

# Needs Analysis

## Probing for Business Results

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What should you do when you've lead with insights and posed smart questions, and you still get shallow answers? To uncover the real business issues, you are going to have to probe deeper.

When the prospect responds with a generic answer, start by acknowledging what the prospect is saying, then go deeper with more questions.

### Educate

*I hear that a lot. It makes sense that you would want to educate prospective customers:*

- What kinds of questions are customers asking these days?
- How have these questions changed over the past year or two?
- What would you want them to know that they don't seem to know now?
- If they knew that, what initial action would they be more likely to take?
- What would they ultimately buy from you once they become convinced you are the best solution?
- If we worked together on a campaign to help educate prospective consumers, how would you measure the success of that program?

### Awareness

*That's a good idea. Without awareness, no sale can take place:*

- What makes you feel that awareness is a big problem you currently face?
- Specifically what about your business/product/service is it that you would like people to know?
- How will you measure increased awareness? In other words, how will you know if you're getting increased awareness or not?
- Which people out there should be most aware of you and what you offer?
- Awareness in and of itself would not necessarily lead to increased sales or profits—if we worked together to increase your awareness, how would you measure the success of such an effort?

### Image

*Image is a precious commodity in advertising and marketing—that's for sure:*

- Do you think your image is different from what you actually do or what you offer?
- Have customers been surprised, saying that what they are seeing is not what they were expecting?
- How do you think you came to have the image that you have right now?
- What sort of image would you like to have?
- What obstacles would you have to overcome in order to achieve that image?
- Does a competitor of yours pretty much own that image at this time?
- How would you benefit if your image was improved or corrected?
- How will you know if and when your image comes more in line with what you'd like it to be?
- If we just worked directly on the sales problem, how acceptable would it be to you if we left the image job for later?

## Traffic

*Traffic is definitely important. If they're not visiting, you can't sell them anything!*

- Tell me about the kind of traffic you're getting now. Do you keep a count of traffic on a daily or a weekly basis?
- How does the traffic you're getting now compare to what you've had in the past?
- Do you have any way of knowing how it compares to the traffic your competitors are getting these days?
- Has there been a change in the type of traffic you're seeing? Either the type of people who are walking in or what they're asking about?
- Some retailers talk about "conversion ratio"—or what percentage of their overall traffic, actually makes a purchase. Do you track this kind of information and do you know what your conversion has been recently?
- Is your need for more traffic more urgent in certain locations or departments?
- Are you experiencing poor traffic on certain days or at certain times?
- If we worked together would you be better off with lots of traffic, regardless of whether those people are qualified prospects, or is it better to bring fewer people, but who are better qualified prospects?

## Sales

*Sales is the name of the game! Let's explore this sales issue further:*

- Are sales ahead of where they were at this time last year?
- How do they compare with where you were forecasting to be at this time?
- I'm curious how your sales compare with those of your competitors. Do you have any way of knowing or estimating whether your share of market is growing or shrinking?
- Do you know what percentage of your sales are repeat business? How does this compare with national averages?
- Tell me what your most profitable customers have in common with each other.
- How big is the upside potential?
- Which products or services will generate the biggest growth in the year ahead?
- If we focused our efforts on a program to grow sales, how would we measure the success of that initiative?

## Improve Search Results

*It's essential to make it easy for consumers to find you when they are searching:*

- What are some of the ways someone would naturally search for you?
- What are 2 or 3 questions someone has that leads them to your product or service?
- What are some of the keywords or phrases you would want to rank on if you could?
- Do you currently have a blog or practice any sort of thought leadership?
- How often do you update your website?
- Mobile friendly sites rank much higher with Google—is your website "mobile friendly?"
- If we worked together, how would you see your website being integrated into the campaign?