

# AN INTERVIEW WITH DAVID YOHO

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## A FASTER TRACK TO THE BUYING DECISION

Most problems that salespeople face with slow decision-making are self-created,” declares David Yoho, president of Professional Educators Inc and a leading sales & management expert. “They sabotage themselves because they fail to ask themselves and their prospects certain questions.”

**It’s Not the Prospect’s Job.** Some salespeople blame slow decision-making on the prospect - as though it were the prospect’s job. “Helping people make decisions is a major part of a sales professional’s job,” Yoho asserts. “If there weren’t slow decision makers or obstacles to buying decisions, salespeople wouldn’t be necessary.”

### ASK YOURSELF TWO QUESTIONS

Yoho suggests the following questions to improve your decision-inducing skills:

#### 1. Do I control the direction, timing and conditions of my sales conversations?

“When prospects control the sales conversation, you’re unlikely to obtain a meaningful decision,” Yoho says. However, controlling the direction, timing, and conditions of conversations doesn’t mean controlling, intimidating or pressuring people. It means asking questions that define solvable problems, elicit critical facts, create urgency, establish credibility, obtain feelings, opinions and commitments and determine the content of your recommendations.

#### 2. Do I confuse need and want?

People are more likely to decide quickly when they *need* something. However, says

Yoho, “people *need* little more than food, clothing, and shelter. Most every-thing else is a *want*. And if you don’t create wants and urgency, chances are your prospects will decide not to decide.”

“The likelihood that prospects will actually buy decreases dramatically the longer they ‘think it over,’” Yoho stresses.

### INTEGRATE FOUR KEY INITIATIVES

To speed the decision-making process, boost your closing rate and reduce your stress level, Yoho suggests the following key initiatives:

**“If you don’t create wants and urgency, chances are your prospects will decide not to decide.”**

#### 1. Know more about your customers, their situations, and their options, than they know about you.

“To control the sales conversation, you have to know all the basics about your prospect before the call,” Yoho says. “And many salespeople make the mistake of not having a documented set of questions to ask customers. I wouldn’t make a contact without prepared questions, even if it were my 50<sup>th</sup> call on that prospect!”

#### 2. Learn prospects’ decision-making criteria

“If you don’t know how prospects are going to make a decision, you’re less likely to get one” Yoho contends. “Ask: ‘What criteria are you going to use to make the decision’ or ‘What do we have to do to get your business?’ Prospects love those questions because they see them as bottom-line time-savers that get them what they want,” Yoho emphasizes. “And always obtain decision dates before sending written proposals.”

### 3. Whenever possible, deliver bottom line information directly to decision-makers.

“There are decision *makers* and decision *influencers*,” notes Yoho. You need to know who’s making and influencing the if, when, who and what decisions. There are two common failures here: not asking, and not asking correctly,” Yoho contends.

**An Incorrect Way to Ask.** “Who is making the decision?” The prospect answers, “I am.” However, while the prospect may have the authority to say: “This is the one I want,” (the ‘what’ decision), someone else may actually have to approve the purchase (the ‘if’ decision).

**A Better Way to Ask.** Yoho offers this approach” “Ms. Prospect, should you decide to do business with us, you and who else will make the final decision?” But don’t stop there. Your next question will be” “Whose opinion will you want before you make that decision?”

### 4. Ask a sequence of definitive commitment questions throughout your call.

“Faster buying decisions are initiated at the moment of first contact,” Yoho stresses. “If you don’t ask the right questions from the beginning, you’re asking for delay.”

**What to Do.** Ask commitment questions after each major step in your selling sequence and after each major point in your recommendation. For example, after explaining how your company conducts research to develop the right product or service, as the prospect, “In your opinion, is that ample investigation to get the information we need?”

Yoho notes that “anything but a ‘yes’ answer means ‘no’, ‘I don’t know’ or that

they’re indecisive. You have to qualify their intent before you can proceed toward the close and a speedy decision.

### THEY NEED YOUR HELP

“You can’t expect prospects to make decisions well on their own,” says Yoho. “So, help them speed up their decision- making process. They’ll be grateful for your assistance – and you’ll close more sales in less time.”

**David Yoho** works with organizations that want to outthink, outmaneuver, outnegotiate & outsell their competition. He’s president of Professional Educators Inc, a creative marketing agency that provides professional, ethical systems and structure for education, stimulation, guidance and the bottom-line.

David has delivered more than 2,500 speeches and seminars for executives, managers, salespeople and business owners. He’s created and produced more than 200 customized audio and video educational programs on sales, negotiation, database marketing and management. He’s an adviser and coach to successful executives and managers nationwide.

His client list reads like a who’s-who. It includes Oracle, Ameritech, The American Red Cross, United Airlines, Gateway Computers, The Washington Post, Allstate Insurance, Sherwin-Williams and so on.

He’s a member of the prestigious CPAE Speaker Hall of Fame, which includes President Ronald Reagan, General Colin Powell, Art Linkletter, Dr Norman Vincent Peale, Earl Nightengale, Harvey Mackay and Zig Ziglar.

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