

# Are You Asking the Closing Question?

by Art Sobczak

What percent of the people in your follow-up file do you feel will ever do business with you? Sixty percent? More? Less? You're fairly typical if you answered 50% or less. Agents like to hang on to prospects, hoping it might eventually turn into something eventually. Usually it's disappointment.

## Ask the Cleansing Question

Agents tend to have too many "leads working" because they don't ask the tough questions early enough. Find out if the person you're talking to is really a "player." It's always better to get a "no" early, than to waste time and effort chasing shadows that never will materialize.

Begin cleaning up your "non-prospect" prospects now by asking this *Cleansing* question:

"Mr./Ms. Prospect, we've been talking for awhile now, and have agreed that we'd be able to help you (fill in with how they would benefit.) I want to be sure I'm not bothering you, or wasting your time or mine. Tell me, what is the probability we'll be able to work together in the next week/month/quarter?"

## Think of the possible results:

1. They say, "Zero probability." Great, now at least you can find out the real problem. Or move them out. Movement, forward or out, is progress.
2. They give some other probability. Good, but not great. You want to ask what you both need to do to move forward now.
  - Get specifics.
  - Commitments.
  - Ask them to attach time frames to the commitments - don't allow them to continue putting you off.Again, movement here is success.
3. You just might get the business right now. Perfect. Sometimes all it takes is the nudge to get the boulder rolling down the mountain.

Art Sobczak gives real world, how-to, conversational ideas and techniques helping business-to-business salespeople use the phone more effectively to prospect, sell, service, and manage accounts without "rejection." Art is author of numerous books, taped training programs, and publisher of the TELEPHONE SELLING REPORT sales tips newsletter. He's also a speaker and trainer, providing high-content, one-hour to multiple-day customized speeches and seminars. To receive his free "TelE-Sales Hot Tips of the Week" visit [www.businessbyphone.com](http://www.businessbyphone.com) © 2010, Art Sobczak. All rights reserved. For information contact FrogPond at 800.704.FROG(3764) or email [susie@FrogPond.com](mailto:susie@FrogPond.com).