

ASKING QUESTIONS AND QUALIFYING

2026



Katherine Duley

Sales Concepts, Inc.

kduley@salesconcepts.com

678-624-9229 x 237

<https://www.linkedin.com/in/katherineduley/>



Andrew Sharp

Sales Concepts, Inc.

asharp@salesconcepts.com

678-624-9229 x 226

<https://www.linkedin.com/in/andrewrsharp/>

“Qualify – Ask Questions – Challenge Assumptions.”

Program review notes

ASKING QUESTIONS AND QUALIFYING

Something to think about: “What separates successful people from mediocre ones?”
What do you believe are the top three traits of a highly successful salesperson?

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

How about “*Curiosity?*”

We believe curiosity is essential for excelling in any job and doing it better because when you are curious, you ask questions, learn from others, and look for innovative ways to do your job better and help others. If you show more interest in your work, you indicate that you care and want to learn and progress.

Quote:

“Our world is drowning in a sea of self-centeredness. You can make yourself unique right away by leaving this ocean of selfishness and choosing to be curious about other people.”

– John Bytheway

Curiosity is a quality that can be strengthened, but why become more curious?

- You become more likable
- You have stronger relationships
- Improves the quality of your life
- Improve your health
- You become happier
- Personal Growth
- It helps you learn almost anything
- Gain a better understanding of yourself and other people

Questions open minds.

Statements close minds.

ASKING QUESTIONS AND QUALIFYING

How to become more curious:

- Call new people. Do something different.
- Ask different questions.
- Be willing to ask seemingly dumb questions.
- Listen without judgment.
- Resist the temptation to interrupt.
- Be present. Don't worry about the future or the past. Just be in the moment.
- Do things you don't know how to do. Push you out of your comfort zone.
- Put other people before yourself. Ask yourself: what do they want and why?
- Consume information from sources with which you disagree.
- Read widely.
- Be willing to be wrong. Be eager to learn and grow.
- Be willing to admit you don't know.
- Quit trying to be an expert . . . even though you may be!

Three questions all customers ask which you must answer:



- Can I trust you?
- Can you help me?
- Do you care for me?

ASKING QUESTIONS AND QUALIFYING

Why asks questions?

- Gain Information
- Uncover concerns, objections, and perceived risks
- Confirm understanding
- Validate assumptions
- Avoid Mistakes
- Establish Credibility
- Establish Value
- Create Interest
- Move the process forward



Why don't we ask questions?

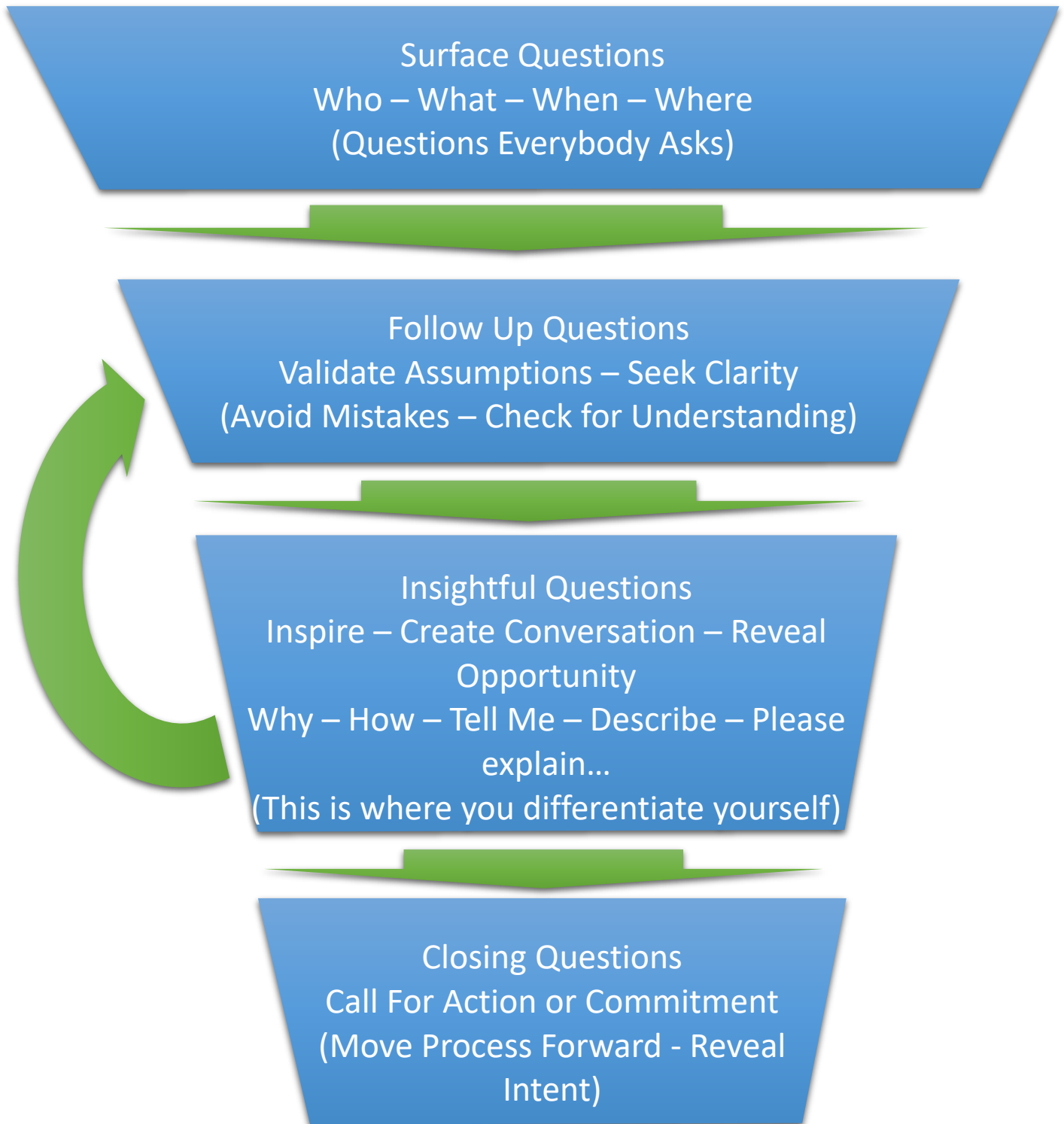


- Assumptions
- Too busy. Not enough time.
- Not listening
- Lack of understanding
- Not wanting to look foolish
- Afraid of the answer
- Lack of interest
- Lack of caring
- Lack of preparation

Guard against assumptions!

*If you don't know exactly what your
customer means... ASK!*

Questioning Funnel



Examples

Surface Questions

- ✓ What is your timeline for making a decision?
- ✓ When do you want to get underway?
- ✓ What is your total budget?
- ✓ How may I assist you today?
- ✓ What does your business do, and what is your role there?
- ✓ Who is my competition?

Results

- Everyone asks them.
- Not detail-oriented.
- Don't lead to many follow-up questions.
- Don't get the customer to open up.
- They are often answered with one word or sentence.
- Don't cause your customers to think very hard.

Follow Up Questions

- ✓ So what you're saying is...
- ✓ Can you tell me more about that?
- ✓ Let me see if I understand...
- ✓ Is there anything else you want to add...
- ✓ Can you say that again? I want to make sure I get it right.
- ✓ How does that impact...

Results

- Go deeper by asking follow-up questions.
- Coming up with a great list of questions is only the first step. The follow-up questions will tell you who you're dealing with.
- For example, "if you find out they like dogs, take it deeper by asking them what they like most about their dog or what kind of dog is their favorite and why?"
- In answering, they reveal a little more about themselves and their preferences.

ASKING QUESTIONS AND QUALIFYING

Insightful Questions

- ✓ Aside from all that, what else is there keeping you from...?
- ✓ How can I make the process easier for you?
- ✓ To best be of help with all the resources we have. May I ask what is driving this directive?
- ✓ What can we do to help you please your customer's customers?
- ✓ How could we help you set your company apart from your competition?
- ✓ Have you experienced a service issue or issues in the past you could share with me so I can take extra steps to ensure we address those types of details before we begin?
- ✓ How are you going to measure the success of this endeavor?

Results

- Deeper Questions: Why... How... Tell me... Describe...
- Should... Would... Could... What if?
- Ask about their Knowledge, Feelings, Opinions, or Thoughts
- Ask for explanations. Could you please explain...
- Create conversation because they lend themselves to follow-up questions.
- Come in many forms.
- They are not quickly or easily answered.
- Cause your customers to think.
- Allow them time to formulate and answer. Silence is good!

Closing Questions

- ✓ What do you think?
- ✓ What concerns do you have at this point?
- ✓ Shall I send you a contract/quote?
- ✓ Are you ready to move forward?
- ✓ Are you ready for me to send you the contract now?
- ✓ Do we meet your expectations? Let's get your order in now.
- ✓ Would you like to schedule a demo or evaluation?
- ✓ Since you seem to like what you see, shall we move forward?
- ✓ Are there any decisions that we should make today?
- ✓ Is there anything else besides that keeping you from moving forward?

Results

- Closing Questions call for action or reveal intent.
- Short words – Short Questions. Then Quiet!
- Use short words like, Do..., Is..., Would you...? May I...?, Can we...?

ASKING QUESTIONS AND QUALIFYING

*“It ain’t what you don’t know
that gets you into trouble.*

*It’s what you know for sure
that just ain’t so.”*

Mark Twain

What should you do now?

- Prepare a list of possible questions to ask for each of the four types of questions.
- Ask at least 3 insightful questions on every call.
- Write down one assumption before each meeting.
- Let the customer speak first.
- Never interrupt a customer.
- Use silence intentionally.
- Be curious!



ASKING QUESTIONS AND QUALIFYING

Stay in touch with us! Follow us on LinkedIn.

<https://www.linkedin.com/company/sales-concepts-incorporated/>



Katherine Duley

Sales Concepts, Inc.

kduley@salesconcepts.com

678-624-9229 x 237

<https://www.linkedin.com/in/katherineduley/>



Andrew Sharp

Sales Concepts, Inc.

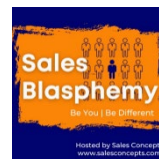
asharp@salesconcepts.com

678-624-9229 x 226

<https://www.linkedin.com/in/andrewsharp/>

Great salespeople ask great questions!

Google "Sales Blasphemy" or listen to our podcast here:



©2026 all rights reserved. Sales Concepts, Inc. Roswell, GA