

The "Ben Franklin" (and Other Secret Ways to Close a Sales Pitch)

I learned how to write a sales close in the following manner:

My copywriting mentor would hand me a draft of a promotional package he had started.

It would say at the top ...

"Dear Friend ... "

Underneath, he would write a note to me: "John, insert proofs and stuff here. The usual sales close, etc., too. No problem."

By luck and sweat, I managed to learn how to close a sale with what you might call the basics – justify the price, remove risk with a guarantee, re-state the offer, re-state benefits, call for action, always give one more reason to buy in the P.S.

And so on.

Often the fundamentals are good enough. But are there industry "tricks" that can actually make a sales close work even better?

Absolutely ...

Have you ever bought a car from a dealer?

If so, you've probably been hit with every one of the techniques below and then some. Likewise, if you've ever bought anything over the phone after a cold call. Or if you've ever purchased a piece of real estate.

No matter what the source – or the enterprise – the sale-closing secrets seem to be the same. Or similar.

Here are a few of the "classics" that you can apply to writing closes for selling in print:

1.

The Ben Franklin Close:

This is really just a simple, traditional persuasion technique. The only thing Franklin did was make it famous by actively applying it. Here's how it works: Draw a line down a page. On the left side of the line, list every possible "minus" response your target audience could think of. On the right side, list all the "plus" responses. The longer the list on the right side, the more likely the sale. Use that list to write your close copy ...

"Let me be clear on what I can't do for you ... etc."

"But let me also make sure you understand what I can offer ... "

2.

The Buying-Criteria Close:

Draw a line down another piece of paper. (Again with the list making ... oy vey!) Only this time, the trick is to make a list of buyer NEEDS and then counter each of those needs with the product benefit that satisfies it ...

"You've waited a long time to lose those extra pounds. Too long? Not at all. Lard-Be-Gone works no matter what your age.

"You want to take better care of your heart. Lard-Be-Gone is fortified with 6 essential anti-oxidants, shown in a Finnish study to reduce heart disease by as much as 63%."

3.

A Double-Whammy-Question Close:

Opening a close to a sale with a question is common practice. But some sales professionals stack the questions one after the other. The first question is just a statement of something your target is wondering. The second is a challenge to the prospect to act, dependent on the answer ...

"Is there any kind of 'safety-buffer' on this investment idea? If there were, would you consider giving my service a try?"

This could then be followed up with another benefit ...

"This is the only drug company that's finished FDA trials on the drug I told you about. We're only three months away from full approval. And all prospects look good ... "

4.

The "This-Could-Be-You" Close

Lots of promo pieces open with stories about people in the same predicament as the prospect. Sometimes with happy endings. Sometimes not. You can do the same for a close. For instance ...

"Still undecided? Maybe hearing what happened with Mary Pritchett will help you make up your mind. Mary was diagnosed diabetic six years ago. She started on a full course of insulin, special diet, and full exercise schedule.

"14 months later, she started to lose her eyesight. Her limbs fell off. Her hair turned purple. Mary thought she was too far gone to be helped.

"Desperate, she tried 'Kidney-Kickstarter' and was as right as rain in less than 4 days ... You're probably in much better shape than Mary right now. But why take chances on what the future holds ... "

(You get the picture.)

5.

The "Feel, Felt, Found" Close

Sales folk widely credit Zig Zigler with this one. It's a simple statement to help overcome lingering objections. You must, of course, "feel" what you state with sincerity. I'm just making the following example so you'll get the point ...

"If you're thinking this isn't the first time you've heard promises about vitamins and arthritis, I know how you feel. I felt the same way when I was having joint troubles of my own.

"But then I found bio-chemically activated 'Flex-O-Rific' and everything changed almost overnight ... "

There are surely more techniques.

Just be warned before you try any of the above: Writing sales closes is a little like shooting pool – you shouldn't try to put a spin on the ball until you've mastered the straight shot.

Re-visit the basics I mentioned above. Find a way to get excited about the product you're selling. Do all your preliminary research into both the product and the prospect ...

Look for ways to get your customer nodding his or her head throughout the pitch. Let him feel that the decision to buy is his decision, rather than something you've imposed on him. Use a guarantee. And always, always make sure that at some point, you simply ask your customer to buy. Oui?

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Guest (Hasten) – over a year ago

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