

The Art of Turning Smirks to Smiles: 8 Strategies to Close Cynical Customers

In sales, you are going to encounter skeptical, sarcastic, and cynical people – *LOTS* of them. They will question you, the product you sell, and pretty much anything you try to tell them. They may even question you to the point that you question yourself – don't do it! **You've got to develop the skills to approach them, and arm yourself with knowledge and confidence** – and here's how you can do it.

#1: Be the Expert on Your Product or Service

The problem with many sales people is that they only look at selling from the micro level. They see themselves as the person selling *this product* or *that service*. However, the superstar sales pro takes a much broader viewpoint. Instead of focusing on one product for one customer, they become an ambassador for the industry. These elite sales pros stay current on the latest industry trends and they share them with their customers. They are familiar with the most common problems their customers might encounter and the best ways to solve them – *even if the solution doesn't involve their product*. **Superstar sales pros always look the big picture and approach their customers as partners, for whom they have a fiduciary responsibility to help.**

#2: Know Your Prospect

One of the best ways to address a cynic is to get to know them better. Research the latest news on their company. Discover if they have had any recent professional victories or difficulties. Try to find out what you can about their personal lives too. Check out their profile on LinkedIn or other social media platforms. Look for information about their hobbies, their alma mater, or how they ascended to their current position in the company. Knowing personal information helps build the relationship during your meeting, and gives them permission to let their guard down. From a human perspective, people appreciate one who takes time to show interest in them instead of just making a sale. *It may sound a little bit like stalking, but it's not stalking when you are using it for a mutual benefit!*

#3: Believe What Comes Out of Your Mouth

Before you can convince anyone else that you know what you are talking about, you've got to believe that you do! Skepticism is eased when they see and feel your passion for your job. *People buy for emotional reasons, and then justify it with logical reasons.* Not the other way around. So be sincere and transparent. Share personal stories or anecdotal ones of how you've helped other customers solve similar problems. Memorable stories that are delivered with enthusiasm can help set the cynic at ease and get them in a buying mood.

#4: Associate Yourself with Things the Buyer Respects

This is the reason sales pros close prospects who have been referred by a current customer at a higher rate. Usually the person who referred you is highly respected by the prospect. But in the absence of a referral, pay attention to the prospect's environment for clues of what they respect to build familiarity and create positive vibes.

Look for things in the environment or in their life that you can relate to - things you might have in common. If you notice a collection of golf memorabilia in their office (and you happen to

know a little bit about the game) talk with them about it. Or perhaps you see that your client has kids or grandkids – you can talk about family. Maybe you are from the same state originally or connected somehow through your alma mater. **Use anything that will help you relate to your buyer and what he or she respects.** *For example, I routinely took note of where someone went to school or trained for their profession. Eventually, I built a lucrative network out of customers who all studied at the same place!*

#5: Offer Risk Reversal

A great way to put the cynic's mind at ease is to offer a free trial, a money back guarantee, or some other kind of incentive to buy. This ensures that they can recoup their money if they are not satisfied. It breaks down the walls of mistrust and it shows that you believe in what you are selling. So, draw them in this way to help establish a relationship with you that could ultimately result in earning their business.

What do you have to lose?...it's NOT the sale! If the customer decides they don't like your product or service and decide to reverse the deal, do it with the same great energy and attitude you used to make the deal. You may miss a sale, but gain a *client* for life because of your great service and integrity!

#6: Compare Your Product to Their Current Vendor

It is critical that you are always aware of what your competition is doing. To win over the cynical customer, you've got to deliver a better message. Whether it is the quality, positioning, or value of your product – *focus on why you can offer the best solution to their problem.* What is the unique value that you can add to their current situation? Is it a better-quality product that will perform better and last longer? Will you save them more time? Price matters, but it is never the top issue unless the customer doesn't see a clear advantage or greater value with your product or service over what they currently buy.

#7: Isolate Their Objections

When dealing with a cynic, make sure they do most of the talking. Rattling on about how great your product or service is when the customer clearly has objections is not going to convince them to buy. But overcoming the objections just might. So, uncover and isolate them quickly. **Use open-ended questions to get them talking, and keep them talking, so you can figure out why they are saying no and then address these reasons.**

#8: Sell the Relationship, Not the Product

The cynical customer must buy you before he or she will buy what you are selling. **Actually, the same is true for any customer because people won't buy from you if they don't like you, or feel like they know you.** Plus, the added advantage of selling the relationship is that if they buy into it, then this could mean repeat sales for you. If they strictly buy the product, then they are done with you. So, approach the sale with an abundance mindset and think long-term.

With improved sales skills, cynics could turn into your top customers. If they are cynical and skeptical of you, then they are probably doubtful of other sales people too. So, apply these strategies and be the one who stands out and wins them over!