

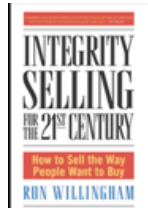
The Interview is the Key

We sometimes think the most important part of the sale is the presentation, but the real sale is usually made in the interview. All of you Integrity Selling® graduates know how true this is. Unless we have effectively discovered the real reasons people sell, or have fully discovered what buyers are looking for, we have not completed the most vital step in the sales process.

If you really believe you are focusing of the needs of your buyers and sellers then you need to be identifying people's wants and needs and then assisting them to fill them.



This is quite different from the approach of trying to sell something to somebody without truly filling their needs. It differs from the stimulus-response selling that has been around for many years and some of the old-timers still try to use. It really didn't work then and doesn't work now.



Ron Willingham in *Integrity Selling for the 21st Century* says, "Interviewing is the Heart of Customer-Focused Selling." He says you must first explore, ask questions, and get feedback. You make no attempt to sell anything until people admit their needs, agree they are open to solutions, agree to talk to you about the solutions, and confirm that they can make a decision.

I wonder how many sales are lost when the eager salesperson pushes too quickly to show and tell? I wonder how often when we call back to a buyer or seller to set up the next appointment and we're told they have decided to work with someone else, we didn't fully interview or didn't really listen to what they said?

You all know real estate agents that seem to never be listening and always feel they must be talking or they're not doing their job. I think the opposite is the real answer. Be slow the talk and quick to listen.

Just a couple of years ago one of our students in a class we were doing for Coldwell Banker Residential in Sarasota, Florida called and reported he had just listened a buyer into a 3.8 million dollar home. He went on to say he had spent almost three hours interviewing the buyer on what they were really looking for. Went into life style, type of neighborhood, location of services, commute time to work and many other areas of their life before even talking about the house they were looking for. Then after the interview he set up just four houses for them to preview. He told them that most likely one of the four would be just perfect for them. And I'm sure you can guess what happened. They purchased one of the four that afternoon. Wouldn't you like more days where it all happened in just one day.

It can, if more time is spent in the Interview.

Jerry R. Smith
Co-owner, Success Coach Systems

