

# How to Gain Influence and Increase B2B Sales Close Rates

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Pindar explains to Joe that if he single-mindedly focuses on making money, he's never going to achieve the wealth he desires. Instead, the secret to success is giving. He then shares what made him successful. One concept that sales leaders will be most interested in is what Pindar calls "The Law of Influence." It states that your influence is determined by how abundantly you place other people's interests first.

You can also apply this philosophy to every sales call you or your representatives make. The goal should be to help the other person win. In a subtle way, this changes your approach to an interaction with a prospect or customer. It takes the focus off yourself and onto the other person. When you make this shift from selling

to connecting, people are more likely to like, trust and engage with you.

- **Listen In**

In the classic book *How to Win Friends and Influence People*, Dale Carnegie writes about the importance of listening in the context of becoming a good conversationalist. He says that for people to enjoy talking with you, there's no need to entertain them with fascinating topics. You just have to be interested in the person with whom you're talking. Show it by asking questions and listening. When you center your attention on your prospect, it's a huge compliment to them. Because it makes them feel important, they want to continue the conversation.

Also, if you listen, you're more likely to understand the prospect's issue and to be able to find relevant solutions to it, increasing the chances that the prospect will turn into a customer. And even if you don't end up closing a sale, you will have made a good impression. The prospect is more likely to remember you and may refer someone else to your company.

There are several proven listening techniques. One is to take notes with the objective of creating a summary of the prospect's situation. You can store it in your customer relationship system and use it to guide you through future follow-up calls.

The takeaway? Instead of relying on your sales pitch, aim for an authentic conversation and the conversions will take care of themselves.

- **Empathize**

According to research conducted by David Mayer and Herbert M. Greenberg, empathy is one of the two essential qualities in a salesperson. If you conquer steps one and two, putting the customer first and listening to gain a full understanding of their situation, empathy should come naturally.

When you're listening to prospects, try to put yourself in their shoes and understand what they are feeling. This perspective is particularly important when you're selling a complex B2B product or solution. That's because your buyer is making decisions that likely involve some degree of risk. Where there is risk, there is emotion. If you understand the customer's concerns, you can persuade them from their point of view.

Ego drive is the other characteristic of a good sales person. However, although Joe was ambitious and driven, without these other skills, he was on a non-stop treadmill of sales activity and never reaching the carrot that was in front of him.

So if you want to boost your sales close rates, go back to the basic principles of human communication — focusing on another person's needs, listening, and seeing things from their point of view.

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