Chapter 4
Communication Skills
LEARNING OUTCOMES

1. Explain the importance of collaborative, two-way communication in trust-based selling
2. Explain the primary types of questions and how they are applied in selling
3. Illustrate the diverse roles and uses of strategic questioning in trust-based selling
4. Identify and describe the five steps of the ADAPT questioning sequence for effective fact-finding and needs discovery
LEARNING OUTCOMES

5 Discuss the four sequential steps for effective active listening
6 Discuss the superiority of pictures over words for explaining concepts and enhancing comprehension
7 Describe and interpret the different forms of nonverbal communication
Class Exercise

• Divide into groups of three to five. Next, look at the phrases listed below. Take five minutes to list as many different meanings as possible from the phrase.

• You can use verbal and nonverbal variations to convey different meanings.

• Articulate the phrase with a meaning that has not already been offered by another group.

• Tell the class the meaning you hope to convey and then attempt to convey it.

• We will decide whether your group was successful.

Phrases

• Hello
• I like this sweater
• I’m not ready to buy
• I can find it somewhere for less
At the heart of the relationship building process is collaborative conversation

Interactive conversation focused on learning more about the buyer
- Buyer situation and needs
- Demonstrating a sincere and empathetic interest in the buyer’s well being.
- Talking *with* rather than *at* the customer
- Two-way and collaborative

Trust Based Communication

Collaborative and two-way form of communication
- Produced or conducted by two or more parties working together.
- Allows buyers and sellers to understand the need by working together to create the best solution for customers

Salespeople must ask carefully crafted questions to the customer to:
- Elicit information from a prospective buyer
- Redirect, regain, or hold the buyer’s attention
Verbal Dimension of Communication

1. Developing effective questioning methods for use in uncovering and diagnosing buyers’ needs and expectations

2. Using active listening skills to facilitate the interchange of ideas and information

3. Maximizing the responsive dissemination of information to buyers in a way that fully explains and brings to life the benefits of proposed solutions

Non-Verbal dimension of interpersonal communication

- Application and meaningful interpretation (later in course)
We don’t buy products… rather, we seek out the satisfaction and benefits that certain product features provide.

Trust based sales communication is the sharing of meaning between buying and selling individuals that results from the interactive process of exchanging information and ideas.

- Purpose of sales communication is not agreement but rather the maximization of common understanding among participants.

Effective selling requires:
- Questioning
- Listening
- Giving information
- Nonverbal communication
- Written communication
Verbal Communication: Questioning

2 ways to dominate and control a sales situation
1. Salesperson talks all the time
2. Salesperson can maintain a subtle level of control by asking well thought out questions that guide the discussion and engage the customer

Think like a doctor: ask relevant questions to methodically diagnose the situation and problems before presenting solutions.

Effective selling requires:
• Questioning
• Listening
• Giving information
• Nonverbal communication
• Written communication
Practice

Man walks into a computer store and says... I need a computer outfit.
What questions are you going to ask?
Why are questions so important?

Purposeful, carefully crafted questions can encourage thoughtful responses from a buyer and provide richly detailed information around buyers' current situation, needs, and expectations.

Facilitate both the buyer and seller understanding of a problem and its possible solutions.

Shows interest in the buyer and his/her needs.

Actively involves the buyer in the selling process.

Use to redirect, regain and hold buyer's attention.

Provide a convenient and subtle transition to a different topic of discussion.
Types of Questions Based on the Amount and Specificity of Information Desired

- **Open-end**
  - Allows free customer response

- **Closed-end**
  - Limits the customers’ response to one or two words

- **Dichotomous**
  - Customer needs to select from two or more options
Types of Questions Based on Strategic Purpose

- **Probing question**
  - Elicits articulate and precise responses from the customer

- **Evaluative question**
  - Uses open-end and closed-end question formats to discover attitudes, opinions, and preferences that the prospect holds

- **Tactical question**
  - Used to shift the topic when the conversation goes off course

- **Reactive question**
  - Question based on the information provided previously by the other party
Types of Questions: Strategic Purpose

- **Probing Questions** – designed to penetrate below generalized or superficial information
  - 1. ____________________________
    - “Can you share an example of that with me?”
  - 2. ____________________________
    - “How are you dealing with that situation now?”
  - 3. ____________________________
    - “So, if I understand you correctly... Is that right?”
Types of Questions: Strategic Purpose

- **Evaluative Questions** – use open- and closed-end question formats to discover attitudes, opinions, and preferences of customers.
  - “How do you feel about…?”
  - “Do you see the merits of…?”
  - “What do you think…?”
  - “Do you believe this is something…”
Types of Questions: Strategic Purpose

• Probing Questions
• Evaluative Questions

**Tactical Questions** – used to shift or redirect the topic of discussion

“Earlier you mentioned that…”

“Could you tell me more about how that might affect…”
Types of Questions: Strategic Purpose

- Probing Questions
- Evaluative Questions
- Tactical Questions
- Reactive Questions – refer to or directly result from information previously provided by the other party.
  - “You mentioned that … Can you give me an example of what you mean?”
  - “That is interesting. Can you tell me how it happened?”
  - “Can we go back to something you said a moment ago…”
## Guidelines for Combining Types of Questions for Maximal Effectiveness

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strategic Objective or Purpose of Questioning</th>
<th>Open-end questions designed to be Probing in nature</th>
<th>Open-end questions designed to be Evaluative in nature</th>
<th>Open-end questions designed to be Tactical in nature</th>
<th>Open-end questions designed to be Reactive in nature</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Explore and Dig for Details</td>
<td>Gain Confirmation and Discover Attitudes/Opinions</td>
<td>Change Topics or Redirect Buyer’s Attention</td>
<td>Follow-up Previously Elicited Statements</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Closed-end questions designed to be Probing in nature</th>
<th>Closed-end questions designed to be Evaluative in nature</th>
<th>Closed-end questions designed to be Tactical in nature</th>
<th>Closed-end questions designed to be Reactive in nature</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Choosing from Alternatives</td>
<td>Discussing and Interpreting</td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- **Guidelines for Combining Types of Questions**
  - **Explore and Dig for Details**: Use open-end questions to gain insights into the subject matter.
  - **Gain Confirmation and Discover Opinions**: Use evaluative questions to confirm or challenge opinions.
  - **Change Topics or Redirect Buyer’s Attention**: Use tactical questions to steer the conversation.
  - **Follow-up Previously Elicited Statements**: Use reactive questions to respond to previous statements.

### Example Table

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Amount and Specificity of Information Desired</th>
<th>Open-end questions designed to be Probing in nature</th>
<th>Open-end questions designed to be Evaluative in nature</th>
<th>Open-end questions designed to be Tactical in nature</th>
<th>Open-end questions designed to be Reactive in nature</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Confirming and Agreement</td>
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</table>

- **Open-end questions** are best for gathering detailed information.
- **Closed-end questions** are useful for confirming or challenging specific points.
- **Dichotomous or Multiple-choice questions** are appropriate for making choices or testing knowledge.
A questioning system that sequences four types of questions designed to:

1. Uncover a buyer’s current situation and inherent problems
2. Enhance the buyer’s understanding of the consequences and implications of those problems
3. Leads to the proposed solution
Types of Questions under SPIN

- Situation
- Problem
- Implication
- Need-payoff
Definition: Finding out facts about the buyer’s existing situation.

Examples: How many people do you employ at this location? Can you please describe your payroll process?

Impact: Least powerful of the SPIN questions. Negative relationship to success. Most people ask too many.

Advice: Eliminate unnecessary Situation Questions by doing your homework in advance.
Definition: Probe further for specific difficulties that the buyer is experiencing with the existing situation.

Examples: What sorts of challenges do you face with your payroll process? Have ever had trouble getting the payroll processed on-time?

Impact: More powerful than Situation Questions. People ask more Problem Questions as they become more experienced at selling.

Advice: Think of your products or services in terms of the problems they solve for buyers—not in terms of the details or characteristics that your products possess.
Implication Questions

**Definition:**
Follow and relate to the information flowing from a problem question.
Assist the buyer into thinking about the potential consequences of the problems and understand the urgency of resolving the problem to seek a solution.

**Examples:**
How do your employees feel when the payroll process is delayed?
Do you have additional expenses as a result of having trouble with the payroll process? How much?

**Impact:**
The most powerful of all SPIN questions. Top salespeople ask lots of Implication Questions.

**Advice:**
These questions are the hardest to ask. Prepare for these questions by identifying and understanding the implications of various suspected needs prior to the sales call.
Need-Payoff Questions

**Definition:**
Based on the implication of the problem -- They seek the buyer’s opinion as to what life would be like if the problem was solved.

**Examples:**
How would your employees respond if you could assure them, they will always receive their paychecks on time? Would you like to learn more about how we can help you accomplish this?

**Impact:**
Versatile questions used a great deal by top salespeople. These questions help the buyer to understand the benefits of solving the problem.

**Advice:**
Use these questions to get buyers to *tell you* the benefits that your solution can offer. Use to propose a solution and develop commitment from buyer.
A question system that uses logic-based funnelling sequence of questions that identifies and assesses the buyer’s situation

- Assessment
- Discovery
- Activation
- Projection
- Transition
What types of operating arrangements do you have with your suppliers? Who is involved in the purchase decision-making process?

How well are your current suppliers performing? Have you ever had any trouble getting your leased equipment serviced?

How do the problems you are currently experiencing with your suppliers affect your production efficiency? Do you ever experience downtime while waiting for your leased equipment to be serviced?

If your suppliers were always on time and orders were always accurate, how would your production efficiency be enhanced? If downtime were eliminated, how would your productivity be affected?

Would you be interested in hearing about how you can eliminate the problems you are currently experiencing with your suppliers? Are you interested in learning how you can lease your equipment and still eliminate downtime?
Effective selling requires:
- Questioning
- Listening
- Giving information
- Nonverbal communication
- Written communication

- Listening is the other half of effective questioning
- Asking the customer for information is little value if salesperson does not listen
- Effective listening rated among the most critical skills for successful selling
  - Identified as #1 weakness of salespeople
  - Identified as primary cause of failure
Keys to Effective Listening

- Keep an open mind
- Capital on fact that thought is faster than speech
- Exercise the mind
- Resist distractions
- Work at listening
- Find areas of interest
- Judge content not delivery
- Hold your fire until full consideration
- Listen for ideas
- Be flexible

Keys to effective listening
Facets of Listening

**Paying attention**
Pay attention – listen to understand, not to reply. Resist urge to interrupt and receive full message the buyer is communicating.

**Monitoring nonverbals**
Monitor non-verbals – make effective eye contact and check to see if the buyer’s body language and speech patterns match what is being said.

**Paraphrasing and repeating**
Paraphrase and repeat – confirm you correct understanding of what the buyer is saying by paraphrasing and repeating what you have heard.

**Making no assumptions**
Make no assumptions- ask questions to clarify the meaning of what the buyer is communicating.

**Encouraging the buyer to talk**
Encourage the buyer to talk – encourage the flow if information by giving positive feedback and help the buyer stay on track by asking purposeful questions.

**Visualizing**
Visualize – Maximize your attention and comprehension by thinking about visualizing what the buyer is saying.
Effective listening requires more than just hearing what is being said:

Types of Listening

**Informal mode of listening that can be associated with day-to-day conversation and entertainment**

**Social Listening**

A form of listening that is associated with events or topics in which it is important to sort through, interpret, understand and respond to received messages

**Serious Listening**
Active Listening: The cognitive process of actively sensing, interpreting, evaluating, and responding to the verbal and nonverbal messages.
## Effective Listening

### Key Practices

1. **Find areas of interest**
   - The Weak Listener: Tunes out dry subjects
   - The Strong Listener: Actively looks for opportunities of common interest

2. **Judge content, not delivery**
   - The Weak Listener: Tunes out if the delivery is poor
   - The Strong Listener: Skips over delivery errors and focuses on content

3. **Hold your fire until full consideration**
   - The Weak Listener: Evaluates and enters argument prior to completion of message
   - The Strong Listener: Does not judge or evaluate until message is complete

4. **Listen for ideas**
   - The Weak Listener: Listens for facts
   - The Strong Listener: Listens for central themes

5. **Be flexible**
   - The Weak Listener: Takes intensive and detailed notes
   - The Strong Listener: Takes fewer notes and limits theme to central theme and key ideas presented

6. **Work at listening**
   - The Weak Listener: Shows no energy output; attention is faded
   - The Strong Listener: Works hard at attending the message and exhibits active body state

7. **Resist distractions**
   - The Weak Listener: Is distracted easily
   - The Strong Listener: Resists distractions and knows how to concentrate

8. **Exercise your mind**
   - The Weak Listener: Resists difficult expository material in favor of light recreational materials
   - The Strong Listener: Uses complex and heavy material as exercise for the mind

9. **Keep an open mind**
   - The Weak Listener: Reacts to emotional words
   - The Strong Listener: Interprets color words but does not get hung up on them

10. **Capitalize on the fact that thought is faster than speech**
    - The Weak Listener: Tends to daydream with slow speakers
    - The Strong Listener: Challenges, anticipates, mentally summarizes, weighs evidence, and listens between the lines

### Diagram

- **Keys to effective listening**
  - Keep an open mind
  - Find areas of interest
  - Judge content, not delivery
  - Hold your fire until full consideration
  - Listen for ideas
  - Be flexible
  - Work at listening
  - Resist distractions
  - Capitalize on the fact that thought is faster than speech
  - Exercise the mind

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**EXHIBIT 4.7**

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<th>The Key Practice</th>
<th>The Weak Listener</th>
<th>The Strong Listener</th>
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<td>1. Find areas of interest</td>
<td>Tunes out dry subjects</td>
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<td>Tunes out if the delivery is poor</td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
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Understanding the Superiority of Word Pictures

- The verbal message creates a mental picture in the receiver’s mind.
  “Tropicana juices are bursting with flavor.”

- Use words and phrases that convey concrete and detailed meaning
  “This new system will increase weekly production by 2,100 units.”

- Integrate relevant visual aids into verbal communication.
  “As you can see by this chart . . . .”

Studies in psychology have found that pictures tend to be more memorable than their verbal counterparts. Pictures enhance understanding and are more easily recalled than abstract words and symbols.
Impact of Poor Grammar

- Meaning and credibility of the message are downgraded
- Receiver begins to focus on the sender rather than the message
- Receiver dismisses the sender and the sender’s organization from performing the role of an effective supplier and partner

On Jun 21, 2018, at 1:43 PM, Patricia Martinez <patty@hlgross.com> wrote:
Hello Marylyn:

we don’t make em in round. only square. i am sorry,, i got wrong information before. style # PE103, they gonna cost you 200. i can order em for u.

Thanks

Patty Martinez
Gemologist
H.L. Gross & Bro. Jewelers
Impact of Logical Sequencing

Logical sequencing of material provides clarity and assists the receiver in following the facts.

Facts and details must be organized.

If not followed:
- Presentation will be inefficient and ineffective.
- Receiver will have to ask many questions to gain clarity.
- Receiver may dismiss the sender as incompetent.
50% or more of the meaning conveyed in interpersonal communication comes through nonverbal behaviors.

**Nonverbal Communication**

- Facial Expressions
- Eye Movements
- Placement and Movements of Hands, Arms, Head, and Legs
- Body Posture and Orientation
- Proxemics (prox-EE-Mics) – Personal space
- Variation in Voice Characteristics
  - Speaking Rate and Pause Duration
  - Pitch or Frequency
  - Intensity and Loudness

**Effective selling requires:**
- Questioning
- Listening
- Giving information

**Nonverbal communication**

- Written communication

- The conscious and unconscious reactions, movements and utterances that people use in addition to the words and symbols associated with language.
Facial Expressions

Central point of focus
Frowning, pursed lips and squinted eyes = uncertainty, disagreement & skepticism
Tightness of jawline = suspicion and anger
Smiles = agreement & interest
Biting lip = uncertainty
Eye Movement

Increased eye contact = increasing levels of interest and concentration

Stare = treat or power

Blank stare or eye contact away from conversation = disinterest and boredom

Repeated glanced to watch (iPhone) = conversation is over

This is how your eyes move when you’re thinking about something. It’s actually a good way to tell if someone is lying or not, because they’ll look to their left (your right, durr) when they’re constructing false memories, and to their right when they’re actually remembering them.
Placement & Movements of Hands, Arms, Head and Legs

- Smooth and gradual movements = calm and confident
- Jerky and hurried movements = nervousness & stress
- Uncrossed arms and legs = openness & cooperation
- Increase movement of head and limbs = tension
- Tight clasping of hands/fists = stress and tension
- Hands on chin & tilted head = increased levels of evaluation
- Drumming fingers or tapping = impatience
- Fingers through hair & rubbing back of neck = nervousness and apprehension
Body Posture and Orientation

- Fidgeting and shifting from side to side = nervous and apprehensive
- Leaning forward or sitting on edge of chair = increasing interest and positive disposition
- Leaning away = disinterest, boredom, distrust
- Rigid erect posture = inflexibility, disinterest
- Sitting back in chair, edge of chair = power
Proxemics refers to the personal distance that individuals prefer to keep between themselves and other individuals and is an important element of nonverbal communication.

The physical distance between the salesperson and the buyer is a form of nonverbal communication and affects the comfort level of the buyer.

A salesperson is standing too close may be uncomfortable and feel that the salesperson is pushy or aggressive.

The salesperson is standing too far away may perceive the salesperson as uninterested and not customer-oriented.

Salespeople should understand the concept of proxemics so that they can effectively communicate with their customers.
Nonverbal communication is often broken down into several individual components.

Nonverbal clusters are groups of related expressions, gestures, and movements.

A single isolated gesture or movement cannot be taken as a reliable indication of the true intent or meaning of a message. Rather, sensing and interpreting groups or clusters of nonverbal cues provides a more reliable indicator of the message and intent.

It is important for salespeople to be able to identify and read nonverbal clusters so that they are better able to capture what the buyer is conveying through the set of nonverbal expressions, gestures or movements (i.e. nonverbal clusters).
### EXHIBIT 4.8
Common Nonverbal Clusters

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Cluster Name</th>
<th>Cluster Meaning</th>
<th>Body Posture and Orientation</th>
<th>Movement of Hands, Arms, and Legs</th>
<th>Eyes and Facial Expressions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Openness</td>
<td>Openness, flexibility, and sincerity</td>
<td>• Moving closer</td>
<td>• Open hands</td>
<td>• Slight smile</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Leaning forward</td>
<td>• Removing coat</td>
<td>• Good eye contact</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Unbutton collar</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Uncrossed arms and legs</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Defensive-</td>
<td>Defensiveness, skepticism, and apprehension</td>
<td>• Rigid body</td>
<td>• Crossed arms and legs</td>
<td>• Minimal eye contact</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ness</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Clenched fists</td>
<td>• Glancing sideways</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Pursed lips</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Evaluation</td>
<td>Evaluation and consideration of message</td>
<td>• Leaning forward</td>
<td>• Hand on cheek</td>
<td>• Tilted head</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Stroking chin</td>
<td>• Dropping glasses to tip of nose</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Chin in palm of hand</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Deception</td>
<td>Dishonesty and secretiveness</td>
<td>• Patterns of rocking</td>
<td>• Fidgeting with objects</td>
<td>• Increased eye movement</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Increased leg movements</td>
<td>• Frequent gazes elsewhere</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Forced smile</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Readiness</td>
<td>Dedication or commitment</td>
<td>• Sitting forward</td>
<td>• Hands on hips</td>
<td>• Increased eye contact</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Legs uncrossed</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Feet flat on floor</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Boredom</td>
<td>Lack of interest and impatience</td>
<td>• Head in palm of hands</td>
<td>• Drumming fingers</td>
<td>• Poor eye contact</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Slouching</td>
<td>• Swinging a foot</td>
<td>• Glancing at watch</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Brushing and picking at items</td>
<td>• Blank stares</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Tapping feet</td>
<td></td>
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