

“Will You Marry me?” – Why Closing is a Science

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You remember that guy making his proposal in the middle of a snow storm, using his fingers to write “will you marry me?” on the snow-covered windshields of all the vehicles sitting in front of his lady’s house? Or do you remember every year right at Times Square in New York City during the New Year countdown when THE proposals are made? All over the world, these “closings” are happening in some other odd and crazy times and places.

What about your story, if you have already made or received a marriage proposal? How about the rest who are planning or dreaming of the perfect proposal?

Most probably, the question “Will you marry me?” is one of the most difficult and important questions anyone will ever ask or be asked.

So you can imagine the huge pressure (and hopefully the pleasure afterwards) and the hope to get the proposal done and over with (some say it is the beginning of the end). It does take effort, courage preparation, and everything one has got. After all, one wants his proposal to be accepted, and live happily ever after with the better half one has chosen, right?

Do you wonder why the success rate of proposals is so high? It is much higher than the success rate of other kinds of proposals, like sales orders.

In many cases, the ability to close is the ONLY differentiator between success and failure for a sales executive. A person who cannot close a deal is NOT a salesperson, so they say.

Closing the sale does make the difference between champions and runner-ups; between the best and the rest; between life and death; between happily-ever-after and if-only-we-could-turn-back-time. The ability to get things done is the ability to CLOSE deals.

So is there a secret to become an expert in closing deals? Is CLOSING an art or science?

Before anything else, we have to understand some principles of closing. First of all, there has to be a mutual agreement, i.e. the prospects are willing to buy and the salespersons are willing to sell. Second, when we talk about the art/science of closing, we are not talking about the art/science of making a decision. Rather, it is the art/science of making a decision with which all parties agree.

The point is: CLOSING should be natural and logical, and if so, then it is science, in which you will have identical results every time, given that you do every step properly, right from the very beginning.

A deal cannot be made unless the selling processes match the buying processes. Also, there must be a buying motive(s) that need to be discovered and recognized, and fulfilled. People do the purchase because they want or need to satisfy their needs. Unless they can be satisfied, it is close to impossible to close any deal at all.

One dollar is too expensive if we don't need what it buys, or recognize the value for us. A million dollars is not too much if we can solve the problems, improve the brand image, save cost, increase revenues, enhance security, or any of these combinations – provided we can afford it and we see sufficient value.

In his article ["Tactics against Sales Tactics"](#), Charlie Lang, Managing Partner of Progress-U, mentioned that salespeople often try to push potential buyers to make decisions that "they don't feel comfortable with", and "the reason they have doubts or hesitations... is because their subconscious minds knows of some criteria they are not aware of and yet still matter in their decision-making."

Sellers, therefore, should not even attempt to ask for the close if both sides have not totally agreed upon that decision-making. If they still ask for the close, then they are only asking for rejection, and the romantic "Will you marry me?" becomes the annoying "Are we there yet?"

Yes, we can talk about all kinds of techniques to help a salesperson to close a deal more effectively. Yet, the best way to close a deal is to have the clients making the right decision to buy; making a decision with which all parties have already agreed upon. That closing will just represent the result, the climax, the highlight of all the preparations and hard work, the trust that has been established by the seller.

Looking at it this way, the closing started on Day One of the interaction between seller and buyer.

Now you know why the closing rate of asking "will you marry me?" is so high.

Now you know that the proposal of marriage – in the middle of the snow storm or during the New Year Eve countdown at Times Square - becomes just a formality. Everything should have been agreed upon before, otherwise one would not even dare to say it, right?

... and needless to say, a diamond ring helps too, but then again, all the mutual love, commitment and promises, caring and trust (to him or her ONLY) are the winning keys ... and one can live happily ever after.

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William is a senior veteran in the business world, also helped to attract and confirm investors to set up overseas companies; and was involved in a few merger and acquisitions throughout his career. He earned his stripes through his practical experience in the actual market.

He is keen to help and coach companies to explore their own potential, understand their core competence, and ride through the adversity of the economy. He is especially interested in situation where companies have to deal with constant changes, new market developments, multicultural environments, fierce competitions, and leadership development, particularly in sales. His expertise lies in building and managing sales and marketing teams, key account management, tactical negotiation and closing deals, forming alliances and partnerships through training and coaching within the organization to develop a sales- and subsequently results-oriented culture.