

# PROFITABLE PRINT RELATIONSHIPS

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## The Successful Print Sales Circle

### Sales Phrase Podcast Episode 1:

#### "What would make this a good conversation for you?"

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Hello, and welcome to the Sales Phrase Podcast, What to Say in a Sales Conversation. In this episode, and in every following episode, I'm going to share with you one of my favourite, most effective phrases. These are ones that I use in lots of sales conversations, and I find them really useful when I'm talking to prospects. In each episode, you're going to learn a phrase and I'm going to tell you why I use it, how I use it, in what situations and what results I expect to get from it. The aim of this is that by the end of all 12 episodes, you're going to have a really useful toolbox for your sales conversations. You'll be able to dig in and get exactly the right phrase for all sorts of complicated situations. Maybe when you're struggling to move a conversation forward, or you're not quite sure where someone's coming from, you'll find these phrases very, very useful. They'll make any sales communication, verbal and written, much more effective.

I'm really excited about this. I've got 12 really useful phrases lined up and I don't see many of these phrases being used very often. They will make your sales conversations different and they will get people being not sure about how to respond to things, which puts you at a big advantage. In this first episode, the phrase I want to talk about is, "What would make this a good conversation for you?" Now, that seems like a fairly simple phrase and I find it very useful when I'm speaking to someone seriously for the first time. I also find it useful on networking calls and when I want to drive a sales conversation forward. Finally, I use it when maybe I'm not sure why I'm having a conversation. Maybe someone's asked to speak to me. I've agreed to have the call, but I still really need to find out why they were so keen to speak to me and where we're going to go next.

The reason I use this is that it gives me a goal for the conversation. Once someone's answered that question, once they've told me what would make it a good conversation for them, now I can work out what I need to do in order to get there. It manages my expectations. Both when I'm speaking to someone seriously for the first time, or when I'm not sure about why I'm having a conversation, it helps answer the questions for me, why are they speaking to me, how can I help them, and what do

I need to do to make them want to speak with me again? It also gives me a really good sense of if this is a dialogue that I want to spend time on or not.

In networking calls, it's very useful because people network for so many different reasons. This gives me a chance to get a sense of what they're looking for and also the speed at which they like to network. Sometimes people want to go far too fast for me and I'm not comfortable with that, or they're going to be very, very slow, and maybe these conversations are not the right ones for me to be having. It's something that I can make sure is a quick discussion and then move on, and perhaps focus on other conversations with other people instead.

Then finally, I use the phrase, "What would make this a good conversation for you?", when I want to drive a sales conversation forward. Sometimes I'm not sure about how things are progressing, and I want to understand what the next stage of the decision-making process is and what I need to do to move things along. Again, this question is really helpful in those sorts of situations.

Why is this phrase so powerful? Well, firstly, it encourages the other person to tell me what they want out of this conversation. I'm getting a sense of where they want to go. If I want to be on that journey, and if I do want to be on that journey, I'm going to help them get there. Next, it makes them feel listened to straight away. They feel that they're contributing to the conversation and that it's not just me talking about what I want. Next, it raises intrigue. It's not a common question and several times, I've been told by people when I've used this phrase, "Oh, that's an unusual question," or, "That's interesting." It wasn't what they were expecting, but they liked it.

Finally, by using this question, it means I can start getting to the point in a conversation without having to have endless chit chat. Yeah, it's nice to get to know people. It's nice to have a conversation where I learn a little bit about them. However, sometimes it gets to a point where it can seem that a conversation is carrying on with the niceties and it's a bit difficult to get things started. This is a great question at that point. Now, some people are a little unsure about using this phrase because they worry that it's going to give the other person too much control. There are times when I don't use this phrase. I certainly don't use it if I've got an exact agenda that I want to follow. This is a phrase that's much better used when I want to explore the opportunities about whether I want to have this conversation or not, or about when I'm not quite sure about where we go next in the conversation.

Remember also, that I'm only letting the other person suggest the goal. They're not setting the agenda for the conversation, so I can then suggest the right route to help us both get to that goal. I still have good control over the conversation. What results would I normally expect to get when I use, "What would make this a good conversation for you?" Well, firstly, I get the goal. I can decide whether the other person's goals are aligned to my goals or not, so then I know whether it's a worthwhile conversation for me and I can decide whether I want to have this conversation or not. Next, it appears to give the other person control, but actually I'm getting more control, so it's very powerful in the balance of power in a conversation.

Let's go through some examples of this. First, I'm going to use it as a networking one. I said, "What would make this a good conversation for you?" to someone that I was networking with and what I hadn't realized with this particular person was they had a very clear vision about some ways that, potentially, we could work together and help each other. This was far bigger than I'd realized. There

were far more opportunities here. If I hadn't asked that question, it might've taken me a lot longer to understand where they were coming from and to be able to focus on these really big opportunities that were being offered to me. It allowed both of us to make it a worthwhile conversation much more quickly and allowed us to really concentrate on creating a valuable alliance.

Next, let's talk about an early-stage prospect. There was one I talked to and I said, "What would make this a good conversation for you?" They were very vague about what they wanted and it really came across that they were more of a tire kicker than a serious buyer. I understood where I stood in the conversation and I decided that I really didn't want to waste too much time on this prospect. I could tell that even if I did get work out of them, they were going to be hard to deal with. They probably weren't going to be a big spender. They probably weren't the right type of client for me. I gained all that just by asking that one question at the beginning of the conversation. It speeded up things hugely for me.

There was another time when I was dealing with a late-stage prospect, but I knew that there were opportunities there. I knew that I should be booking some good business with them, but it was taking a lot of time and I didn't really understand why this was the case and what was happening. By asking, "What would make this a good conversation for you?", it allowed the other person to tell me a little bit more about the decision-making process. I then understood what I needed to do in order to move things on. I gave examples. I knew what I had to follow up with and then I knew that if I gave them the right information the right way, I was so much closer to receiving an order.

This may seem a very mild, gentle, unthreatening phrase that you can use. Just a simple question at the beginning of a conversation, but I hope that by listening to this episode, you've been able to understand that in the right circumstances, asking, "What would make this a good conversation for you?", gives you real power and you can then create a dialogue that really achieves the results that work for both parties. Next month, we're going to deal with a completely different phrase. It's one that scares a lot of people when I bring it up, but it is such a useful phrase. We're going to cover, "Would you like me to stop contacting you?" You may be surprised to find what a powerful phrase this is and how, actually, it's a very good way to make sure that you keep conversations going. If that intrigues you, look out for the next episode. I look forward to talking to you then.