



## CREATING A STRUCTURE FOR SALES SUCCESS

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It's been said that if you fail to plan, you plan to fail. Experience tells me it should be, "If you fail to have a good plan, you plan to fail."

Do you have a good plan for what happens during a sales call? That plan is to have a structured question sequence that walks a contact from beginning to end, from the introductory opening to the final commitment in getting an order. Having that plan separates a Sales Leader from a sales rep.

The acronym to use for building an effective question sequence is INFOCUS—hence the name INFOCUS Selling™. The acronym reminds us of the best sequence for your questions, giving your questions a plan and a purpose. Let's take a look at INFOCUS Selling™, letter by letter:

**I for Introduction**—This initial phase introduces who you are and who you represent so that you are not talking with a stranger, stated in a way that the other person wants to talk with you.

**N for Name Your Purpose**—This defining phase sets the parameters for an open dialogue between you and your contact, that you are there to ask questions and collect information to see whether there is a match between their needs and your offerings at some time in the future--not that you are going to ask them to make a decision today.

**F for Find a Goal**—At this phase you begin to discover the desired pressing goal or overall objective of this contact, a goal that is important to them in their world, both personally and professionally.

**O for Outline the Goal**—Through this phase you help the prospect identify and explore the details of the goal so that both you and the prospect have a full, complete, and comprehensive understanding of the goal or objective.

**C for Crystallize Gains and Losses**—During this phase you have the prospect determine the good, positive, and pretty things that will happen personally and organizationally if this goal is achieved, and the bad, negative, and ugly things that will happen personally and organizationally if this goal is not achieved. Together you calculate positive and negative financial values for both achieving and failing to achieve the objective.

**U for Uncover Blocks and Obstacles**—In this phase you dig for what is in the way of accomplishing the goal; what must be overcome or at a minimum handled or addressed for the project to be successful or the goal to be achieved. This may also be the reason the goal has not already been accomplished or achieved in the past.

S for Secure Final Commitment—This last phase is where you get the last commitment you need to start a client/vendor relationship. When the entire process is done correctly, this is a natural outcome and a natural progression of the questions you have asked up to this point.

These letters that spell INFOCUS™ indicate the process and sequence to take your sales from wherever they are today to above whatever chart or goal you and your boss have devised. We will deal with all of the letters in future postings as we dissect each step of the INFOCUS Selling™ process.

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