

~ Tips for Sales People ~

The Art of Listening

Are you tuned in to what your customers are saying ... and not saying? Rick Davis, president of Building Leaders, Inc. and author of the book, *Strategic Sales in the Building Industry*, offers these tips for becoming a better listener and determining what your customers really want.

Tip #1 – Maintain eye contact. Look your customer in the eye to show respect and maintain focus on his or her message. This simple act allows you to “connect” with your customer and show respect when he or she is speaking.

Tip #2 – Don’t interrupt. Stifle the desire to “jump in” with information or questions while your customer is sharing information with you. Powerful sales people know show their security and appreciation of a customer by not interrupting during conversations.

Tip #3 – Avoid distractions. Turn off your cell phone or pager during face-to-face customer meetings so you can focus all your attention on your meeting. If meeting in your office, turn off the computer and the phone to resist distractions.

Tip #4 – Take notes. Nothing shows respect to someone like taking notes while they speak to you. By jotting down a few quick questions and follow-up points, you’re showing that you are involved in the conversation ... even when you’re simply listening.

Tip #5 – Ask questions with sincere interest. Listen and keep an open mind to truly understand the viewpoints of your customer. Ask questions in order to hone in on what his or her needs are. Then, ask additional questions to help position yourself for a sale.

Based in Chicago since 1998, Building Leaders, Inc. has distinguished itself as the premier sales and sales management education specialists in the building materials industry. For more information, visit www.buildingleaders.com or call 773-769-4409.

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