

The Four Abilities to Yes

The third of four abilities that can help get you there

By Terry Begue

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TRUSTABILITY

With consumer trust low, your prospects are looking for a dependable company. Trust is the winning ticket. It's important to know that people often feel the same way about a business as they feel about the salesperson. When they feel they can trust you, they'll probably trust your company. When they know they can trust you, they'll pay your price, use you over and over, and tell everyone about you.

Simply stated, trust is buyer confidence, and the power of trust cannot be overestimated. Business is all about relationships, and the most important element in any relationship is trust. At the very beginning, you need to consider the big question that's in your prospect's mind: Is this business going to deliver what it promises? Here are four things to establish your company as the best and most reliable choice.

KEEP YOUR PROMISES

I make a lot of promises to my customers both verbally and in writing. And do you know what? I keep EVERY one of them. This is the most powerful element of trust. Don't make any promises you can't keep. Your customers may never express disappointment if you don't keep your promises, but you can be sure they won't forget it if you break them.

Even the little promises? YES, especially the little promises. Much like believability, trust doesn't develop after just one interaction. Trust grows out of the little encounters between people. Remember, as the salesperson you're always on stage. People are continually looking for clues that reflect your character and communicate whether you're the right choice.

CARING

Don't you have more trust for people who care about you? Of course your prospects know your purpose is to sell, but they need to feel you have their best interests at heart as well. Both you and your customer must truly believe your services will make their life easier or better in some way.

Show your customers you care by focusing on them, especially in the beginning. If they get the impression you're just trying to sell something, then all sorts of ugly sales resistance behaviors will emerge. Your customers may become suspicious of what you say and do. People want to work with those who they feel care about them. Sell to the heart; people often don't care what you know until they first know that you care!

SHOW RESPECT

When I started my business, I was a teenager. Since all my prospects were older, it made sense to call my customers Mr. and Mrs. Now I'm in my 50's and many of my customers are younger than I am, even half my age, but I still call them Mr. and Mrs. If you want people to respect you, show you respect them first.

When you respect what people say – and respect their time, their home, their money – and you show respect in every interaction you have with them, they will give you their business.

BE CLEAR

Don't you hate it when people talk endlessly when all you want is facts? Ambiguity often creates a feeling of distrust. I can't even guess how much work I've contracted just because I communicated more clearly to my prospects than my competition did. The crazy thing is that at the outset, my clients knew I wasn't the cheapest! But

consumers are more likely to trust and work with people they understand.

Keep your communication clear and simple. Avoid fancy terminology, industry jargon or technical terms when making sales calls. These things don't impress prospective customers. Using words and phrases that are unfamiliar fosters a disconnect between you and your prospects. And remember, a confused mind often says "No." The clearer you are, the more people will see you as an expert.

Keep in mind that no matter what business you're in, you're in the relationship business first. And the foundation of all relationships is trust. Without trust there can be no loyalty, and without loyalty, your business cannot grow. Showing dependability, respect, caring and clarity are four reasons that I've closed contracts with eight out of 10 customers for many years.

If you don't enjoy selling your services, then focus on building trust. Consumers want to work with people they know, like and trust. Show your prospects you're the reliable choice and the selling will happen all by itself!

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