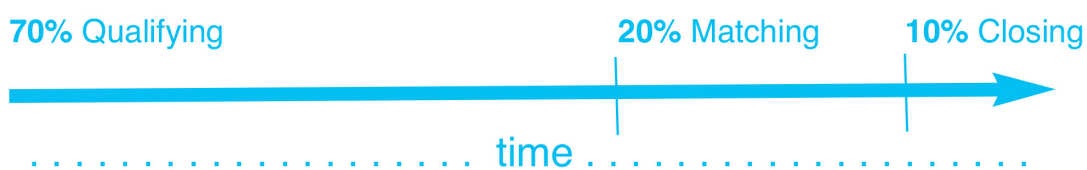


Closing

With *Directional Selling* we allocate just 10% of time and effort for **Closing**. This is not to suggest that it is the least important part of the selling process, merely to stress that if you've conducted the first 90% correctly, you – and the sale – should almost be there, if not already confirmed.



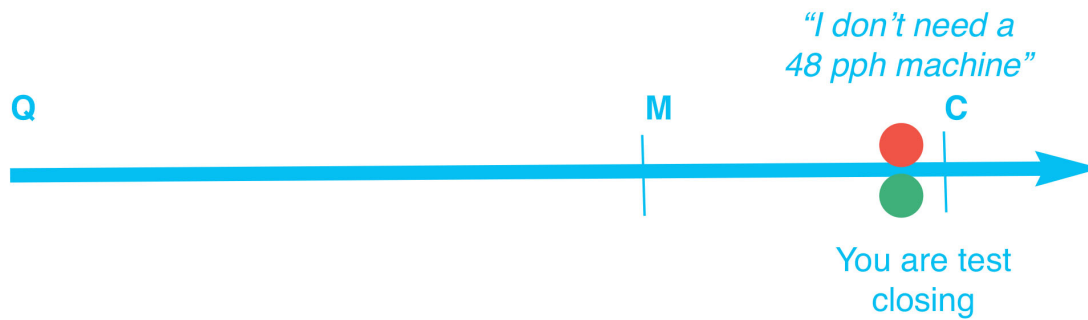
In actual fact, you will probably have already been '**test-closing**' throughout the sales journey, mostly during the **Matching** process.

With your **Qualification** notes written down, and clearly visible for the prospect, the closing process actually began when you were underlining 'matches' as you linked products with their needs.

This should have been further confirmed with test-closing questions such as, "*You said that 36 parts per hour was your minimum requirement for production, so can I assume our 48 parts per hour machine would be more than adequate and actually a bonus?*"

Getting the client to agree each **Match** between your product and their need is not just the start of the **Closing** process, but can also be used to test the strength of the close with language such as, "*Does this look good so far?*" and "*Is this starting to make sense?*"

It is typically here that objections start to pop up (see our *Directional Selling* **Objections** course). This is perfectly natural and a sign of the customer's engagement. However, isolate each one and agree with the client how you are going to deal with it.



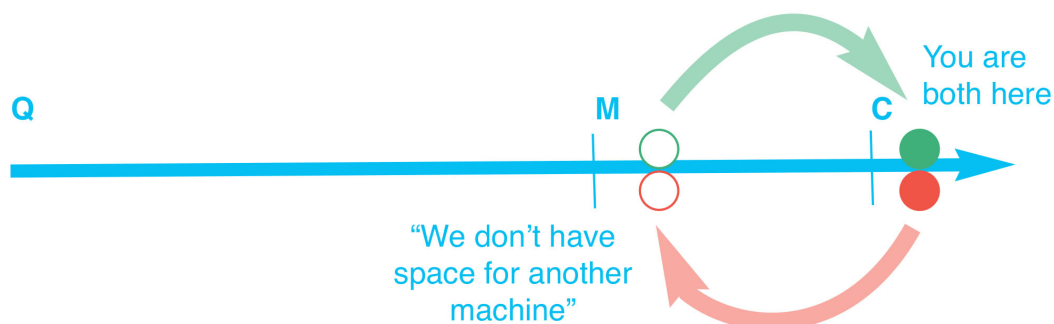
"I don't think we need a 48 parts per hour machine and your only alternative is a 24 parts per hour machine, which is too slow."

Remember where you are on the *Directional Selling* path and consider where you want the client to be after dealing with this objection. Your answer must satisfy the buyer's concern and move you forward. Alternatively, as in this example, you could try and use the objection to close the deal.

"If I can show you how to run a 48 pph machine at the price of a 36 pph one, and therefore leave you with capacity to grow at no further cost, would we have a deal?"

Sometimes it is necessary to take the client back on the *Directional Selling* path in order to conclude a deal, especially when an objection is raised during **Closing**. This is fine but always agree the pathway back to the closing stage: *"If I can satisfy this, can we do that?"*

Consider the client saying, *"We don't have space for another machine right now."* Here's another situation where thorough **Qualifying** questions and **Matching** will close this sale because you're going to travel back on the selling path to cement this deal.



"Okay, but I have one concern here. Looking back at my notes you mentioned that you anticipated a big order in Q3 and we agreed that your current machines would be too slow. The alternative would be to shift premises, which I guess you don't want to do?" We're **'fishing for pain'** here and an obvious *"Yes, we certainly can't do that"* would now allow you to re-match and close.

"So, I will have to call my manager for approval but... if I can arrange to swap our 48pph machine with an old 36pph one AND give you cash-back on the trade, would we have a deal?"

This is a clever use of a '**manager call**' too, highlighting the extra length you are willing to go for the client. Sometimes a '**manager call**' is a great close even when not actually necessary!

Closing options

Arrival at the **Closing** stage will differ between sales, so it is useful to have a variety of closing methodologies to hand. Three classics:

The assumptive close. When a sale has progressed smoothly to a logical conclusion, be bold: *"So, let's get you locked in for 30 units then!"* Silence

The alternative close. This takes away the focus on 'should I, shouldn't I' and replaces it with 'which one': *"So, do you want the standard plan or premium?"* Silence

The timely close. Use time to your advantage when dealing with an objection or price negotiation: *"I could do that but it would have to be today because our new rate card comes out tomorrow."* Silence

Note that we've underlined Silence after each close. When you ask for the business – shut up! Don't say another word until the client has confirmed 'yes' or 'no'.

And if they do say 'No', you simply need to take them back on the path so that you can deal with the objection.

- Find out the true reason why the client is saying no.
- Confirm that it is the only reason: *"Is this the only reason stopping you?"*
- Use this objection to close the deal: *"If I can solve this problem do we have a deal?"*
- Or, use this objection to move further towards a close: *"If I can solve this for you, can we further explore options?"*

Closing - remember these points.

- No two closes will be the same but they should never be hard. Hard selling is bullying. It shouldn't be necessary.
- A great close is when both parties are happy. This means a greater chance of repeat business for you!
- A sale often has multiple, smaller closes that move you both down the *Directional Selling* path. It's not just one BIG CLOSE at the end.
- Sometimes you won't make a sale because the product isn't right for the client but never waste your time. Ask for a referral, as they probably know someone for whom it *is* right. Always leave a meeting with something: referrals are really hot leads!
- Never let yourself be closed on a price squeeze – 'a deal', a 'little bit off.' It is a slippery slope and devalues you and your company. Where possible, add value to maintain price, or take something away. You must value what you are selling otherwise how can the client?
- Don't forget your 'virtual manager' call. Calling back to the office for approval nearly always satisfies a buyer that they've got themselves a great deal and they will find it very hard not to sign up on the spot!

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