

## **THE QUALIFIED NEED**

By Don McNamara

Unless you are in the top 2% of sales professionals worldwide it's pretty hard to create need. Only those who are able to ask questions which surface a subliminal need and then develop that need into want will be able to make that sale.

Sales people should find other ways to identify need through questions which establish the qualified need. Merely having the prospect tell us he has a need does not always identify the real need. What we really should do is probe with questions which spring the need behind the need. That's what's referred to as the qualified need. Prospects usually state their need, yet unless we can drill down a little bit further, we will not be able to discover the refined need, which if course is the qualified need.

For example you are selling cars. The suspect shows up on the lot, you approach and ask them what they are interested in. They say 'a four door sedan'. But when you see what they are looking at you notice they are looking at a sports car model. You quickly calculate the GAP between what they said and what they are looking at. It's clear there is a wide spread and you know that something is not right with this picture.

You have a choice here. You can start to extol the benefits of that racy convertible rolling down the freeway with the top down and help the buyer see how good they'd feel about themselves and the way other drivers would gawk with envy at them. Or you could probe to see why what they said they're interested in [the four door sedan] and what they're drooling over are different.

You can bet the farm on this one. More sales never happen because the sales person didn't take the step to determine the GAP between what is said and what is meant. Frankly, they failed to qualify the need.

Would it surprise you to know that with a few well chosen questions you could discover why they were looking at the sleek convertible but saying they wanted a sedan?

How about these questions for openers.

- Do you have a family? If so, what are the children's ages?
- Is this car only for you or is this a vehicle for you and your wife?
- Do you think your wife would trade with you every so often, namely you get the van and she gets the sports car?

It won't take long before reality sets in. He is daydreaming about something he desires but doesn't need. He needs a four door sedan. Can you imagine the wife's reaction when he comes home in his mid-life fantasy auto and she was thinking about practicality? If you have ever had a sale unhooked, bet that what the prospect said they wanted and what they really needed were not the same. Therefore it is recommended you create and practice asking questions related to your own product or service in order to determine the qualified need with your prospects.

Our job as sales people is to determine what the prospect says they want is really the right thing for them. This is assured when the sale is made, the paperwork and down payment are received, your prospect will show a sense of relief that you HELPED them make the right decision. If you have ever inked a sale and observed a concerned look on the buyer's face, you need to ask yourself why the concerned look? Is this sale a solid one?

Simply remember this. If the prospect says this is what they need your job is to qualify that need. In so doing you'll discover the product or service they really require as opposed to what they want or desire.

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