

# Words that close

Cheat sheet





## Close more deals with the right words

Switch out words that don't work for ones that do — especially toward the end of your sales cycle — and your deal is more likely to close.

Tack this list up where you'll see it, and start using these words today!

## 01

### Say "approved price"

In negotiations, most sales people say *list price* or *typical price* or *standard price*. It's costing them deals and eating up their time.

**That language extends sales cycles by 19%** when it's used at any point in a deal. In fact, saying *list price* triples the time you spend on pricing if it's said in the second half of the sales process.

Instead, say *the approved price*.

#### Why it works

The buyer believes the price was set by someone else and can't be changed.

### Time spent discussing pricing during the second half of the sales process



Additional minutes

**+7.5**

11.4min  
"List price"  
was mentioned

4min  
"List price"  
was not mentioned

## 02

### Use “I” not “we”

This one may feel counterintuitive. Although words like *we* and *you* establish a connection and trust with your buyer early on, they stop working in the negotiations phase That’s when you should switch to “I’m pleased to offer you [X] price on our product.”

#### Why it works

Buyers will happily push back against an organization when they hear “We have a great price for you.” They have a harder time pushing back against **you** as a person when you say, “I have a great price for you.”

### Use more “I” language and less “we” language during negotiations



Successful pricing discussion

Unsuccessful pricing discussion



**2.4 min**

“I” language



**1.3 min**

“We” language



**1.84 min**

“I” language



**2.05 min**

“We” language

## 03

### Try “Can I bounce a few thoughts off you?”

When a buyer raises any issue during negotiations, don’t counter with “I have the perfect solution” or “Can I make a suggestion?” Those phrases put buyers on the defensive.

Before offering a solution, use this phrase: “Can I bounce a few thoughts off you?”

#### Why it works

It creates genuine openness in the buyer, so they want to hear what you have to say.





## 04

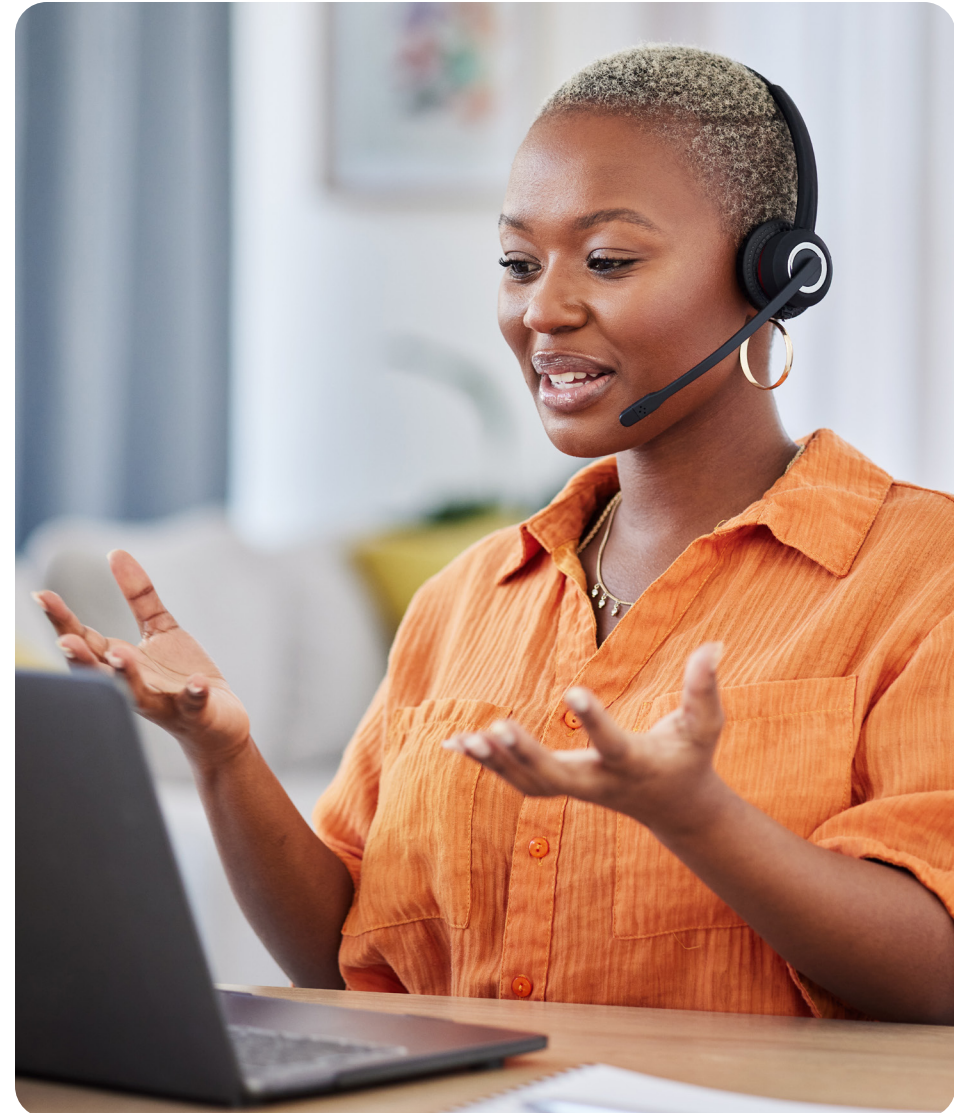
### Say sorry, but only in this situation

Apologizing is a great tactic, just don't ever apologize for your actual price. As in, never say "I'm sorry the price seems high to you."

Instead, use apologies in **negotiating** phrases like, "I'm sorry. I *want* to offer you that number, but I've been told it's not doable."

#### Why it works

If you apologize for the price, the buyer feels justified in balking at it. But using *sorry* in negotiations creates a mutual sense of empathy, and buyers will accept your final offer more easily if they empathize with the position you're in.



05

## Use the “F” word

Before you’re too shocked to read on, we mean the word *fair*.

Top performers use the word *fair* ~1.7x in each deal. Average and low -performers? Just 0.2x. Use a phrase like, “*Would that be fair*” in the end-stage of a deal to ask a question, handle an objection, get buy-in, or set next steps.

### Why it works

Everyone wants to be perceived as fair, and be treated fairly. Say this word out loud to get agreement that it’s really happening. It’ll feel good for everyone.

(PS: Using the *real* F-word can actually help your deal. Read about it in one of the riskiest posts we’ve ever written: [The startling truth: How cursing impacts sales.](#))

## Frequency of “fair” in sales conversations

LABS

Frequency of fairness

+1.5x ↑

~1.7x  
Top performers

0.2x  
Average and low performers

06

## Ask "how" more often

There's nothing wrong with letting your buyer *feel* in control of negotiations.

So when they ask for four free months and a 12% discount, don't say no. Give them the reins by asking them, "*How* am I supposed to do that? *How* can I ask my CFO to give you 30 days AND erase the implementation fee?"

### Why it works

It puts them in charge. And if they can't give you a decent answer, it makes your predicament clear and helps them understand your position.





## 07

### Use your buyer's words

People reveal more than normal when they hear their own words said back to them *as a question*. And that's what you want from them — more information so you know which strategies will close the deal. Here's an example so you can see how it works →

Now you have what you need to frame their problem and your solution.

#### Why it works

It elicits information from your buyer without directly asking for more information, which can sometimes make buyers clam up.



#### Buyer

Our reps don't handle objections well. They always fumble the ball and it's really frustrating.



#### Sales rep

Fumble the ball?



#### Buyer

Yeah. They answer inconsistently, but we're not sure why.



#### Sales rep

Inconsistently?



#### Buyer

Yes, I suppose that's my big-picture problem: All my sales reps handle their calls differently. I can't get them to stick to the approved narrative or process.



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