

**Sent:** Saturday, February 10, 2001 4:29 PM

**Subject:** HEY LISTEN UP !!

Dear Aquathin Dealer On-Line;

How many times have you heard me say (especially at Aquathin University), "my Mr. & Mrs. Ginzberg what a lovely home...what are your concerns?" You all know this little statement is to point out that we are not selling purification, filtration or softening (like the other guys push), but we are offering solutions. There is no way to provide a solution until we LISTEN TO WHAT THEIR WATER CONCERNS ARE. Enjoy this article by Bill Brooks and adopt these great listening skills.

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Think Aquathin..AquathinK !!  
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"Alfie"  
Alfred J. Lipshultz, President

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## How To Listen Your Way To More Sales

by [Bill Brooks](#)

What do talking and listening have in common when it comes to sales? The unusual link here is that most salespeople do too much of one and not enough of another.

Research has consistently shown that the ability to listen is, far and away, the most essential trait necessary for a successful, productive face-to-face sales encounter. Even given that research and documentation, why is it that so many salespeople still believe that silver-tongued **oratory** is the secret to sales?

Maybe it was your grandmother who once told you "You have the gift of gab, you should go into sales," or your first experience purchasing something when you were entranced by the

persuasive skill of an articulate **silver-tongued** orator. At any rate, the real truth is that if you do a lot more listening than you do talking you will be a lot better off.

Part of the dilemma is to decide what it is you need to be listening **to** and listening **for** from your prospects. Let me give you 10 hints:

1. **Listen for answers to intelligent, probing questions.** This, of course, means you need to know how to develop and ask questions that are meaningful, relevant, targeted, structured and designed to help your prospect **define** how you can help them.
2. **Listen between the lines.** What is your prospect saying and **not** saying? What do they **really** mean? How do their answers help you understand them better?
3. **Never interrupt your prospect.** Be willing to be interrupted, but never interrupt, cut-off or otherwise **curb** whatever your prospect is saying.
4. **Focus on what your prospect is saying.** Don't focus on what they are going to say. Worse yet, don't focus on what you're going to say next. Listen to them.
5. **Record what your prospect is saying.** Ask for **permission** to take notes and then, like a caring physician, write down their answers. This will help you to focus better on what they are saying and will give you a permanent record of the conversation.
6. **Paraphrase what you believe you are hearing.** Ask questions to verify with your prospect that your impression and understanding of what you think they are saying **matches** what they really mean.
7. **Ask for clarification.** Don't be afraid to ask questions like, "What do you mean by that?" or "Could you explain that for me?" to be 100% sure you fully understand what is being communicated.
8. **Offer feedback.** This will prove to you and to your prospect that you fully understand what they are saying, what they mean and how it is intended.
9. **Listen with your eyes, heart and ears.** Be sure to listen for the tone, speed and intent of your prospect's comments. Don't just listen for information.
10. **Summarize what you heard.** Repeat back to the prospect your understanding of what they told you in a capsulized form. Say something like, "I understand you are looking for something we have in stock, is either red or blue and can be installed in two days." Then **verify** that your understanding is correct before you ever begin to present any product or service.

There is very little doubt that effective **listening** lends to effective **sales**. There is also very little doubt that if more salespeople would simply learn this obvious truth that they would certainly sell better, easier, more **resistance-free** and at greater **margin**.

The next time you make a purchase observe the salesperson you encounter. How much talking do they do in comparison to listening? How many questions do they ask you? How frustrated are you when you aren't even given the opportunity to tell them what you want, need or have to resolve?

The next time you make a sales presentation observe yourself. How much do you talk versus listen? How many questions do you ask? How frustrated is your prospect? Perhaps the real question is this: How successful was your presentation? Did you **make** or lose the sale?

Here's the bottom line. You can listen your way into far more sales than you can talk yourself into...every time.