

Conflict vs. Cooperation in Selling

There are two main types of communication that take place in selling situations: conflict and cooperation. Which type of communication you're using will have a profound impact on whether or not you get the sale.

Conflict takes place as the result of the vast majority of sales processes and especially as the result of those taught in traditional sales training, which usually goes as follows: The salesperson initiates the sales process through a cold call. Because the prospect does not expect or anticipate the call, sales resistance automatically exists and the salesperson is forced to overcome it. This is conflict. When the first appointment takes place, the prospect again has his defenses up in anticipation of a pushy sales pitch. As a result, frivolous objections are thrown out that the salesperson must overcome. More conflict. At the end of the appointment, the salesperson must secure a time for a second appointment in order to present a proposal. The prospect says to call next week for a time, but the salesperson wants to secure it now. Even more conflict. The second appointment takes place, the proposal is presented, the salesperson asks for the order, and now the prospect really has objections. Conflict. The salesperson works to overcome them and then uses a sleazy technique such as the infamous alternate close to again ask for the order. Conflict at its worst.

Now let's take a look at a sale where the state of mind is not conflict but cooperation:

The prospect learns of the salesperson's offering through the salesperson's thoughtful, organized self-marketing plan. The prospect contacts the salesperson and asks for a meeting, to which the salesperson of course agrees. Cooperation. During the first appointment, the prospect willingly explains the need that exists and the salesperson listens and takes down all pertinent information. They mutually agree to a time to review a solution. Cooperation. The day for the proposal appointment arrives and the prospect is excited to finally learn of a way to solve his problem. The salesperson presents it and the prospect agrees that it looks great. More cooperation. There is no need for the salesperson to engage in any ethically questionable closing tactics

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because the prospect sees the value in the proposal and simply buys. Cooperation at its finest.

Ask yourself, do your sales processes look more like the first or second example? If you're experiencing conflict instead of cooperation with your prospects, perhaps it's time for you to drop the old methods of prospecting and selling and learn a new way that fosters goodwill and cooperation. The answer is self-marketing. Instead of annoying people with cold calling and pushing them to buy with tacky closes, it will induce qualified prospects to call you and simply agree to buy.

Frank J. Rumbauskas Jr. is a New York Times bestselling author who redefined selling, and who now uses his expertise in the Science of Social Dynamics to unleash unstoppable people and organizations!

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