

**C L O S E**

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**I**n the AID,Inc.<sup>®</sup> selling system, the close is viewed as simply asking people to buy when they're ready to buy!

The close is a natural thing to do, for both salesperson and prospective client, when the other steps of AID,Inc.<sup>®</sup> have been done.

Over the years there have been many distortions and misunderstandings of what closing is. For a long time it was viewed as a manipulative strategy that a salesperson used to make a prospect buy. Tricks and gimmicks abounded.

For a long time the process of selling was viewed as telling about a product or service, trial-closing, overcoming stalls and objections, and then closing.

It was often presented as a process that a strong, cunning salesman did to a weaker, unsuspecting buyer.

But in Integrity Selling,<sup>®</sup> all this has changed! Now, closing is something that *both* the prospective clients and salespeople want to happen because both see how they'll profit from the win-win transaction.

Here are some additional beliefs about closing.

1. You don't sell in the close. You close after you've already sold.
2. Trial-closing is asking for *opinions*. Closing questions ask for *decisions*.
3. The close is a natural follow-up when all the previous steps of AID,Inc.<sup>®</sup> have been completed.
4. When you can't close (or get a decision), it means you didn't complete one or more steps of the AID,Inc.<sup>®</sup> system.
5. You have a *responsibility* to ask a person for a decision if they truly have a need that you can fill.
6. Closing is a double win – both you and your prospective client win.

## **CLOSING ACTION GUIDES**

1. Ask trial-closing questions to get opinions and response.
2. Listen to and reinforce each response.
3. Restate how the benefits will outweigh the costs.
4. Ask for a decision.

## TRIAL-CLOSING QUESTIONS

We talked about trial-closing questions earlier. Remember the concept: Trial-closing questions call for *opinions*. Closing questions call for *decisions*.

There's a big difference in *opinions* and *decisions*. Opinions, whether they be positive or negative, can serve you well. They can because they let you know where a person's thinking is.

Trial-closing questions first begin as demonstration-response questions in your presentation phase. In your demonstration or presentation, as you explain the features and end-result benefits you can give people, you should ask opinion questions to get their reaction.

Then through any negotiation and before you ask a closing question, here are some sample trial-closing questions that you can ask people. Obviously you won't ask them all but will learn them and rephrase them so they're appropriate for you.

1. "How do you feel about what I've shown you so far?"
2. "How would you feel about having these benefits?"
3. "What do you think of this feature?"
4. "How does this fit into your budget?"
5. "What other concerns do you have?"
6. "What haven't I explained?"
7. "What questions do you have that I haven't answered?"
8. "Are there other people who need to be included in a final decision?"

Notice any common thread running through these questions? Most have one of these six words: who, what, where, why, when, how.

They don't call for yes or no responses. Generally yes or no responses don't get enough information, although you'll want to occasionally use them. You don't really know how a person feels or thinks when all they say is yes or no, but these questions can sometimes help you get at the truth that hasn't surfaced yet.

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Asking trial-closing questions sets up an environment that allows lots of persuasion and selling to take place. In the psychology of selling, asking questions, totally listening to responses and then giving feedback that you did understand, causes an unconscious bonding and rapport to develop between you and your prospective client.

So, get in the habit of asking plenty of trial-closing questions before asking for a decision. And then, when you think people are sold, that they understand and want what you've presented to them, that they have no more objections, and when you think you've completed all the AID, Inc.® steps; ask two or three more trial-closing questions before you ask for a decision. Why? To make sure you have dealt with all the possible concerns a person has before asking for a yes or no.

You might ask final trial-close questions like these:

1. "Is there anything I haven't fully explained?"
2. "Do you have any other questions?"
3. "Will this do what you want it to do?"

Notice that these final trial-close questions call for a yes or no.

When you get responses to these questions, then it's time to either assume or ask for a decision.

## **DESIGNING YOUR OWN TRIAL-CLOSE QUESTIONS**

Please take a few minutes and design your own trial-close questions. Ones you can ask to get opinion and response so you'll know when to ask for a decision.

Remember, most will use the words *who*, *what*, *where*, *why*, *when*, or *how*. Also, they work much better when you *sincerely* want to understand a person's feelings and responses.

1. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

4. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
5. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
6. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
7. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
8. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

## **LISTEN TO AND REINFORCE EACH RESPONSE**

Each time, as you get responses to your trial-close questions, give back positive responses. Whether their response to you is negative or positive, consciously give positive responses back to them.

Positive responses are like nodding approval, verbalizing agreement (“I agree...”), gesturing your agreement with what they say, leaning forward in agreement and smiling approval.

These positive responses help bond you to your prospective client. They help them feel better about you, trust you more and have more confidence in you. You should give back positive responses when people give both *positive* and *negative* responses to your trial-closing questions.

Try it! You’ll discover that it works. It’s very powerful in persuading people.

## **RESTATE HOW THE BENEFITS WILL OUTWEIGH THE COSTS**

Before asking closing questions, it helps to summarize how the benefits will outweigh the costs involved.

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You need to do this because, before anyone makes a decision, they mentally weigh the benefits against the costs. If they say to themselves, “The cost is too much. There’s something else I’d rather do with my money,” then they’re probably going to say no. But if they say to themselves, “The cost is a lot of money, but I can see how investing it will increase our profits and productivity,” then you’ll probably get a yes.

It’s at this point of closing that you need a powerful benefits vs. costs statement. You might summarize it like this.

“Mr. Johnson, I have carefully attempted to understand your needs, as well as your budget constraints.

“I realize that the cost isn’t inexpensive. It may even take some sacrifice on your part. . .

“But whatever sacrifice you have to make will be worth it. . .

“Especially when you consider that the new software package will help you control your costs much more efficiently, as well as give you more management information than you are currently getting.

“In addition we’ll make sure that it’s functioning very smoothly, taking the burden off your busy staff.

“I’m very excited about what this will do for you!”

When you restate how the benefits will outweigh the costs, be very strong. Look deeply into people’s eyes. Speak low and slowly. Put as much conviction behind your summary as you can.

Mentally see the benefits that the person will enjoy.

If you are truly convinced of the value people will receive from what you’re offering them, you’ll communicate this in a powerful way.

## **ASK FOR A DECISION**

Once you have powerfully restated how the benefits will outweigh the costs, pause a moment and look directly into their eyes and ask for a decision.

In your previous sessions you learned three Integrity Closes.

Three ways to ask for decisions.

1. The assumptive close
2. The either-or close
3. The simply ask close

The *assumptive close* asks for a minor decision, assuming that they've already made the major one (to buy).

“When would be a good time to set up the installation?”

“All I need to do, then, is to fill out the application and get your signature.”

“Who (if you're not sure) should be the beneficiary of this policy?”

Take a moment and write down two assumptive closes that fit what you sell.

1. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

The *either-or close* gives people a choice between two things.

“Do you want to pay with a check or credit card?”

“Do you want to handle the premium annually or on a monthly bank draft?”

“Which mortgage option do you want?”

Design two of your own either-or questions.

1. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

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The *simply ask close* simply asks people to take a closing action. Here are some typical ones.

“All I need is a signed purchase order. Who can handle that?”

“Will you please sign this contract where I’ve indicated?”

“Will you give me a check for \$\_\_\_\_\_?”

Again, take a moment and design two of your own simply ask questions.

1. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

## **A CRITICAL FACTOR IN CLOSING**

When you get down to it, it’s your own *conviction* and belief in the value of what you’re offering people that most powerfully impacts your closing.

Sincerity, conviction, and genuine belief in the benefits to people help you have a powerful closing ratio – whether you are outwardly loud or soft, extroverted or introverted, outgoing or shy. If you really believe that you’re creating value for people, you’ll be strong and effective.

You can prepare your own mind for closing from the moment you make a presentation. From that moment begin to visualize the benefits and value people will receive. Mentally picture the peace of mind, increased efficiency, accumulated savings, happier lifestyle, or whatever end-result benefits you give people. Visualize events happening that will cause the people to come to you later and thank you for sincerely helping them.

When you believe you’re giving people more value than they’re paying for, you’ll enjoy a natural confidence and energy in closing. Not only will you not fear the close, you’ll actually look forward to it with confidence and even a sense of obligation.

**DIFFERENT BEHAVIOR STYLES  
MAKE DECISIONS DIFFERENTLY**

Remember that different people make decision differently. Take a moment and write down some responses to the following questions.

1. What describes people who will make quick decisions?

- a. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
- b. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
- c. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
- d. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

2. What describes people who will make slow, studied decisions?

- a. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
- b. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
- c. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
- d. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

3. What describes people who will make objective, fact-based decisions?

- a. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
- b. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
- c. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
- d. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

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4. What describes people who will be very indecisive?

- a. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
- b. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
- c. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
- d. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

### **HOW YOU'LL KNOW WHEN YOU'VE DONE THIS STEP**

1. You receive several positive responses to your trial-close or opinion questions.
2. All obstacles to a purchase decision have been removed.
3. You have summarized how the benefits outweigh the costs.
4. You have asked for a decision.
5. You have gotten an affirmative decision.
6. You have initiated follow-up action.

### **POINTS TO REMEMBER ABOUT CLOSING**

1. Closing is simply asking for a decision at the right time.
2. The right time to ask is when you're pretty sure you'll get a yes.
3. Trial-closing questions call for *opinions*. Closing questions call for *decisions*.
4. Begin asking trial-closing, or opinion questions, during your demonstration.
5. When you complete all the steps of AID, Inc.® you'll always close.
6. Failure to close means you didn't complete one or more steps of AID, Inc.®

7. If you have presented the best product or service to fill your prospect's needs, you have a professional obligation to get them to buy.
8. Integrity closing is a double win – you win and your clients win.
9. Many people don't buy because they're not asked to buy!
10. Carefully consider the Behavior Style of each person and how they want to make decisions.

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## CLOSE SELF-EVALUATION SHEET

After reading the preceding part, please answer the following questions.

1. What have you learned about closing from this segment?

- a. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
- b. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
- c. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
- d. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

2. What are your strengths in this step?

- a. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
- b. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
- c. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
- d. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

3. What areas do you need to strengthen within yourself in this area?

- a. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
- b. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
- c. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
- d. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

4. Now, *before proceeding to the next chapter*, make an appointment to visit with your manager or with the program coordinator to discuss your responses written above.