

Special Report

Ask Michael Oliver April 2006

By Michael Oliver

www.NaturalSelling.com

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From The Desk Of Michael Oliver

Dear Friend,

In April 2006, I invited you to submit questions about how to apply "Natural Selling" in your business. There was a great response with questions covering a range of topics.

I decided the best way to respond was through the "Special Report" which you are now reading.

In this Special Report, I've responded to a selection of the questions submitted. The topics have been chosen on the basis of being of interest to the majority of Network Marketers.

Hope you enjoy this Special Report and find it helpful as you build your own Network Marketing business.

Best wishes

Michael

P.S. You're always welcome to submit questions at www.AskMichaelOliver.com.

Question *Natural Selling teaches that, "The purpose of a business (including an MLM business) is to help others get what they want." A response I got from saying the above is that if the MLM is selling health products which may be beneficial to them but priced beyond the purchasing power of those sick and poor, it is NOT helping them and NOT caring for them. It is just the Network Marketer making money in life and enjoying life. Words of caring and trying to help are nonsense.*

Reply Firstly, I'd want to know a little more about the person who made this comment. Where were they coming from? Were they coming from a place of being antagonistic because they heard this before? Were they coming from a place where they needed a product but couldn't really afford it?

The same point can be made for the cost of regular health care. I don't think that many people would say that doctors are uncaring because they prescribe treatment that can be too costly for some.

It boils down to that you can't solve the world's problems or solve everyone's problems with your product necessarily. If a person really is in pain and they can't afford a product, then it's incumbent upon the person who has the pain to work out whether, in fact, their pain is enough to want to do something about it.

For example, what if you were told that you had six months to live and that a \$20,000 operation would take care of the problem and allow you to lead a healthy normal life like everyone else. And let's say you didn't have any money? Would you find the money? Or would you bemoan the fact that the hospital was just in the business just to make money? It's almost certain you would find the money!

So it really depends on the values of the other person, where the other person is coming from. And so it's important to understand that. The only way you can understand that is through asking questions to discover where the other person is coming from, why they would

make a response like that.

Remember that the principle... "The Purpose Of A Business Is To Help Other People Solve Their Problems" is NOT "The Purpose Of A Business Is To Help Other People Solve Their Problems...For Free!" If you're providing something of value, then it's a fair exchange of value for the other person to pay you money for your products or service.

Question *When making follow up calls, what are the most important questions I need to be asking?*

Reply The first thing to be clear about is what kind of follow up call we're talking about. For example, is this following up a previous call or are we talking about contacting someone who has asked you to contact them, such as replying to an advertisement? Either way, you're fundamental objective is to get the three basic questions answered.

1. What does this person want. 2. Discovering why they want it. 3. How committed are they in making it happen. So regardless of whether it is an initial call or follow up call, those are the three objectives that you must be focused on, and your questions must revolve around getting the answers to them.

Question *I would like to have any suggestions on how I could get to the decision maker. I have just recently started with a voluntary benefits company.*

Reply I'm not entirely clear about the situation this question relates to. I'm going to assume it's some sort of "Business To Business" situation.

The first thing to do is to create a compelling introduction speech... a compelling opening statement... (a benefit statement) and the way you do this is write down what needs or concerns that the company you're calling might have, that your solutions solve.

You need to do that for your products anyway.

Another thing you can find out is, what are the real

reasons why other companies have bought from you or your company. See if there is a common thread. If there is something of commonality that you could bring into your introduction speech, you could open with something like, "I'm not sure if you're like most companies, though what we've found (describe the problem). Is that something that is affecting you and would like to have resolved?"

You can use this either with a screener or with a decision maker. But you're going to need to have a really compelling benefit statement which is rounded off with a question in order to create a reason why the screener or anyone else in the organization should listen to you.

And the other thing you need to be clear about is, what is unique about your program?

It could be that the uniqueness of your program could be in that introduction speech or compelling statement.

Set an objective for the call. In other words, you must say, "What do I want to do" or "What do I want the other person to do as a result of this call?" Such as, buy something or get an agreement to try something the next time they're buying.

Or it could be to set up a date to meet.

Also, have a secondary objective, which could be just to make them aware of your company or leave them with a good feeling about your company, so that you are planting a seed for a future contact.

Question *How do I handle objections effectively?*

Reply Firstly, let me say once again that I don't like the term "objections". It implies an adversarial relationship which shouldn't be the case if you've used the Natural Selling approach correctly. In fact, if you do this, you won't have to "handle objections" because the Natural Selling Process will eliminate them in the first place!

Having said that, the thing to do is not to treat everything

that your potential partner or customer asks or says as an objection but as a legitimate question, concern or statement. Find out what is behind the question or what is behind the concern. In doing so, you'll treat them with respect. And don't use adversarial techniques such as using the "Feel, Felt, Found" trick! People know they are being duped and that you're not really listening to or respecting them.

And so the real key is to really get behind what they're actually asking or saying. Once you've done this, then together you can find a way to address the issue. There's more about this on pages 242-245 of my book "[How To Sell Network Marketing Without Fear, Anxiety Or Losing Your Friends!](#)"

Question *I have made all the mistakes re prospecting in the past - selling instead of telling etc. How can I approach those people once again using Natural Selling techniques?*

Reply I covered this topic in my newsletter dated 15 September 2005 ([click here](#) to access the newsletter). The answer is basically to open up the conversation as you would with any friend or associate or someone you know and ask them how they're doing.

If they happen to bring up your previous bad and needy behavior, you can apologize for it. But it doesn't stop you being interested. That is one of the key things... be interested in the other person and find out if they have any needs. Find out how their life is going, how their health is going, whatever is necessary to allow them to talk while suspending your agenda. Allow the other person to speak without feeling as though they have to be guarded.

That way you can achieve your purpose, which is to find out if they have a problem you can help them with. It's critical that you really detach from any need to bring them back into your business or as a customer. If you don't do this, you'll simply end up back where you started! If you do, you'll have a better chance of them listening to how what you are doing might be of benefit to them down the road.

Question *How to break the ice and have a great script to follow and what questions to ask to find out the personalities of the people.*

Reply The simple answer to how to "break the ice" is to ask relevant questions that allow the other person to talk about themselves! Remember, everyone's favorite topic is themselves so if you give them the opportunity they will happily talk. And the thing you'll find is that by being interested in them, they will find you interesting!

I don't recommend reading from scripts, though. Write out what you want to say, learn it and use it as a guideline. It's useful for you to remember certain types of questions that you can use when connecting with people. Chapter 11 of my book "[How To Sell Network Marketing Without Fear, Anxiety Or Losing Your Friends!](#)" and the audio program "[12 Ways To Start Effective Conversations](#)" covers this in detail.

As one example, if you're calling leads, a good question to use is "What was it that attracted you about the advertisement?" That will allow the other person to start talking about what they are looking for.

Or if you're talking with someone you don't know, start with questions based around very general themes such as where they live, what they do or what hobbies and interests they have.

While finding out the personalities of other people can be useful, it's not essential. Learning how to ask questions first, will open up more doors than learning how to find out about the personality of the other person. Here's a question for you. Even if you know the personality of the person, will you be able to find out anything if you don't know what questions to ask? So don't get hung up on having to "label" people. Use the Natural Selling process and the other person will tell you everything you need to know.

Having said that, understanding personality types can increase your ability to ask questions geared toward their

type and it's a fascinating topic. To find out more, I'd recommend the audio program "[The Magic Of Colors](#)" by Jerry Clark.

Question *I talked to a prospect in person and she said that she spoke to other people who have a similar product / program like mine. She asked me why would she would pick mine over others? I asked her, "I see. So do you mind tell me what kind of a product or program did other people have? How did you feel about these programs?" What would you say to her if you were me, Michael?*

Reply I think you're on the right path here. I would ask these types of questions as well. Tell me more about the other programs. For example, What were they? Did you like any particular one? If you did, why did you like it or what was it you liked? Did you buy it? Or why did you not buy it? So what would you be looking for in a product or program like this? Why would you be looking for that? If you are able to find it, would you get it or would you buy it?

Once you've discovered what the other person is looking for, then you're in a position to explain how your product or opportunity can benefit them based on the differences that yours has over the competitions!

Question *I sell investments and I need to know about my prospects financial experience, their current investments and the amounts invested. Often, they are reluctant or say no to revealing this information and it feels unnatural to press the issue. However, to be able to help people properly I do need to know this information.*

Reply Well it appears to me that you're attempting to get facts and information far too soon, and probably what is not happening is you're not developing enough trust. And so before you start probing for information, you really must go through a deep discovery process, and ask them what they want out of their investments. Or what are the reasons they have their investments. What is the end goal of having their investments? Why do they want that? Are they currently getting it? Are they satisfied with the rate of return on their current investments? If not

what would they like to see?

Also, what would they do to see this change? How would they see a change happening? How would they see their current investments being better? What will happen if they don't do anything? And also, what would be the criteria under which they would consider looking at your services?

And then you're in a position to ask a Qualifying Question such as, in order for me to evaluate whether I might be able to help you, I will need some idea as to your present portfolio structure. Would you be open or okay with sharing that with me? And if they say no, then you can ask another question. Then how do you propose taking this further?

Basically let them tell you as to what it's going to take for them to open up their portfolio to you.

What is really important is that before you start asking any personal facts or questions about portfolios, you really must discover.... again, going right back to basics... what it is they're looking for, why they want it, and how committed are they to making that change. You ask questions around those three things. You ask questions using the dialogue process, using solution questions and consequence questions. You must build that trust first by understanding what it is they want and why they want it.

Question *We are new and do not want to fake how well we are doing, which is quite good for the level we are at. What do you say to those who want to know how we are doing personally, even though our mentor is a millionaire?*

Reply I'd say, don't worry about your mentor being a millionaire. Don't even think that everybody wants to be a millionaire. In my experience, they don't. Some people want to make enough money to be able to put a down payment on a house or be able to pay a mortgage for example.

People do things for different reasons. As far as people

asking how well you're doing, I'm going to suspect that not many people do ask how well you're doing. And if they are, then the way you're talking with them, is probably bringing up the question. If that's the case, then let it go. It's not important as to how you're doing even though you are doing quite well. And basically tell the truth. "We're doing quite well, thank you, for our level. And we expect to do better as we move along."

Question *How do I get my downline to attend our training sessions?*

Reply First of all, by making sure that when they join you that they are committed to make a change and a difference in their life, preferably through helping other people make changes and differences in their life. If they don't make that commitment you have to ask whether they would make a good team for you in the first place!

However, to answer your question regarding your existing team... ask them if they really truly believe that they know everything to make it possible for them to achieve the success that they're looking for. Ask them why they are not going to training. Ask them if they will learn anything by not going to specific training. Ask them if they really do know enough to achieve what they want to achieve. Ask them if they are really achieving it. If they are not achieving it, ask them why they are not achieving it. Ask them if it maybe has something to do with the lack of knowledge or lack of training.

Question *The person who sponsored me is not living up to promises made to me and my group about having meetings and appointments. As a result I've also joined another company but I can't get my "motor in gear".*

Reply This is really a two part question. As regards the first part, all I can suggest is that you ask the person involved why they are not meeting their commitments. If you're still not getting the support you need, then all you can do is look for someone else in your upline for help.

Concerning the second part, all I can suggest is to ask yourself why is it that you can't get your "motor in gear"? Maybe the answer will be self evident. Without knowing

more about the circumstances, that's all I can suggest. Otherwise, I would just be speculating.

Question *How can I get your awesome dialogue started if the well qualified potential client will not answer the phone (approx. 9 out of 10 calls find answering machine barriers)?*

Reply One way is to learn to leave a message with your compelling Personal Introduction speech (see page 159-163 of my book "[How To Sell Network Marketing Without Fear, Anxiety Or Losing Your Friends!](#)"), which has enough advantages and benefits that it's going to attract the person to return your call.

If you leave it for up to three times, (no more) they will know who you are and could return or take your call one day. You might want to try calling at a different time. Look at the time you're calling. Maybe it's at a time that people aren't in. Also ask yourself, why is it so many people don't respond? Could it be the quality of your leads?

Question *I have been having such a problem getting to talk to clients over the phone. I either can not get a hold of them or they hang up quickly. Reaching their answering machine is 95% of my calls. Even e-mailing my clients doesn't help. How can I get the client to call me back or at least acknowledge that I called them?*

Reply The answer to this is the same as for the previous question.

Question *You discussed the "Feel, Felt, Found" standard way of handling objections a while back. Can you go over that again or send me the link to the previous tip?*

Reply I'd suggest you avoid using this technique. I discussed this in a recent entry on the Natural Selling Blog on 10, April 2006 ([click here](#)).

Question *I have a team member who is "fearless" and approaches*

people, asks them 3 questions, and if they are positive answers, then he requests their contact details. Then he hands me their details so that I can then phone them. The leads are not the type you talk about in your training programs. Rather these people are not actively seeking a home-based business. I start the call by introducing myself, asking them if they remember my colleague and if they would like to learn more about having a home-based business. Many times I am then asked what this is all about, and I get stumped and fall into "sales" mode. Do you have a suggestion as to how I could proceed?

Reply

Again, use the Personal Introduction speech (see p159-163 of "[How To Sell Network Marketing Without Fear Anxiety Or Losing Your Friends!](#)"). Then ask them if this is something that might be of interest to them. If they say no, then ask them if they are satisfied with what they are presently doing, presently getting. Or ask them if they ever thought about starting up their own home-based business so they could earn some extra income to achieve those things that they might not be able to get at the present time.

Ask them why they even gave their number to your team member?

But the real thing is to go back to the introduction speech so that you can introduce, not what it is you're doing, but how what you're doing helps other people... and ask if this could be something that would be useful to them.

Ask if this strikes a chord with them, and that's the reason why initially the other person asked the questions and why the referral was passed to you to find out more information.

I would also ask the person who gives you the leads to make some calls him or herself so that you can get some experience as to how they would make them. The first few questions are the easiest... it's the ongoing questions that require some skill!

Question

My question is: how to use the phone correctly? I have

lots of numbers, both warm market and cold market who I rarely meet by person.

Reply

This is a rather broad question but in essence using the phone is no different from talking with someone face to face. The principles of effective dialogue are exactly the same. You may have some issues in actually making contact with people (see some of the previous questions) but once you've made contact, then use the Natural Selling approach and the Conversation Framework the same way you would if you were sitting down with the other person.

Remember, as always, when you contact someone you're looking to discover three things. Do they have a problem you can help them with? Why do they want to make the change? How committed are they to making the change?

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I hope you enjoyed this special report and found some things you can use in your business right away.

Thank you once again for your continued interest in "Natural Selling" helping you get what you want by knowing how to help others get what they want.

Best wishes,

Michael

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