



Sales Coach Series

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Closing the sale: time & money

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Most salespeople know the corny 'Your pen or mine?' closes but in the world of complex IT sales and long term business relationships, 'closing the sale' is just a natural progression of the discussion - but try to avoid the following

- Pushing for the order to meet your timescales (eg month end), not theirs
- Confusing 'having budget' with being ready to spend the cash. Commercial companies, large and small, need to manage cashflow, especially in relation to costly purchases. This may also include balancing expenditure against income within VAT quarters. These factors may affect when the company actually place orders and release funds.
- Not identifying 'real' project deadlines. Ask the customer when they need the solution to be live and work the implementation plan back from there. Then determine what might make these timescales slip and the implications of a delay. The fewer implications there are, the more likely it is the project timescales will move.

Closing the sale is all about being in-tune with the customer, fully understanding the business drivers, the timescales and the implications and of having sufficient rapport with the customer to understand when he/she is comfortable and ready to proceed.