



## How to Close a Sales Interview

Closing the interview means to 'ask for the order' or at least ask what the next stage is and whether they will potentially involve you at the next stage. You are a sales professional in a sales interview. You are expected to close. An interview is just another sales meeting and would you leave a sales meeting with a 'thanks then, bye'? Absolutely not! In extensive research (basically over the course of a month I asked every interviewee if they closed the interview and make a tally) just under three quarters of sales people in sales interviews didn't close the interview (but all would say that they would never leave a sales meeting without closing the meeting down and an interview is different!)

Every interview, regardless of whether you are a lawyer, accountant or CEO is a sales meeting. You have to sell yourself, the benefits your strengths will bring, your skills, values and character in order to land your perfect job. As part of this process you also have to close. Most people are daunted by closing, but don't be. It is good professional business practise and will demonstrate that you are taking the interview seriously.

## Closing the Interview

Before the interview prepare your close and particularly how to close in a straightforward and non confrontational way.

You will feel the meeting coming to a somewhat natural ending, the questions are less furious, there's a shuffling of papers, a glance at a watch, you'll know – it's instinctive.

At this point probe and fact find around their thoughts on you. Ask Open Questions (questions you can't answer 'Yes' or 'No' to) – How, What, Where, Why, When, Who to get the interviewer talking. A great question is "How do you feel our business meeting has gone today" – it is no longer an 'interview', it is a business meeting, you are now on a 'level'.

Others could be "How do you feel my personality will fit in with the existing team", "What skills and experience do you feel I have that will make me succeed in the role", etc.

If you are getting any negative points here you are in the perfect situation to overcome them. If all that you are getting are positives then you are in a position to SEMI-CLOSE.

Semi-closing is the precursor to closing – like all closing questions they should be closed questions (questions you can only answer 'Yes' or 'No') – Do, Don't, Didn't, etc. Questions could be: "Is there any further information on my career to date that you would like me to expand on that will help you in your decision process" – "Do you see any reasons why you feel my experience would not be relevant to the position"-"Do you have any concerns about my lack of exact product knowledge", "Do you see any reasons why I would not be recommended for a second interview"

## Back to Sales Basics - Different Ways to Close

If you are getting negatives overcome them. Acknowledge that you've overcome them, i.e. "So have I managed to convince you that I do have the organisational skills required to succeed?" – etc. If all that you are getting are positives then you are in a position to CLOSE.

**Direct Close** – "Have I got a second interview?" – use only if you feel that it is appropriate

**Alternative Close** – "Would you like to see me again on Tuesday or Wednesday?"

**Deferred Close** - "I shall look forward to hearing from you tomorrow to hear your decision"

But, by far the easiest way to close is the **Assumptive Close** – "I have really enjoyed our meeting today and would like to reiterate my interest in the role. I really look forward to having the opportunity to meet with you again to discuss matters in more depth. I shall hope to see you then"