

Audio-Tech Business Book Summaries

Secrets of Closing Sales

by Charles B. Roth and Roy Alexander

A summary of the original text.

In this issue:

- Grasp... the secrets that enable the top 20 percent of salespeople to close 80 percent of all sales.
- Unleash... the power of 16 proven tactics for closing sales that can easily be adapted to your own personality, products, and prospects.
- Analyze... the nine types of customers so you understand what makes them buy and then craft a sales presentation they can't resist.
- Hone... your sales skills by observing seven master closers as they successfully select the right techniques for each closing situation.
- Confront... the three fears most people encounter when they sell to groups, and use five proven techniques to close the sale to several buyers at once.

The authors of *Secrets of Closing Sales*, Charles Roth and Roy Alexander, have distilled the best field-tested methods of tying up the sale straight from the firing line. These techniques can boost productivity for the seasoned professional and increase income for salespeople in all areas. They've uncovered the art and science that separates the master closers from the thundering herd. Charles Roth has trained more than 30,000 people in closing techniques. For ten years, Roy Alexander was editor of *Marketing Times* magazine, a national journal that provides personal selling information to sales and marketing executives worldwide.

This business-tested treasury of ideas will reveal classic closing keys — and how to apply them, the answers to solving buyer problems by turning their weaknesses into your strengths, and the ins and outs of effective group selling. You'll also benefit

from the highly detailed, point-by-point descriptions of successful sales scenarios straight from the real-life encounters of seven master salespeople.

Here's the top secret of closing. You must be willing to try to close every sale. And the plain truth? A salesperson who can't go out and make up customers' minds for them or overcome their procrastination isn't a salesperson at all. He or she is a business conversationalist, or a visitor, at best. The hallmark of great executives is their desire to sell something better to customers. Those who can match need and solution and balance the ever-changing tastes of today's finicky buyer will rise to the fore.

It's widely known that the upper 20 percent of salespeople close the lion's share of sales. What we'll examine here is how they do it.

You're about to hear many

definite and tangible closing techniques. And they're all built on this cornerstone: You must assume that the customer will buy and that you will close every sale. If you are positive in your own mind, this positiveness will show. The customer will buy. The only question is when and how much!



THE SIXTEEN TIME-TESTED CLOSING KEYS

Now, here are the 16 time-tested closing keys you and your sales force can use immediately. They work for both products and services, big ticket or small. These keys can be adjusted to your personality, your products, and your prospects. Here are 16 closing keys to clinch any sale:

1. **The Beyond Any Doubt Close.** You close by assuming the prospect's going to buy. Take it for granted the answer is yes. You are 100 percent certain — you can imagine no other outcome. You sweep the buyer forward with this positive assumption, beyond any doubt.
2. **The Little Question Close.** By getting the buyer to decide something of secondary importance, like upholstery color in an automobile, you make the prospect tell you he or she is ready to buy. ("Will that be cash or charge?" "Shall I ship it by UPS or FedEx?") That's the little question.
3. **The Do Something Close.** Nine sales in ten should

be closed by physical action. ("Just OK this slip and I'll call the plant right now.") Action is the easiest, surest, quickest way. It implies consent. Just do something.

4. **The Coming Event Close.** You announce an impending event to hasten the decision. ("Prices are going up next month. Initial this form now!") When you suggest the possibility of loss, the buyer is putty in your hands.
5. **The Third Party Endorsement Close.** You tell stories about, or get referrals from, happy customers. ("Don't take my word for it." "Listen to what happened to Joe Weaver!") It's not what you say, it's what they say — the third party.
6. **The Something for Nothing Close.** You end your presentation with a special bonus — appealing to that something-for-nothing hot button in each human being. Many buyers, seeing themselves as the center of the universe, will not sign unless they're getting something special. This can be, and usually is, a trivial thing. But it often locks up the sale — something for nothing.
7. **The Ask and Get Close.** At times, the best strategy is asking boldly for the order. Use this carefully, at the right time, under the right conditions. Many people are just waiting to be asked! One sure thing:

You don't ask, and you don't get.

8. **The Choice Close.** Don't ask if, ask which. ("Which color do you prefer?" "Which do you like — 30-day or 90-day terms?") Give your buyer a choice where you win either way.
9. **The Appeal to Pride Close.** Paint a vivid picture. ("Imagine how you'll feel driving up in this family van!") Pride is powerful.
10. **The Future Dating Close.** Your prospect is really not ready to buy now? Pin down delivery three months, or even a year, ahead. Better than letting a competitor walk away with it. That's future dating.
11. **The Colombo Close.** The prospect says no. You start to leave. Then you stop, as if inspired by TV's Lieutenant Colombo, and say, "Oh, one more thing. I almost forgot to mention a very important fact. If you place your order this month, you'll get one case free. You simply cannot afford to lose out on savings like that, can you?" One more thing. It works for Colombo, it will work for you.
12. **The Summarize Plus Points Close.** Some prospects respond to an array of plus points marching toward them. ("It's all here in black and white. This is the best product available. You can't say no to an offer like this, can you?")

Summarizing the pluses.

13. The Pros and Cons Close. With the analytical buyer, write out the pros and cons of your proposition, side-by-side. Naturally, you favor the pros. But give a few cons, too. Make sure the prospect agrees with each listed item. The pros and cons.
14. The Logic Close. The buyer wants evidence. Give it in full measure. ("It must be clear to a woman of reason that, if these are your needs, this must be the right product for you. Therefore, there's only one thing for us to decide — how soon do you want these books in your library? Will next Wednesday be soon enough?") When the buyer starts answering questions about delivery, she's going to buy.
15. The Whispering Close. One high volume buyer says his most effective supplier whispers at the close, as if disclosing a valuable secret. Said the buyer, "I leaned forward, not wanting to miss a word. The salesman continued to whisper. I continued to follow. Before I knew it, he asked me to buy. Before I knew it, I whispered yes!"
16. The Silent Close. One toiletries salesman doesn't say a dozen words. He merely shows merchandise. He points to this feature and that. He demonstrates. He lets the product speak. Then, he starts writing up the order and inquires, "How

many?" Two words. Or, he takes out an order blank, marks an X on it, and says, "Here." One word. It works. The power of silence.

Regardless of who's selling or what's being sold, most sales will continue to be closed with one, or several, classic keys. That's a science you can learn. Knowing when and how to use these keys — that's an art. It's an art that can be mastered through practice. Through time it will become natural, like an inborn reflex.



THE NINE TYPES OF CUSTOMERS

You've just acquired sixteen closing keys useful for what you say and how you respond in closing customers. That's half the equation in the buyer-seller communication process.

Now let's deal with the other half: What customers say — and how they respond to you.

Here are nine different customer types. Learning to spot them — and preparing to cope with them — will dramatically improve your closing average.

1. The Tribalistic Customer. Recognize these customers by their lack of personal buying values. They blindly accept beliefs and preferences of authority figures — a parent, husband, wife, or boss.

To sell this prospect, be reassuring of her purchase decision — not

free-wheeling, rational, or objective. Help her maintain good standing in her peer group by reinforcing the continued respect she'll receive from higher up the chain of command. The Third Party Endorsement, such as testimonials from public figures, are effective in selling Tribalistic buyers.

2. The Egocentric Buyer. This rugged individual has become his own tribal chief. He says: "To hell with the rest of the world. I think for myself." Sometimes Mr. Egocentric believes salespeople are rip-offs. He counters by attempting to rip you off first. Anything goes in the Egocentric's effort to dominate and win.

Play the game by the Egocentric's values. If he plays con man, be a better con man. If he plays tough guy, be tougher. Don't dwell on product dependability, durability, cost savings, or guarantees. Mr. Ego's more concerned about product appearance, delivery, status. He wants a product to symbolize his rugged individualism and power. Close by praising his leadership "as first in your field to take this step." Then use the Ask & Get key. Ask boldly for the order; he's a bold buyer.

3. Conformist Buyers. Identify the conformist by what he's not — not a high roller, not a leader. These people

have difficulty accepting other values. They try to get others to accept their values — values often subordinate to a philosophy, cause, or religion.

Conformists seek product dependability, durability, cost savings, guarantees, brand names from reliable, stable companies. They aren't trend-setters. They only reluctantly make changes. With the conformist, be business-like and straightforward. Point out "everybody is buying." Dress appropriately. Avoid comments on religion, politics, or sex. Set up an exact time for the presentation and be there. Close by Summarizing Plus Points. Show it's all here in black-and-white — with proof from happy customers.

4. Manipulative Buyers don't need assertiveness training — but they should lecture at the course. They thrive on gamesmanship, politics, competition, and antics. They measure success in possessions, status, and money. They respond to fast-paced presentations. They don't need all the details. Simply present the highlights and wait for questions. Make sure you hold some benefits in reserve — you may well need them.

The manipulative customer will often play stump-the-salesperson. They'll say: "You don't mean to tell me . . ." Then they try to negotiate price. They demand

a written contract with escape clauses. Your strategy: Let them believe they've won the game while you make the sale. Quietly manipulate the manipulator. Use the Something for Nothing key.

5. The Sociocentric Buyer values getting along over getting ahead. In dealing with a Sociocentric, relate your product or service to society. Play down status symbols, power, or materialistic gains. Talk about preservation of the environment, good taste, respectability, social responsibility, benefits to the public and to the nation.

Sociocentrics prefer you as a friend, not a supplier. When you make the sale, Mr. Socio may take you to lunch. Since you've made a friend, avoid the frontal assault. Use the flanking movement with The Little Question — friend to friend.

6. The Existential Buyer. Recognize her as a participant. She must be involved in the sale. She cannot stand by as an observer. Present the problem, give her access to information. Build a participating role for her in your demo. Emphasize problem solving. Here, price is of secondary importance.

Be flexible and spontaneous. Stress simplicity and personal ethics. Avoid conventionality, status symbols, conformity, profitability, power,

and short-range benefits. Let conversation flow. Don't try to force structure. Slant benefits toward acceptance of yourself, your company, your product, and its effect on the customer. Use the Do Something key. Let her operate, test, try, smell, taste. Give her a hands-on feel for the product or service.

7. The Dedicated Delayer. He fears being pressured or tricked into buying. He wants the last word, his self-respect and integrity intact. This prospect has been telling himself — and family or associates — he will not buy the day you present. He has built a shield around himself. He can, and does, come up with fantastic excuses for not buying, real Academy Award material. Combat the Dedicated Delayer with pros and cons on paper. Throw in Something for Nothing: "only if you OK this today."
8. Mr. White Hat. Recognize this self-righteous personality who could have been a television evangelist. This leading man sees himself as the good guy all the way. He's going to make a decision — he has the power to grant this sale (or deny it). He's pulling all the strings. He sees you as The Black Hat. Thus, if White Hat stretches the truth or misleads Black Hat, it's all fair. Play to the ego. Congratulate him on his judgment.

Use the Win/Win Choice key. Don't ask if, ask which. Play the game until you can say: "Please put your initials right here, Mr. White Hat. You have the right slant on this problem."

9. The Greedy Customer often starts by saying "I can get a better buy someplace else." She wants the best deal possible and she'll use every trick to get it. This buyer — not dishonest exactly — wants to use her money to fullest advantage. Come up with a bottom-line-oriented close to feed the greedy. Since she's for profit and savings, offer her both.

Ask: "Do you want the greater savings from a two-year payment plan or the greater convenience of a three-year plan?" Also throw in the Coming Event. Let her know the deal is only available until next Thursday.

There you have nine customer-types. When you go in armed with this psychological edge, combined with the right closers, you start with a powerful advantage.



SECRETS OF SELLING TO GROUPS

Even for the best of closers, there are specific challenges to mastering the group selling situation. When facing several buyers at once, be prepared to confront three psychological fears which must be tamed if you want to maintain effective control of the meeting.

Fear #1 is being outnumbered. Well, there is only one of you and several of them, right?

Fear #2 is a lack of feedback. You do tend to get less response from a group, and, with less feedback, there's less for you to work with.

Fear #3 is the fear of being put on trial and cross-examined to the point of losing your confidence and initiative.

These unfavorable conditions can be turned around when you, the outsider, become an insider. As you integrate yourself into the group, the boundaries between you and them blur. The dynamics of group psychology shift in your favor. The ultimate goal is to put yourself inside so far that you become the group leader.

Here's how to do it:

- *Analyze the participants.* Who will be there? Who is your likely ally or opponent? Who must be influenced and how do you plan to do it? What roles do the individuals play? How can you transform the meeting to a shirt-sleeve gathering to make it easier for you to fit in? Know your group. Ask in advance about the company's history, membership and corporate culture.
- *Ask your prospects to help you make your presentation.* This is a daring move, but it works well when you are close to the contact. To enlist client aid in presenting, you need to be honest about your need for help. If you're just being slick, forget it.
- *Use and understand selling presence.* Presence is difficult to define, but powerful in effect. John F. Kennedy had it. So did Martin Luther King, Jr. When they spoke to an audience, they made each person feel like the only one. Power presenters

bring the audience into their presence. That's the key to getting on the inside of a group and staying there. Selling presence is being confident and comfortable with the clients and making them comfortable with you. The key is knowledge. Know who's dominant in the group and pay a little more attention to that person. On the other hand, don't ignore any group member. Be your own self — just enlarge yourself for your group audience, like an actor in a theater.

- *Put words and action together with style.* Be enthusiastic. It's contagious. Draw out prospects with questions. Be detailed. Assume the prospect knows nothing so you won't miss a sales-clinching point. Grab them in your opening with a bold statement. Don't speak in long sentences. The ear needs simplicity. Stay lively. Remember, nothing is worse than a plodding presentation.
- *Finally, here are some keys to fielding group questions.* Avoid defensiveness. This is particularly important in group selling. If you make someone feel uncomfortable in front of his colleagues, you may win the battle and lose the war. Don't use put-downs by saying things like "No, that's really not valid." Put-downs do not stimulate sign-ups! Be fully grounded in your subject. If you lack the necessary knowledge, bring along a specialist. Address the specific question that's been asked. A long answer may bore others.



LESSONS FROM THE MASTER CLOSERS

Let's continue our field trip with some real-life calls with seven master closers. See how they select the best keys possible to suit their prospect, their product and the industry in which they work. Master closers, like performers, use classic techniques again and again until they become second nature. In time, as you move into a closing situation, the correct techniques emerge almost automatically. When you make classic closing keys part of your business personality, they emerge by reflex — at the right time, with the right impact.

Master Closer #1: Selling the Financial Benefits

Bob Horner racked up a top record as a Mercedes closer in New York, the world's toughest and richest car market. He sold 100 cars a year. He earned a place in an elite membership limited to 200 sales folk at any given time.

Horner closed sales by always assuming his prospect was money-minded. Said Horner, "No matter what your product or service, work in a financial benefit and sell that. This is particularly true if you sell to business executives. To them, the world is money."

Horner always did his financial homework before the customer face-off. One day, the president of a manufacturing company wasn't responding to Horner's approach on a new car. Horner took figures out of his pocket.

"Mr. Leiter," he said. "I've just done some arithmetic for you. If you take this \$40,000 car by trading in last year's car for \$31,000, you can make up the extra \$9,000 in tax savings. Here's how the figures work."

The man signed up. Says Horner: "I even had customers I could show how to make money by trading cars." Horner says, "How's that for a benefit?"

Bob Horner never sells cars. He sells financial benefits.

Master Closer #2: Using the Customer's Unique Life Experience

What better way to get on the prospect's side than to recognize the viewpoint of his ethnic group? None, says H.G. Gardner. Gardner presented a sales promotion service to Carlos Gonzalez, head of a firm that employed 100 driver-salespeople.

Gonzalez said he'd buy if Gardner could convince his two sales managers. But these two men refused to buy. Ah-ha! Gardner suspected the boss had secretly told them to say no. Catch 22!

Gardner, a courageous salesperson, went back to Gonzalez and said: "Am I correct in assuming that even if your sales managers recommend my program, you won't buy it?"

On the spot, Gonzalez said, "I didn't realize how expensive it was. Our budget won't allow it."

Gardner needed a change of pace. He asked Gonzalez how he had started the

business — always a good question. Gonzalez had come to the United States as a young man. He worked hard and succeeded. But he never forgot his compatriots below the border. He provided many jobs for Latinos.

Gardner complemented Gonzalez on a fascinating story. Then he added: "But I wonder if you haven't overlooked one thing? You've been good to Latinos. You've hired many. But have you given the ambitious people who work here all the materials they need for success? Have you put them on a level playing ground with competitors?"

Gonzalez said: "Uno momento. I'm going to buy your program!"

Gardner got on the ethnic side of his customer's experience. It works.

Master Closer #3: Pitting Emotion Against Facts

Gayle Freeland is a closing-oriented World Book sales manager in Memphis. She loves to hear prospects ask how her product compares with her famous competitor, Encyclopedia Britannica. Her strategy is not to knock her competitor's authority.

John Dixon, a prominent businessman, asked Freeland to come to his office to explain why her product was better than Britannica.

"Mr. Dixon," she said. "World Book is widely known for its value in educating children. On that point, it has no peer. So I assume that your concern is why World Book is better for adults?"

Dixon nodded. Gayle Freeland was calling on the Logic key to build up to an Emotional Event.

"Well, Mr. Dixon," she said. "When you want to look up something in Britannica, it's there, all right. I won't pretend otherwise. But it's not easy to find. Why should you have to work that hard to get it? After all, your time is valuable. World Book makes it easy. That's why World Book is better. After all, World Book has 60 percent of the global encyclopedia market. The other 40 percent is divided among all the others. There must be a reason!

"There's also a reason why I sell World Book. I could be selling Britannica. But we always had World Book when I was small. There's no way we could have done without it. I believe in World Book."

Thus you have it. A powerful side-by-side summary. Sure, the competitor is famous. Sure, it's authoritative. But there are people who believe in World Book. She played the Third Party Endorsement key. Maybe ease-of-access has something to with it. The Logic key again.

Dixon bought. Gayle Freeland proved that emotion-based closing depends on the closer, not the fame of the product. And, she closed without once mentioning price, yet her product is half the cost of her competitor's. She was talking to a prospect who could easily afford any product he wanted. Does her lack of emphasis on price give you a clue? It should!

Master Closer #4: Getting In Your Prospect's Shoes

In making a joint presentation with a colorful character, be prepared for sudden shifts and learn to recover quickly. Walter H. Johnson learned this working for the legendary Marion Harper, CEO of The Interpublic Group. Harper had hired Johnson away from an airline sales management job.

One day, Harper tooted into Johnson's office on the 44th floor of the Time-Life Building and said, "I'm making a presentation to American Cyanamid tomorrow morning in New Jersey. Can you stay in town tonight and help?"

No one ever said no to Harper. Walter phoned his wife: He wouldn't be home that evening. Then, Walter discovered Harper hadn't even started the Cyanamid presentation. At 9:00 p.m. the two men went to work.

Data from computers flowed in, and rough charts rolled from the graphics studio, on all-night alert.

By 4:00 a.m., the proposal was finished and they departed to nearby hotels. They met at 8:30 a.m., the finished presentation in tow.

As the limousine hummed through Lincoln Tunnel, Harper said, "I've changed my mind. You're going to make the presentation."

"Okay," Johnson said, wondering about the last-minute change.

At Cyanamid, the two men went directly to the

conference room. Six corporate people filed in and took seats at the other end. Instead of sitting beside Johnson, Harper sat with the Cyanamid people and talked New Jersey politics. Once everyone assembled, he nodded for Walter to begin.

As the presentation moved along, questions arose — some critical and hard to answer. Harper also asked questions — some of the toughest.

Thought Walter: "He's joined the client!"

The presentation lasted less than an hour. After a brief silence the chairman said, "Would you mind leaving us for a few minutes, Mr. Johnson, so we can discuss your proposal?"

Johnson left the room, but Harper didn't move. After 15 minutes, they called Johnson back. They had signed the business. Harper had, in effect, joined the client and helped make the decision.

Now, that's really getting into your prospect's shoes!

Master Closer #5: Planning Ahead to Control the Sale

Bruce Alexander, the Tennessee real estate expert, believes the ace closer melds many major and minor keys in advance planning to control the sale. Here's his advice:

In real estate, always take the prospect to see the property in your car. You have no control in their car. They can decide when they've seen enough. Keep control.

Take the best route to the property. Don't drive by vacant lots and eyesores. Choose the most scenic route. This is part of your close.

Use the time en route to talk about the property's disadvantages, such as "It's an excellent value but needs painting inside and out."

If you don't mention it ahead of time, the buyers are going to lay it on you when they get there. If you are going to show property that's a mess, make it an even bigger mess. Say: "The walls have got this and the carpet needs that and the lawn is this high. Oh, wow, it's in terrible condition. But I'll tell you one thing: It's about \$6,000 under the market price. It's a fantastic buy, if you don't mind fixing it up."

When the prospects get there, they're excited about the terrific price. When they see the property, they'll say, "You know, it's not that bad."

Anticipating objections and heading them off is part of the closing attitude.

If the buyer is not sold enough to go right to contract, use the balance sheet close.

Take a piece of paper and draw a line right down the middle. Say: "Let's write on this half of the paper all the reasons for owning this property. On this side, we'll write down all the reasons you should not own this property."

"This property certainly suits your needs, doesn't it?"

Mary says: "Gee, I like it." Write that down. Property suits needs.

When you finish, the positives should outweigh the negatives three or four to one.

Then ask the prospect where the preponderance of evidence lies. Tom and Mary are going to judge the evidence.

Convert all general objections to specifics. For example, a general objection: "I want to think it over." Ask: "What part concerns you?" Then get the prospect to say: "I'm concerned about the lack of a second bedroom." Now, that's an objection you can work with.

Now, suppose you cannot close on the house that day. The buyers pose a legitimate question. You can answer it tomorrow but not today. Say it's 2 o'clock in the afternoon. You don't want Tom and Mary to look at any other property today. Somebody may sell them. You want them to go right home.

On the way back, stop and get ice cream. Say: "I'd like you to take this little gift home. The kids have been so great. They'll enjoy it."

Now there's ice cream in the car. Tom and Mary must go home before it melts. When they get home and give the kids the ice cream, they're not going to feel like going out again. They're off the market until the next day. Frozen assets may be a problem in finance, but in closing, it's the way to out-fox your competitor.

Notice how the following

closing keys applied to Tom and Mary are so integrated they're almost invisible, but all the more effective.

- **Do Something.** He gets the prospects to write down advantages and disadvantages and then make the final judgment.
- **Third Party Endorsement.** Who better as endorsers than the prospects themselves? Let them tell you how wonderful it is.
- **Something for Nothing.** The ice cream. But it comes with a double-whammy: They must get it home quickly and cannot see a competitive property.

When your closing keys become second nature they become interwoven seamlessly.



MORE LESSONS FROM THE MASTER CLOSERS

Master Closer #6: Offering Free Counsel

Al Wall dispenses free advice to his customers. For that reason, Hollywood will probably never cast Al Wall as a sales manager, but then, movies often lack reality. Al Wall has racked up a successful selling record, selling decorative home accessories. So much so, he's become national sales manager of the MaLeck Group, a leading company in the field.

Al uses the Something for Nothing closing key by giving his customers free counsel. He meets regularly with group buyers from

department store chains, not to sell, but to talk about their problems. "Funny, you never try to sell us your products," a buyer said to Al one day.

"No, I don't," Al said. "I'm here to find out about your problems and to find solutions. Now some of those solutions probably include our company. If I only sold products, I'd be just as good as my last sale."

Al Wall calls it reverse selling. His customers feel they're getting advice for free. No wonder Al's sales rise steadily, year after year. He is appealing to a universal human weakness — the desire to get something for nothing.

Master Closer #7: Coming at Them Fully Loaded

Good closers are not born, they develop themselves. That's what makes a professional: perfecting your craft. But no matter what you sell, you benefit from exposure to expert closing. Put closing advice under a microscope, and you'll begin to see the keys emerge. They're closing keys to you, but to the buyer, they're reassuring advice, or helpful information, or a real solution to a problem.

Pay close attention to the number of closing keys David Boue's classic close illustrates.

He arrives at the prospect's office fully prepared to use any (or all) of his closers. Says Boue: "I am prepared to draw on any of 25 responses. I don't know which one I'll need. But whatever it is, I'm ready."

Does this mean Boue forgets homework and plays it by ear? Absolutely not. He sells a complicated business service in a volume of \$750,000 a year. This requires intensive preparation. He must know his service inside-out, know the client's business and know his closing keys.

Does that sound like an enormous amount of work? Yes. But it pays off in spades or, more properly, in dollars. Learn what happens when Dave Boue calls on Whitelaw Chambers, general manager of a company that makes solar products for the home. Boue sells a seminar service that dramatizes product benefits to the public. It's intangible, new to many prospects, hard to grasp.

This is Boue's second call. On his first call, he left Chambers a plan and budget.

Boue arrives at Chambers' office at 8:45 a.m. He knows the day gets complicated as it wears on at the company.

Before meeting Chambers, Boue stopped in to see Chambers' boss, Vickors Reilly, to make a valuable suggestion on a completely unrelated matter. Soon he's seated with Chambers.

Chambers asks Boue: "Can we get you coffee?"

But Boue says: "No, thanks. I brought my own." From his briefcase, he takes a small compact coffee maker and a small silver cup. He tells Chambers, "I have a special blend made in Brazil. Want to try mine?"

In wonder, Chambers nods.

Boue picks up the string and says, "Very appropriate we should be talking about solar products today, Whit. I was just reading this article in The New York Times last Sunday."

Naturally, Chambers is interested. Later Boue explained: "It's amazing how many business executives have not read key articles. I use this to advantage."

Boue summarizes the Times' comments. Solar products, once considered a novelty, are now a necessity to many consumers.

"This is the solar era. But, as you know better than I, you're in an ease-of-entry business. Almost anyone can set up in a garage and call himself a solar products manufacturer.

"The number of companies in the field has grown by 500 percent in the past year, according to the Solar Products Association. There's a power struggle going on right now. A few companies will emerge as leaders in the public mind. Many more will be left by the wayside."

Chambers nods. What Boue says is provocative.

Boue continues: "To establish leadership, your company must make a dramatic, but legitimate, gesture. Now, it's true you put on a public demonstration about 18 months ago when the industry was much younger. And you benefited from that. But you must decide when you can be on the give and when you can be on the take."

Chambers wants to know: Give? Take? How does that work?

Here Boue stops the action, seemingly, to tell Chambers a story from history. When Nelson Rockefeller was running for re-election as governor of New York, his political enemies circulated rumors that Rockefeller was on the give, that he was giving money to certain groups to swing votes.

Then Boue nailed down the point: "This contrasts with the usual political charge of being on the take. Naturally it wouldn't be credible to accuse a Rockefeller of being on the take. Who could offer him money he doesn't already have? So they accused him of being on the give."

Chambers, who follows politics closely, chimed in: "On the give — that's pretty good."

"But there's a moral here," Boue says, "that applies to the solar industry" — in one deft stroke, he shifts back to closing.

Says Boue: "When you made that public demonstration 18 months ago, you were on the give, giving the public information and instruction to help buyers make decisions about solarizing homes. People appreciate that. When they get ready to buy, they turn to that helpful company that put on the demonstration."

"Since that time," Boue tells Chambers, "your company has been on the take."

Boue adds: "You've been reaping the benefits of that

early demonstration. But you can't go on being on the take forever. Now you've got to go on the give again. This public demonstration is the most dramatic, legitimate way to go on the give."

Chambers is nearly convinced. However, there's the matter of cost.

Says Boue: "Let me pour you another cup of coffee and I'll tell you how we plan to save you money over the previous quote."

Boue then details a plan whereby Chambers can rent a meeting site at less money by bartering closed-out solar products in exchange for space. Says Boue: "This will reduce your cash outlay by \$4,200."

Just then, Chambers' boss, Vickers Reilly, comes into the office. Says Reilly, "Sorry to interrupt. I just wanted to catch Dave before he left. Dave, that's a good suggestion you made today. We're moving out on it. Thanks a lot."

Dave says, "Glad to help." Then Chambers says: "By the way, Vickers, I want to see you a little later about a new plan for a public demonstration. We want to make a decision on this right away."

Reilly agrees and leaves. Boue asks Chambers to decide which products he wants to barter. He then gets Chambers to initial the contract. The sale is closed.

Let's analyze how Boue closed throughout:

Off the cuff? Far from it. Dave Boue went in loaded for

bear. Canned presentation? No. Boue stored a number of prepared elements in his mind, but the presentation moved like a skilled performer on a talk show. Boue drew on rehearsed components. He filled in between the bricks with pleasing and convincing conversational mortar.

Are you willing to prepare to that extent? Do you know your closing keys so well they pop up as needed, almost — but not quite — by reflex? Well, master closers do. Here are the closing keys David Boue drew from mental inventory.

First, he set the time to suit the buyer's mood (in this case, early in the morning) to close in the right psychological climate. He brought along a distinctive coffee pot and offered his customer a drink from a silver cup — the Do Something key. This insured customer interest. It set Dave aside from 999 other salespeople Chambers may have known.

Dave was selling an event, so his Coming Event key was built-in. His well-prepared manner assumed he'd get the order — the Beyond Any Doubt key. He used Chambers' own boss to get his Third Party Endorsement. Of course, Reilly coming into Chambers' office was a stroke of luck. Or was it? Good closers make their own luck!

Boue also used the Coming Event in talking about the industry shakeout and how some companies will be left by the wayside.

Because he has investigated

a less expensive way for Chambers to buy, he was really offering Something for Nothing.

Boue even worked in the Little Question key by asking Chambers which products he wanted to barter. Not if, but which — a much easier decision to make.

Of course at the end Boue trotted out Ask and Get — time for Chambers to sign. He signed.

Clearly, Boue's most important move was stopping the sale to tell a related story about Nelson Rockefeller. Storytelling is part of the Third Party Endorsement key. But once he told his story, Boue immediately moved back into the close.

In this one close, Boue interwove seven major keys into his presentation. He used a number of special keys, plus much good common sense and good close-ability. He was totally prepared. A true professional closer at work.



The major closing keys are now yours. Scale them up and down. Adapt and adopt. Re-jigger and rebore. Polish and sand. By the time you finish, they won't look like these keys at all. No matter. Use these principles as your launching pad. Where you go beyond that is as wide open as outer space.

Review what you've learned. You started with a look at the importance of closing — quite simply, if you cannot close, you cannot sell. There are no born closers. Closing can be learned. Take

your instruction from the world's champion closers.

David Boue started working on his close when he read The New York Times article and decided to use it as ammunition.

Correction. He started his close by keeping informed in the first place!

You now know how to match your presentation to your prospect's personality, and you've gained skills for skillfully handling — and closing — group sales.

Your foundation includes being able to speak clearly, colorfully, and persuasively — the closer's fundamental tools. And this applies in any selling interaction. If you're not an expert speaker, start studying. You must master the language.

Once you make classic keys part of your nature, you'll close the easy and medium-hard sales automatically. And the really difficult sales will come easier and easier with time. Closing is the pinnacle of selling achievement. Here is where your time, money, and effort pays off — or goes down the drain. Learn from the top-producers who do close. Most classic truths are simple. Most sales are closed with a classically simple key. It's a science you can learn.

Knowing the Secrets of Closing Sales makes your work easier, more productive, more profitable, and, perhaps most important of all, more fun. You now have the tools to do just that. Good selling!



ABOUT THE AUTHORS

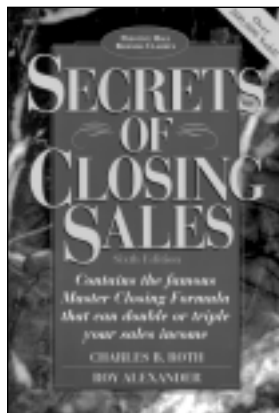
The late Charles B. Roth personally trained more than 30,000 salespeople in the art of closing more sales. In the field and as a sales counselor, he helped develop the selling programs of dozens of leading firms, including Ford Motors and Railway Express.

Roy Alexander heads his own consulting firm in New York City, where he specializes in sales and communications for energy-related fields. He is the editor of the professional journal *Marketing Times* and is co-author of *Climbing the Corporate Matterhorn*, *Direct Salesman's Handbook*, and *Commonsense Time Management*.

HOW TO ADD THIS BOOK TO YOUR LIBRARY

To order this book, please send check or money order for \$16.95, plus \$3.50 shipping and handling to:

**Audio-Tech
Business Book Summaries**
825 75th Street, Suite C
Willowbrook, IL 60527-8492



Secrets of Closing Sales summarized by arrangement with Learning Network Direct, Inc., from *Secrets of Closing Sales: Sixth Edition* by Charles B. Roth and Roy Alexander. Copyright © 1993 by Prentice-Hall, Inc.



825 75th Street, Suite C, Willowbrook, Illinois 60527-8492
1-800-776-1910 • 1-630-734-0600 (fax) • www.audiotech.com