NEPQ BLACK BOOK OF QUESTIONS

Powerful Science-Based Questions
to Bypass Sales Resistance, Melt Objections, and Close Deals Without Pushy, Outdated Sales Tactics

7th Level

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DISCLAIMER

The publisher and the author of this book make no guarantees concerning the level of success you may experience by following the advice and strategies contained in this book, and you accept the risk that results will differ for each individual. The testimonials and examples provided in this book show exceptional results, which may not apply to the average reader, and are not intended to represent or guarantee that you will achieve the same or similar results.

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Introduction

This book has been 23 years in the making.

I remember when I was 22 years old, barely making ends meet. We lived in a small, cramped basement, and my first daughter was on the way.

No matter what I did, I couldn't sell.

Listening to my sales managers didn't work, reading old sales books didn't work—none of the traditional advice worked.

And I couldn't go to the bank and cash in excuses:

"The leads aren't good."

"The economy is tanking right now."

"People just don't want to buy."

So, the only option left?

Figure it out.

What you hold in your hands now is the end product of "figuring it out" over the last 23 years.

It's not just another sales training book built on opinions, hypotheticals, or what "should" work.

This is a sales framework built from my experience in the trenches, selling in four different industries.

It's built from my studies in human behavioral science and lessons learned from the most persuasive figures in history.

It's been tested by sales professionals around the world and has yielded statistically significant results in 161 different industries—yes, including yours.

But I know how salespeople think - and I know that no amount of proof will convince you until you've experienced it for yourself personally.

So, let's stop wasting time and help you close more deals.

Jeremy Miner

How to Use This Book

First, read through this book one time quickly.

This will help you understand the 5 Stages of Neuro-Emotional Persuasion Questioning (NEPQ) and how NEPQ is radically different from boiler room selling, consultative selling, or any other traditional framework.

Once you've done the first skim through, keep the book on your desk as reference material.

Whenever you get stuck on a specific part of your call, flip to the relevant section and test out a new question from the book.

You'll be pleasantly surprised at the reactions you get.

In this book, we provide generic examples as well as a few industry-specific examples so you can see the nuances between each industry.

Forbes recently announced there are 163 industries.

We looked through the 563,000 sales reps we've trained, and there were only two industries we didn't cover: salt mining and another industry so obscure I forgot what it is.

Even though my last name is Miner, we can't help miners out. But if you're in any other industry, there's a good chance we've trained sales professionals in your industry.

To keep this book from being 34,598 pages long, we only provide a few industry-specific examples for each section.

For more advanced, industry-specific training, scan any QR code found throughout this book, and it'll take you to a resource page specifically for Black Book owners.

As a tip, you might want to keep this book hidden somewhere so your coworkers don't see it—that way, you can keep your competitive edge. ;)

Let's get into it.

Scan the QR code or visit:

nepqblackbook.com/resources

NEPQ BLACK BOOK RESOURCES

To help further your sales training, we put together a resources page.

Simply scan the QR code or visit the link and you'll find a page where you can access the training portal for Black Book owners.

You'll also be able to ask for help from one of our NEPQ experts - and see how we might adapt NEPQ to your industry and what you sell.

We're here to help.

THE **New Model** of Selling

What exactly is the New Model of Selling?

Before we get into that, we need to revisit the three main "Eras of Selling," their unique modes of communication, and how they impact the way sales professionals currently sell. Each era has its own approach to persuasion.

Most salespeople are stuck in the first two eras of selling, and they're not even aware of it - costing them deals they *could have closed.* But once you enter the third era of selling, that's where the magic happens.

Let's start with the first era.

Selling Era #1

When you hear the words ***"boiler-room selling,"*** what first comes to mind?

Do you think about the "Wolf of Wall Street" type of selling?

Or maybe you thought about that famous quote "always be closing"?

Or maybe you just imagined a salesperson pressure selling a prospect by talking fast and loud.

Whatever came to mind, it's likely the type of selling that goes something like this:

"This is perfect for you!"

"Hey, I got a great opportunity for you!"

"Our company is the best at XYZ. We've been rated #1 for X amount of years in a row!"

Then, we talk about the features and benefits of what we do. Then we push and tell them why they need to buy – or why they need to go with you!

We are the ***least persuasive*** when we **tell** people things or attempt to dominate them, posture them, manipulate them, or push them into doing something that we want them to do.

It's just like if you tell your spouse or your teenager that they really **need** to do something for you, and you push them.

How do they typically respond?

They push back, right? That right there is **human behavior 101**.

Here are a few examples of the least persuasive ways to sell:

Presenting

We are all taught to have a great sales presentation:

"Here's a picture of our corporate office, of our company awards, of our 'Triple-A Rating' with the Better Business Bureau" – and show prospective clients how great our services and products are.

Included in this are the 60 to 90-minute pitch decks (i.e., *"We have the best this!" "We have the best that!"*).

Meanwhile, doesn't every sales professional say they have the best product or service?

Or that they're the #1 market leader?

How many sales professionals you know will tell you their product or service is the 5th best in the market?

NO ONE DOES!

They all say they are the best or have the best!

The result is that your prospects trust you less when you make those exaggerated claims (or if you talk badly about your competitors).

Why? Because they are used to every sales professional that's ever tried to sell them anything saying exactly the same things!

Note, too, that the data suggests the longer you present, the less persuasive you become. In fact, the most persuasive presentations **take up 10% or less** of the entire sales process.

One of the main reasons sales professionals struggle to close deals (especially when there are multiple stakeholders involved) is simply because they spend too much time presenting.

Later on in this book, we'll dive into what to do instead, and how to "present without presenting."

Telling Your Story

I hate to have to be the one to tell you this: but your prospects don't care about you.

They don't care about your company values...

They don't care about your customer service awards...

And they definitely don't care about how your founder bootstrapped the company during the Great Depression...

So, what do they care about?

Solving their problems. In some cases, problems they don't even realize they have, and it becomes your job to help uncover those problems (and provide solutions).

We'll show you how to do that later as well.

Using External Pressure

There is a massive difference between "external pressure" and "internal tension."

External pressure is imposed on the prospect by the salesperson when they tell the prospect what to believe and think.

Internal tension is created when the sales professional asks the right questions with the right tonality - allowing the prospect to develop their own beliefs and thoughts about the problem.

When we force conclusions onto prospects, they will reject them.

However, when prospects come to their own conclusions, not only will they accept them, they will fight for them.

"Assuming the Sale"

Have you ever heard the saying that "sales is a numbers game?"

Maybe you heard it from a colleague, your sales manager, or even from a self-proclaimed "sales expert."

What they're basically saying to you is:

"This sales process doesn't really work... So, you're gonna just have to work harder. Call more leads. Clock more hours."

But think about it...

How can that type of training give you a competitive advantage over anyone else?

Truth is - it cannot.

Unfortunately, sales will be a numbers game for you if you use traditional selling techniques.

Why?

Because traditional methods will trigger many of your prospects to enter fight or flight mode, where they will try to get rid of you...

Or worse, cause them to shut down emotionally. They stay surface level with you, only to get to the end of the conversation and get the all-too-common:

"This looks great, but I need some time to think it over."

At which point, you never hear from them again, sending you into "chase mode," am I right?

HOLY MOTHER OF MARY, let's STOP the MADNESS!

Now, let's talk about the **second mode** of communication, called **consultative selling.**

Selling Era #2

Consultative Selling

Consultative selling became popular in the late 1970s and early 1980s with methodologies put forward by Sandler Institute and books like Neil Rackham's *SPIN Selling.*

Rackham was a college professor (and a great academic) who taught how to ask logical questions to find the needs of the prospect.

Compared to boiler-room sales tactics, consultative selling techniques seemed revolutionary.

But the downfall of this approach?

When you only ask **logical, surface-level questions** like...

"What's the #1 challenge you're facing?"

"What are two things keeping you up at night?"

"If you waved a magic wand and could solve the problem, what would that look like?"

What kind of answers do you think you're going to get?

Logical, surface-level answers.

And let me ask you, do people buy on logic or emotion?

Dale Carnegie, author of How to Win Friends and Influence People, says:

"When dealing with people, we are not dealing with creatures of logic. We are dealing with creatures of emotion, creatures bristling with prejudices and motivated by pride and vanity."

This is why you should **never sell to just the needs of the client.**

It bears repeating:

You should never sell to what your prospect thinks they need – because the truth is, most of your prospects don't really understand what they need when you first talk to them.

Imagine waking up with a terrible migraine that just won't go away. You think to yourself, "Maybe I should go to urgent care and get some medicine," which makes sense, right?

Next, you start thinking about your budget: "$75 co-pay... Maybe $25 after insurance for the medication... Great! I just need $100 to solve my problem..."

But then you meet with the doctor, who starts asking you some very pointed questions about your migraine.

"What does the pain feel like?"

"Is the pain focused in a specific area?"

"How long have you had the pain?"

"What is the pain doing to you?"

"What is the pain preventing you from being able to do?"

These questions begin to stir up some major internal tension; you start to suspect that you might have a much bigger problem than you originally thought you had!

And so this is why you can never sell to just the needs of the prospect.

You have to sell to the real problems that your questioning ability and tonality help them find—problems they might not realize they have.

Are you with me?

Now, let's look at some **examples of consultative questions that trigger resistance.**

“What are you looking for in a solution?”

Once again, it’s just a surface-level question.

You have to learn how to go far deeper than that if you want to pull out their emotions and create genuine urgency in the sale.

“What sort of budget do you have for this type of thing?”
[asked early in the conversation]

Here is the problem: early in the conversation, they don’t even know what their real problems are yet, so how can they possibly know what budget they need to solve them?

Instead, shift it to this - this is an example of a **NEPQ Qualifying question**.

“What type of funds do you have or have access to so you can financially protect Cindy and the kids when you do pass away?”
(if you are selling life insurance)

Notice I just tied in them getting the funds to the end result, which in this case is financially protecting Cindy and the kids.

Use it later on in the conversation after you have helped them find problems they didn’t know they had.

Let’s move onto the next example of a surface level question.

“Who besides you will be involved in the decision?”

Most of your prospects will not just magically open up to you if you ask questions this way. **It’s far too surface-level.**

Instead, ask it this way:

“How does your spouse feel about you getting coverage so she’s financially protected when you pass and doesn’t have to go get a second job to pay for the mortgage?”
(If you’re selling mortgage insurance)

This is an example of a **NEPQ Situation Question.**

Watch how they open up to you when you ask it that way.

Remember, if you use the same type of questions that every salesperson who’s trying to sell them is using, you’ll sound like what?

You’ll sound like everyone else.

This could be a major problem if your prospect sees you as *just another salesperson trying to stuff your solution down their throat.*

Selling Era #3

Dialogue

Dialogue is the foundation for the New Model of Selling and involves Neuro-Emotional Persuasion Questioning (NEPQ).

We are the most persuasive when we get others to pull us in and **persuade themselves**.

So, how do you get your prospects to persuade and sell themselves and PULL you in?

That's the trillion-dollar question.

Do you want to acquire that skill?

How much easier would selling be for you if you could get prospects to do all the work?

Get your prospects to pull you in...

Get your prospects to sell themselves...

Get your prospects to overcome their own objections...

How much more commission would you make than you are now with that skill set?

I can't tell for sure - but for most sales professionals, it would be a considerable amount.

So how do you do this? How do you get prospects to do all the work?

Do you just show up and give your prospects permission to persuade themselves?

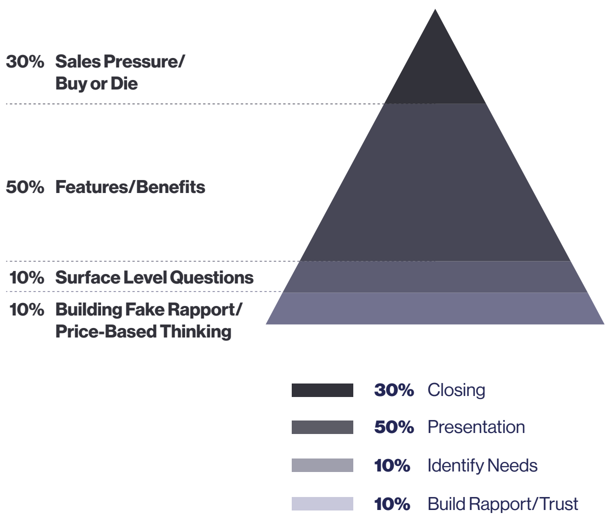
Do you say, *"Hey, Mr. Prospect, go ahead and persuade yourself. By the way, what's your bank info?"*

No, of course not.

You have to learn specific skilled questions, when to ask them, and how to ask them in a **step-by-step structure**.

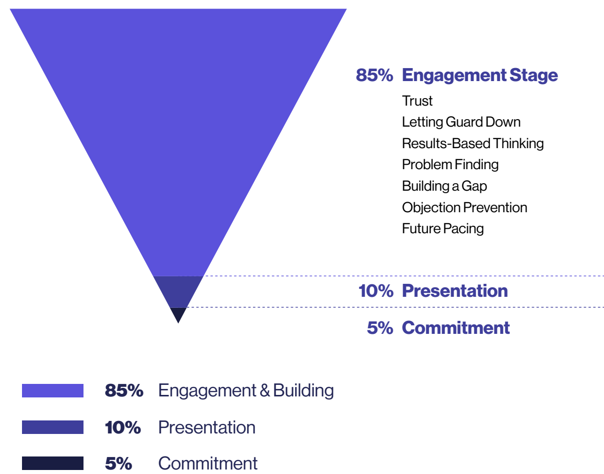
AIDA Model

"Old Model"



NEPQ Neuro-Emotional Persuasion Questioning

"New Model"



It's this delicate fusion of skilled questions, timing, and tonality that will get your prospects to pull you in and sell themselves rather than you trying to do it.

So now we've covered the three eras of selling, ask yourself where you are at.

Are you a boiler-room salesperson?

Are you a consultative salesperson?

Or are you a dialogue-based sales professional?

It's okay if you're not where you want to be right now, that's what this book is for.

Before we move further, I want to make an important distinction.

When I talk about using NEPQ questions, **I'm not referring to questions that are designed to get people to say what you want them to say.**

That's what average salespeople do.

The questions I'm referring to are questions that are intended to bring out your prospect's inner truths (i.e., their emotions).

They are intended to get a human being into their emotional state - so it causes them to want to open up to you and go below the surface.

That's what NEPQ is all about.

What NEPQ Questions Will Do For You

Let's quickly look at what NEPQ Questions (aka the New Model of Selling) will do for you.

First, these questions help your prospects analyze and diagnose their problems, their root causes, and how these problems have affected them personally.

They also help uncover what their problems are, if any, and find out if they want to change their situation.

NEPQ Questions engage your prospects emotionally, making them feel like they're part of the process.

When you listen to their answers, and then go further with deeper questions, they will feel understood, respected, and validated.

Traditional sales questions make people feel like they are in a job interview (or worse, being interrogated) - and they tend to close up.

NEPQ questions make sales conversations feel like having coffee with a close friend - allowing for an open, honest conversation between you and the prospect.

NEPQ Questions internally persuade your prospect—

because in answering these, they not only tell you what their problems are, why they have those problems (what caused them), and how these problems are affecting them – but most importantly, they are telling themselves!

Here's how the process works:

Your prospect begins to consciously and subconsciously internalize what they are saying to you.

Their answers help them look at - and challenge - their beliefs as to why they keep allowing their present situation to continue.

In doing so, their answers can give them a **different perspective** on why they keep allowing their problem to happen.

They experience a very powerful internal motivator that makes them automatically feel like changing their situation and taking action NOW - instead of 'someday.'

When you ask the right NEPQ questions at the right time in the conversation, you don't have to try to persuade them anymore because **your questions help your prospects persuade themselves!**

Just ask the skilled questions that I will give you access to and then listen to their responses.

You might be pleasantly shocked at how simple this process is.

Most importantly, NEPQ questions **put you in complete control of the conversation,** not for power or manipulation, but for you to keep the sales conversation on the right path.

In summary, NEPQ Questions **empower your potential customers** to get in touch with their emotions about their present circumstances and want to do something about them.

They will want to change, and they will want to make that change with you. They now view you as a trusted authority.

It's similar to a good doctor; he or she does not just walk in the room and give the patient a prescription (their solution) without first asking questions about the problem, what caused it, and how it's affecting that patient, right?

Because if that doctor did, they'd be making assumptions (most likely the wrong ones) since it's the patient who knows their own symptoms. However, they might not know the solution to their problem, but the doctor will.

Since the doctor takes the time to ask skilled questions and listen, the patient feels like they are part of the process. This being the case, the patient will more than likely accept the prescription (solution) the doctor gives them.

Add this approach to how you sell, and you'll notice prospects will start to regard you as the authority and NOT the adversary...

You'll also start to see that prospects will want to work with you to overcome their own concerns. And at the end, you'll notice they are more likely to accept what you are offering.

What else do questions do?

NEPQ Questions engage your prospects emotionally, making them feel like they're part of the process.

Your questions will open up your prospects to really think about the consequences and how they'll be affected if they do nothing to solve their problems.

Here's another thing NEPQ Questions do...

NEPQ Questions create value in your expertise and in the product/service you offer.

By asking the right questions at the right time in the conversation, you automatically create value in who you are and what you represent.

Your prospects will buy into you first, and the strength of how much you understand them will come from listening to their answers.

Here's how this could look...

Say you sell franchises, and you have a booth set up at a trade show. Someone comes up and asks you to tell them more about what you do. Instead of going into a classical sales pitch, first find out why they asked.

Briefly answer the question with your Personalized Introduction.

By the way, an NEPQ Personalized Introduction is where you tell them two to three generic problems they would associate with their industry and how what you do helps people solve those problems.

Here's a quick example:

> **"Well, you know how a lot of people nowadays are finding it harder to get by with corporate downsizing, lack of job security, and higher cost of living?**
>
> **We help people set up their own franchise businesses so they can start taking care of themselves, their families, and have more control."**

What should you do next?

Follow immediately with an NEPQ Situation Question such as...

> **"What do you do for a living yourself?"**

Now, you're in a two-way conversation.

You start by asking them NEPQ Situation Questions about what they are presently doing, how long they have been doing it, what they like, what they don't like about it, and how they feel about it.

If you know the right skilled questions to ask them at the right time in the conversation, they will look very seriously at changing their situation.

This is what I mean by NEPQ Questions creating value in you and what you sell.

Never assume they are looking to start their own business just because they approached you.

Instead, find out what they are looking for by asking what problems they have, if any, why they have those problems, what those problems are doing to them, and whether or not they want to change their situation.

Now, there are a few more ways that NEPQ Questions can help you out.

NEPQ Questions get prospects to become open to your ideas.

You can make suggestions like—

> **"What if it wasn't what you thought it was? Would you be open to looking at it from another perspective?"**

Oh, and you're really going to like this next one:

NEPQ Questions help your prospects overcome their own concerns (aka objections).

This is key if you want to be a top 1% earner in your industry.

When faced with a prospect who has a concern, instead of handling it with a rebuttal like you would an objection, address the concern by asking questions.

Seek to get behind the concern so that you can understand it.

Keep asking skilled questions to help them come up with their own solution to overcome their own concern.

One simple thing you can do right now is to turn your statements into questions.

Instead of telling your prospects about what you know and what you have...

Ask questions that will uncover and explore what they know about the subject first.

If you tell your prospects your solution outright, you are the one who owns the problem and the solution - not your prospect.

The result is your potential customer is far less attached.

'Telling' is far less persuasive.

On the other hand, when you ask questions, they're immersed in the process and will start to own their own problems along with a need to solve the problems.

The people you speak with will start saying things like:

"Gosh, why do I keep putting off buying XYZ?"

"Why do I keep investing my money with this firm? Maybe I should look at what this guy is going over with me... Maybe I could probably get a higher return?"

"Why do I keep commuting to work an hour each way when I could be like this lady working from my home?"

"Wow, why do I keep advertising my business this way when I could be getting leads that have higher conversions for my sales team?"

They will keep questioning themselves.

"What's preventing me from doing this? What's holding me back?"

They will question why they allow themselves to stay in that same situation—at which point they'll begin to seriously think about doing something to change their situation.

They will start to persuade themselves to be ready to make that change now—not next week, month, or year.

So, let me ask you this: **Which form of persuasion is more powerful?**

When your prospect persuades themselves to want to make a change with you? Or when you try to persuade them to make a change with you?

I think you know the answer by now.

When someone persuades themselves, they're internally motivated—and for their own reasons. There's a big difference between internal and external motivation.

While external motivations wear off, like water drying off quickly after taking a shower, **internal motivation never dies.**

So, later in the sales conversation, after you've listened...

That's when you can suggest that you might know of a solution that could take care of their problems or help them get where they want to go.

Would most of your potential customers be open to listening to you?

Of course, they will, and you know what?

A very interesting thing will happen: your prospect will like you.

Prospects will start calling you back and chasing you rather than you chasing them.

The reason for this is you have become what I call a "trusted authority" in their eyes.

Because for the first time in a long time, they know that you are genuinely interested in them and what they are looking for.

You're not just another salesperson trying to stuff your solution down their throat.

Now, how does this look in action?
It's based on the 5-stage NEPQ structure.

Turn the page, and I'll show you how it works.

The 5 Stages of NEPQ

Also known as **Neuro Emotional Persuasion Questioning.**

STAGE 1

The Connection Stage

Connection Questions
Puts the focus on them and off you.

STAGE 2

The Engagement Stage

Situation Questions
Helps you and the prospect find out their current situation.

Problem Awareness Questions
Opens up the emotional door to finding out what their problems are, why they have those problems, and how it is affecting them.

Solution Awareness Questions
Helps them see what their future looks like once their problems are solved.

Consequence Questions
Helps your prospect question their way of thinking and explore the consequences if they do nothing.

Qualifying Questions
Confirms how important it is for them to make a change and take action.

STAGE 3

The Transition Stage

Transition Questions
Transition to presenting your solution.

STAGE 4

The Presentation Stage

Feedback | Agreement
Demonstrates how the specific advantages & benefits of your solution will solve their problem.

STAGE 5

The Commitment Stage

Commitment Questions
Helps them commit & take the next step towards purchasing your solution.

The 5 Stages of NEPQ

STAGE 1

The Connection Stage

The Connection Stage covers what to say when you first connect with a prospect. It involves asking "Connection Questions."

Connection Questions

The purpose of Connection Questions is... well... to ***connect*** with your prospect.

They are designed to disarm the prospects - not alarm the prospects, like most salespeople do when they get into "sales mode".

Within the **first 7-12 seconds** of every sales interaction, your prospects are subconsciously picking up on your **verbal and non-verbal cues,** triggering their brain to react in one of two ways:

1 If you come across as **aggressive, needy, and attached,** and you don't know the right questions to ask, it triggers your prospect's brain to go into fight or flight mode.

This is where they try to get rid of you fast and say things like:

"I'm too busy now."

"Can you call me back later?"

"I don't need it; we already have that."

Especially when you are calling aged leads (i.e., leads that other salespeople are also calling), you will trigger them quickly if you don't disarm them from the start.

2 If you come across as **neutral, calm, and detached**—and ask the right questions—it triggers their brain to become **so curious that they feel they have to engage.**

Suddenly, they want to open up to you as you might have something very important to them.

As sales professionals, we have to **come across as detached from the expectations of making the sale.**

Instead, we need to refocus on whether our prospects have problems that we can actually solve.

Now, do I mean that you should get on a call and NOT make sales?

No. Heck no.

Your goal is to make a sale on every call, but only for the people you can actually help.

The moment they feel like they are being sold is the moment they shut down.

So what does it look like? Let's take a look at NEPQ Connection Questions in action.

NEPQ Connection Questions — In Action

Remember, NEPQ **Connection Questions** take the focus off you, put it on them, and help lower their guard.

Here are a few generic examples of connection questions in action:

Have you found what you're wanting, or are you still looking for...?

When you talked with ______, what was it that you guys talked about that caused you... to wanna look into this further?*

When you saw the ad that was going over ______, what was it they were talking about... that caused you to want to... look into this further?

*Throughout this book, you'll find ellipses in our scripts and examples. These are intentional. They are what we call "Verbal Pauses".

Why do we have them in our scripts and examples?

Many reasons. One, they help you sound unscripted and genuinely interested in the prospect.

Two, by slowing down, it naturally causes the prospect to think deeper about their problems - which gets them to emotionally open up and tell you their real problems, and how their problems are affecting them personally.

This builds internal tension inside of prospects - which is important later down the line, as you'll see in the Consequence Questions section.

For more examples, scan one of the QR codes in this book and it'll take you to the book resource page with more video examples.

Now, the scripts differ depending on whether you're engaging with ***outbound*** or ***inbound*** leads.

Outbound Leads

The following are generic examples so you can see the structure for outbound leads, which in our mind means a prospect has maybe put in their name, email, and phone number...

Maybe they responded to an ad and asked someone to call them back. But they don't know who is calling them or when.

So, the beginning of the call might sound like this:

YOU

Hey [Prospect Name], this is just [Your Name]... with [Your Company]... It looks like you recently responded to an ad on ______ and asked us to call you... about possibly helping you with ______. And I just had a few minutes before my next appointment... I guess I should start off by asking you, have you found what you're looking for, or are you still looking for... [repeat back the end result]?

PROSPECT RESPONDS...

YOU

And do you know what you're... looking for?

PROSPECT RESPONDS...

YOU

So when you saw the ad, what was it they were going through...that caused you to... wanna look into this further?

PROSPECT RESPONDS...

YOU — **STATUS FRAME**

Now, this call is pretty basic; it's really more for us to find out about what you're using now, what results you're getting, compared to what you might be wanting, to see what that GAP looks like...*

And towards the end of the call, if you feel like it... "might be"... what you're looking for, we can talk about "possible" next steps.

Would that help you?

*This is what we call a **Status Frame.** It's designed to position you as the expert and authority on the call - that way, you don't come off as needy and low-status, like most salespeople do.

To see what type of tonality to use with this question, check out the book resource page.

Here's another variation of the script you could use for an outbound lead:

YOU

Hey [Prospect Name], this is just [Your Name] ... with [Your Company] ... it looks like you recently responded to an ad asking us to call you back about looking at getting possible help with [________________] so that you could [[repeat back the end result]], right?

PROSPECT RESPONDS...

YOU

Hey, when you went through the ad and saw [_________] what was it about the ad/ [(however they found you)] ... that attracted your attention? And do you know what you're... looking for?

PROSPECT RESPONDS...

YOU · STATUS FRAME

Now, this call is pretty basic; it's really more for us to find out about what you're using now, what results you're getting, compared to what you might be wanting, to see what that GAP looks like...

Towards the end of the call, if you feel like it might be what you're looking for, we can talk about possible next steps.

Would that help you?

Inbound Leads

Inbound leads are prospects that have booked on your calendar, and you might be meeting them on Zoom, or you could be calling them, or you might be meeting them at their home or office.

It's a scheduled appointment.

YOU

Hey [Prospect Name] this is just [Your Name] ... with [Your Company] ... it looks like you recently booked on our calendar... about possibly getting help with [their problem] so that you can [repeat back the end result], right?

PROSPECT RESPONDS...

YOU

So when you went through the ad where XYZ was talking. What was it about what they were saying that caused you to... wanna look into this further?

PROSPECT RESPONDS...

YOU ◆ STATUS FRAME

Now, this call is pretty basic; it's really more for us to find out about what you're using now, what results you're getting, compared to what you're wanting, to see what that GAP looks like...

And towards the end of the call, if you feel like it... "it might be"... what you're looking for, we can talk about "possible" next steps.

Would that help you?

PROSPECT RESPONDS...

YOU

And what were you hoping to get out of the call with us today, just so we have a better understanding?

Now, you're going to get different responses here, and depending on how they respond, you will determine what Connection Question to ask next.

Again, this is outside the scope of this Black Book.

All the different responses and scenarios are in our virtual training platform for clients, which you can access by reaching out to us should you want advanced training that's customized for your industry and what you sell.

So, we've included a few examples of industry-specific questions to keep the book to an appropriate length.

Connection Questions Example

Auto Industry | Outbound

YOU

Hi, is [Prospect Name] there?

PROSPECT RESPONDS...

YOU

Hey [Prospect Name], yea... it's just* [Your Name] from [Company Name].

You had asked us to call you back... it looks like you responded to an ad on Facebook this morning about possibly looking at that... Red 2022 A6 Audi, right?

**The word "just" implies that they should already know you.*

PROSPECT RESPONDS...

YOU

Yea, we just got that car on a trade-in that you were looking at; what aspects of the car, I guess... caused you to maybe... want to test drive it?

PROSPECT RESPONDS...

YOU

Aww, okay, and do you know what type of vehicle you might be looking for... besides the red Audi... just in case it's already gone... by the time you could get down here to look at it?**

***This builds urgency; the car could be gone soon.*

Connection Questions Example

SaaS - For Associations | Inbound

YOU

It looks like you booked with us to look at possible outside help with your awards program and automate that process, right?

PROSPECT RESPONDS...

YOU

So when you were talking to [__________], what was it you guys were going over that caused you to want to look into this further?

PROSPECT RESPONDS...

YOU ◆ STATUS FRAME

Aww, and just so you know... these first calls are pretty basic... it's really more for us to understand what you're doing to manage the (program/process) now... the results you're getting from that... compared to what you might really be wanting... to see what that GAP looks like...

And then, towards the end, if you feel like this... might be... what you're looking for, we can talk about "possible" next steps.

Would that help you?

Connection Questions Example

HVAC | In-Home Appointment

YOU

Okay, so it looks like one of our technicians, [Technician Name] , was just recently out here… and you scheduled about possibly looking at upgrading your heating/cooling system to get your air circulating better in the upstairs area… of the home, right?

PROSPECT RESPONDS…

YOU

So when you were talking to [Technician Name] when he was out here looking at your equipment… besides just wanting the air conditioning to cool upstairs better… what was it about what he was mentioning to you that caused you to want to look into this further?

PROSPECT RESPONDS…

YOU ◆ **STATUS FRAME**

Aww, okay, yea and really, the purpose of us coming over is to really find out more about the equipment you have now… and how it's cooling the home and upstairs area… compared to what you need it to do… to see what that GAP might look like…

And then before I leave, if you feel that, hey, this "might" be what you're looking for, we can talk about "possible" next steps.

Would that help you guys?

Connection Questions Example

Financial Services B2C | Inbound Lead on Zoom

YOU

Hi [Prospect Name], can you hear me? Can you see me?

PROSPECT RESPONDS...

YOU

Okay, it looks like you had booked on the calendar about possible outside help with your retirement planning and 401k options... to get a higher rate of return... Right?

PROSPECT RESPONDS...

YOU

Aww, okay, now it looks like you spoke with my associate _______ the other day... I guess what was it that you guys talked about with her that caused ya... to maybe wanna... look into this further?

PROSPECT RESPONDS...

YOU ◆ STATUS FRAME

Aww, I see, and I would say the first part of this call is pretty basic; it's really more for us to understand... kinda what you're doing now to save for retirement and the results you have been getting... compared to maybe what you want them to be... to see what that gap looks like...

And then, towards the end of the call, if you feel like, "Hey, this "might" be what you're looking for, we can talk about "possible" next steps.

Would that help you?

PROSPECT RESPONDS...

YOU

And what were you hoping to get out of the call with us today, just so I have a better understanding?

PROSPECT RESPONDS...

(In this example, they know your offer, costs, etc.)

YOU

Oh yea, yea, I'll go through all the different options for sure. It really all depends on your age, your income when you want to retire, and what your expenses look like. Once we understand all those details, I can go over all the different options we have for our clients...

Would that help you?

When you've asked the Connection Questions, you can then move on to the **Engagement Stage.**

STAGE 2

THE Engagement Stage

Situation Questions

These questions will be the foundation on which you'll build your entire sales conversation.

Situation Questions will allow you to get facts about your prospect's current situation.

Remember: We have to help them find out their real situation because most of your prospects don't know what their problems are until you help uncover them.

Situation Questions have a two-fold purpose:

1. They help us understand their current situation.
2. They also help your prospect discover problems they might be unaware of.

Once you establish a foundation in the prospect's mind of what their situation is, you can then start building a gap from where they are now to where they want to be.

Typically, in most industries, gap-building starts with asking NEPQ Problem Awareness Questions (more on this later).

That being said, within some industries (such as insurance), you can even start building the gap when asking NEPQ Situation Questions.

In general, Situation Questions are most effective when used as a fact-finding strategy.

Remember, these help both you and the prospect understand what their real situation is.

Most prospects don't even know what their real situation is when you first start talking to them.

If you cannot help them see their real situation, then it's impossible to build a GAP from where they are to where they want to be.

NEPQ Situation Questions — In Action

Here are some examples:

What are you doing now?

What are you using now?

How long have you been...?

What got you involved with...?

What does their process look like...?

How many do they have?

Can you walk me through what you're doing now to...?

How are you doing XYZ now?

Can you walk me through what your process is for...?

Now, do you do A, B, or C?

Okay, and what type of ________ do you have now, just so I understand?

How many _________ do you have so I have more context?

Your _________ can you tell me a little bit more about those?

You mentioned in your application that you're having some issues with __________. Can you tell me a little bit more about that?

What are you doing now to get ___________ so I have more background?

Now, obviously, you wouldn't ask this many questions - these are just generic examples you can choose from. Usually, you'd ask just 3 or 4 in a sales conversation.

When you've felt you have a good understanding of their situation, you can move on to the next stage.

The following are Situation Questions you would ask in the general life insurance or final expense industry - remember, these are questions that come AFTER Connection Questions:

Situation Questions Example

Life Insurance

SCENARIO 1

If they have inferred they don't have any coverage now from your Connection questions

YOU

It doesn't sound like you have life insurance now... do you have any savings, stocks, or like when something does happen to you... like what would be used to pay [insert what they said they wanted to cover in connection] for the mortgage, the car payments, credit card debt, funeral services, and ALL the BILLS and EXPENSES; what would be used to pay for all that?*

*Verbal pace this question out.

PROSPECT RESPONDS...

YOU

**And who would be the person responsible for having to like...
Go in, sit down, and actually meet the funeral director and have to plan and pay for everything?**

PROSPECT RESPONDS...

YOU

Now... would they be forced to pay out of pocket, or... would they have to get a loan and have to pay all the interest and stuff?**

**Use a concerned tone for this question.

Situation Questions Example (continued)

Life Insurance

SCENARIO 2
If they say: "I'm not sure."

YOU

Act confused and concerned

Would they have that saved up for something unexpected like that, or... would they just.. end up being forced to get a loan and have to pay payments with all the interest for a few years or something like that?

YOU

And who would be the person responsible for having to like... Go in, sit down, and actually meet the funeral director and plan and pay for everything?

SCENARIO 3
If they have mentioned other coverage

YOU

Now you mentioned that you had *insert amount of coverage* ; what else, if anything, do you have there, like any 401ks, stocks, or other assets that would be passed down when something does happen to you?

PROSPECT RESPONDS...

YOU

Now, do you want to financially protect all your assets so [Family Member] doesn't have to go and get a second job and can still retire on time, or what do you want to do for them?

PROSPECT RESPONDS...

SCENARIO 4
If they have a policy

YOU

And is that a policy that will last forever like a whole life policy, or will it eventually expire?

PROSPECT RESPONDS...

YOU

How long have you had that for?

PROSPECT RESPONDS...

YOU

How much are they making you pay just to have that coverage?

PROSPECT RESPONDS...

YOU

Aww, and when you originally got this policy, what made you decide to go with it vs another option?

Here is a quick note on how to bridge your questions:

We don't want to sit there, ask a question, wait for an answer, ask another question, wait for another answer—and on and on and on.

Instead, we have to use what are called verbal cues.

Verbal cues help **bridge questions**, making sure your conversation doesn't sound scripted.

Some examples are "Ahh," "Oh, I see," and "That makes sense" - but again, don't use these blindly. Take a look at some of our video trainings to see how to bridge it seamlessly into your conversation.

Situation Questions Example

Marketing Agency
(Selling Leads To Real Estate Agents)

YOU

Walk me through it. What are you doing now to bring in new leads to get new listings?

PROSPECT RESPONDS...

YOU

How long have you been doing that for?

PROSPECT RESPONDS...

YOU

So what caused you to go that route rather than [repeat other advertising alternatives, social media platforms, direct mail, etc.] ?

PROSPECT RESPONDS...

YOU

And what is the average home price in your area?

PROSPECT RESPONDS...

YOU

Aww, and how many leads are you getting on average per month?

PROSPECT RESPONDS...

YOU

What about referrals?

Situation Questions Example (continued)

Marketing Agency
(Selling Leads To Real Estate Agents)

PROSPECT RESPONDS...

I'm getting, on average, 60 leads a month.

YOU

And how many listings are you getting on average every month from those _______ leads?

PROSPECT RESPONDS...

3 listings

YOU

And how many are actually closing?

PROSPECT RESPONDS...

2 closes

YOU

Only 2?*

*Use a confused/concerned tone here

PROSPECT RESPONDS...

YOU

So, if you're getting 60 leads a month, what do you feel is causing you to only get three listings from those?

PROSPECT RESPONDS...

YOU

How many closings do you feel you could get every month if you had 60 leads a month, but they were of a much higher quality, meaning really interested buyers?

PROSPECT RESPONDS...

YOU

Okay, so six closings a month. And what is your average commission per property?

PROSPECT RESPONDS...

YOU

Around 8k a home, right?

PROSPECT RESPONDS...

YOU

So what's the math on that? Do you have your phone? So if you are losing on average four closings a month X 8k each, what is the math on that?

(Let them add it up on the phone while you add it on the phone.)

PROSPECT RESPONDS...

YOU

So you're losing about 32k a month in commissions you should be making if you had the better lead type? Do you want to change that?

Situation Questions Example

Relationship Therapy/Psychologist/Therapy Coaching

YOU

So, I was reading your application form, and you mentioned that you are having some issues with [potential issue(s): connection, intimacy, resentment, communication, etc.] ... with your husband.

PROSPECT RESPONDS...

YOU

Can you tell me a little bit more about that?

PROSPECT RESPONDS...

YOU

What else is going on?

PROSPECT RESPONDS...

YOU

What are you doing now to try to resolve the [potential issue(s): connection, intimacy, resentment, communication, etc.] with your husband?

PROSPECT RESPONDS...

YOU

And how long have you been doing that for?

PROSPECT RESPONDS...

YOU

Anything else you're doing?

PROSPECT RESPONDS...

YOU

I'm curious: what got you involved in doing that?

After asking the relevant situational questions, you'll move into asking **Problem Awareness Questions.**

Problem Awareness Questions

Problem Awareness Questions help you better understand **what your prospect's real problems are, the root causes of these problems, and how these problems are negatively affecting them.**

As you ask Problem Awareness Questions, you build the gap from where your prospect is now to where they want to be.

Conventional sales wisdom tells us to be **problem solvers.**

Except that 'being a problem solver' is not enough to give you a competitive advantage over other reps who are also working at selling the same prospects.

Problem-solving only really happens after they buy the policy from you and you actually solve their problems.

To stand out and get that competitive advantage, you have to be a *problem-finder.*

After all, you must find problems before you can solve them.

And you find problems by asking the right questions, at the right time, with the right tonality.

It's essential to realize that most of your prospects don't even know they have a problem when they first talk to you.

If we can't help them find problems and have them emotionally engage with those problems, it's impossible for them to feel any need or urgency to buy from us.

Let's see NEPQ Problem Awareness Questions in action.

NEPQ Problem Awareness Questions — In Action

Remember, Problem Awareness Questions help you and the prospect understand what their real problems are, the root cause of these problems, and how they're affecting them or will affect them.

These questions help answer the following:

1 Do they like their present situation?

2 What is their past history?

You will ask as many of these questions as needed.

On average, it's usually 3-4 questions, but sometimes a few more, depending on the answers you receive.

Do you like what you're...?

Do you like what you...?

Do you want to...?

What makes you feel like [Current Provider/Product]'s not enough, though?

NEPQ PROBLEM AWARENESS

Two Truths

Two Truths is an expansion on the Problem Awareness stage - and you should only use this if you need it.

Nobody likes 100% of what they do or have, so we use the "Two Truths" to probe and understand which parts of their situation they'd be open to change. Generic example:

YOU

So, to me, it sounds like things are going 100% perfect for you. Is there anything you would change about your [present situation], results you're getting from that if you... if you could?

IF PROSPECT SAYS "NO, I DON'T LIKE IT":

YOU

So I'm curious: what is it about your ___________ that you don't like?

PROSPECT RESPONDS...

YOU

Why would you change that?

PROSPECT RESPONDS...

YOU

Why is that important to you now, though?

NEPQ PROBLEM AWARENESS

Clarifying Questions

When prospects start to realize that their current situation isn't optimal or that they're willing to make a change...

Clarifying questions are a great way to help them expand on reasons for why making a change is a good decision.

If they expand on what they don't like about their current situation:

Oh, what do you mean by that?

Can I ask what you mean when you said...?

What do you mean by that?

I'm not sure I quite understand?

When you said... Could you expand on that for me?

So do you mean that...?

Let me see if I understand what you want/what you're saying...

NEPQ PROBLEM AWARENESS

Probing Questions

We call this "Precision Probing."

Prospects tend to give general and vague answers around the most important issues... this is why we interject with Probing Questions to get specific and targeted answers.

Here's a general example of how the sequence of questions might sound after they tell you a problem they have:

YOU

How long has that been going on?

PROSPECT RESPONDS...

YOU

Has that had... has that had an impact on you?

PROSPECT RESPONDS...

YOU

In what way, though?

PROSPECT RESPONDS...

YOU

You don't sound so sure about it... what don't you like?

PROSPECT RESPONDS...

YOU

Okay, well, let's do this just so I can see the rationale behind why you might be looking for [what they said they wanted].

PROSPECT RESPONDS...

YOU

But besides [reason #1] and [reason #2] [plug in what they have already told you] ... what's the main reason why you might be looking [your product/service] ... rather than [repeat back alternative] ?

Problem Awareness Questions Example

Financial Services

YOU

So, with the retirement strategies you have now... do you... do you LIKE... the returns you have been getting?*

*Make sure you use a verbal pause with this type of question; that is what the periods between the words signify.

PROSPECT RESPONDS: THEY SAY "YES"

YOU

What do you like about it?

PROSPECT RESPONDS...

YOU

So, to me, it sounds like things are going 100% perfect for you. What would you change if you could?

PROSPECT RESPONDS. MOST PROSPECTS, WHEN YOU SAY "100% PERFECT," WILL SAY:

Well, we like them, but it's not 100% perfect.

YOU

Not 100% perfect?

Watch how they respond at that point.

Problem Awareness Questions Example

Staffing/Recruiting Agency

SCENARIO 1

They are only using job boards

YOU

You've been posting jobs on [LinkedIn] for the past [several years] ... I mean.. what's caused you to feel like [LinkedIn's] not getting you the right people?

PROSPECT RESPONDS...

YOU

So you've had your internal recruiter working on this for the last few months... I mean... What's caused you to feel like they're not getting you the right people?

PROSPECT RESPONDS...

YOU

So you've been working with [these two] for the last [four years] ...

Then continue with these Problem Awareness questions.

YOU

Do you... do you *like* ...the quality/ results you've been getting?*

PROSPECT RESPONDS...

Problem Awareness Questions Example (continued)

Staffing/Recruiting Agency

YOU

*(skeptical/concerned tone)

What don't you like?*

PROSPECT

They're not delivering.

YOU

Not delivering?

PROSPECT RESPONDS...

YOU

Can you give me some specific examples of when that happened?

PROSPECT RESPONDS...

YOU

What happened when they were trying to fill it with those inexperienced people ?

PROSPECT RESPONDS...

YOU

How often does this happen?

PROSPECT RESPONDS...

YOU

How does that... impact you when this happens?

YOU

What are your bosses saying to you?

PROSPECT RESPONDS...

YOU

Besides you, who else in your department does this impact right now?

PROSPECT RESPONDS...

YOU

What happens if this stays the same...?

PROSPECT RESPONDS...

YOU

How long do you think they're going to give you... to get it fixed...

Problem Awareness Questions Example (continued)

Staffing/Recruiting Agency

Now, if the prospect is vague and not opening up, you can use the Two Truths. Here's an example:

YOU

Those are some fairly decent agencies or fairly good job boards ... are you 100% satisfied with the quality or the time it's taking them to find the candidates?

PROSPECT RESPONDS...

YOU

Not 100% satisfied?

PROSPECT RESPONDS...

YOU

Well, just so I can see the rationale, but besides wanting to get a more skilled, dedicated employee to grow the company, what's the main reason why you might be looking to switch agencies rather than just trying to figure it ALL out on your own?

Repeat back the alternative you might get objections to

Problem Awareness Questions Example

Real Estate Agents

Depending on what they have told you in the Connection and Situation Questions, you have a couple options:

YOU

Option A

This home seems so beautiful. Can I ask what's causing you to possibly want to sell it?

Option B

You said that this was due to a family matter. Can I ask what's going on just so I understand?

PROSPECT RESPONDS...

YOU

I mean, that realtor you used last year is fairly decent. So, what's causing you to... possibly look at... going with another agent? Just so I have more context...

PROSPECT RESPONDS...

YOU

What did you feel they missed in marketing your home that caused it to sit so long?

PROSPECT RESPONDS...

Problem Awareness Questions Example (continued)

Real Estate Agents

YOU

Just so I can see the rationale, but besides what they said (i.e., looking for the best possible price), what's the main reason you want a(nother) agent handling this for you rather than going out there and trying to market it yourself and hope and pray it actually sells?

PROSPECT RESPONDS...

YOU

What would be the sale price/range that you would be happy to sell for?

From here, they could respond with a price that's appropriate or a price that's out of range - here's how to handle it—

SCENARIO 1

If they respond with appropriate price range

YOU

How does that compare to offers that you have received to date?

PROSPECT RESPONDS...

YOU

Can I ask why that price point?

PROSPECT RESPONDS...

SCENARIO 2

If they want a crazy high price that you know no one will buy it for (Price Anchor)

YOU

So let's say we put it up on the market for that price, but the buyers start looking at comparable homes in your area that are 5-10% lower than what you're asking for your home... and it causes the home to sit there and not sell for months... what should we do at that point?

PROSPECT RESPONDS...

Solution Awareness Questions

Solution Awareness Questions **get your prospect involved and causes them to *emotionally attach themselves*** to solving their problem...

And more importantly, solving the problem with you.

These questions get them to emotionally own their problems and start to see what their future will look like once all these newfound problems (that your questioning ability has allowed them to see for the first time) are solved.

There are two parts to Solution Awareness Questions:

1 **The first part focuses on what they have done in the past to solve these problems.**

This gets them to see that, maybe, they haven't done all that much.

It also brings home the realization as to how long it's been that they've had the problem or issue.

Solution Awareness Questions help them clarify for themselves what they are looking for in the ideal solution (which in turn helps you know how to position your solution in the best possible way in your presentation).

2 **The second part focuses on what their future will look like once their newfound problems are solved.**

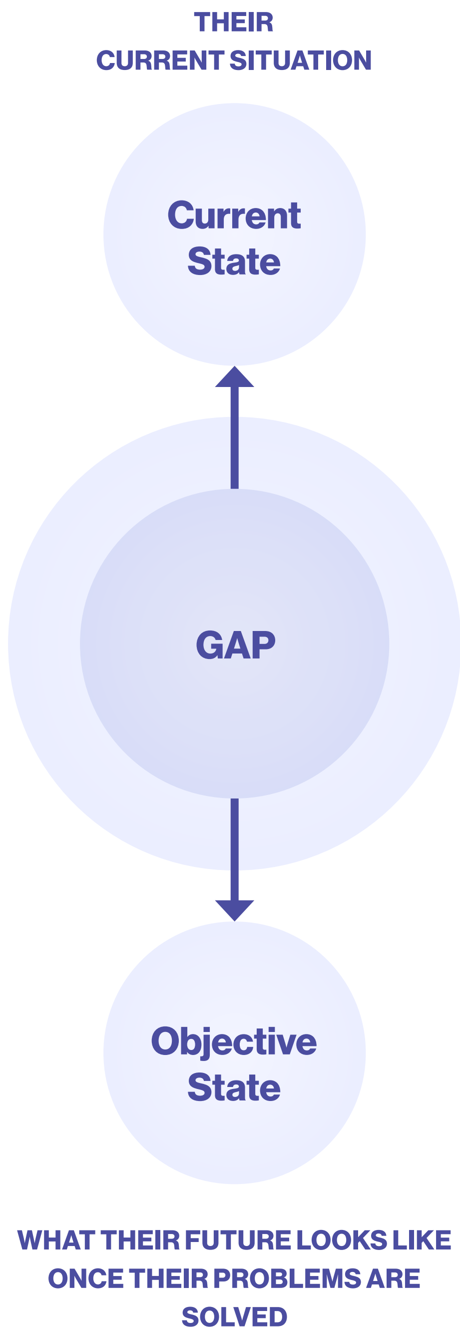
So, circling back to the Situation Questions we went over earlier, these questions help your prospect look at their **present situation.**

We call this their **"current state."**

Solution awareness questions, on the other hand, help your prospect see what their future looks like once the problems are solved.

This we call their **"objective state."**

As in, how will their future reality look once the urgent problems you just helped them see very clearly in their mind are solved with your solution.



What's the cost of not asking Solution Awareness Questions?

If you don't ask Solution Awareness Questions, your prospect will not be able to see what their future can look like with your solution, and they will feel **no urgency to "buy now."**

This causes uncertainty in their mind, which in turn **triggers objections** such as:

"I want to think it over."

"I need to keep looking around."

"I need to do more research."

"I don't have the money for this."

"I need to get quotes from other companies."

"I need to pray about it."

"I need to talk to my spouse, my CPA, my mom (my uncle who lives in a van down by the river)..."

Then you start to rush headlong into "chase mode," trying to convince them to buy!

But when you ask Solution Awareness Questions correctly...

You'll avoid these headaches and the conversation will be much smoother.

NEPQ Solution Awareness Questions — In Action

Remember, Solution Awareness questions get prospects to emotionally own their problems and start to see what their future will look like once all these newfound problems are solved.

Solution Awareness Questions (Part 1)

YOU

Before we started talking today, were you out there looking for [plug in what they said they want] so you can [plug in the result they told you they wanted] ?

SCENARIO 1

If they say "NO"

YOU

What's prevented you from doing that in the past?

SCENARIO 2

If they say "YES"

YOU

What did you do?

PROSPECT RESPONDS...

YOU

How did that work out?

PROSPECT RESPONDS...

YOU

What kind of results did you get from it?

PROSPECT RESPONDS...

YOU

What do you think held you back from having success...?

SCENARIO 3

If they had BAD RESULTS

YOU

Do you know if other people were getting results from that?

PROSPECT RESPONDS...

YOU

Why do you think others were able to get results, but you didn't?

PROSPECT RESPONDS...

YOU

What do you think held you back from getting the kind of results you wanted at that time?

SCENARIO 4

If they didn't get started with anything else

YOU

What prevented you from getting started with that?

After these Solution Awareness questions, you want to transition to the second part of Solution Awareness with a **"criteria question" sequence:**

YOU

Let's do this... just to make sure that what we're doing could actually help you... besides [Benefit #1] and [Benefit #2] [plug in what they have already told you they want], what would you actually be looking for in [your Product/Service]?

PROSPECT RESPONDS...

YOU

Like what would be your ideal criteria?

PROSPECT RESPONDS...

YOU

Can I ask why that's important to you... now though?

PROSPECT RESPONDS...

YOU

Is there anything else you want?

Solution Awareness Questions Example

Home Improvement

YOU

Before you had me out here today, were you out there looking for a more accessible shower/tub [Plug in what they said they wanted] so that you can get in and out safer/better [Plug in the result they told you they wanted] ...?

SCENARIO 1

If they say "No."

YOU

What's prevented you from doing that in the past? (softly)

SCENARIO 2

If they say they have been looking at others

YOU

Oh, what prevented you from going with that company?

SCENARIO 3

If they say "Yes"

YOU

Oh, okay, what have you been looking at?

Solution Awareness Questions Example

Staffing/Recruiting Agency

SCENARIO 4

If they didn't get started with anything else

YOU

What prevented you from getting started with them?

After they answer - ask the criteria question:

YOU

Let's do this... just to make sure that what we're doing would work for you, but... besides ________ and ________ [plug in what they have already told you want], what are you actually looking for in a new shower/tub, let's say that we have you come into the store and we're all sitting down designing it together... what do you feel you really need so that you can... [repeat back what they wanted] feel safer/look better/ have a more updated/modern/ more functional tub?

Solution Awareness Questions Example

IUL (Indexed Universal Life)

So depending on what you uncovered in the previous sections, you could ask this question in a couple different ways:

OPTION 1

Retirement-Focused

YOU

So before today, were you out there looking for more stable options so you can retire by the time you're (age 62) or what have you been doing?

OPTION 2

Legacy Wealth Building

YOU

So before today, were you out there looking for strategies to grow your money to make sure you left that legacy behind, or what were you doing to make sure your family is protected?

PROSPECT RESPONDS...

SCENARIO 1

If they say "No."

YOU

I am curious: what has prevented you from doing that in the past? Or what prevented you from looking at other strategies previously?

PROSPECT RESPONDS...

SCENARIO 2

If they say "Yes."

YOU

How has that strategy worked out for you so far?

PROSPECT RESPONDS...

YOU

What type of results did you get with that?

PROSPECT RESPONDS...

YOU

What do you think HELD you back from having success with THAT strategy/approach?

SCENARIO 3

If they say yes but do not go with them

YOU

Okay, what prevented you from going with that type of approach, just so I understand?

Solution Awareness Questions Example (continued)

IUL (Indexed Universal Life)

Explaining How An IUL Works

YOU

How familiar are you with how IULs work?

PROSPECT RESPONDS...

YOU

Okay, would it help you out if I shared my screen and showed you how IULs work for our clients?

Then you explain how it works.
Share your screen with the prospect.

Let's do this just to make sure an IUL would actually work for you besides having something stable that actually compounds faster for you repeat back what they said they wanted based on what we just looked at.

PROSPECT RESPONDS...

YOU

How do you picture yourself really utilizing something like this?

Solution Awareness Questions Example

Real Estate: Buying Distressed Properties

YOU

So, before we started talking, were you out there looking for options to sell your home so it didn't go into foreclosure, or what were you doing?

SCENARIO 1

If they say "No."

YOU

I am curious: what prevented you from doing that in the past?

SCENARIO 2

If they say "Yes."

YOU

Option 1

What do you feel really held the realtor back from being able to sell it for you?

Option 2

What prevented you from going with that investor?

Option 3

What held you back from listing it then?

PROSPECT RESPONDS...

YOU

Can I ask why you were considering them as an option?

Then use the criteria question sequence:

YOU

Let's do this just to make sure that we could actually help you, but besides (what they said) and (what they said), what are you hoping to get out of the home if you were able to sell it, what would be your price range and what you're looking to get out of the house?

PROSPECT RESPONDS...

YOU

Now, if I go to my partners and they give me a number lower than that, like, I don't know, like 90k [lower number than what they said], should I just go ahead and tell him to go kick rocks, and we can't do anything together, or what do you feel like we should do?

Solution Awareness Questions (Part 2)

Ask these questions to help the prospect understand and feel what the future will be like once the problems are solved.

These are a few generic examples:

So besides [repeat back what they they already said they wanted], how do you see this benefiting you the most, though?

What would it do for you personally, though?

How would it be different, though? You being able to [plug in what they said they wanted]. How would your life/business be... Maybe different than it is now?

How would that make you... feel though?

How do you see the benefits of actually solving this problem? [Repeat back the actual problem]

Solution Awareness Questions (Part 2) Example

Fitness/Personal Trainer/Weight Loss/Gyms

YOU

Okay, so let's say we come in and we're able to help you lose the 105 pounds... what would you be able to do... that you feel you can't do right now or can't do at your best right now?

PROSPECT RESPONDS...

YOU

What would that do for you to be able to do those things again? [Plug in what they said they wanted to be able to do—ex. play basketball with your son again]

PROSPECT RESPONDS...

YOU

How would it be different, though, [losing the 105 pounds and, most importantly, being able to keep it off where it doesn't come back... How do you see your life being... Maybe different than it is now?

Solution Awareness Questions (Part 2) Example

Solar

YOU

Let's say that we are able to lock in your rate permanently like we do with our other clients... where it never went up, and you were saving... I mean, it's not gonna be much, but... around 10-11k or so over the next 10 years... what would that do for you personally?*

*Important to downplay the money they save, which causes humans to make it a bigger deal in their minds. This is called mismatching.

PROSPECT RESPONDS...

YOU

What do you mean by that?

PROSPECT RESPONDS...

YOU

So how would it be different, though, you being able to give the utility co the middle finger (playful tone), by keeping that money... knowing literally you're not FORCED to keep paying the rate hikes anymore... I guess how would things be... maybe different than they are now?**

**Start with a playful tone and end with a concerned tone

Solution Awareness Questions (Part 2) Example

Health Insurance (B2C)

YOU

Okay, let's suppose we're able to get you a policy that had the nationwide network [the benefit they said they wanted so that you could see any doctor you wanted [their desired state] and know that if anything big did happen... that you would be completely covered financially... knowing that was there...

What would that do for you guys?

PROSPECTS USUALLY WILL GIVE YOU LOGICAL ANSWERS

YOU

What would that do for you... personally though?

(Concerned tone)

PROSPECT RESPONDS...

YOU

But besides the [repeat back what they said they wanted] nationwide network, how do you see this... benefiting you the most, though?

Solution Awareness Questions (Part 2) Example

Cyber Security

YOU

Besides the company being able to reduce chargebacks, how do you see this... benefiting you guys the most, though?

PROSPECT RESPONDS...

YOU

So, if you're the one that is responsible for bringing in the right company to solve the chargeback issue... how does that help you?

PROSPECT RESPONDS...

YOU

In what way?

PROSPECT RESPONDS...

YOU

What would it do for you personally... to get that promotion?

After the two parts of Solution Awareness questions, you can then move on to Consequence Questions.

Consequence Questions

You have now reached a point in the conversation where you must get your potential customer to think about the **consequences of not doing anything to change their current situation.**

Consequence Questions are primarily asked after Solution Awareness questions.

Once they feel and see what that future looks like we want to rip that away from them by asking consequence questions.

These get the prospect to defend themselves on why it's so important to change now, not later!

How this works is you simply take a problem that they themselves have told you they have and want to solve...

And you ask them a Consequence Question around that problem.

WARNING: Average salespeople like to use the customer's problems in a manipulative way to bully the customer into buying a product or service.

Your goal is not to force anything.

Rather, you want to **empower the customer** to realize they can change their own situation by purchasing your solution to effectively solve their problems.

Let's see these NEPQ Consequence Questions In Action.

NEPQ Consequence Questions — In Action

Consequence questions help your prospect question their way of thinking and explore the consequences of not solving the problem.

This way, you help build massive urgency in their mind to get the problem solved instead of pushing it down the road.

Here's a few examples:

What if you don't do anything about this problem [plug in what their problem is], and your situation gets even worse?

(challenging tone)

Have you thought about what would happen if you don't do anything about this?

Have you considered the possible ramifications if you don't do anything about this...?

What are you going to do if nothing changes, if you keep using/doing in what their problem was for the next [plug in 3, 6, or 12 months, or 5, 10, 15 years, depending on what you sell] and nothing changes?

Consequence Questions Example

Dental Implants

YOU

What happens if you don't do anything about this, though... you keep losing the bone density in your jaw... and now you can't even get implants?*

*For all of these Consequence Questions examples, you want to use a challenging or concerned tone - at this point in the conversation, we need to be a bit tougher on the prospect.

PROSPECT RESPONDS WITH A NEGATIVE, LIKE:

Well, I don't know, I just hope that won't happen.

YOU

Do you want to keep living with that pain in your mouth... if you... if you didn't have to?

Consequence Questions Example

Employee Benefits (B2B)

YOU

Okay, but on the flip side... What happens if you just keep the same plan... and your top people keep going over to your competitors... what happens to your business... at that point?

PROSPECT RESPONDS...

YOU

Do you want to have to go through all of that... if you... if you didn't have to?

Consequence Questions Example

Marketing Agency For Real Estate Agents

YOU

What if you don't do anything about this... and you keep getting these low-quality leads that don't pick up when you call... what are the consequences for you... at that point?

(Challenging/concerned tone)

PROSPECT RESPONDS WITH A NEGATIVE...

YOU

Do you want to have to go through all of that... if you... if you didn't have to?

Consequence Questions Example

Car/Auto Dealerships

YOU

What happens if you just keep your car... and it keeps breaking down on your way to work? What would happen to your job... at that point?

PROSPECT RESPONDS...

YOU

Okay, so it's important for you to do something then?

PROSPECT RESPONDS WITH A NEGATIVE OR WISHY-WASHY REACTION

YOU

Option 1

Are you willing to settle for that, though?

Well, whose choice is it if you settle or not?*

*You have to be tougher with the prospect here.

Option 2

Do you want to keep putting yourself in that situation if you... if you... if you... didn't have to?

Consequence Questions Example

Solar (Residential)

YOU

What happens if you don't do anything about this... they keep raising your rates every year like they have... and now you're 75- 80 years old... still having to pay your bill every month... but the bill is more than three times what it is now... and now you're on a limited income/social security...

(concerned tone, verbal pace this out)

How would you pay for it... at that point?

PROSPECT RESPONDS...

YOU

What happens then?

PROSPECT RESPONDS...

Well, I guess I'll have to figure it out.

YOU

Do you want... to have to keep being FORCED to pay the RATE HIKES... if you... if you didn't have to?

PROSPECT RESPONDS...

YOU

Okay, but for you... Why look at going solar now? Why not push it down the road and keep paying the rate hikes like a lot of people who don't know anything about solar do?*

*Challenging/concerned tone

Consequence Questions Example

Cyber Security

YOU

So if you continue to use XYZ vendor... what are the consequences if you don't do anything about your false positive rates... and you continue to reject good customers?

PROSPECT RESPONDS WITH A NEGATIVE...

YOU

Do you want that to keep happening to you if you... if you didn't have to?

Consequence Questions Example

Home Improvement (Pool Sales)

YOU

So what happens if you don't end up putting the pool in... the kids keep having to go ALL the way down to the YMCA... and you miss out... ***(slow down pace)*** **on all the memories of your kids growing up?**

PROSPECT RESPONDS...

YOU

Do you want to miss out on all those memories with the grandkids if you... if you didn't have to?

PROSPECT RESPONDS...

YOU

So how important is it for you to change your situation... get the pool back there... and actually have all these memories with your kids... for the rest of your life?*

*This is an example of a Qualifying Question.

Consequence Questions Example

Relationship/Marriage Therapy/Coaching

We can go with **two options** here depending on what the prospect has given us up to this point:

YOU

Option 1

What if you don't do anything about this ... you keep having these issues with your husband... where you are arguing and feeling resentment... for another 3, 6, or 12 months... what would happen to your marriage at that point?

Option 2

What happens to your marriage if you don't do anything?

PROSPECT RESPONDS...

YOU

So why look at doing therapy now? Why not push it down the road like a lot of couples who end up getting divorced?

After we ask Consequence Questions and get the prospect to think about the consequences of not doing anything to change their current situation...

We can enter the **Transition Stage.**

The 5 Stages of NEPQ (continued)

STAGE 3

THE
Transition Stage
Transition Questions

The Transition Stage is fairly simple if you've done the groundwork in the Engagement Stage.

Remember, the Engagement Stage is 85% of the work - so if done correctly, the transition shouldn't require anything complex.

Simply use this Transition formula:

The Transition Formula helps you transition into presenting your solution or scheduling the next step.

Based on what you told me... What we are doing could/would actually work for you...

Because you know how you said... [Repeat back what they said they wanted]

And because of that, it's making you feel... [Repeat back what they told you it's doing to them emotionally: frustrated, stressed, annoying, worried, concerned.]

I think you mentioned a little bit... Stressed sometimes...

Then, you can move to the **Presentation Stage.**

The **5 Stages of NEPQ** (continued)

STAGE 4

THE Presentation Stage

In essence, the goal here is to present without presenting.

Remember, if you've done the job well enough in the Engagement stage - the Presentation Stage should only be about 10-15% of the entire sale.

So instead of boring prospects with irrelevant information that takes two hours to cover...

Keep your presentation focused on how your solution can address the key challenges and problems you uncovered during the Engagement Stage of your conversation.

The purpose of this stage is to demonstrate how the specific advantages and benefits of what you sell will solve their problem.

This stage is different depending on the way you give your presentations - whether it's a one-call close, two-call close, or a more complex sale where it requires several appointments.

Base the presentation off of your industry.

For example, here's **how to bridge for a one-call close:**

> With your permission, I can go over a few things that we would be able to do for you to help you with your situation and solve those problems [repeat the actual problems]. Would that help you?

If it was a **2-call close, or if you were in a more complex B2B sales role, whatever the next step is, let's say it is to schedule a demo or a proposal,** it would look more like this:

> Good first call; that gives me more understanding of your situation and the challenges you guys are going through compared to where you want to be...
>
> Really, the next step would be to book another call to go over a demo of the XYZ platform and how we solve those same problems for our clients to get you where you want to go. Would that help you?

Or, if you are **scheduling a second call proposal:**

> Alright, so good first call that helps me better understand your situation and the challenges you guys are going through compared to where you want to be...
>
> Really, the next step is, if it's appropriate... We would go back and put together a proposal for you with different options on what we could do for you to solve all of these problems and help you [repeat back what they said they wanted]. Would that help you?

In essence, we want to present without "presenting" - and tailor it to our prospect.

How To Present By Not "Presenting"

Here are some general rules to follow:

1 **Do the presentation around the problems/issues/challenges that the prospect mentioned:**

So many salespeople try to show the entire solution when presenting to prospects.

That is how 40-page proposals and 90-minute presentations happen. Doing that will turn most of your prospects off quickly.

It goes in one ear and out the other as they lose focus.

Instead, your potential customers want to know if you can solve their problems. They just care about you solving the key challenges that are holding them back from achieving their desired results.

So stop presenting all the features and benefits that have nothing to do with solving the prospect's problem.

Only present directly to the issues the prospect mentioned during the Engagement Stage of the sales conversation.

You have to customize each presentation to each prospect's challenges. Never do cookie-cutter presentations; they will make your prospects feel like you do not understand their situation.

Remember, your prospects will always buy from the sales professional who they TRUST understands their unique situation the most.

Use the **3-step Presentation formula** in this part.

The 3-Step Presentation Formula

STEP 1

One of the biggest problems that people have when they come to us is they don't know how to/don't understand how to/ having issues with... [plug in what they don't know how to do, or a big problem that most prospects have / their main issue/challenge]

Which causes them to... [go over the consequences]

STEP 2

So the way we solve that for our clients like you is we... (go over how your product, service, or program solves this part of the problem)

STEP 3

And what they mean to you is... [Repeat back the advantages and benefits of what it will do for them or mean for them once it's solved]

2 Use Case Studies To Reinforce Solving Other Prospect's Problems

This is powerful if done correctly. You can show real-life examples of other clients who were in similar situations and how your solution was able to solve their problems.

The case study should show the problems the prospect faced, what your solution was to solve those problems, and what the results of the work ended up being for that prospect.

Include real numbers that can be objectively quantified.

Remember, your prospect cares most about the results of your solution, not features and benefits.

But what will your solution do for them? How does it help them get where they want to go?

3 Ask *Checking for Agreement* Questions Throughout

Most sales presentations are an hour long monologue with the salesperson talking most of the time about all the great features and benefits of their solution...

And how we have the best company...

And the best customer service...

And the best quality and the best delivery...

And the best this and the best that.

Basically, what every salesperson says about their product or service.

How many salespeople do you know that when they pitch you, tell you that their product or service is only 4th or 5th best in the market?

No one, right?

They all say that they are the best, so prospects have built up defensive mechanisms when they hear these types of sayings from salespeople.

It basically goes in one ear and out the other.

Doing this is a disaster if you want to be in the top 1% of sales.

To avoid this from happening, you want to ask what are called:

NEPQ *"Checking for Agreement"* Questions

These questions engage the prospect during the presentation and cause them to feel you are present in the conversation.

They make you appear credible in their eyes. You are the expert, the trusted authority.

Here are some examples:

Does that make sense?

Are we on the same page?

What are your thoughts on that?

Are you with me on this?

Do you see how that works?

Do you see how that could help you?

How do you see that helping you the most?

Any questions about that?

Is there anything else I should add?

These questions help you keep a pulse on how the presentation is going with the prospect. It keeps the prospect engaged in the conversation.

It makes the prospect feel they are part of the process and much more likely to buy.

Do you see how that works?

(Did you notice how I just asked you a checking for agreement question just now, and you probably mentally nodded your head?)

During the presentation, you should be asking at least 8-12 of these checking for agreement questions to make sure the prospect is on the same page.

Most salespeople present 50% of the sales process. This is way, way too much.

The presentation stage should only be about 10-15% of the entire sale.

It should be about presenting back the challenges and problems they told you during the engagement stage and presenting how your solution can solve those challenges. Nothing more, nothing less.

The amount of information the prospect needs to know will always be much less than what a salesperson thinks it is.

Additional Proposal Questions To Ask (Generic Versions):

We had planned to cover the following areas [repeat the actual areas] for you. In your mind, what would be the most important thing that you would want to spend more time on?

What are you hoping to gain from the proposal/demo?

What are your thoughts on what we have outlined so far?

In what ways does this capture what you're trying to accomplish?

Can you walk me through your decision-making process?

How will your funding/budget to solve this problem be determined?

What aspects of this possibly concern you?

(This should rarely be used, and only if you pick up from body language or their tonality that they are hesitant)

Who besides you would be deciding on which firm to work with?

I sense you are hesitant about what we have covered. Can you help me understand what is behind that?

(Concerned tone)

What's holding you back?

(Concerned tone)

Only ask this question below if they tell you during the conversation or close to the end when you are closing that they are still looking around at other companies or they tell you which companies they are about to meet with after you.

Whatever they tell you from this question is where you need to focus on.

Let's say you meet with these other companies, and it seems like they can all solve the XYZ problems like we can, and the pricing is somewhat similar; how would you then decide who to go with?

Is there anything else you'd like to go over before we finalize this so you can...? [Repeat back what they said they wanted]

After the proposal, we can move to the final stage - **Commitment Stage.**

STAGE 5

THE Commitment Stage

These are the final questions asked in this stage to help your prospect commit and take the next step toward purchasing your solution.

Let's see it in action.

NEPQ Commitment Questions — In Action

YOU

Do you feel like this could be the... answer for you?

PROSPECT RESPONDS...

YOU

What specific parts/aspects of what we went over today do you feel... are going to really help you the most?

PROSPECT RESPONDS...

YOU

Do you feel like this is something you can have/do that will get you where you want to go?

PROSPECT RESPONDS...

YOU

Well, it looks like we covered what you're possibly looking for in ________ . Really, the next step is we would make some (tell them what the next steps are) type of arrangement for you ________ , you can use a credit or debit card, invoice, wire transfer then at that point we would ________ so that you can [repeat back what they said they wanted .

Would that be appropriate, or how... Would you like to proceed from here?

A few industries like to ask Commitment questions after the presentation and then bring up the funds they need after they ask Commitment questions. Here is a Generic example of how that looks:

YOU

So we pretty much covered how we could help you get to XYZ [repeat back what they wanted]; before we go into the funds/funding, you will need to do that... Do you feel... like this could be the answer for you?

PROSPECT RESPONDS...

YOU

Why do you feel it would, though?

PROSPECT RESPONDS...

YOU

Okay, so write this down: the funding/funds you will need for us to come in and to solve XYZ problems to get you to ABC result would be... ________

PROSPECT RESPONDS...

YOU

Any questions on how that works?

PROSPECT RESPONDS...

YOU

Okay, really, the next step would be...

Commitment Questions Example

Culture/Recognition/Awards Industry
(To Retain Top Employees)

YOU

Do you feel like this could be the answer for you?

PROSPECT RESPONDS...

YOU

Why do you feel like it is, though?

PROSPECT RESPONDS...

YOU

What specific aspects of what we went over do you *feel*... are really... going to help you... retain your top executives... the most, though?

OR

YOU

So why look at doing this now, though? Why not just push it down the road like a lot of companies do... who end up losing many of their best people?

PROSPECT RESPONDS...

YOU

Well, it looks like we covered the basis of what you were looking for; really, the next step would be to make some type of arrangement for your ____________. You can use __________ or __________, and at that point, we would [repeat back the next step to onboard/buy/send the agreement] so that you can... [repeat back what they wanted]. Would that be appropriate?

Commitment Questions Example

Final Expense Insurance

This is a Final Expense Insurance example where we went over 3 different policy options. This is a smaller price so I can get away with being a bit more "assumptive".

YOU

Option 1

Which one of those would you... lean towards? *(soft tone)*

Option 2

Which one of those would you possibly... lean towards? *(only use if they have been surface level with you)*

PROSPECT RESPONDS...

YOU

How come that one, just so I understand?

PROSPECT RESPONDS...

YOU

Does this *feel* like it's what you're looking for... to take that burden off your kids' shoulders... so they're not responsible... for having to pay... for all those expenses when you pass?

PROSPECT RESPONDS...

YOU

That makes sense... well, the first step is to make sure we could even get you qualified.

I can get that pulled up here. I've got your [street address/spelling of first name] (confirm something) as ____________. Is that correct?

PROSPECT RESPONDS...

YOU

Is there a middle initial you want here on the form/application?

[Move right into the application - and when you get to their social]

Now, as I had mentioned, the way they make sure you're 100% eligible is they pull your medical record to make sure you haven't got some crazy disease where you got two weeks to live, so everything with your medical records will be tied to your social, what's your social?

[When you start the medical questions]

Okay, now there are a few medical questions they ask here. We already went through a lot of this, so I'm just going to cruise through this, and then we'll put in the beneficiaries and do the billing... just stop me if you have any questions...

[About halfway through the medical questions]

We're about halfway through the medical questions here, then we'll do the billing and put in the beneficiaries, and we're pretty much all done... straight into the next medical question...

Commitment Questions Example

Final Expense Insurance

YOU

[When you get to billing]

Okay, and if we are approved, who do you bank with that you want me to put down for the billing for the coverage?

PROSPECT RESPONDS...

YOU

Got it; the system will pull up the routing number here in just a second if you want to log into the app or grab a statement or checkbook so that we can confirm that...

(Google the routing number, put in the name of the bank, and state in Google search.)

It just came up here; let me know when you're ready.

(Read off the routing number; if they confirm, then great; if it's wrong, just have them read off the right one.)

[Then they'll ask for the account number]

What's the account number?

(Read it back to confirm)

Commitment Questions Example

Real Estate Agent

SCENARIO 1

If they are a seller

YOU

Do you feel like this marketing plan we discussed to sell the home... would be the answer for you?

PROSPECT RESPONDS...

YOU

Hold on, why do you feel like it is, though?

PROSPECT RESPONDS...

YOU

Well, I don't really have anything else to go over with you. It looks like we've covered the basis of what you are looking for to sell your home... really the next step would be... is we would have you fill out the listing agreement and arrange for the photographer to come out to take pictures of your home... and then start the listing on the MLS so we can get it sold quickly for you.

Would that be appropriate?

SCENARIO 2

If they are buying

YOU

Do you feel like this could be the home for you and your family?

PROSPECT RESPONDS...

YOU

Why do you feel like it is, though?

PROSPECT RESPONDS...

YOU

Well, I don't really have anything else to go over with you... it looks like we've covered the basics of what you are looking for in a new home...

Really, the next step would be... We would have you fill out the basic buyer agreement and start viewing some of the properties you were looking at... would that be appropriate?

SCENARIO 3

If listing an appointment at their home

YOU

Do you feel like we can help you find the home you are looking for?

PROSPECT RESPONDS...

YOU

Why do you feel like we can, though?

Commitment Questions Example

Vacuum Cleaners

YOU

Do you *feel* like this could be... the answer for you?

PROSPECT RESPONDS...

YOU

Why do you *feel like* it would though?

PROSPECT RESPONDS WITH AN ISSUE WITH MONEY

YOU

Money aside, why do you *feel* like it is, though?

(Has to get "yes" before getting to the concerns)

PROSPECT RESPONDS...

YOU

So, what specific parts of the system do you *feel* are really going to help you guys get rid of John's breathing problems?

[Repeat back what they wanted or what they want to prevent from happening] ?

PROSPECT RESPONDS...

YOU

Well, it looks like we covered what you're looking for in ________ ...

Really, the next step is we would make some [tell them what the next steps are type of arrangement for you ________ , you can use a credit or debit card, invoice, wire transfer then at that point we would ________ so that you can [repeat back what they said they wanted] .

Would that be appropriate, or how... do you want to proceed from here?

And that's the final stage. After getting a commitment - you should be making the sale!

Now, that was a lot to take in - don't worry if you don't have it all down after one read.

This takes practice, and as you put it in action, it will eventually become second nature.

If you want personalized individual help - request a time with one of our NEPQ experts, who can help you see how we might adapt NEPQ for your particular industry and situation.

Scan the QR code or visit:

nepqblackbook.com/resources

NEPQ BLACK BOOK RESOURCES

To help further your sales training, we put together a resources page.

Simply scan the QR code or visit the link and you'll find a page where you can access the training portal for Black Book owners.

You'll also be able to ask for help from one of our NEPQ experts - and see how we might adapt NEPQ to your industry and what you sell.

We're here to help.

NEPQ Questions
Bonus Section

There is a lot we can't cover in one generic structure - with 161 different industries we train in, we had to leave some stuff out so we don't get too in the weeds.

That's why we have a bonus section with other NEPQ questions for situations outside of the generic framework.

Let's get into it.

COLD CALLING INTRODUCTIONS

This section is specifically for cold calling - insert these introductions BEFORE the Connection Stage.

Here's how to do it:

YOU

Is [Prospect Name] there?

Hey [Prospect Name], this is just [Your Name]. I was wondering if you could... help me out for a moment?

PROSPECT RESPONDS...

YOU

Well, I'm not quite sure who I should be talking to; I called/stopped by to see who would be responsible for looking at any possible hidden gaps in your ______ that could be causing you to ______

Who should I be talking to about that?

(There are many other versions of this depending on if you are calling the actual decision maker, compared to an admin person or an assistant.)

If they are aggressive, say:

YOU

Oh, I apologize if I offended you. What I do is... you know how... (then go into your personalized intro

PERSONALIZED INTRO — 30 SECOND COMMERCIAL

Well, you know how a lot of people/companies sometimes get frustrated with __________, __________, and __________?

Well, what I do is, I help people/companies like that with __________, __________ and __________.

Does that resonate with you/your company or something you might be experiencing?

NOTE: You would ONLY use a personalized intro at a networking event if someone asked you what you do, or you were cold calling.

If cold calling, you would use this right after they ask you, "What's this all about," or "Who are you again"?

It's not meant to sell them, only to make them curious enough to want to engage in a conversation with you!

Cold Calling Questions Example

SaaS Platform for Recruiting Top Truck Drivers

Script #1

YOU

Hey [Name], this is just Your Name].
I was wondering if you could... possibly help me out for a moment?

PROSPECT RESPONDS...

YOU

Well... I'm not even... sure who I should be talking to... I'm trying to reach the person who's responsible for overseeing any possible hidden gaps in your systems to recruit TOP drivers... that might be causing you to hire several that end up quitting...

Who should I be talking to about that?

PROSPECT RESPONDS...

YOU

Should I have you transfer me over to their voicemail to leave a message so they can call back later if they'd like?

Script #2

YOU

Hey [Name], it's just Your Name]
I was wondering if you could possibly help me out for a moment?
(confused tone)

YOU

Is [Name] in? As I understand, he is responsible for looking at any possible issues/hidden gaps around the recruiting process you guys use for new drivers that might be causing you to lose more dependable drivers he could be hiring? Is he available? *(confused tone)*

IF THE GATEKEEPER GIVES YOU THEIR NUMBER/DIRECT LINE:

YOU

Hello is [Name] there?

PROSPECT RESPONDS...

YOU

Hey this is just [Your Name], with ABC company.

__________ dispatch mentioned that you might be the person responsible in your department for looking at any possible hidden gaps in your recruiting process that could be forcing you to have to keep several trucks vacant each month because some drivers end up quitting. Are you the person I should be talking to about that possible issue?

Cold Calling Questions Example

Healthcare SaaS

YOU

Hi [Name] ... this is just Your Name] with XYZ Company... *(act confused)*

I was wondering if you could help me out for a moment?

PROSPECT RESPONDS...

YOU

Well, I'm not quite sure who I should be talking to, but I called to see who the person in your practice would be responsible for... helping your doctors determine if the amount of time they're spending dictating their notes might be preventing them from more billable hours?

Who should I be talking to about that?

PROSPECT RESPONDS...

YOU

Should I have you transfer me over to their voicemail to leave a message so they can call back later if they'd like?

Pre-Situation Questions

These are used if you are in a board room or in the office of a prospect and they are waiting for others to join the meeting.

They are just normal chit-chat questions, but they do give you an idea of who this prospect is and more insider info on the actual company.

These are not meant to be used in an actual sales conversation; they are just a pre-sales conversation. These would be used if you were in a B2B sales environment.

These questions help you understand more about your prospect's personality, how they feel about the company, and the culture of the organization within a few minutes.

Below are generic examples of Pre-Situation Questions. You would need to tweak them for your industry.

1. How long have you been with the company? How has your job evolved since you started here?
2. How have your responsibilities evolved since you started? (Curious tone)
3. What do you like about your work here? What don't you like, if anything? (Playful tone)
4. What would your customers say is the biggest reason why they do business with you over someone else? Why do you feel that is?
5. What would your employees say is the biggest reason they work here over working for a competitor of yours?

Past Situation Questions

Asking questions about the past is a great way to understand your prospect's behaviors and priorities.

These questions allow you to understand how best to sell to the prospect and dig up their history to allow you to better understand the problems they had in the past.

Past situation questions can be used at any point throughout the conversation. They can be used in a variety of different situations depending on what you sell.

As with all of these examples, the questions are generic. You would just need to tweak them based on your industry and previous answers the prospect has given you from other questions.

These, along with Situation Questions, help you see what their past and present situation looks like and how they got to where they are now.

1. Can you tell me some of the things you like about the XYZ vendor you're using now? What don't you like, though?
2. What are some of the hurdles you've had in the past to solve XYZ problem? [Repeat back the actual problem]
3. Can you give me an example of something recent in which you had to deal with __________ problem?
4. What is different about your company today from when you started working here, if anything? (B2B example)
5. Can you tell me about the changes your department has gone through recently? Have those impacted you? In what way? (B2B example)
6. What were some of the expectations the company had for you when you started with them, and how have those changed over time? (B2B example)
7. What's been the toughest thing you've had to deal with recently? (Concerned tone) Tell me more...
8. What have you been seeing lately as far as a market trend?
9. What steps are you taking to adapt to this trend so you don't get left behind?
10. If you could do this over again [Plug in the issue], what would you do differently from before?

NEPQ Questions To Start A Boardroom Meeting

Here are some opening questions you can ask that raise your status in your prospect's minds and cause them to view you as the expert, the **'Trusted Authority.'**

1. From your perspective, what would be a valuable way for us to spend this time together?
2. What would you like to discuss today so that we can focus on you and what you might be looking for?
3. What prompted you to want to have this meeting today with us so we have more context? (Curious/serious tone)
4. How did you reach the decision to possibly seek outside help to come in?
5. What were you hoping to get out of this meeting, if anything?
6. What caused you to bring me in just so I can see if we could possibly help you?
7. What are the most important items you'd like for us to cover today? Oh, why those items, just so I understand? (Curious tone)

NEPQ Problem Awareness Questions (Expanded)

Here are more examples of Problem Awareness Questions you can ask in the conversation, depending on what you sell.

1 I mean, you've been with XYZ vendor for ___ years; it can't be ALL DOOM and GLOOM over there; what do you like about what they've done? (immediately after they answer) What would you change if you could, though?

2 Would you be opposed to sharing with me the top two challenges you are having now? Of these two, which one is the most important to solve?

3 Why is it so important to you now, though?

4 How long has this problem been going on?

5 What's causing the problem? Tell me more...

6 What barriers are stopping you from overcoming this?

7 Who else in the company is having this same problem?

8 What were your expectations when you went with your current company/vendor? What results are they getting you?

9 What results do you want if you could, though? Can I ask why?

10 What would you change about your situation if you could?

11 Why change that, though?

12 What's the biggest obstacle you're facing right now that's preventing you from solving XYZ problem?

13 What areas do you want to improve if you could?

14 How much do you feel this problem is costing you in lost revenue/sales?

15 Can you tell me what your biggest priorities are for this year within _______? (You would fill in the blank with what is relevant in that conversation)

16 Can you tell me what your biggest priorities are for this year with your data security? [For data security industry]

17 If you could change one thing about your current vendor/company, what would that be? Why is changing that important to you, though?

18 How is XYZ's problem affecting your company's sales? Production? Profitability? Scheduling?

19 How is the problem affecting your bottom line? In what way?

20 When you have these problems [Repeat back the actual problems] in_____, how much does it cost you to fix them?

21 Have you lost clients because of these issues? How much were those clients worth to you financially?

22 How are these issues possibly affecting other areas of your business?

23 How much time are you spending each day dealing with XYZ problem? If you were able to solve it, what would you be able to do? What would it mean to you, though, to do that?

24 How many employees are having to deal with this problem? How much does it cost you to train and employ these people? (B2B example)

25 Have people in the company left over these issues? Do you want to change that? Why now, though? (B2B example)

26 How much does it cost to hire and train a new employee? How long does it take to train a new person to be able to do his/her job effectively? (B2B example)

27 How much does that cost you in lost time? What areas of your business is this affecting? Which one the most? In what way? Has it had...has it had... an impact on you? [Verbal pace this question out]

NEPQ Questions To Disrupt Vendor Relationships

These questions help you seed doubt in the prospect's mind about the vendor/ company they are already using. It introduces the idea that maybe they are not as good as they thought.

1 Can I ask how does your ideal situation compare to what you have now with this vendor you're using?

2 You've already reached big numbers and milestones; tell me, where do you want to go from here in terms of future improvements in... ?

3 Back when you chose to work with that company (Current vendor), what were your selection criteria, if I could ask? In what ways has that possibly (Criteria) changed as you look at your situation today, though?

4 Can I ask what you'd change if you could?

5 So, to me, it sounds like things are 100% PERFECT (Really emphasize 100% perfect with your tone) with what you're using now; what would you change if you could?

6 Can I ask in what ways your vendor could do better for you than what they are doing now, though?

NEPQ Questions About Your Potential Customers' External Customers (Mainly B2B)

These questions get them to think of losing their customers if they do not have your solution.

These questions would NOT be used for every industry, however.

They would only be directed to prospects who have significant contact with external customers. I know I said this multiple times already… but you will need to tweak these questions for your industry.

1. Can you go over who your most valuable customers are for your company? What's the typical customer look like for you?
2. How would your clients measure success from doing business with you? Why's that, though? What would they expect from you as far as results so they don't go somewhere else?
3. Have your client's expectations changed over the last few years? In what way? How do you see their expectations changing over the next few years?
4. What are you doing now to make sure you keep these clients from going somewhere else?
5. What would be the main reasons why your customers go with you over someone else?
6. What are the main reasons why some of your prospects go with your competitors over you? Why do you feel they do that? Has that had an impact on you? In what way? Do you want to change that?
7. What would you say are your biggest strengths as a company? What are some of your weaknesses? How long has that been going on? Has it had an impact? In what way, though? What if you don't do anything about this, though, and you start losing clients because of it?

NEPQ Precision Probing Questions (Expanded)

Do you ask questions, but your prospects give you vague, generalized, surface-level answers and then say, "I want to think it over" at the end of the conversation?

How do you get your prospects to "expand" their answers to bring out more emotion?

How do you get them to RE-LIVE their pain?

You do that by asking **"NEPQ Precision Probing Questions."**

These are just the tip of the iceberg I'm giving you today, like a little hors d'oeuvre compared to what our clients learn in our virtual training programs.

How about this statement? Let's start with a very basic expanded probing question.

The prospect tells you something, maybe a problem they have, and you would ask;

> **Tell me more... about that?** ***(Curious tone)***

Just a powerful way to get your prospect to expand on their problems when they bring them up from your questions.

Here is a great one for you if you sell B2B:

> **Can you walk me through your company's decision-making process when it comes to solving challenges like this?** ***(Curious tone)***

Even if the person you are meeting with tells you they are the decision maker, you still need to find out if others in the company are part of that decision-making process.

This question is much better to use than the standard, "Are you the decision maker"?

Once they go through how the company makes decisions, it will be far clearer to you who else in that organization needs to be involved with you.

> **Can you give me a specific example so I can understand this better?**
> ***(Curious, Concerned tone)***

When a prospect tells you about a problem or challenge they are having, this question helps you see more behind what they really mean.

It also helps your prospect feel more pain about what the problem is doing to them once they elaborate more with specific examples.

Pain is good for you and them as it helps them build urgency in the sale, that they should do something about solving this newfound pain.

> **Can you go over what you might be looking for when choosing a company to work with?**

This would be more of a question you use if you sold B2B.

"Can you go over with me?" is a NEPQ **lead-in phrase** that helps your prospect uncover more in their mind of what they truly want and also helps you position your solution much more clearly in their minds once you get to the Presentation Stage of the sales process with them.

Walk me through the criteria you use... to make a decision on something like this?

"Walk me through" is a phrase that allows your prospect to explain step-by-step how their organization makes decisions and allows you to know how to best position your company within that process and who to influence to win the account.

Describe for me what you're possibly looking for just to see if I could help you.

or

Describe for me what you meant by that?

"Describe for me" is another lead-in phrase that allows the prospect to go into more detail on what they want and allows you to know how to better present that back to them in the Presentation Stage of the sales process.

Here are a few more examples of lead-in phrases:

Can you unwrap that for me so I have a better understanding?

Can you unpack that for me a bit more...

Can you go back a few pages for me so I understand that better?

And another good lead-in phrase to use is:

Explain that to me in more detail just so I understand ...

NEPQ Precision Probing Questions (Expanded) continued

"Explain to me" is another NEPQ **Lead-In phrase** that allows your prospect to elaborate more on a problem they just mentioned to you and helps them feel more of the pain of the problem, its root cause, and how it's impacting them.

Then, after they expand on their pain, you ask the following probing questions to help them feel it even more.

Now, these next 3 are very important if you want to make a ton of money as a sales professional or if you own the business and you want to scale your company and increase sales, **these are very important.**

They tell you the problem or the emotional pain they are feeling...

How long has that been going on for? ***[Repeat back the problem they just told you]***

Then you follow up by asking;

Okay, so you've been having this problem for the last [Repeat back how long they said] months. Has that... has that had... an impact on you?

or

Has that had an impact on the business? ***(If you sold B2B)***

Prospect responds:
"Oh, you have no idea"

At that moment, they are at a high in their emotional state, and you want to ask them this:

In what way, though?

These probing questions pull out tons of emotional pain and help the prospect feel that pain in the present moment and what it's doing to them!

These questions help your prospect clarify what they say to you from your initial questions and help them RE-LIVE their pain.

What is the #1 emotional driver in a human being that causes them to want to change?

It's a pain or the fear of future pain.

If we cannot help the prospect re-live their pain and get them to emotionally open up and go below the surface with us...

Then, they feel no need to change. And if they feel no need to change, they WILL NOT BUY FROM YOU.

Here's more examples of **Precision Probing Questions** you can use (adapt accordingly to your industry and what you sell):

1 How do you mean exactly?

2 What's causing this issue?

3 What's causing this to happen?

4 What's prompting you to look into changing this?

5 Can I ask what originally led you to this decision in the first place?

6 Why is this important to you now, though?

7 Can I ask why?

8 Can you be more specific? Give me an example...

9 What do you mean by that?

10 Could you share with me what is motivating your decision to...?

11 What would this do for you personally? In what way?

12 What are you hoping to accomplish by us possibly working together?

13 Tell me, what's driving the need to change your situation now, though?

14 Can you walk me through the steps that led you to this conclusion?

15 What would it mean for you to be able to solve this problem?

16 What would it do for you? In what way?

17 What's in it for you to implement this for the company?

18 What would it do to you personally if you were not able to solve this problem [Repeat the actual problem]? Are you willing to settle for that?

19 If you were able to solve this, what would it mean for you?

20 How would it make you feel though?

21 How long has this issue been going on for? Has it had an impact on you? In what way?

22 Which of these problems are impacting you the most? Why this one, though?

NEPQ Probing Questions — In Action

Here are a few examples of where and when you would insert Probing Questions:

PROSPECT

We have been trying to get both these projects off the ground for months now.

PROBING QUESTION

You mentioned you've been trying... what hasn't worked for you so far?

Trying is the keyword here. This word represents human feelings of frustration about not being able to accomplish the goal.

This is your golden opportunity to bring the prospect's problems to the surface of his/ her mind. To have them re-live the PAIN and their feelings and then be open to your solution to solve that pain.

PROSPECT

My company has been having some problems with the vendor we use, and we are looking for something better now.

PROBING QUESTION

Can you give me an example of the problems that you've been having with them?

Most salespeople would miss asking this powerful clarifying question here.

But this is where the emotion comes out if you ask the right question.

A potential customer who reveals past problems to you will experience the pain of that problem again in their mind.

They will then start to confide in you about their business, problems, and what they are looking for in a new vendor to work with.

PROSPECT

The new CEO wants us to reduce costs in our department by close to 10% just this year, but we have found this very challenging to do. Since we're also trying to keep up with bringing on new business.

PROBING QUESTION

When you say challenging, what do you mean by that?

The word challenging is an emotional word that represents the aggravation of not being able to achieve a goal in this context.

This clarifying question can help the customer vent their emotions/feelings and specific issues that help them relieve that pain, which, in turn, opens them up to wanting to solve that pain and do that with you.

NEPQ Decision-Making Questions

Let's discuss how to understand the companies' decision-making process.

You will use these questions to help you navigate and determine who the decision-makers are in any company and organization.

If you sell B2B...

Forbes magazine says that in the average company, there are 6 or 7 decision makers and/or influencers who will influence the buying decision in a company.

If you only talk to 1-2, then you are risking that the other 4-5 decision-makers might kill the deal, and you are at their mercy and have no control.

You must learn how to get them involved in this decision.

As a reminder, even the CEO, CFO, COO, or department head might love your solution and believe it's going to solve their problems and get them what they want.

But others in the company might feel threatened by your solution. Even employees who cannot make the decision can still influence the decision-makers to not buy.

Let's look at a hypothetical example.

Say you have some type of software that has magical powers and is going to take this company to 3 billion dollars a year in revenue.

But let's say on their end, they have to install it and train their people how to operate it.

Let's say that you have everyone on board, but you still haven't met with the head of the IT department, who will be responsible for running it, installing it, training, etc.

Well, how do you know that the head of the IT department or the Chief Technology Officer won't feel threatened by this new magical software?

What if they feel they might lose their job because of it or they feel it might make them look bad to the CEO?

Or maybe they might feel it will be too hard to install, take too long, or be impossible to train people how to use.

And then they go to the CEO and convince them it's not such a good idea after all...

They can make some internal changes and not have to use your software.

Do you know how many deals get killed because of things like this? Because you haven't learned YET how to get all the decision makers and people who influence the decision makers onboard?

I'm going to give you a few generic examples here to get all the decision-makers on board.

Can you walk me through the criteria you use when choosing a company... to solve these issues you talked about?

(Now, this is generic; you will need to plug in the actual issue or issues rather than just saying the word "issues.")

This question helps you understand the decision-making process in this company, so you are prepared to bring in the other decision-makers into your sales process.

NEPQ Decision-Making Questions
(continued)

Another version, which I personally prefer best:

Can you walk me through your company's decision-making process... when it comes to solving problems like this?

(Once again, make sure to repeat back the actual problems they told you, not just use the generic term "problems.")

You told me that your company has budgeted _______ to fix this problem. Can I ask... how that was determined?

Personally, I never used the term "budget" when I sold B2B because that term is "limited-based thinking." Like a budget is capped, right?

So, I always used the term funds or funding. Funding works well because it's more of a positive thing. Putting in "funding" to grow the business - like it's an investment.

For Example:

You told me your company has around 250k of funds to fix the XYZ problem. Can I ask... how the funding for this was determined just so I understand?

This question helps you start uncovering who the decision makers/influencers are in the organization in a B2B selling environment.

It also helps you see more of the whole picture of the company's funding and if you need to pull other decision-makers into the sales process.

This also sets up the next question much better.

Once they tell you what the funding/budget is, let's say their funding/budget is way lower than what your solution costs to actually solve their problems and get them where they want to be, you ask:

Do you feel the budget/funding... you've been given is sufficient to solve XYZ problem?

This would be used more in a B2B selling environment. It gets them to think that maybe the budget/funding they have been allocated wouldn't actually solve the problems they just told you and themselves they had.

Can you tell me how the funding for this project will be determined?

Another powerful question that helps them see how the funding process works in their company and allows them to understand if there are other decision-makers in the organization who they need to get on board, is:

What obstacles would you possibly encounter when trying to get financial approval to solve XYZ problem?

(You would mainly ask this question towards the end of your first discovery call)

This is a very important question to ask as you must understand what the influencer or decision-maker you are talking with is going to come up against when they go to the board or other decision-makers in the company to tell them about your solution.

Without asking this question, you are winging it and will not be in a position of strength to secure this account.

Who else besides you would be involved in approving the funding/budget to solve this?

This allows you to see who the other decision-makers are in the company. This is much better than asking, "Who are the other decision-makers here?"

You will notice if you ask, "Who are the other decision-makers?" A lot of the time, the original person you started talking with will say, "Oh, I make the decisions around here."

And as you know, even if they are the only person making the decision in that company, there are others who can influence that conversation.

How will you get financial approval from the company to solve this XYZ issue... you have talked about?

This question also allows you to see how the prospect is going to get the funding to solve the problems you have helped them uncover.

Now, let's say it comes up in the conversation that the prospect is meeting with other companies. You want to get more details to find out why and help them overcome concerns they might have with your solution.

YOU

What are you hoping they will say to you? ***(Curious tone.)***

PROSPECT RESPONDS...

YOU

Let's suppose you meet with all these other companies, and let's say they all meet your criteria... can solve the same problems like we can... and the pricing is somewhat similar...

How would you then decide who to go with at that point?

Now, you would only ask that question if they say they are meeting with other companies. If they don't bring that up, there is no need for this question.

PROSPECT

"Well, at that point, it would come down to..."

[Whatever they say here is what you need to focus on to win the sale]

NEPQ Decision-Making Questions
(continued)

Now, what do you do if they say in the beginning, that "cost" or the "price" is really important to them?

You mentioned that the most important thing to you is cost... Can I ask how that compares to you actually getting results and being able to solve this problem, though?

This is both a B2B and B2C question.
You only would ask this if they told you the most important thing to them is the cost of the solution.

If they never say that, there is no need to ask this question.

This question is powerful as it gets your prospect to start focusing on **results-based thinking** rather than price or **cost-based thinking.**

Maybe they should get more funding/money to actually solve the problem and get them where they want to be.

It helps you to not get commoditized like most salespeople get, where they have to compete on price.

NEPQ Solution Awareness Questions (Expanded)

These questions **involve your prospect and their ideas, which causes them to emotionally attach themselves** to solving their problem and doing that with you.

And start to see what their future will look like once all these newfound problems that your questioning & tonality ability has allowed them to see problems they didn't know they had before.

Remember, there are 2 parts of Solution Awareness Questions:

1. **The first half focuses on what they have done in the past to solve these problems - which gets them to see maybe they haven't done that much and how long they have had this issue.**

   Also, it gets them to see what they are looking for in the ideal solution so you understand how to position your solution the best in your presentation.

2. **The 2nd half is what their future looks like once the newfound problems are solved (Their objective state).**

FOR DECISION-MAKERS:

Solution awareness questions also allow you to gain access to the decision-making process of the company you are selling to. They allow you to uncover competing or conflicting interests among multiple decision-makers within the organization if you sell B2B.

They also allow you to influence key employees who can influence the decision. They allow you to find out who is on your team to help you and who in the company might resist your solution.

They open up the decision-making process and give you access to the company politics. Once you know the company politics, you become aware of those who will resist your solution and help prepare your influencer who is on the inside to help overcome that resistance.

FOR VENDOR DISRUPTION:

Solution awareness questions open the door to new solutions for your prospects that they might not have ever considered.

They can uncover any dissatisfaction with their current product/service and, in turn, position you as the trusted authority and how your solution can solve their problems.

HERE ARE A FEW GENERIC EXAMPLES OF

Solution-Awareness Questions:

1. What are you hoping to accomplish in the next 3-6 months in XYZ area?
2. How does that compare with where you're at right now, though? (Skeptical/curious tone)
3. Can you go over what qualities you are looking for in a vendor?
4. How does that compare with what your CEO/boss/department heads look for in a vendor?
5. What do you feel differentiates your company from your competition?
6. Why do you feel it does?
7. What is more important to your company: cutting costs or increasing sales and revenue? (Your hand gestures need to show a GAP with this)
8. Can you share your long-term objectives with XYZ? How do they compare to where you are now? What's prevented you from achieving them? (Skeptical tone)
9. What have you tried to do about this in the past? What worked? What didn't?
10. How much do you think this has cost you? In what ways?
11. Have you given up trying to deal with this problem? (Concerned tone)
12. Why is it important to deal with this now, though?
13. Have you given up trying to solve this issue? [Plug in the actual issue they told you about] Why though?
14. How long has this been going on in the organization?
15. How long has XYZ been a problem?
16. What's prevented you from solving this in the past? Why look at this now? Why not push it down the road like...[Repeat back negative consequences they don't want]?
17. How much do you think it's costing you in lost sales each year?
18. How much do you think it's costing you in lost revenue each year?
19. I mean, you've already reached big numbers and milestones. Where do you want to go from here in terms of future improvements in... ? (Skeptical tone, like why am I even here, everything is perfect for you)
20. Can you tell me what your biggest priorities are for this year in your... ?
21. Before today, were you out there looking for... or what were you doing about __________? [Plug in the end result they said they wanted]

22 If they say we haven't done anything: Oh, what prevented you? (Skeptical/concerned tone)

23 Just to see if what we do would work for you, but besides _____ and ________, what are you looking for in a... ? [Repeat back what they said they wanted.]

24 What would be your ideal criteria to solve XYZ problem?

25 What would this do for you... personally to solve XYZ problem/issue/ challenge? [Repeat back their actual problem] Would it?

26 How serious would you say this issue is for you? (Lean in, and use a concerned tone.)

27 What were you hoping I could do for you, though? (Curious/concerned tone.)

28 How do you see this working for you... the most?

29 How long has this been... on your mind?

30 How do you feel about that?

31 In addition to you, who else recognizes that XYZ is a major problem in the company?

32 What steps have you taken to resolve this in the past?

33 If there was a way to eliminate this problem you talked about, I think you had mentioned it was costing your business over a million a year in lost revenue; what effects would that have on your company at that point? In what way?

34 How would implementing this change help you? What would it do for you personally, though?

35 If you came to your CEO with a possible solution that could save the company around 3 million a year, what would that mean for you... personally? What would he/she say?

36 If those changes were to happen to solve this for your company, how does that help you the most? In what way, though?

37 If you were able to have this XYZ problem solved, what would it allow you to be able to do? How would that make you... feel?

38 If you were able to accomplish this objective [Repeat their actual objective], what would that do for you personally? In what way, though?

39 If you were able to help solve this, in what ways would this benefit your company? What would it do for your department? What would it do for you... personally?

HERE ARE A COUPLE OF

Industry-specific examples:

BUSINESS CONSULTING

You train them how to scale their companies with better systems, operations, etc

For you... why look at putting in better systems now? Why not push it down the road like... unsuccessful companies would?

RESIDENTIAL SOLAR

Helps them lower their bill, protect against the rate hikes of utility companies, lock in their rate, and eventually have no bill

But for you, why look at going solar now? Why not push it down the road and keep being FORCED to pay the RATE HIKES like a lot of homeowners who don't know anything about solar?

See how, in both examples, we plugged in negative consequences that no prospect would want. We are pushing them away a bit to get them to defend themselves on why they need to change.

For the next example, use this anytime you get an email or a phone call and the prospect says:

PROSPECT

We really liked what you went over about your XYZ product and your company, but we decided to go with ABC company, not sell the house now, keep looking around, and wait till next year.

(It could be anything here; this is just a way to get them to engage with you again and become open to your solution)

YOU

Can I ask you something?

PROSPECT SAYS: "YES"

YOU

How can I communicate to you... that you might be making a mistake... without you getting upset with me?

And if the prospect is not opening up to you during the conversation... these questions could come in handy.

WARNING - Only use the next two questions once you have a firm understanding of NEPQ - it has to be asked in a skeptical tone.

Why am I even here?

Why did you even want to see me?

NEPQ Consequence Questions (Expanded)

Here are more examples of Consequence Questions.

1. If you don't decide to address this problem now... how much will it cost you this year... in lost profit/revenue/sales?
2. If you don't solve this issue, what's the impact it has on your business? Can you afford to take that risk? (Lean in, and use a concerned tone, a tone that shows empathy)
3. What would the impact be if your company decides to do nothing about solving XYZ problem [Repeat the problem they said they had] and you stay with your current vendor?
4. What if you don't address this XYZ problem. What would that cost you in lost revenue this year? (If they say, "Well, I'm not sure," then you say, "Well, if you really thought about it... what would it cost you?)
5. What's the potential impact on your business/you if you don't do anything about this? Are you willing to settle for that? Can your company achieve its goals [Plug in the goals they told you] without solving this XYZ issue?
6. What type of effects will this have on your business... if you don't do anything about this?

NEPQ Funding/ Budgeting Questions

Use these questions if it takes multiple visits to make a sale, and your product or service is a higher-priced solution that requires multiple decision-makers within the organization.

Reminder: the more PAIN the prospect experiences, the more money the prospect will pay for your solution!

They can only experience that pain by the skilled questions you ask them to bring out their emotions.

1. Could you go over your funding/budgetary process when it comes to solving problems like this?
2. Just to see if I could help you, what funding/budgetary parameters are you working with?
3. Can you tell me how the funding for this project will be determined?
4. What obstacles would you possibly encounter when trying to get financial approval to solve XYZ problem?
5. Who else besides you would be involved in approving the funding it will take to solve this?
6. How will you get financial approval from the company to solve this issue [Plug in the actual issue] you have talked about?
7. What type of funding/funds do you have to put into this so you can start______? [Plug in what they said they wanted]

If the prospect says they do not have any money/funds/budget/funding for your solution, you simply ask:

Tell me, if you did have the funding/budget/money, is this something that would work for you?

(They will usually say yes if you have done a good job with your questions in the Engagement Stage.)

I can appreciate that money might be an issue based on what you told me. How do you think you can resolve that... so you can find the funding/funds so that you can...? [Repeat back what they told you they want]

At this point, if they still cannot come up with ways to get the funding/funds, you ask:

What other avenues do you have to find the funds/funding/money so that you can...? [Plug in what they said they wanted again]

If they still cannot find ways to find the funds, you can make a suggestion like this:

Can I make a suggestion? What I can do is show you the other avenues our clients used to find the funds if they didn't have the funds themselves, and you will have to see if you have those avenues if you want to... [Repeat back what they said they wanted]

Now, list ways your other clients have found funds, which will vary depending on if you sell B2B or B2C (401k, bank loan, home equity, moved around funds in the company budget, sold things, credit cards, etc.).

Which of those avenues do you have so that you can solve this XYZ problem and...[Repeat back what they wanted]?

THE

Proposal Process

RULE NUMBER 1:

Never give a prospect a proposal without understanding what their problems are, and whether they have the funds/funding/money/budget to solve the problem.

You should live by this; there are no exceptions to this rule.

Even if you have a prospect that says, “Can you just send me over a proposal with your pricing in it?”

You must never fall prey to this with a prospect - because early in the conversation you have not built a GAP.

If a potential customer asked for a proposal upfront before you have discovered what their situation is, you simply would say this:

> **Yea, for sure, I’d be open to putting together a proposal for you, but just so you know, I’m not quite sure we could even help you yet. It might be better for you if we ask a few questions about what your situation is, and then we can put something together for you that might be more useful. Would it help you if we did that for you?**

There are tweaks for this depending on the industry you sell in. This was a generic example.

Then, you start asking your situation questions to find out more about their present situation.

RULE NUMBER 2:

Your proposals should lay out the key two to three problems they told you during the Engagement Stage of the sales conversation.

This reminds them of the issues they want to solve and brings back the pain they feel from those problems.

The proposal should also have the key two to three objectives they want to accomplish as a company or a consumer.

This creates a proposal that shows that the salesperson was present in the conversation, showing the prospect that you have a complete understanding of their situation and how to solve it for them.

The proposal restates the value to the prospect of achieving their objectives by solving their problems.

Restating the value helps you provide context for the sale so that the price for your solution seems tiny compared to them being able to achieve their objectives by solving the issues that are holding them back.

You always want the value of solving the prospects’ problems and achieving their objectives to be at a minimum of 10 times the cost of your offer.

For a company (if you sold B2B) solving a problem that is costing them $35 million a year in lost revenue, a $250,000 solution will seem quite small to them if you are positioning it correctly.

Going over this value with the prospect during your presentation and the proposal makes it a logical next step for them to do business with you.

Always have more than one option for them to accomplish their objectives.

Every proposal you send out should provide 3 options for them to accomplish their goals.

Most proposals I have seen typically only offer one option. This loses many prospects as even with the best questions, you still will not be able to read the prospects' minds 100%.

That is why it's important for you to provide three options for them to work with your company.

OPTION 1

A basic, lower-priced option that is still profitable to your company.

OPTION 2

A middle-of-the-road option that is your core offering where most prospects fall into.

OPTION 3

A high-priced option that is the premium choice.

Setting up the proposal with these options helps your prospect to make a decision.

Now, the power of the premium option is not just that it's highly profitable to your organization or that some prospects will choose it.

It also makes the middle-of-the-road option with your core offering seem like a great bargain to the prospect. This will help you not only make more sales but larger sales.

Make the proposal a basic agreement.

You can also make your proposals serve as a signable agreement to get the ball rolling while you are waiting for the agreement to be drawn up, which sometimes can take a week or longer.

Remember, the more steps you add to the sales process, the higher chances of it falling apart.

If someone in the organization has to approve the proposal, and then it takes a week or two to draw up the agreement/contract, there is more of a chance that the prospect might change their mind and go a different direction. You want to avoid as many steps as possible for your prospects to buy.

You should always make the buying process easy for your potential customers. Give your prospect the opportunity to authorize/sign the proposal as the first step in doing business with you. Make sure your proposals serve as an agreement/contract.

They don't have to be legally binding, but it's a micro-commitment that leads them to the larger commitment of buying your solution.

NEPQ Qualifying Questions

The way a prospect responds to you should inform you whether or not there is a sense of urgency for them to solve their problems.

Important principle: Listen to what the prospects mean, not just what they say.

This is where you acquire the sales ability to read your prospect's body language and tonality, that will give you the advantage that 99% of salespeople will never even know they need to learn.

If you want to acquire that skill set, it's taught in our advanced virtual training programs.

So, how do you determine if they want to urgently solve their problem?

Simply ask qualifying questions to probe. Here are some examples:

1. How important is this issue to you? (Curious/skeptical tone)
2. How important is it for you to change your situation and start ... ? [Repeat back what they want]
3. How important is it for you to do something about this? Why now, though?
4. Is it important to you to solve this problem? Why?
5. If you could... what would that do for you?
6. Are you prepared... to change your situation so you can... ? [Plug in what they said they wanted]
7. It sounds like you're frustrated with... [Repeat back what they told you they don't like.] So, if you could get what you want, how important is it for you to do that? Why now?

Let me give you some examples of NEPQ Qualifying Questions to ask your prospect so you don't waste travel time if you have to travel to appointments by car or by plane.

The world has gone more virtual recently, but many industries still meet in person and travel long distances for larger deals.

I see so many salespeople waste precious selling time driving hours or even getting on an airplane to see a prospect who might not even be qualified to buy their solution. Stop doing this now if you want to be at the top in sales.

Before you make a trip that takes significant selling time away from you, you want to get at least some smaller commitments from the prospect.

PROSPECT

Can you come to our offices in Dallas and do a demo for the ownership to see?

SALES PROFESSIONAL

Let's suppose I do come out to your office for a day. You're able to pull the owners and the other decision-makers together for me to do a demo in person, and everyone finds that we can solve the XYZ problems you mentioned like we do for our other clients. What do you see happening next?

Now, at this point, you are going to get one of these answers:

1. We would do business with you for sure.
2. We would have to run it by our committee, corporate.
3. We would have to see if we could get the funding/budget for it.
4. We would have to compare it to what we have now with our current vendor.
5. I'm not really sure what would happen.

If you get the first response, then you should make the trip and do the demo/presentation.

If you get any of the other responses, you should not commit your time and resources because there are too many obstacles in the way over which you have no control.

And because of the virtual world we live in now, most demos you can simply do with them on Zoom virtually.

So before you travel to that prospect, you need to find a way to remove those obstacles. Removing those obstacles will make it much easier for you to get a commitment once you are meeting the prospect face to face.

Here are some phrases to use to start the Qualifying Question with:

"Let's pretend we could..."

"What if..."

"Just suppose we could..."

"Imagine for a moment..."

"Assuming we were able to..."

At the end of those questions, you would ask:

"What do you feel would happen next?"

"What do you see happening next?"

"Where would we go from there?"

"What would you want to happen next?"

NEPQ Common Objections

HOW TO ADDRESS THE QUESTION

"Send Me References"

If they ask you this 99% of the time, it's because they have a concern.

They don't trust that you can get them the results they said they wanted.

Because you didn't ask them the right questions and you didn't know how to get them to want to open up to you emotionally, it triggered uncertainty in their mind, and that's exactly why they asked you for references!

Now that being said, references from clients can be a great tool to help a few who just need that little extra bit to get them over the line with you.

However, it can also be just a way for the prospect to get rid of you, the salesperson.

You have to ask NEPQ Qualifying Questions to really find out if this prospect is serious about changing their situation and if they have a concern, which is usually why they ask for references.

Here are some examples of questions to ask if they ask the "send me some references" question.

PROSPECT

Can you send me some references from other clients you have?

YOU

Yea, I can do that for sure...

Now, just so I can send the right people to you, what specifically would you like to discuss with them?

(This helps you find out what their real concern is. Whatever they say they want to discuss is probably their concern or getting you closer to the real concern)

PROSPECT

Well, I want to find out from them ... (whatever they say here is their real concern)

SALES PROFESSIONAL

That makes sense. When do you plan on calling them so I can let them know... to see if they would be available for you?

PROSPECT

Well, I would probably just call them tomorrow afternoon if that works.

SALES PROFESSIONAL

I can reach out to them to see if that would work for their schedule... Now, let's pretend for a moment that the clients you talk to say good things about how we were able to solve the same type of problems your having/company is having... where do you feel we should go from there?

WARNING: If you simply agree to send a prospect reference without a commitment to know what the next step is after they talk to them, then you will most likely never hear from that prospect again.

HOW TO ADDRESS THE OBJECTION

"Send Me a Proposal/Quote"

EARLY IN THE CONVERSATION BEFORE YOU'VE BUILT ANY GAP

PROSPECT

Can you just send me a proposal/quote? I don't have time to talk!

or

I'm really busy right now. Can you just send me a proposal? And I'll get back to you if we are interested.

SALES PROFESSIONAL

Oh yea, for sure. What is it that you're hoping to see from the proposal?

PROSPECT

Well, I'm just trying to see if we have the budget for your program/XYZ product/ service.

SALES PROFESSIONAL

Awww.. I understand. Now, It might make sense FOR YOU... before I sent a proposal if I understood a little bit more about who you're using for XYZ/situation just to see if we could even help... because you might not even need us.

For example, what type of...
(You would start off by asking a few situation questions to find out their present situation.)

When I say "because you might not even need us," it disarms your prospect; it causes them to let their guard down.

Now, do we know that we can help them?

YES. Of course, we know that, but do they know that the first minute of your sales call?

No, you have zero trust and credibility at that point.

Your main job is to get them to let their guard down because if you can't, they will do what?

STAY SURFACE LEVEL WITH YOU, and at the end, throw out a ton of objections!

Now, after you have taken them through the Engagement Stage towards the end of the conversation, you will bring up the question they asked about sending them a quote like this:

SALES PROFESSIONAL

I will get to work on putting together a proposal for you if you'd like. Now let's assume for a minute we get you the proposal, and we were able to solve the XYZ problems that you mentioned to me so that you can [Repeat back what they said they wanted].

What do you see as the next step?

How many of you have lost sales with this objection because you don't know how to overcome it? You email them a quote or proposal and NEVER hear back from them?

You follow up with them, and they just GHOST you?!

That is a triggered objection by what you are saying AND how your tone is coming across at the beginning of the call that is causing sales resistance, and they just throw that objection at you!

Now, once you learn more about NEPQ, you can reduce that concern by 70%, and if it does happen, we teach you exactly what to say and ask that helps them resolve that in their mind!

HOW TO ADDRESS THE OBJECTION

"Send Information to My Email"

Everyone has seen this before...

CAN YOU SEND ME SOME INFORMATION? I'll get back to you if I'm interested?!

What would most salespeople do?

Oh, okay, great, yes, I'm gonna email them the information.

You get excited and push the send button, but magically, they don't respond back.

You call and email them again and again, and they NEVER get back to you...

Here's what you say instead:

PROSPECT

I'm just really busy today. Can you just send some information to my email, and I'll get back to you?

SALES PROFESSIONAL

Yea, I can do that for sure, now, just so I can put together the right information for you. What exactly are you looking for?

PROSPECT

Well, I'm looking to see how your XYZ product could...

SALES PROFESSIONAL

Okay, and who/what do you use now for your...?

(Now you simply start going through the Engagement Stage with your first Situation Question; it's a very natural way to go from just sending some information to helping the prospect **uncover their problems** and start to engage with you.)

Now, after you have taken them through the Engagement Stage towards the end of the conversation, you will bring up the question they asked about sending them more information like this:

SALES PROFESSIONAL

Okay, good first call, that helps us better understand what's going on. What I can do, if you'd like, is send you the info about how we could solve XYZ problems you mentioned.

Now, let's suppose you and the firm go through the details we sent over and see if it fits into what you are looking for. What would you want... the next step to be?

WARNING: Never, never, never send out information to a prospect without first finding out if this is a serious person wanting to change their situation. Otherwise, you are just wasting valuable selling time.

Now, let's say you call outbound leads, someone who has requested information, and they say: ***"I am just too busy. Can you call me back?"***

What do most salespeople say?

Oh, yes, when can I call you back? 9 pm on Saturday night? Okay, I'll call you then.

You call, and they don't answer; you leave a voicemail and text, and they never respond!

Oh, no, I thought they were so interested!

Here's what you say instead:

PROSPECT

Can you call me back? I'm too busy right now.

SALES PROFESSIONAL

That's not a problem. What I can do if it helps you... I will give you my number, and you'll have to call me back later today to see if I would be available for you. Would that help?

My number is 555-578-9872. What's your timeframe on getting back to me today just to see if I would even be in the office for you?"

Asking them what their time frame is just to see if I would be available for you, is a very powerful question that helps position you as the expert in the market.

It makes you appear that you are busy with other clients.

They will start to view you more as an expert whose time is valuable rather than just another salesperson trying to sell them something.

PROSPECT

I can get back to you sometime later in the week, probably.

SALES PROFESSIONAL

Well, possibly, it might be harder to randomly get a hold of me with my schedule. Here's what I can do, though: If you have your calendar handy, I could pull out mine so you can book a specific time with me; that way, you don't have to chase me down and vice versa... Would that work for you?

That's called an
NEPQ Calendar Commitment.

Now, if they don't call back at the scheduled time, you wait two minutes, so it doesn't look like you were waiting by the phone and you call them.

SALES PROFESSIONAL

Hey John, it's just Jeremy getting back to you. I'm just a little bit behind schedule...

See how that works?

Here is another example:

PROSPECT

Can you call me back? I'm too busy right now.

SALES PROFESSIONAL

That's not a problem. I can give you my number, and you'll have to call me back if you'd like? My number is XXX-XXX-XXXX. What's your timeframe for getting back to me just to see if I would be available for you?

And here's another variation of the NEPQ Calendar Commitment:

PROSPECT

I can probably get back to you sometime later in the week.

SALES PROFESSIONAL

If you have your calendar handy, I could pull out mine to book a specific time with you just so you don't have to chase me down and vice versa. Would that be appropriate?

This also positions you as a trusted authority whose time is valuable rather than just another salesperson who they can shrug off at any time.

How to Ask for Referrals and Actually Get Them

Now, the good news: If you're following the NEPQ process, you'll eventually do less and less cold calling, and you'll have a higher percentage of referrals.

That could depend on your industry, but a lot of times, I've trained sales professionals in this method who end up not doing any cold calling at all after six months of building their pipeline.

And you know what's great about that?

Referrals are much easier to sell to than a random stranger if you have the right questions in your arsenal along with, of course, the right tone.

So, pay attention.

We're going to start here with ASKING FOR REFERRALS. There is a right way and a wrong way to ask for referrals.

Here is the right way:

SALES PROFESSIONAL

I appreciate the opportunity to be able to help you. Can I ask you... in your mind, how do you feel we've been able to help you the most?

Why do we ask this? Because they're going to tell THEMSELVES how you have helped them... and when they do that, they OWN it.

SALES PROFESSIONAL

With that in mind, who do you know that might be struggling with...

And then you're gonna plug in the problem you solved for them.

An example might look like this. Let's say you sell merchant processing:

With that in mind, who do you know that might be struggling with overpaying for merchant processing?

Let's say you sold real estate training or Amazon training for people who want to start a business to make more money.

With that in mind, who do you know that might be looking for ways to make more money or have more time with their family?

Or if you sold life insurance:

With that in mind, who do you know that might not have the right amount of coverage or a policy for the family when something does happen to them?

Once they've suggested a friend or business associate, you then ask for more information.

Note the way in which this is asked... or the tone, more specifically.

SALES PROFESSIONAL

Can you tell me a little bit more about this person and why you feel I could help them, though?

Why do you want them to tell you more? It goes back to finding more about the person before you call... but we also want the person to OWN this.

How to Ask for Referrals and Actually Get Them (continued)

That way, they're more likely to contact this person and build you up.

SALES PROFESSIONAL

Well, how do you think it would be best to approach them?

You want to find out the best way to get a hold of them: FB messenger, phone call, email, etc.

If the prospect says to you:

Well, why don't you call him?

You say:

Well, I guess I could. Do you feel like you should communicate to him first that I will be calling, though?

Why would we want to ask this question?

Because we want that person to reach out to them... it's more powerful that way... it's like I'm sending you somebody that I think might be able to help you.

You're more likely to get a hold of them and convert that referral.

PROSPECT

Yea, that's a great idea.

SALES PROFESSIONAL

What do you think you should say?

Now, why do you want to know what they're going to say to that person?

Well, you want to be able to prevent them from saying anything that could create resistance with that person... anything too technical, inaccurate, or weird... It's key that you set this up right.

So, offer a suggestion to help communicate the right thing with the right words.

SALES PROFESSIONAL

Can I make a suggestion?

PROSPECT RESPONDS...

SALES PROFESSIONAL

What if you talked about some of the challenges you had and that he's having right now and how we've been able to solve those? Would that be more helpful to him?

In most cases, they're going to think this is a great idea.

SALES PROFESSIONAL

So besides X, who else do YOU FEEL we could possibly help?

What's important for you to notice about this statement is the use of the words **YOU FEEL we could possibly HELP.**

First, you've made it about them and how they feel, and second, people are more likely to give you referrals if you're in it to help the people they know.

Now, let's take a look at what most salespeople would say when calling a referral...

In this example, let's say you sold training to help business owners scale their companies. Here is the way an average salesperson would make the call...

AVERAGE SALESPERSON

Hey Mary, I'm John Smith with XYZ company, and Amy asked me to give you a call and said that you'd be interested in my company's services. She said you want to take your business to the next level.

Do you have a few minutes to talk right now about how my company can get you the results you're looking for?

Notice who this was focused on... entirely the salesperson and his/her solution - NOT on the prospect. That was the first mistake.

What do you think the second mistake was?

You never want to ASSUME that just because you get a referral, they're automatically going to be interested.

I've seen salespeople fail at this because when they call, they're so enthusiastic, assuming that the referral is automatically going to be interested.

So, from the get-go... you need to LET GO of the outcome of the sale... and focus on whether you can help them...

Remember, the top 1% of all sales professionals are problem finders and problem solvers... they're not product pushers.

If you're a product pusher, you'll always be viewed that way, and they'll never take you seriously and will just shop around for the best price.

PROSPECT

Ya, I guess this is a good time.

OR

Yea, sure. Sue said you were calling. Tell me what you have to see if I'm interested or not.

When you assume they're interested from the get-go, what usually happens? Most people will throw up some sales resistance...

AVERAGE SALESPERSON

Okay, great, I know you're gonna be excited about what my company can offer you today... You see, here at XYZ company... We've been in business for 10 years, we've helped over 4,000 businesses have success...

Now, let me tell you a few things we can do to help you get where you want to go, and then you can make an informed decision at the end about working with us, and we can see if you are a good fit for our company, too.

How to Ask for Referrals and Actually Get Them (continued)

When you try using a closing technique right from the very beginning, you tell them what you can do with a sales pitch and say that they can then make an informed decision and that you need to see if they are a good fit for your company.

What do you think that person feels?

This automatically creates sales pressure and sales resistance.

Do you really feel like people believe you when you say you don't work with just anyone, that if they are not a good fit for you, you just turn them down?

If you're still using this phrase… you've got to get rid of it.

It simply DOES NOT work with most prospects.

So why do salespeople keep using this technique?

It's because you get an adrenaline rush when you use it, and it actually works on a prospect…

So you keep using it on every prospect; even though it doesn't work on most, you will keep using it because of the adrenaline rush you get when it works 1 out of 10 times.

It's like people who play golf… if you're not very good… you might play one really good hole out of 18… and the rest aren't that great… but it keeps you motivated to keep trying, to keep coming back to play… so like in sales, if you get one out of 18 calls…

You're playing the numbers game…

And by saying "informed decision," the prospect already feels sales pressure from you.

We've got to get rid of that old way of thinking.

If you want to be in the top 1% earning reps in your industry and make more sales than you are now, you have to think differently about how you come across to your prospects…

And think differently about how you are triggering sales resistance by the way you've been forced to learn how to sell.

Now let's take a look at what a top sales professional like our clients who are in the same industry as you would actually do… someone who understands NEPQ… and you're gonna see some drastic differences.

Remember, never assume that just because you've gotten a referral, they're automatically interested. Your first objective is to find out about the person and what problems they have, if any.

Here's what to say when calling referrals…

SALES PROFESSIONAL

Hi, is this John? This is Jeremy. A mutual friend/business associate of yours, Amy, suggested I call you, as I recently helped her with X, which was causing them to XYZ, and she mentioned to me that you might be experiencing the same challenges with that.

Is this an appropriate time to talk?

Notice that here, the sales professional is focused on solving problems.

Why would I say **"might be"** experiencing some of the same challenges?

Because if you assume here and say she mentioned you were having the same problems, you will have a lot of A-type personalities say:

> **Well, not really, or Well, it's not really that bad as she was making it out.**

What you did was trigger sales resistance, and now the guard is up; they stay surface level, give you general or vague answers to your questions, and at the end, tell you, "I need to think it over", "do more research", or "I need to keep looking around."

Now, what do you do if the referral wants to meet you? Here's how to start the conversation:

SALES PROFESSIONAL

> **Amy, it's nice to meet you, and let's do this ... just so I don't go over things you have already talked about with Jim, perhaps you can give me your thoughts on what you have discussed with him and then what you'd like to cover so that we could focus on you and what you might be looking for?**

"MIGHT" is the neutral term here. At this point, most people are not looking for a solution... and in fact, most don't even know they've got a problem. But it's your job to be a problem-finder... and with NEPQ, those problems will surface.

NEPQ Resolving Questions

When your customers complain, the first reaction that most salespeople have is to argue the point and try to show them that they just don't have all the facts.

Rather than trying to win the argument, why don't you ask questions that allow the customer to overcome their complaints?

When a client is upset...

Maybe the product was faulty, maybe the service didn't work like you said it would, maybe customer service in your company is average or bad, whatever the reason, the customer just wants to be heard.

They want to be heard and understood - arguing with them will do you little to no good.

When a customer is upset, their emotions are like facts to them. Arguing will only inflame the situation.

Your goal should be to win the relationship with the client, not the argument.

During the first phase of the crisis, you have to ask NEPQ questions. If you do this, you will learn needed information and also create an ally in solving the challenge.

Here are several example questions to ask:

1. What happened exactly, just so I know?
2. Can you say more about that so I understand?
3. I appreciate you bringing this to my attention. Can you tell me everything you know about what happened? What has their reaction been, just so I know?
4. What else can you tell me about this?
5. How do you think it got to this point?
6. I apologize that this happened. What would you like to see done at this point so we can correct this for you?
7. This is upsetting to me. How soon can we meet to discuss this in person?
8. Would it help you if I did some fact-finding and then we got back together to discuss some possible actions that could take care of this for you?
9. If anything else happens in the meantime, can you come to me so I can help you?

NEPQ Questions To Keep Customers

These questions help you keep monitoring your relationship with your clients. When asking them, depending on the answers, they will let you know if you are in danger of losing them or if the relationship is strong.

1. How do you feel we are helping you the most? Why though? What type of changes do you feel we could make to help you achieve even greater results?
2. What objectives would you like to see us help you get to within the next quarter/year?
3. How do you see us being different than the former vendor you were working with? Why do you feel like we are, though?
4. How could we make your life easier? Tell me more...
5. In what ways do you feel we could improve that would help you on your end?
6. Would you be opposed to giving me some advice on how we could do better for you?
7. What do you feel we are doing the best for you that's helping you get where you want to go?

Conclusion

Well done, you made it.

That was a lot to take in. Don't try to get it all down at once. Put this on your desk and refer to it in moments of need.

Put this book to good use - practice, practice, practice. Roleplay, roleplay, roleplay.

The more you do, the more sales you will make and the more income you will earn for you, your family, and the company you represent.

Now, go out and start using the questions.

And if you want to acquire a far more advanced sales ability than the generic Black Book Of Questions, go to the resource page or our site to learn more about all the different training programs we offer so you can become a top 1% earning salesperson in your specific industry.

Remember... Is training something you did? Or is training something you do?

It's something you do if you want to be great...

Success is just a choice.

Choose well.

Yours,

Jeremy Miner

Scan the QR code or visit:

nepqblackbook.com/resources

NEPQ Black Book Resources

To help further your sales training, we put together a resources page.

Simply scan the QR code or visit the link and you'll find a page where you can access the training portal for Black Book owners.

You'll also be able to ask for help from one of our NEPQ experts - and see how we might adapt NEPQ to your industry and what you sell.

We're here to help.

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About the Author

“The single most effective way to sell anything is to become a problem finder and problem solver... NOT a product pusher.”

For Jeremy Miner, the embodiment of this philosophy made him one of the wealthiest sales professionals on the planet.

During his 17-year sales career, he was recognized in the direct selling industry as the **#45th highest earning producer out of more than 108 million salespeople**, selling ANYTHING worldwide - Jeremy’s earnings as a commission-only sales rep were in the multiple 7-figures, EVERY year!

His company, **7th Level** was ranked the **#1 fastest-growing sales training company in the US in 2021 & 2022 by INC magazine’s INC 5000 list.**

7th Level was also ranked as one of the **TOP 10 Sales training companies in the world in 2022 & 2023** by the prestigious Selling Power Magazine.

Jeremy’s particular brand of sales training, pioneers the unique use of behavioral science and human psychology within the sales process, reflective of his deep studies in the subject from Utah Valley University.

He is a contributor for INC magazine and has been featured in Forbes, USA Today, Entrepreneur magazine, the Wall Street Journal, and a host of other publications on the topic of sales, persuasion, and the role of human behavior within the buying process.

His new book ***“The New Model of Selling, Selling to an Unsellable Generation”*** co-authored with Jerry Acuff–CEO of Delta Point is available in all major bookstores!