**How to Make Large-Quantity, Non-Returnable Sales?**

**(Hint: You already know the answer)**

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Have you ever tried to get a loan? Ask for a raise? Sought to get agreement with family members about where to go on vacation? In each case you took part in a process designed to reach an accord that was agreeable to everyone involved. You can use those same skills to sell your books in large, non-returnable, profitable quantities to business buyers.

When trying to persuade people to your side, you probably planned on how you were going to do it. The larger the stakes, the more forethought you gave. If your objective were to sell a case of books to a prospective buyer, there is little at stake and you will not spend much time developing a negotiating strategy. You can pivot with relative ease from one tactic to another, responding to your prospects’ moves. However, if you are sitting across from a person deciding whether to purchase 10,000 or 20,000 of your books – or none at all – the risks are higher, and more preparation is necessary.

While each negotiation will have different twists and turns, there are some aspects that are generic to all. Planning for those in advance can greatly enhance your probability of success. The key to successful preparation is an understanding of what leads to a win-win conclusion for both parties.

For example, your objective is to sell a large quantity of non-returnable books. However, corporate buyers do not want to buy your books. They want to use your content to solve a business problem. With that awareness, what preparation must you consider before you can reach a deal that is universally satisfactory?

**From your prospects’ perspectives**:

* What is their objective(s)? Introduce a new product? Improve sales of an existing product? Motivate employees? Learn the problem(s) they want to solve, then show how your content can do that.
* What worked (or did not work) for them in the past? Show how can you help them avoid past mistakes.
* Why should they buy from you? Buyers need to feel comfortable that you can do what you say you can do, on time and at the agreed-upon price.

**From your perspective**:

* What is your ideal result, your Best Negotiated Outcome (BNO)? Think of all the different options that may come up when you discuss terms for the sale. What is your position on each? Consider these examples of most-beneficial terms:

a. Short discount

b. No returns

c. Little customization

d. Long delivery time

e. Large quantity order

f. Opportunities for recurring revenue

g. Payment with order

* What are you willing to negotiate away in return for a favorable outcome? If you must concede on one item to get something in return, which of the above criteria is least important to you? For example, customization may not be a major factor to you since you know it entails little marginal cost. But adding a logo to the cover may be critical for your prospect. Customization thereby becomes a quid pro quo negotiating point.
* What are you *not* willing to sacrifice in return for a favorable outcome? There may be terms upon which you are not willing to concede. You may not have the financial reserves to print a large quantity of books if they are returnable. In this case, you might offer a greater discount or extended payment terms in exchange for a non-returnable sale.
* What could undercut your BNO? Unanticipated discussions may surface during the negotiation. One of the participants may get a brainstorm and say, “What if we…?” Then the dialogue revolves around that unforeseen topic. It is impossible to know all these diversions in advance, but you can think about the general boundaries within which you will deal.
  + Can you remove or alter any constraint that makes your BNO unattainable? You could be blind-sided with a stipulation that you pay a penalty for late delivery. But if you know in advance that your printer can easily make the intended date, you can catch your prospect off guard and regain the momentum when you reply, “Actually, I’ll pay you a higher penalty for late delivery, if you pay me a bonus for early delivery.”
  + Is there any way to change the terms you bring to the table that could improve your BNO? What if a buyer requests that you purchase a costly product-liability policy? If you are familiar with the terms of your current policy you may describe them as adequate.

The more you know beforehand about the people, the process, your costs and operations, the more likely you can discuss terms on the spot, resulting in the best negotiated outcome for both parties. Focus on your objective and keep your best interests in mind, but do not ignore the needs of your buyers.

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