

# How can we get our customers to see their needs as serious enough to require action?

A buyer expresses a need that plays to your strengths, so you plunge into the corresponding advantages of your solution - only to find yourself stalled. Why? Our research among top salespeople during the Recognition of Needs phase reveals that they don't just surface needs, they develop them, by helping buyers see serious consequences that might otherwise have been overlooked. Only once a need is appreciated as an urgent problem do top salespeople move on to help the buyer evaluate solution options. Here's how it's done.

## Understand What Problems Your Product Solves

1. **Before** you begin uncovering buyer needs, understand what problems your product solves
2. **Go** beyond the obvious, including coming up with problems unique to a specific customer
3. **Pay** particular attention to problems you can solve that your competitors can't
4. **Plan** questions in advance calculated to draw out problems you are hoping to uncover

## Uncover Customer Dissatisfaction

1. **Always** remember, without dissatisfaction, there's no reason for the account to buy
2. **Emphasize** questions that probe for problems, difficulties or areas of dissatisfaction
3. **Buyers** are more likely to be receptive to problem-seeking questions than fact-finding questions
4. **In** complex sales situations, recognition of problem alone is seldom sufficient to spur action

## Develop Customer Dissatisfaction

1. **Emphasize** questions that draw out the implications and consequences of an identified problem
2. **Don't** move on until the buyer accepts the problem as serious enough to require action
3. **Larger** and more complex sales require more dissatisfaction to tip the scales
4. **Just** because you recognize the severity of a problem, don't assume the buyer does

## "Hire" the Problem Owner

1. **Invite** the problem owner to help you gain access to the ultimate decision maker
2. **If** direct access isn't possible, deputize the problem owner to make your case for you
3. **Rehearse** them with questions that get them to articulate the value of solving the problem

## Exploit Problems to Create Value

1. **Customers** see value in salespeople who help them discover previously overlooked problems
2. **Value** is also created in surfacing serious implications to problems previously thought to be benign

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