

Why People Buy

By Bette Price, CMC

When selling, it is important to remember that people buy for their reasons, not yours. Understanding an individual's attitude about decision-making will help to explain why they decide to buy. Attitudes help to initiate one's behavior and are sometimes called "the hidden motivators" because they are not always readily observed.

There are six business attitudes/values that drive individual's buying decisions. When you can identify these hidden motivators, you can gear your sales presentation to appeal to their true need. Following are the six business attitudes/values, their underlying need and possible approaches to expedite the sale.

1. **Practical and Useful**

This buyer focuses on what the return of investment. The return may be measured in time, materials, or service in addition to money. They need efficiency and practicality and are interested in eliminating waste and excess. Any equipment or service that can create efficiency should be appealing to them. A typical question asked is: "If I buy now, will it be as good an investment as if I wait until next month?" Or, "What kind of service can I count on for reliability?" Avoid psychological benefits, stick to cold, hard facts.

2. **Understand and Knowledge**

This buyer needs adequate information because knowledge is king. This customer likes to be seen as an expert. While that expertise may be isolated, there will be a need to have depth of knowledge on anything they buy. Focus on problem solving aspects of the product/service, along with facts and research data to back up your

claims. Typical response from this buyer may be, “I’d like to read about the history of the product and get a few more facts.”

3. Power and Quality

This buyer is very competitive, likes to be seen as a leader in their industry and be seen as the person in the know. Chain of command is very important to this individual. Know it and follow it. Referrals from people of equal status will do well with this individual. Once they’ve been sold, honor their good decision by asking permission to quote them about why your service/product helps them to achieve their leading status. A typical question from this individual may be, “I’d like to know how XYZ company used this to be seen as customer friendly.”

4. Traditional

This buyer has a defined set of rules, principles and system for living. Listen for it. Their decisions will be made according to a “closed” book. High integrity and ethics are a must. They are always striving for the “ideal.” This individual needs to feel valued for their systematic thinking and decisions, so do that. They seek reliability, so ensure it. A typical comment could be, “I’ll have to determine how lasting the effects will be before I can make a final decision.” This buyer may take more patience than the average buyer. Take the time to meet their high standards and they’ll be yours forever.

4. Harmonious

This buyer needs to personally experience the benefits. Focus on feelings and look for how you can remove any pain or discomfort that may be incurred without your product/service. Encourage them to talk about their subjective ideas, feelings, and

passions. Allow them an unstructured environment. A typical comment would be, “This service will make everyone feel good about our services.”

5. People First

People issues are first and foremost in this buyer’s mind. Focus on how your product/service will benefit others. Do not focus on profit or practical benefits unless you also hear a strong Practical value along with this. Even then, the focus should be on the people benefits. Team decisions may be a part of this buyer’s process, so be prepared to talk to the team. A typical comment may be, “I’ll have to see how the other people on the team think this will work.”

One of the greatest failures of sales people is to sell to everyone in the same way. When you take the time to honor the diversity in each buyer’s thinking, you will convert more prospects into loyal customers who repeat and refer.

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