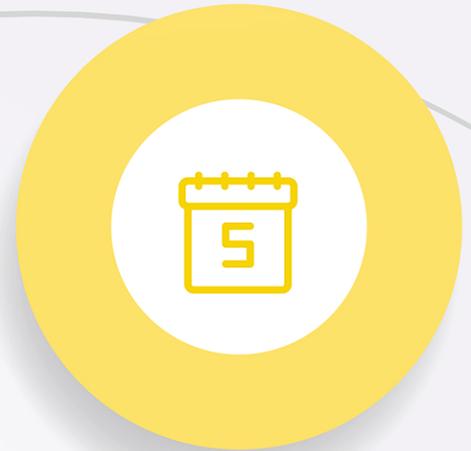


IMPROVE SALES PERFORMANCE

Sell More Stuff!



# 10 WAYS TO GET YOUR CUSTOMERS TALKING IN YOUR PRODUCT DEMOS

A "Startup Selling" Checklist



SALESQUALIA



## 1. "How does [insert recent development] affect your business?"

This question shows you're doing your homework. The morning of your presentation, spend a few minutes on Google News searching for industry announcements or issues. If they haven't seen it, give them a quick 1-2 sentence synopsis. The customer will likely have an opinion about the topic or the person mentioned in the article.

Bingo! New information and a conversation.

BONUS: Tell the customer that you'll send them a link to it, then send it later in the day or the next day in a separate email from any other follow up emails that you send about the meeting. This opens up a separate line of communication, shows that you follow up on things you say you're going to do.

## 2. "I came across an article this morning about your company on [insert industry publication]. Did you get a chance to read it?"

Same as above. This builds your credibility.

## 2. "What's changed since the last time we talked? What else is there that we didn't discuss last time that we should consider?"

Always start your presentation with a summary of the key people, critical business issues, and reasons for the presentation. Then ask this question.

Even if you just talked to your customer last week or yesterday, always be sure to ask this question. You never know when your target company might have announced a reorganization, a change in strategy, or a change in management and people involved in the decision.



## 3. "What are the 1-2 main takeaways you want to get from our time today?"

Ask this question before you begin a sales presentation, and it works whether you're presenting to a single person or a group. This question also helps to identify any customer needs you may not have uncovered in previous calls or conversations.

When you are presenting to two or more people, modify the question to:

"Before we get started, let's do a quick round robin. For each of you, what are the 1-2 main takeaways you want to get from our time today? I'll start with [insert name of a person on the call/in the meeting]. What you do want to get out of today?"

## 4. "How does this compare to what you expected to see?"

Ask this question in the middle of your product demo or sales presentation. I usually ask this question after I've shown 2-3 specific feature/benefits in our product so that I can get confirmation that I'm showing what the customer needs to see.

## 5. "What questions do you have so far?"

If there are no questions, then say, "A lot of times we get questions about [insert topic]? For example:

"A lot of times we get questions about data security..."

"A lot of times we get questions about how we use open source code..."

"A lot of times we get questions about how our software works with your current systems..."

"A lot of times we get questions about implementation timelines and how we support our customers after they're up and running."

Or combine two areas into a single question:

"A lot of times we get questions about data security and also how our software works with current systems"

Once you introduce a question or two, then your customer will want you to answer it. They'll say, "Yeah, that's a good question. How do you deal with data security?"



## 6. "What would you like to see next?"

I love this question as a follow up to the "How does this compare to what you expected to see?" question. This will show how engaged your sales prospect is in the conversation, and it gives you a chance to adjust your presentation based on what the customer wants to see.

Lastly, this question builds anticipation. When the customer replies back with a specific request, "I'd really like to see how your software handles reporting of the users..." Then you can reply, "Absolutely, we will definitely get to that, but first I need to show you XYZ feature so that you have some context on how our reporting feature works."

The anticipation creates interest and attention in your presentation.

## 7. "How would you see yourself using this?"

This is a great question to get the customer imagining themselves using your product, as well as uncovering early objections.

If you're hitting the key elements uncovered from previous conversations, the customer will say something like, "Wow, this is really great. We could have our customer service team using this to track calls in real time."

Or they might say, "I'm not sure if we could. It looks like your product does ABC and we need it do to XYZ."

Either way, you win with this question.

## 8. "How would you use this feature of the product?" or "How would this help you with [insert problem]?"

I like this question after I've shown a particular feature that is completely unique to the product. It's a chance to give the customer time to absorb what they are seeing for the first time in any product, and also gets the customer to think out loud or brainstorm with you to answer the question. Lots of times, this question transforms me into a consulting role in which I'm advising the customer on new ways they can manage and improve their business process because of our product.

"A lot of times we get questions about implementation timelines and how we support our customers after they're up and running."



□ 9. “So far, we’ve covered [insert a description about how the key business issues the customer identified are solved]. We have about 20 minutes left in our time together. What else should we cover?”

This is a great question to ask when you’re about 50-60% through the scheduled time. This also means that you need to plan accordingly! Don’t set up your presentation so that you use every last minute of the meeting to get through every last product feature!

Once you’ve hit the 2-3 main issues that the customer identified as critical business issues, and you’ve shown that you listened to the customer during your previous discovery conversations and then you can use the time to uncover additional needs that perhaps didn’t come up your first interactions.

□ 10. “How do you typically handle onboarding new technology partners? Do you assign a procurement person and a project manager to each new solution provider?”

This is a trial close question. The goal of this question is to get the customer to tell you where you are in the sales process with them.

(In sales-speak, it’s known as a “trial close” - you’re testing the waters to see if you have a sale on your hands or if you have more selling to do.)

The customer might say:

- “Yeah, this looks good but we’ll have to get IT involved to take a look.”
- “How do you guys price this?”
- “Do you offer a free trial?”

Regardless, it will show you where you are in the customer’s mind. If you’ve hit all the key issues and the customer is ready to move forward, they’ll answer your question and you can start working through the details of next steps.

If the customer avoids the question, you know that you have more selling to do and you can go back to the “How would you use this part of the product?” and “How does this compare to what you expected to see?” questions.



## So there you have it!

Ten ways to get your customers talking during your product demos. Most of all, remember this – by getting your customers to talk, you're the one in control of the conversation, not them. Own the room (or the WebEx) with the confidence that conversation and interaction is the single best way to uncover both your customer's needs and to identify if you're hitting the mark with your product.

As always, give me a call or send me an email with any questions. I'm here to help!



*If you like what you've read here or have a few tips of your own that you'd like to share, send me an email or tweet me:*

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