

## The Biggest Myth in Sales

Did you hear the one about great salespeople being great talkers? They have the gift of gab and they dazzle their customers into buying anything. Some salespeople even believe it. It's the biggest myth in sales. Here's how it got started and why it is a myth.

News travels fast. The poor salesman seems to leave a more lasting impression on the customer than the great salesperson, who makes selling look easy. Poor salespeople get remembered for their excessive talking and the word gets around. The myth is born.

These poor salespeople start talking about all they know the moment the sales call begins. They want to impress the customer with all their knowledge, thinking that selling is one-sided. Selling starts when you learn what your customer knows. Only when you hear what your customer needs should you start talking about your product or service. To really give yourself enough to work with, you should hear 3 needs before you begin your presentation. The way to do this is to question and listen.

Looks like I'm not doing anything. Some salespeople think they are selling and doing something only if they are talking. You are doing something when you actively listen. There are actual physiological changes in the body. Body temperature, heart rate and blood flow slightly increase with active listening.

A good listener focuses on the speaker and tries to determine what the speaker means. A good listener wants to gather clues about the speaker's message without judging. Try to gather clues about the speaker's feelings behind his message. Paying attention to nonverbal communication will give you more clues that you can use.

Enter with an open mind, ready to hear what your customer has to say about his business and job. Even though we know what we want to say in our selling message, we have to be flexible and respond to what our customers tell us. Selling is not a random event. Have several alternatives ready to provide solutions that meet your customer's needs.

Your job as a listener continues with providing feedback to the customer to check your understanding of his message. The feedback shows the customer what you've heard. This gives you an opportunity to correct any misunderstandings. It's also an opportunity to build a stronger communication bond when the salesperson taps into the customer's correct emotions.

The salesman's job as a listener is to translate what we hear from our customers into how our products and services can help them. Selling starts with our customers, not with us. If we're talking and not listening, we'll miss the clues. The myth of the salesman being a great talker got started by poor salespeople. Unfortunately, the great salespeople have to deal with this myth. Maybe they can address this myth while they're off golfing. That's another great myth.

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