SPIN QUESTIONS

Situation Questions

Situation questions are used to collect facts. Inexperienced salespeople tend to ask more situation questions. Often situation questions can be answered as part of the prospecting process. Only ask "essential" situation questions as prospects quickly become impatient if too many situation questions are asked.

Examples

1. What equipment are you using now?
2. How long have you had it?
3. Is it purchased or leased?
4. How many people use it?

Problem Questions

Problem questions are used to probe for problems, points of dissatisfaction, or general difficulties that the prospect has. Answers to problem questions will direct you toward the core need of the prospect.

Examples

1. Are you satisfied with your present equipment?
2. What are the disadvantages of the way you're doing it now?
3. How difficult is it to process orders with your present system?
4. What reliability problems does your equipment have now?

Implication Questions

Implication questions are used to probe for the consequences of a problem, point of dissatisfaction, or general difficulty. When a prospect answers an implication question s/he should feel that the problem is larger and more urgent than s/he originally felt it was.

Examples

1. Does your overtime expense increase when your equipment goes down?
2. Do bottlenecks result because you only have two people who can operate your order processing system?
3. Are you experiencing high turnover and training costs because of he difficulty that your employees are having in operating your equipment?

Need Questions

Need questions are used to uncover the core need (i.e., the buying motive) of the prospect. These questions focus the prospect's attention on the solution rather than the problem. Answers to need questions will get the prospect to tell you the benefits that they are looking want.

Examples

1. How do you feel a faster machine will help you?
2. Is there any other way that a machine might help?
3. Would it help if a new system could reduce your employee turnover?
4. You said a new machine would be really useful, Useful in reducing your training costs, or is there something else?

How to use **SPIN** Questions

1. Write down at least three potential problems which the prospect may have and which your products might solve before making a sales call.
2. Write down some actual Problem Questions that you could ask to uncover each of the potential problems you've identified.
3. Ask yourself what difficulties might arise for each problem. Write down some actual Implication Questions that might get the prospect to see the problem as large and urgent to solve.
4. Write down three Need Questions for each implication.

Source: Neil Rackham, SPIN Selling, McGraw-Hill, Inc. 1988.