or sales track organized to present ideas. Planning and rehearsing the presentation is much more effective than a spontaneous presentation. It allows you to present to the prospect without wasting time or words. It organizes the ideas and information in order to spark interest and help in decision-making. Present your ideas logically, effectively, and with applicable words. Give careful thought to the presentation in advance, and your performance will be smooth, polished and effective. Your job is to reveal the existing problems or desires to your prospect. Your job as a counselor for seniors is to help each prospect see a clear picture of their unsolved problems. These problems are critical to their loved one's financial future and should be solved for their own peace of mind. Show how life insurance is the only certain solution.

At this point in the interview, show your enthusiasm for life insurance as the solution to life's problems. The interview should progress to the climax of the sale using an enthusiastic presentation. The prospect will not more enthusiastic about the insurance solution than you are. This is where the client should see your true enthusiasm for the product you provide, because a person's decision to buy is usually based on emotion rather than logic, which leads to the next step in the sales process: ask the client to buy. If you raise the emotional pitch of your interview at the same time ask someone to take the critical step, your results will be much more successful. Emotion aroused at this moment will disappear when your leave and the urge for the prospect to act will fade, however, so remember that we want the client to buy now.

Bridging to a Discussion about Financial Needs

If you discuss a health-related product, ask non-threatening questions about their lives and pay attention to the feelings expressed. To assist you in warming up discussion with your prospects, we use the acronym HELP. Keep your questions focused on these things:

H: home

E: education

L: loved ones

P: plans for the future

Remembering and using HELP will assist you in finding out what is important to your prospect, which can help you in the selling interview and in closing the sale. Build a relationship by discussing things that interest your prospects. For example the things they have accomplished or hope to accomplish in their lives. Here are several examples of how HELP reminds you about the things that are important to your prospects:

First, **H** for **home**. People work hard to provide a home for their families and they want their family to have that home after the death of one of the spouses.

Next **E**, for **education**. Every parent and grandparent wants his or her grandchildren to have an opportunity to pursue higher education.

Next is **L**, **loved** ones. People are proud of their families. Photographs around the house of children, grandchildren, vacations and so forth make this fact evident. Keep in mind that grown children can also be excellent prospects.

Finally, **P**, **plans** for the future. Everyone has hopes, dreams and plans for the future. We could ask our prospects what their most important goals are to find this out. We can learn a lot about their future plans.

Another way of deciphering their future plans is to ask whether the surviving spouse would be able to keep living in the house or have to move in with children. When you ask a question, be an active listener, not phony. Nothing says that you care more effectively than actively listening. Encourage

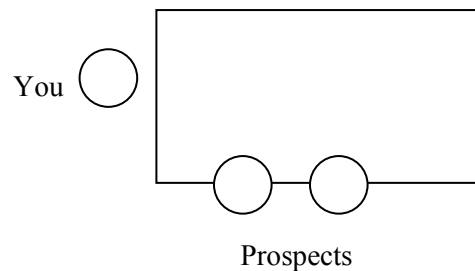
your prospects to talk about themselves. Ask about the type of work they did or anything about themselves. People can detect insincerity, and if they do, you'll have a difficult time gaining their trust, making a sale and getting referrals.

By investing five to ten minutes of sincere listening, you will begin to find out what kind of people they are, which will make your prospects feel more relaxed, and therefore, they will accept you as someone who is genuinely interested in them. Once you've established rapport, how do you get down to the business at hand?

We will focus on the mechanics of the selling interview in the next sections.

Ideal Seating Arrangement

The diagram represents the ideal seating arrangement for you and your prospects at the table. The seating arrangement doesn't need to be exactly as shown in the diagram. The most important objective with the seating arrangement is that you are able to maintain eye contact with all individuals at the same time. Never seat yourself between the prospects. That makes it very difficult to give both your full attention. Also, if someone is accompanying you on the sales call, never surround your prospect. This may make them feel trapped and therefore less receptive to your presentation.



Now that you have become acquainted with your prospects, they should be ready to discuss the very important reasons for your visit. Keep in mind that selling is something you do for and with them. Have everything, such as your laptop and signature pad, in full view of your prospects so that you can easily access what is needed during the interview. You're off to a great start in gaining their attention and interest in your presentation with this effective set-up.

“WIIFM” What’s In It For Me?

Prospects will want to know, “What’s in it for me?” (WIIFM) while you’re making your presentation. There’s a technique we refer to as the “Feature, Function, Benefit, Nail Down” process to assist you. Below is an explanation of how the process works:

- FEATURE** = *What it is*
The feature is the life insurance policy.
- FUNCTION** = *What it does*
The function is the logical or practical use of the feature.
- BRIDGE** = *Leads to benefit*
The bridge is a statement that leads to the benefit, such as:
The importance to you is ...”
The benefit to you is ...”
The advantage to you is ...”
- BENEFIT** = *Answers WIIFM*
The benefit is the logical or emotional advantage of using the feature and its function.
The real value that will appeal on an emotional level
Fills prospect’s need to know, “What’s in it for me?”
(WIIFM)
- NAIL DOWN** = *Call for agreement*
The nail-down is a directive question that gets agreement. This usually appeals to some emotion, such as love, pride, responsibility or security.
“Now, that’s what you want for your loved ones, isn’t it”

Responding to Prospects' Questions

Every prospect will ask questions during the presentation. These questions are not a personal rejection, anything to be afraid of them, anything to overreact to, and anything to distract you from your ultimate goal: to help the prospect purchase the life insurance policy that meets their needs.

If you match insurance to genuine needs, and if you believe the solution holds water, then you won't manipulate your prospects. Instead, you will be *educating* them by demonstrating the real advantage of life insurance.

There are several successful approaches for answering a prospect's questions. As a new agent, learning one solid technique that you can use in any situation will be an asset to you. One of the most popular techniques is "***Feel, Felt, Found.***"

“Feel, Felt Found”

The “*Feel, Felt, Found*” Technique

The “*Feel, Felt, Found*” technique is based on the belief that listening to your prospects, understanding what they are saying, and showing empathy for their feelings effectively deals with hesitancy. So, how does the “*Feel, Felt, Found*” technique work? It is a simple approach that consists of three statements that you can use to deal with most any situation. The following table gives you the structure of this technique and identifies its key words and phrases:

Table 1: “Feel, Felt, Found” Technique

Structure	Key Word	Key Phrase
Statement #1	Feel	“I understand how you <i>feel</i> .”
Statement #2	Felt	“I have <i>felt</i> that way, too.” OR “Others have <i>felt</i> that way, too.” OR “People in similar situations have <i>felt</i> that way, too.”
Statement #3	Found	“However, I <i>found</i> that (insert benefit or explanation.)” OR “However, other people who have tried this have found that (insert benefit or explanation).”

Now we will show how this approach can be used in an actual situation. For instance, if your prospect responds to your insurance proposal with:

“I like the plan but it’s just too expensive.” Using “*Feel, Felt, Found*,” your response might be something like this:

“(Prospect’s name), I know how you feel. I know others who felt that way, too, at first.

However, they have found that life insurance really isn’t that expensive. The food, clothing, house payments, doctor bills, final expense costs and other items your spouse will have to pay for after you’re gone can really add up.”

Now that you grasp the basic concept, try to incorporate the “*Feel, Felt, Found*” technique into your presentation.

The best way to get prospects to believe that you have their interests at heart is for you to listen and really understand their needs and concerns. Show them — through your words, gestures, and expressions — that you or someone you know has been in their situation, and that you share common feelings and experiences. This technique will only work if you are genuine. False sincerity breeds unfavorable responses, as stated before.

“Handling Objections”

Six Steps for Dealing with a Prospect’s Reluctance

When a prospect is hesitant to take the action to purchase the proposed insurance, do not engage in a debate. This rarely succeeds and often annoys or upsets prospects.

You will close more sales if you use the following six-step approach to handling objections:

Table 2: Six Steps for Dealing with a Prospect’s Reluctance

Step (Task)	Description	What To Say
1. Listen to their position.	Pay attention to what the prospect says. Lean forward, nod and don’t interrupt.	Listen and remain silent.
2. Understand their position.	Ask the prospect to repeat if necessary.	<i>“Would you mind repeating that so I can be sure I understand your concerns?”</i>
3. Restate their position.	Restate their concern in your own words. Ask the prospect to confirm your understanding.	<i>“So what you’re saying is (restate the concern).”</i>
4. Isolate concern.	Be sure to identify the correct concern. If you uncover more than one concern, address them one at a time.	<i>“Rather than (restate the concern), is there any other reason why you wouldn’t put this plan in place now?”</i>
5. Address the concern.	Acknowledge the prospect’s feelings and show empathy.	<i>Use the “Feel, Felt, Found” technique. If the prospect hesitates, use a motivational story described in the next section of this guide.</i>
6. Close the sale.	Use a Test Close (described later in this guide) to qualify the prospect. Get the application signed and collect the first premium payment.	<i>“In order to see if you qualify for this coverage, I need to ask you some health questions.”</i> <i>“Everything seems to be in order. All you need to do now is sign right here and make your check out to (company name).”</i>

Other Techniques for Dealing with Reluctance to Purchase

With more experience, you will learn other approaches for dealing with prospects' questions during an interview. Rehearse the approach until it comes naturally. Be conscious of appropriate situations to try it. If the technique ends up working, add it to your sales tools. This section describes a few of the techniques you may encounter:

Simple Responses

Even the most simple techniques can be challenging to apply during an interview when you're under pressure. For example, you can handle some concerns with a **direct response**. A prospect may have incorrect information about insurance in general or about a specific policy you are selling. If so, you may be able to respond with a direct, but polite correction. A direct response could also be appropriate if the prospect is unsure of the value of life insurance. You should be able to answer this objection with a direct expression of your belief in the product.

Another simple response is to **ignore the concern**. You should use this technique only if the concern seems minute. If the prospect repeats the concern again after you ignore it the first time, then address it. Repetition indicates that the prospect's concern is serious.

Use these techniques delicately. If you use them at the wrong time or deliver them in the wrong tone, you could lose the prospect. A direct response has the potential sound blunt and/or sarcastic, and ignoring a concern can appear insensitive or careless.

“Yes – but”

The **“yes – but”** technique can be used with almost any concern. The primary advantage of this technique is that it allows you to get your point across while acknowledging that the prospect has valid issues or concerns. You communicate respect for the other person and a sense of fair play when you make sincere, but minor, concessions. Most prospects will then acknowledge your point, rethink their objection, and continue with the interview.

To understand better understand this technique, consider the following situation involving a prospect and an agent:

Prospect: “I don't see how I can afford this plan. It's all I can do to pay the rent and all my other bills each month.”

*Agent (using “yes–but”): “Yes, you’re right, (prospect’s name). It is harder to make ends meet these days. **But** if you’re struggling now, imagine what it would be like for your spouse if they have to pay those bills without your income.”*

Boomerang

Another popular approach is called the “Boomerang.” When the prospect “throws” you a concern on their part, you return it to the source and turn the concern into a positive reason for buying your product. The following example, illustrates this technique:

Prospect: “I don’t know. I need to think about this for a while.”

Agent (using “Boomerang”): “That’s exactly what you need to do. I wouldn’t want anyone to make this type of commitment without thinking about it carefully. In fact, I have to think about it as well. Before you can sign the application, I need to ask you some health questions to see if you qualify. Let’s go through the questions now, and then we’ll go through your plan again so you can think about each item we’ve discussed today.”

Your Job as a Translator

It's important to have the mindset that **we really do not sell life insurance products.** We sell benefits and solutions to people's problems, so it is our job to translate our products into compelling customer benefits for our prospects. It is only when your prospects are sure that your products will enrich and secure their lives that they will desire to take action.

Taking Action

The last sales dynamic is **closing** – getting the prospect to buy now. Closing is just helping the prospect decide on a solution then taking the important step to start their plan. Closing the sale is easier when you walk into your prospect’s home, demonstrate integrity, are interested in them, look out for their best interests, and allow them to actively participate in the process. Closing will flow from your entire selling conversation. Remember, closing is a journey.

As a professional life insurance agent, you are very important in helping them keep their dreams alive. When they die, their dreams for their families will die with them unless they are protected by life insurance.

Now you are ready to secure their dreams by closing the sale. Closing is very important because it helps your prospects to take action today. Closing should flow very naturally after you have earned your prospect’s trust, presented all the benefits of your proposal, and alleviated all of their concerns. Closing asks for a decision. Many people are reluctant to make decisions, even when they know that the benefits of life insurance are what they need. Fear breeds their indecisiveness, but helping them take action will relieve their anxieties. Most people truly want and need you to spur them on to make decisions. Nearly everyone has a need you can fill, and you have a responsibility to ask for a favorable decision.

Remember, we don’t sell in the close, **we close after we’ve sold**. In fact, when you use good selling principles, everything that happened in the selling interview earned you the right to ask for the business with confidence.

How do you know when to close? You close when your client is ready to buy. This is normally when you have finished your presentation, nailed down the benefits that your prospect wants and needs, and answered their questions. When you believe you have responded to most of their concerns, it is a good time to ask a trial-closing question. For example, you could ask, “In your opinion, do you feel that this plan accomplishes the right things for you and your family?” If you receive a positive response from your prospect, it’s time to solve their problems by closing the sale.

Closing Techniques

This section teaches several closing techniques that have been successful in the life insurance industry. Typically, you would use these techniques at the end of your sales presentation. However, it's important to stay flexible and watch for buying signals throughout the meeting. Whenever you sense the prospect is ready to buy, you should attempt to close the sale.

Many agents find it helpful to view the sales process as a *series of sales*, each requiring a close. For example, you are actually making a sale during your approach. You must **sell** the prospect on the idea of taking time to discuss life insurance. At the end of the approach, you can use probing questions to close this initial sale and continue into the sales interview.

Let's review some trial and final closing techniques that you can use when asking the prospect to buy. With experience, you'll learn how to adapt these examples to close smaller sales throughout the process.

Trial Closing

Let's discuss one of the very important skills/techniques we can use throughout the selling interview to prepare a successful conclusion for both you and your prospect: **Trial Closing**. This skill and overcoming objections or go hand in hand and are very much related to one another.

As previously stated, closing assumes or asks for a decision, whereas trial closing merely ask for opinions. There is a big difference between opinions and decisions. Opinions, whether positive or negative, can help you enormously because they help you understand how the prospect is feeling. Also, asking someone for his or her opinion is a non-threatening question.

To repeat, **trial closing means asking for opinions, and closing questions ask for decisions.**

Why are trial closings important? They help us determine whether or not they are ready to buy. It is helpful to gage how far our prospect is from buying during the interview.

Ask for your prospect's opinion. One way we can do this is by beginning questions with these words: "In your opinion, do you feel..." then follow these words with something you want to find out. For example:

"Ms. Prospect, in your opinion, do you feel that these benefits accomplish the right things for you and your family?"

If your prospect answers yes with conviction, their buying temperature may be hot, and it's time to confidently to close the sale.

However, don't be discouraged if the prospect's response is "no" or "I'm not sure." An answer like this is usually only a temporary roadblock, a sign that you should slow down and gather more information. After all, you haven't asked for the sale, only the prospect's opinion. A "no" at this point simply means that the prospect needs more information. Furthermore, a negative answer tells us that we need to explore further to find out why the prospect feels that way. We can often get the real reasons out into the open by asking this question:

"Apparently you have some reason for feeling that way. Do you mind if I ask what it is?"

Now is the time to listen carefully to your prospect's response. Whatever the response, your next step is to find out whether this answer is a true reason or just an excuse. Here is the wording of the next question you can use to smoke out any real objections:

This question begins with the three words; "just suppose that." After that, we should restate the key point of the prospect's objection. For example, if the objection was: "I think it's too expensive..." the total phrase would go like this: "Just suppose that price was not a concern. In your opinion do you feel..." For example:

"Mr. Prospect, just suppose that price is not a concern. In your opinion, do you feel that these benefits accomplished the right things for you and your family?"

If your prospect still answers negatively, then most likely the reason he told you was merely an excuse. You should never answer an excuse. Instead, just repeat the next question as a trial closing process: "Apparently you have some reason to feel that way. Do you mind if I ask what it is?"

There are three steps in the trial closing cycle. Depending on the situation, the first step may work, or it may be necessary to go further. Step one is to test the buyer's temperature by asking an "in your opinion do you feel..." question. Listen attentively to the prospect's response. If the answer is positive and sincere, it may be time to close.

On the other hand, if the response is negative, we may need to gather more information in a low-key way by going to step two: "Apparently you have some reason for feeling that way. Do you mind if I ask what it is?"

Finally, in step three, we test the response's validity by asking, "Just suppose that..." and here you insert the key point of the objection: "Just suppose that was not a concern. In your opinion, do you feel that..." As you can see, step three includes a return to the first trial closing questions.

Remember, in trial closing, we are looking for the prospect's true feelings. If their feelings are negative, we need to discover why. Once we understand the reason, we have to make sure it is not just an excuse. So remember to ask for, verify and respect your prospect's opinions by practicing and using these trial-closing questions:

- 1) "In your opinion, do you feel..."
- 2) "Apparently you have some reason for feeling that way. Do you mind if I ask what it is?"
- 3) "Just suppose that..." here you insert the key point of objection, "Just suppose that was not a concern. In your opinion, do you feel...?"

At this point in our selling interview, we should move to close the sale or we need to smoke out the objection from our prospect. In either case, you are in good shape. Hopefully, there are no hidden agendas and all the cards are on the table. Now we can come to a mutually agreeable decision.

Consider the following additional examples:

“(Prospect’s name), you told me earlier that you worked hard to provide for your family, and that you want your loved ones to not be burdened with debt when you die. The plan we’ve been discussing would provide the right amount of funds to cover your final expenses, wouldn’t it?”

“(Prospect’s name), you said you’d like to have some funds available in case of a financial emergency. If I can show you a plan that meets all of your insurance needs plus has a loan provision, you’d be interested in it, right?”

If the prospect answers “yes,” you may be able to close the sale, or you will at least be able to narrow the focus of your interview. The prospect can still say “no.” If this happens, address the prospect’s concerns. The other techniques discussed in this section are simply different approaches of the test close.

Implied Consent

In some cases, prospects will subtly show interest in your product or service. They may drop verbal hints such as, “that feature sounds interesting,” or “tell me more about that,” or they may indicate through body language that you have targeted a key selling point. For example, they may lean forward for a closer look at your materials, or they may change to a thoughtful or serious expression.

These buying signals *imply* that the prospect is receptive. When you pay attention to these signals, you may be able to assume the prospect’s *consent* to close the sale. One of the more effective ways to use **implied consent** is to move to completing the application, as in the following example:

[Say the following as you prepare to complete the application.] “(Prospect’s name), I need to get some basic information from you. What is your date of birth? Your social security number?”

If your prospect does not object at this point, complete the application and obtain a signature.

Final Choice

With the “**Final Choice**” technique, you close the sale by presenting choices from the insurance plan you recommend. You do not ask for the sale. You let the prospect make one or two minor decisions first. However, by making these decisions the prospect is actually committing to a sale. The following examples illustrate the final choice close:

“(Prospect’s name), would you like to pay the initial premium by check or bank draft?”

“(Prospect’s name), if you qualify for this plan, to whom would you prefer any death proceeds be paid?”

If a concern is voiced, explore and solve the reason the prospect is hesitating to buy.

More about “The Close”

Using a selling presentation, such as the brochure, “Final Expenses Don’t Need to be a Financial Burden” helps you and your client arrive at the right decision. The advantage is that you have an organized resource available at your fingertips to follow during your entire selling interview and help you motivate the prospect to buy today. If you have the opportunity to use a trial close and a final closing sequence, use it. If you’re not successful, you can always go back to where you left off in the presentation. You can close your sales easily and naturally by using a planned selling system. You may have several opportunities to close. Following your instincts to close can work after a planned presentation, and it will make you more productive in helping your prospects.

For example, the “Final Expenses Don’t need to be a Financial Burden” brochure takes you and your client through the selling interview. **All of us tend to support the plans we help create.** In this way, your prospects’ involvement in building their own plans fuels their conviction and desire.

As we’ve said before, the “Final Expenses Don’t Need to be a Financial Burden” brochure truly puts you and your prospect on the same team and helps in closing the sale at the best time. Remember that closing a sale should be a win/win situation. It is a win for the agent, because he or she successfully helped a prospect solve their problem. It is a win for prospects because they have improved the financial stability of their families.

Also remember that failing to close is not a personal failure. It may very well be that your client has legitimate reasons for not buying. The key is to make sure that you give them a complete knowledge and a number of opportunities to make a decision. A rule of thumb is that you should attempt to close at least five times.

Another important factor in closing the sale is the quality and quantity of your prospecting activity. When you have enough prospects to see every week, closing the sale can be an exhilarating experience for you. On the other hand, if you have only three or four selling interviews during the week, closing can be a stressful process. Qualify your prospects and see a good number of people every week. That way, you can gain experience to close sales more comfortably. You’ll find it’s easier to close when you have an organized way to help them understand their needs for life insurance.

In fact, you may be asking yourself a very natural question: Why do I need to learn so many closing methods?

The first reason why we learn different closes is because it helps us to get a feel for the closing methods that best suit our own personalities and selling styles. We are all different, and some closing techniques are more natural and effective for you than others.

Secondly, your prospects have their own unique personalities as well. One example is that some prospects may be more analytical than others. By helping them weigh the many advantages of your proposal against the modest premium commitment, you help them come to a favorable decision. So we learn different types of closes for different kinds of people, or as the old saying goes: “Different Strokes for Different Folks.”

Finally, and probably most importantly, we learn a number of different closes, because we often need to close more than once. It’s very important to giving up attempting to close after one time can lose many sales and leave families with poor protection against life’s adversities. People buy fire insurance just in case of fires in their homes, or automobile insurance in case they have an accident, but permanent life insurance protects families from leaving our loved ones with sudden expenses.

From our earlier discussions in this training guide, you learned that you will face objections during selling interviews and that objections are just detours on the road to a sales success. Objections can often surface when we attempt to close the sale. Objections are merely signals to gather more information. Steps two and three in the trial closing process can help you determine the reason for the objection.

Step two: “Apparently you have some reason for feeling that way. Do you mind if I ask what it is?”

Once you understand the objection, you then ask:

Step three: “Mr. Prospect, just suppose that...” and here you restate the key point of objection: “Just suppose that was not a concern. In your opinion, do you feel that these benefits provide the security that you and your family need?”

When people answer this last question affirmatively, you can use one of the closes that you learned. Keep repeating the cycle, trying one close after another, until you close the sale or reach a completely dead end. Remember, if at first you don’t succeed, close, close again. Many studies of the closing process have drawn one undeniable conclusion: the more closes you attempt, the more sales you will make, and the more sales you close, the more people you’ll help, and the more people you help, the more satisfying your career will be as a life insurance provider.

Another advantage you gain when you use an organized selling system is that you always have several different closes available. Everything that helps you answer an objection can also help you close the sale. In earlier sections you learned the “*Feel, Felt, Found*” principle to assure prospects that their objections have concerned other people, but who found that the benefits of our products far outweigh the cost. You also learned how you can reflect or “*Boomerang*” the objection back to your prospect by demonstrating that the objection is merely a valid reason to buy today in disguise. Both the “*Feel, Felt, Found*” and the “*Boomerang*” techniques are very helpful in closing the sale.

Many people are reluctant to take the final step to start the plan today and deceive themselves by saying they would like to think it over. However, in reality, they will most likely not have another opportunity think it over other than right now. Once they immerse themselves into their daily lives, they will forget about it. In most cases, all they need from you is a little nudge to start their plan today.

One of the most effective ways to respond to the objections, “I’d like to think about it,” is to use the world’s greatest close: “Mr. or Ms. Prospect, do you feel that this plan does the right things for you?” Pause for a response. “Have you ever been sorry for doing the right thing?” Pause for response. “Well then, let’s just go ahead and get this started now.”

The Assumed Consent or Action Close is perhaps the simplest and most effective close. Assumed consent is a little nudge that helps the prospect decide to buy when there are no outward objections. Here’s how it works:

Once you have finished your presentation and addressed all of your prospect’s concerns to their satisfaction, you earned the right to help the prospect make the closing decision. In the absence of any further objections, you simply obtain more information. All you need to do is assume the prospect is ready to buy and begin the transition to the application process in a very natural way, such as:

“Mr. Prospect, who do you want to name as your beneficiary,” or, “Mr. Prospect, what is your middle initial?”

This helps relieve their anxieties, because you are helping them overcome the indecision. You’ll be surprised that most people will appreciate this nudge from you as long as you have earned their trust.

By assuming that your prospect will take favorable action, you free them from the discomfort of analysis paralysis. They sense that your proposal is the right thing to do for themselves and their loved ones. That's why they appreciate your help to feel that they have made the decision. Remember, taking action overcomes your prospect's fear.

Throughout the training sections, we have explained the vitally important rules that life insurance programs fulfill for everyone in our nation, no matter what their economic levels or situations in life might be. There is no other product that can create more certain security. Of course, you will not close the sale in every time. There are some people who, despite your best efforts, will not allow you to help them. However, there will be a need for money sometime in the future. More often than not, when a person dies, finances are not readily available. Most of our money is tied up in brick, wood, steel, our homes, our possessions and our automobiles.

Life insurance creates the means to pay the immediate bills due at a person's death. Believe in building your own program, because it will be very easy for you to speak of life insurance with sincere conviction. Unless you believe in these truths, how can you expect others to do so?

Your determination, conviction and belief in your product are the most important sales dynamics of all. Life insurance, the promise to pay, is a such a wonderful contract, because it creates wealth for people. You create wealth first and it accumulates, whereas anything else we use must accumulate resources and perseverance over time. Always remember in every selling interview that life insurance agents are important, have always been important for the last two centuries, and always will be important in keeping families protected.

Motivational Stories

We recommend that you use motivational stories. There are two “Ann Landers” stories at the end of this guide that are very helpful in helping your client make that buying decision when used as the summation of your presentation. These stories merely show the common reactions of people in everyday life situations, yet each one of them stirs emotion. They show what can happen when a policy becomes a claim, or what happens when there is no policy. You're helping prospects see what life insurance in action really looks like. You're changing a cold piece of paper (the policy) into a living, breathing instrument that gives meaning to the prospect with a single story. And remember, people react to stirred emotions. Why do people fill a theater night after night to see great plays or movies? What makes a book a best seller? Analyze books and plays, and you'll find in every instance that they appeal to human emotions. Omit this one element, and despite the finest acting and the most beautiful lighting, the public will be disappointed and the play or book will fail.

All you have to do is to present the prospect with a possible future and recite the facts of how the beneficiaries will feel and what they will say when they face the problems that death creates. Your life insurance policy goes into action after this and solves those enormous problems that otherwise would overwhelm the family. A good story creates great sales power, because directly appeals to emotions.

You may hesitate to tell prospects what could happen to their families if they do not buy life insurance in order to remain non-threatening, but if you tell them what happens to the uninsured family of some other person who did not buy, they will not be put on the defensive. Your personal stories and experiences prove to be the most effective. You can still tell stories you hear from friends, other agents, and customers. If you have not been in the business long enough to have experiences, talk to veteran agents. They will tell you of their own true-life experiences that you can then repeat to your clients.

Stories such as the following, if they are true and used properly, can help hesitant prospects realize how great the need is for insurance and ultimately make the decision to buy:

“(Prospect’s name), almost two years ago, I had an appointment with a family much like yours. The husband had a good job. He and his wife had a nice home. He didn’t think they could afford the monthly premium for the insurance plan I recommended, but his wife knew they needed the coverage and wrote me a check for the first premium. About two weeks later, on his way home from work, a drunk driver ran a stop sign and hit his car broadside. He was killed instantly. My company paid the proceeds to his wife.”

“The Close” is Just a Logical Conclusion

Walking through a planned presentation through the use of the brochure when presenting the life insurance story to your clients is as valuable as coming to a natural close.

If your close is so natural that you are able to assume consent to the sale by your client, then your presentation was smooth and professional. We provide sales tracks, sales visuals, and several examples of closing questions and methods for answering your prospect's objections to the sale. You should also memorize your powerful motivational stories, and the answer to these objections will come as easily to you as the rest of your sales presentation.

Summarizing Your Proposal

Another effective closing technique is to summarize the benefits of the plan you are recommending. One of the more popular **summary closes** for selling whole life “live or die” is illustrated below:

“(Prospect’s name), you really can’t lose with this plan. If you live to retirement, you win, because you will have built up a sizable sum of money that you can borrow against.

If you die prematurely, your family will receive the death benefit proceeds of the plan.”

Custom Closes

Many experienced agents have developed custom over the years. As a new agent, it would be wise to stick with the tried and proven closing techniques described earlier in this guide. As you gain experience, however, you can develop some custom closes of your own. For example, one successful agent in our company has used the following close for many years in many different situations:

“(Prospect’s name), you worked hard every day to provide for your family. That’s correct isn’t it? But when you die, your family will have sudden expense that could wipe out your savings. If this were to happen, you’d want your family to be taken care of, wouldn’t you?

For just pennies a day, you can provide your family with the financial protection they need. You’ll also get peace of mind, knowing that your family will be taken care of when you should die. And that’s what it’s all about, isn’t it?

Before you can buy this plan, I have to see if you qualify. To do that, I need to ask you a few questions. First,”

This close intertwines elements of different techniques previously discussed. It used leading questions that are part of the **test close**, it made an emotional appeal to the prospect, just as **motivating stories** do, it included a brief **summary** of key benefits (financial protection, peace of mind), and it used **implied consent** to begin the qualifying interview.

Closes

“Obligation Close”

A simple close that illustrates how the task of protecting an individual’s loved ones is put in the hands of the Life Insurance Company is termed the “Obligation Close.”

After you have determined the life insurance protection needed, follow with these words:

“You have identified that in order to protect your loved ones from a sudden financial burden at your death, funds are needed in the amount of \$?????? to liquidate debts, pay final expense.... Currently, that is YOUR obligation.”

“With life insurance YOUR obligation becomes OUR obligation. The Life Insurance Company’s obligation becomes \$???????? and your obligation becomes \$ (premium for the coverage you are proposing).”

“Live, Die or Quit Close”

The “Live, Die or Quit Close” communicates the value of permanent life insurance.

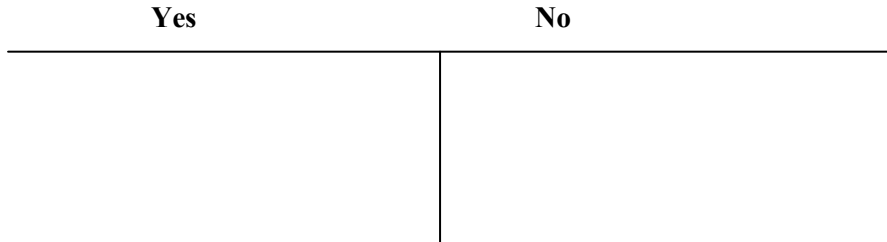
“When you start this life insurance policy there are just three things that can happen and this plan takes care of all three.

- 1. You will live to see your plan complete and the guaranteed cash value will be available to you,*
- 2. You will die before completing the plan and your family will be guaranteed to receive dollars to pay expenses, or*
- 3. You will quit somewhere along the way for reasons you can’t foresee now and the plan will guarantee cash values for you to use without further cash outlay.*

So, live die or quit, you and your family can’t lose.”

“Ben Franklin Close”

A simple close in which you create a sheet of paper with a simple T on the page, labeling the right side “Yes,” and the left side “No” is called the “Ben Franklin Close.”



You say, *“We all know Ben Franklin was one of the wisest men in history. When he was faced with making a decision he drew a T just like this. Ben then wrote on the left side all the reasons he should act on the decision.”*

“For instance, in your case the reasons include (begin writing)

Peace of mind for you now

Pays final expenses

Pays creditors”

“Once Ben listed all the yes reasons to make the decision, he then listed any reasons not to under the no.”

At this point, it is better to remain silent so the prospect has only positive reasons before them.

Tips on Closing

- ⇒ Always assume the prospect wants to buy.
- ⇒ Sit on the same side of the desk or table as the prospect.
- ⇒ Conduct closing interviews in a private, distraction-free location.
- ⇒ Involve the prospect when reviewing materials and making calculations.
- ⇒ Collect and review all documents that are part of the sale.
- ⇒ Use visual aids when appropriate.
- ⇒ Summarize the benefits of the plan.
- ⇒ Describe other products that you offer when appropriate.
- ⇒ Always ask who they care about that would benefit from this same type of interview. ASK FOR REFERRALS!

Let's Review

1. What are the psychological dynamics that usually take place during a successful selling cycle?

- The answers are:
 1. Establishing rapport
 2. Attention
 3. Interest
 4. Conviction
 5. Desire
 6. Losing the sale

2. What are the four things that you can do to help you establish rapport before you arrive at the prospect's home?

- The answers are:
 - A. Be reliable. Deliver on your promises and plan to arrive on time
 - B. Be responsive. Be quick to get back to your prospects with any information they may request prior to the meeting.
 - C. Dress for success. Your appearance is a direct reflection on your professionalism and on your company and your product.
 - D. Advance preparation. Gather sufficient biographical information about the prospect in advance of the interview. This allows you to discuss common information with the prospect. As a result, both you and the prospect will feel less like strangers.

3. The following are four actions and attitudes that will help you feel more confident and help put your prospects more at ease:

- The importance of each is:
 - A. Smiling big. It helps you make a friendly impression and shows enthusiasm
 - B. Tuning the world out allows you to focus on the prospect.
 - C. Getting prospects to talk about themselves creates an atmosphere in which guards are down.
 - D. By maintaining eye contact and really listening, we show that we have a genuine interest in our prospects.

4. Four of the things that are important in peoples lives where your interest can help establish rapport are, **H** stands for their home, **E** is for education, **L** denotes their loved ones, **P** represents their future plans (HELP).

5. To make the transition from establishing rapport to the selling interview you should say something like. “Bob and Kathy, I have an exciting new program to share with you. If you don’t mind, could we move to your dining room table?”

6. The best seating arrangements for the selling interview is one that allows us to maintain eye contact with both prospects at the same time. If accompanied by someone else, do not surround the prospect. They may feel trapped.

7. Having all our sales and service materials on the table is important because it shows our prospects that we are organized. It helps eliminate distractions and there are no surprises during our presentation because everything is in full view.

Objections

Finally, we will touch briefly on this very important factor related to the closing process. When we receive objections to the sales in our close, we should view them as opportunities to provide more information to our prospects. When we have successfully uncovered the motivation behind the objections, we need to answer them and help our prospects focus on their life insurance needs and the way we can help them take care of those needs.

It is important to understand that objections are nothing more than requests for more information. If everyone were extremely eager to buy life insurance, our industry could easily employ people to take orders, and it would not require the services of professionals.

Objections will invariably fall into one of these three categories:

- No need
- No hurry
- No money

There is a fourth category of objection that is more of a feeling. It is termed no confidence, or more strongly, no trust in the agent.

No confidence

Agents build client trust by always doing what we say we're going to do -- no surprises, no disappointments, and the people we work with soon come to know that our word is as good as our bond. Pretty soon, that reputation begins to precede us. One person tells another. Your policyholder tells her neighbor, her neighbor tells her husband who runs a local convenience store, he tells his friend the barber who tells... well, the chain breaks here and there, but you restart it with every contact you make on your agency. Your reputation does precede you, so make it a good one. When you do what you say you will do, you are building client trust.

The most formidable objection is no confidence. It can only be answered by our actions that speak louder than our words. We build trust when we do what we say we will do by providing the professional service our clients expect, and, as often as possible, exceeding their expectations for service. You need to help your clients feel that you are concerned about them. If you only see your clients to sell them, then they may feel that you have only your interests at heart.

We should also discuss the importance of developing your attitude as an asset in terms of your company, your profession in selling, and your attitude toward the people you serve. If your attitude toward other people is positive, you can anticipate that it will be reciprocated.

But before we go further, let's put together a list of the most basic things that your prospects and policyholders expect of you.

- First, they will expect you to do what you say you will do. Sound familiar? We stress this trust building trait, because it is so basic to everything else we do and say.
- Second, your prospects and policyholders will expect you to be informed about service procedures, your products, premium rates, and values --- all of those factors that qualify you to prescribe the proper policy solution once a need or want has been clearly identified.
- Third, they expect and deserve good service, and this good service will pay off in future sales.
- Fourth, they will expect you to look the part of the professional agent--neat, clean and well dressed, not flashy or casual. Note how the most respected insurance professionals dress. There is, in fact, a uniform for success. If you dress like a successful professional and act professional, then you earn the right to be called a professional life insurance salesperson.
- And finally, community involvement. This is not an obligation, but it is a valuable opportunity that may come your way. This is the service concept extended beyond purely business considerations. The youth sports team in your town may need a coach, or your church may need a Sunday school teacher. You may have a chance to help with a Scout troop or the Big Brothers and Big Sisters organization. Build trust not only in your business relationship, but in your social and community relationships as well.

If you look back on this training guide after months or years and recall the two critical elements in a good salesperson, selling for needs and building client trust, our efforts today will have been a success. Your job is to walk through each step of the selling cycle.

Answering Objections

An effective way of putting an objection into a proper perspective is to remember that it is actually a very good reason to buy from you. By shedding new light on an objection, we can reverse its impact and make it a genuine reason to buy from us today. As you recall, this approach is coined the “Boomerang.”

Let’s use a prospect’s “too many bills” objection. They just can’t afford it. Here is one way you can reverse the objection and use it as a reason to buy.

“Mr. or Mrs. Prospect, I understand your position. You’re saying the money you make is already budgeted, is that right?”

Wait and listen to your prospect’s agreement. Then respond with this:

“Mr. or Mrs. Prospect, if it takes good planning to make ends meet now, can you imagine how tough it would be if you loved one were faced with significant expenses at your death?”

The very reason our prospects believe they could not buy is the same reason why they should. Objections often come from feelings and not facts. In most cases, a “no money objection” comes from indecision. Fortunately, we find out that we haven’t fueled their desire enough. Helping your prospects to compare their objection versus their needs will help them take the necessary steps to buy today, for their well-being. Objections are a natural part of every selling interview.

When genuine objections come to the surface, they indicate the prospect’s true feelings. Never allow emotions to enter when an objection is raised, and never see the objection as an attack on your ability.

It takes real skill to get the true objection out, and trial-closing questions will help you reach this important milestone in your selling interview. Never walk away from a true objection. Test its validity by asking, “Apparently, you have some reason for feeling that way. May I ask what it is?” Always make sure your prospects know that you understand their feelings, and help them to see how your proposal is in the best interest of themselves and their families. After all, you are there to help them build their security against life’s uncertainties. Remember, every time you walk out of a home with a sale, whether it’s a small policy or a well rounded program, that person or family is better off than before you walked in the door.

In this guide, we have traveled through most of the selling process, advance preparation and establishing rapport to arousing our prospect's desire. We have discussed some very effective selling principles along the way, which will be very helpful to both you and your prospects. However, unless you practice and use those principles consistently, then they are just ideas that are a dime a dozen.

What does “No” mean?

In spite of our best efforts, some prospects will still say "no" to the sale. In fact, during the course of your career, you will probably hear more no's than yes's. That's natural. **The client's wishes should always be respected.** Put yourself in their shoes. If the answer now is indeed no, then leave it open for them to act on a solution later. As you will learn, those “no's” are due to three factors that really don't anything to do with us as individuals. First, “no's” come from a prospect saying “no” to our product, not saying “no” to us as individuals. If we continue to reflect a positive attitude toward our product, ourselves, and selling in general; we'll have another chance. Second, a "no" may come because we have not done as good a job with our presentation as we'll be able to do next week, next month or next year. We all learn from our experiences. As we get better, we get more “yes's” and fewer “no's.” Make each “no” a learning experience. Finally, some prospects are simply afraid to make a decision and afraid to say yes. If they are promising prospects, we should check back with them from time to time. Eventually, we may win them over, and if not, there are many more prospects out there.

Ann Landers' Letters

“Dear Ann Landers,

The ironic part of this story is that less than one month before he died I asked my husband to buy some life insurance. He refused, saying the smart thing to do is to keep his money in a savings account where it will produce interest.

When he died, the bank gave me \$2,200 he had in his savings account. If he had bought the life insurance policy, I would have received \$50,000.

If you print this letter, maybe somebody will learn from it.”

Another letter to Ann Landers –

“Our agent suggested Mel increase his insurance. ‘We’re insurance poor,’ I felt. The truth was I thought my husband would live forever. Widowhood was something that happened to other women. Today, I’m that other woman.

Last week I came across an insurance proposal for \$40,000 of life insurance. It was dated five months before Mel died. We could have afforded it.

Our agent was trying to help, but Mel was in perfect health, and I figured I could use the money for a new TV.

Today I’m working in a restaurant trying to keep my family together. Believe me, it’s tough. Please print this letter for all those wives out there who don’t appreciate life insurance as much as widows.

Sign me: Kicking myself in Winston-Salem.”

Or, how about this letter –

“I am a 48-year-old widow with four children. My husband died suddenly of a heart attack last year. Needless to say, this has been a difficult time, but thanks to my husband’s loving foresight, our family

is doing well. Throughout all the years of our marriage, in spite of tight budgets and financial difficulties, he maintained substantial life insurance policies on both his life and mine.

Even with my full-time job, I would not have been able to manage had it not been for his insurance money. At least our children's grief over the death of their father was not compounded by the loss of their home and friends.

I am shocked by the number of women who have told me in confidence that they are concerned because their husbands have little or no insurance.

They have two cars, a boat and costly vacations. They give their children music lessons, dancing lessons and orthodontic braces, but they ignore the possibility of what their children would do if the principal breadwinner were to die or become disabled.

Many people have small insurance coverage through their work and believe it is enough. They need to wake up, Ann. It cost me \$15,000 just to bury my husband. I'd hate to think of where I would be now if that dear man hadn't loved us enough to make sure we were provided for after his death.

--Carol in Martinez, Calif."

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