

Conversational Skills For the Home Business Recluse

You may be one of those business people who has the "gift of the gab" - You can strike up a conversation with anyone, and find it easy to excel in sales by building a relationship with your customers, and quickly selling them your products and services. You've been blessed with a good character, communication, and sales pizzazz! For the rest of us, bringing in the sales is not so easy. Not only were we blessed with every skill-set in the world except for communicating with our clients, but we have chosen a home-based business where we work alone, rather than in the corporate world where it is more of a necessity to converse with others on a daily basis. Due to the isolation that working at home can create, some of us lose the one skill that if we possess it, could make us millions - or if we don't, could make us only pennies. Having and maintaining good conversational skills is the foundation for building relationships and a solid, successful business. Lucky for us, these skills can be learned!

A person with good conversational skills comes across as being more confident and competent, which can get them ahead in business. Customers want to do business with people they like, who are easy to talk to, and easy to get along with. Those without these skills may be more prone to rejection by customers who become uneasy with this salesperson's lack of confidence in promoting their own products or services. If you can't answer your client's questions, they will likely go elsewhere. You don't want to lose sales like this. You want to be able to connect with your clients, draw them in, be friendly, listen to them, care about their needs, and entice them into purchasing a product or service that will benefit them in some way.

So what can the home business recluse do to get out of his/her shell? Practice talking and listening to other people, not only in business settings, but in your day-to-day lives. Make the first move in starting a conversation with someone instead of waiting for someone to approach you. Introduce yourself instead of waiting to be introduced. I know that sounds scary for some people, but as with everything in life, practice makes perfect, and those who take risks get ahead! So what if you are rejected? You will never build a relationship or make a sale in the first place if you don't take a risk!

One of the best ways to gain a new customer for life is by talking on the phone, or going on business coffees or lunches and simply chatting with your clients. This gives you a chance to really show them who you are, that you are real, and that you care about who they are and what their needs are. This doesn't have to be stressful if you go to the meeting relaxed, confident, and with a plan about what you want to say, and what to say when there is an awkward silence. When this happens, you really want to take the initiative to fill that dead air and make the client feel comfortable by coming up with something to say to help them get through the conversation. They may be even more uncomfortable than you are, so you have to take charge!

Some tips for easing into conversations with potential clients on the phone or in person are to start and end with small talk, use the person's name when speaking to them, make eye contact, use body language to show that you are listening, make a statement, ask a question, and smile! Show the person you care about what they have to say by asking them to tell you more, or asking them how they feel about this or that. If you remember that every conversation you have with someone is an opportunity, then you will be on your way to conversational and business success!

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About the Author

Liane Bate owns a Plugin Profit Site web business, is a member of Success University, and the IAHBE. Visit: <http://www.HonestMoneyMaking.com> and <http://www.HonestMoneyMaking.com/pips.html>