

How to Seal the Deal by Phone

By Heather Reimer

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We've all read dozens of articles on how to write spicier copy, snappier ads and grabbier banners.

But it's often the personal touch that seals a big deal -- that clincher phone call -- especially these days, when so many of our clients live in other states or countries and fewer deals are actually closed in person.

So the way you address a client through your spoken manner over the phone can be vital to finalizing a sale.

Want to learn how to humanize your human touch? Let's push the keyboard away, do a few vocal warm-up exercises and begin.

POSTURE. If your posture screams out boredom or fatigue, so will your voice. In my office, I sit with my back to a salesman and I can listen to his sales calls without seeing him. I can always tell from his voice when he's slouching or recovering from a rough night!

FACIAL EXPRESSION. Even on the phone people can "hear" the look on your face, so make it a pleasant one.

TONE OF VOICE. Match the clients' tone - the energy level,

the pace, fast or slow, etc. If you jump on them like an eager puppy with your big sales pitch, you'll scare them off. Plus, most people tend to like those who resemble them in manner.

DON'T:

...ask if it's a good time to talk. You hand them an escape route on a silver platter.

...chew on a pen, your fingernails, gum or anything else while on the phone.

...eat or slurp coffee.

...make important calls when you're tired or not feeling well.

...EVER put a sales call on hold while you take another call.

...mumble.

...repeat stalling words like 'basically', 'actually' and 'uh'. It screams out that you're not sure where you're going.

...waste their time. Have all your facts close at hand and review them before the call so they are at the top of your mind and the tip of your tongue.

ASK FOR THE SALE. In the same way we constantly remind web surfers to "click here", we need to invite the prospect to take action.

BRACE YOURSELF. Prepare yourself mentally for rejection, just in case. You don't want your disappointment to come through in your voice because that same client might resurface another day. And you want him/her to remember your pleasant disposition, right?

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