

Discovery Questions

Objective

Review the discovery questions and practice using them.

Warm-up Activity

Tell the staff that you are looking to buy a new car and you need their help to buy the right one. Explain that in order for them to recommend the best car for you; they will need to know some important information about you. Invite them to ask questions that will illicit the needed information.

After they have asked their questions, tell them that in this session, you'll review the discovery process.

Read or Explain

In order to discover your customers' real needs and wants, you must be able to answer a few questions about your customer and her needs. The questions included in the Discovery Process will help you to understand the customer's needs and provide better service. The seven questions you should be able to answer about your customer are as follows:

- What are the customer's preferred features?
- Who will be the end-user of the product or service?
- How will this purchase fit with the customer's past, present, or future needs?
- What is the customer's degree of time urgency?
- What are the customer's budget resources?
- Who is the real decision-maker?
- Why is the customer motivated to think about buying now?

Activity: Role Play

Materials Needed:

Discovery Process Shopper Scenarios cut from page 2 of this lesson.

List of discovery questions and examples from pages 3 and 4

Activity Instructions:

Distribute the shopper scenarios to, one each to three different people. One at a time, have them quietly read their scenario and ask them to become that shopper. Invite the other members of your staff to ask them questions that will help discover the needs and wants of the shopper. After the first scenario is completed, discuss the questions in the context of the descriptions and examples sheet. Repeat the process for the 2nd and 3rd scenario.

Wrap-up:

Remind your staff that the questions included in the Discovery Process will help them to understand the customer's needs and provide better service. They will also sell more furniture.

Shopper Scenarios



Shopper 1 Woman

This woman is in her mid 50's. She has two children at home. They are both in high school. She and her husband are both teachers. She is an elementary school principal and her husband teaches history in Jr. High. They are moving into a new home and have decided that they want to furnish the entire home with new furniture.

Shopper 2 Man

Single man planning to move into a very posh modern penthouse within the next few days. He lives alone. Although he doesn't look particularly wealthy, he has plenty of money to do whatever he wants. He really loves the furniture he has, but he wants to add a recliner for reading and relaxing.

Shopper 3 Woman with two kids

This woman is married and has two children. The family just received their tax refund. The furniture they currently have was handed down when they got married a few years earlier. She wants to freshen up the family room because that is where they spend their most time.

Descriptions and Examples

1. **What are the customer's preferred features?** - Customers buy the benefits of a product, not its features. At first, however, most customers cannot say what benefits they are looking for as easily as they can list the features.

What are the features you are looking for in a new dining table?
What do you like about the different refrigerators you've seen so far?
What are the qualities you're looking for in a new bed?

2. **Who will be the end-user of the product or service?** - The end user is the person or people who will actually use the products you are selling.

Who does most of the cooking in your home, and who will be using the cook top the most?
Will you be using the desk, or is it for someone else?
Are the chairs you would like to look at going in your living room, a room for guests, or a family room for everyone's use?

3. **How will this purchase fit the customer's past, present, or future needs?** - These questions help you and your customers consider the effect their current buying decisions will have on their present situation and future plans.

Please tell me about your dining room, its size, how it's decorated, and any other furniture that might be affected by a new dining room table?
What furniture will you put in the room you are thinking of re-carpeting?
While we look at some new dryers let me ask you what kind of washer you have and how old it is.

4. **What is the customer's degree of time urgency?** - Determine how soon the customer needs the product or service.

Is your current washer still working?
How soon will you be moving into your new home?
How long have you had your current bed?

5. **What are the customer's budget resources?** - Gaining an idea about the customer's initial budget for purchasing furniture is very helpful. The more you know about her budget, the easier it will be to select the right piece of furniture to fit her needs.

Are you looking for a dining table that will last generations or one that will fit your needs for the next few years?
Would you like to look first at our highest quality sofas or those that are a good value for both quality and fashion?
All of our mattresses can offer terrific comfort and a good nights sleep. Our very best mattresses may easily last over 10 years, but even our mid-priced sets could last as long as 8 to 10 years. Which mattresses would you like to look at first?

Features and Benefits

6. **Who is the real decision-maker?** - Decision makers are the people who have the final say in what is purchased. Knowing who the decision maker is will be important when it comes time to close the sale.

To determine the decision maker you will need to listen carefully as your customers talk. If you listen closely enough, you will eventually hear comments that suggest the answer.

7. **Why is the customer motivated to think about buying now?** - All customers have motivations for buying furniture. Most customers these motives much, if any, conscious thought, but these motives wield a powerful influence over their final buying decisions.

Determine your customer's the buying motives by listening to the questions she asks you. The 7 motives included in the motives lesson are: value, unique image, feeling of acceptance, comfort and ease, aesthetic appeal, entertainment, avoidance of loss.