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## [Turning Prospects Into Customers](#)

[FolioMag.com](http://FolioMag.com)

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By Jena C. Rubin

When people agree to talk with you, it is because if your magazine makes sense, buying it makes sense. Since closing is the natural conclusion of the sale, it should be stress-free and stable.

So, if closing is the natural conclusion, why don't salespeople close more often? Fear of rejection, fear of being pushy and not knowing if the time is right are the major obstacles to asking for the order.

### Fear of Rejection

No one likes rejection. If it paralyzes you, reconsider your occupation as a salesperson. More preferably, ask yourself when you are likely to be rejected; it's when prospects are not ready to buy! How do you know they're ready? They will either tell you or show you.

Some salespeople are so afraid of rejection they don't travel with insertion orders. On a sales call with a publisher, one prospect declared, "Yes, that's what I want." The salesman didn't have an order form, and consequently he was chasing the should-have-been-easy-sale for returned calls.

### Fear of Being Pushy

Pushy car salesmen's tactics perpetuate the dislike of salespeople and create an avoidance behavior by people wanting to be effective but not disliked. Remember this: If the close is natural, asking for business is not pushy.

### Signs of Interest

If we only asked people to buy when they were ready, we wouldn't be rejected, and couldn't be perceived as being pushy. So how do we know the time is right? Aside from the obvious, there are some behavioral clues that will signal a purchase is imminent.

⌚ If they talk about how they will benefit from their ad in your publication, give them an insertion order right away!

⌋ When they ask when the close is or if they can get into a specific issue. If the issue they are interested in is later in the year, sign them up now, don't wait for the month before deadline. There might be a personnel change. There might be a strategy change. Another salesman might come along with the chutzpa to ask for the order, and you'll lose what should have been a done deal.

⌋ If they ask specific questions about your magazine. People who are uninterested do not ask detailed questions; they try to get rid of you. If they are into the details, they are into you, so get them into the magazine!

⌋ If they ask you to repeat something. Similar to the previous point, if they're not interested, they are not going to ask you to repeat anything! Either close the point or close the order, whichever is appropriate.

⌋ When they suddenly start agreeing with you or suddenly start asking questions. If they move from neutrality to active participation, they are showing interest. A check-in question can determine if you are ready to close the point or the sale.

⌋ If they lean toward you. Learn to read body language. When you feel close to someone, you move close to them. The opposite is true as well. To learn more, buy *Body Language* by Julius Fast .

⌋ If they start leafing through your magazine or collateral. The key word here is "start." If they had been ignoring your material (if it's appropriate to even have it out) and then start paying attention, it's because they care. When they care is when you are ready to ask closing questions.

#### Recommend What Makes Sense

This is generally a half or full-year program. Rarely will advertisers see results immediately. Have the backbone to say no to 1X orders! The little you lose will be replaced with longer schedules that work. Tell them you do not want to take their money unless they will see results. Research points to six months of insertions before results come in. They would never consider one radio or television commercial; it wouldn't make sense. When your interest is their interest, they will trust you, and you will sell more.

When you know your prospect wants to do business with you and you ask for the sale, you eliminate fears and obstacles. When your client wants to buy, he will stay with you longer and cancellations will be a thing of the past. Be aware of buying signals, and closing is stress-free.

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