

- A: Definitely. At Compix, we have one that we send to our customers every quarter with information about new developments in the industry. In fact, **can I add you to our mailing list?**
- C: Hmmm, well yes, of course.
- A: Great! **Can you give me your card?** Then I have all your details and I'll make sure that you are kept up to date on what we're doing...
- C: That sounds great. Can I take one of these demo software packages?
- A: **Unfortunately, I'm afraid** I can't give you one today. **I'm so sorry** about that. But I can send you one.
- C: OK. That's better. That way I don't have to carry it around with me all day.

Understanding

Amanda made some notes following her conversation with her potential customer, Colin. Complete her notes with the missing information.

Name:	<i>Colin</i>
Field of business:	
Customers:	
Customers looking for:	
Challenges:	
Add to mailing list?	Yes/No
To do:	

Saying it accurately

1 Using the prompts, make questions to find out more about a potential customer.

- 1 What / line of work / in?
- 2 What / involve / exactly?
- 3 What sort / customers / have?
- 4 What / your customers / want?
- 5 What / help you / help your customers?
- 6 What / issues / face in your line of work?

2 Match the questions in *Saying it accurately 1* to the following answers.

- A Competition and rising food prices are our main challenges.
- B I own a small catering business.
- C It would help if we could set up a better way of communicating with our customers so that we can make sure that they are satisfied and use their feedback to improve our performance.
- D Mostly large companies.
- E They want us to supply a high quality product for a fair price.
- F We supply food and drink to conference venues around the country.

3 Kay works in marketing and is having a meeting with a potential customer, Jon. Number the sections of the conversation in the right order, 1–15.

- [] Kay: Well, would you be interested in hearing more about our website design service to publicize what you do?
- [] Kay: Hello Jon, nice to meet you. First of all, what line of work are you in?
- [] Kay: And what does that involve exactly?
- [] Jon: I'm a surveyor.
- [] Kay: What sort of customers do you have?
- [] Jon: Yes, I would.
- [] Kay: Here's some more information on that then. And can I add you to our mailing list?
- [] Jon: Well, I carry out valuations and building surveys on properties for clients.
- [] Jon: That sounds like a good idea. I think it would be useful to keep up-to-date with any new marketing ideas.
- [] Kay: What challenges do you face in your line of work?
- [] Kay: And what do your customers want from you?
- [1] Jon: Hello Kay, I'm Jon.
- [] Jon: We find it hard to get our message out to new clients without spending lots of money on advertising.
- [] Jon: Mainly small businesses or private purchasers.
- [] Jon: They are looking for a professional service that is delivered promptly and is good value for money.



4 Listen to the conversation to check your answers.

Saying it clearly



1 Listen to the questions from *Saying it accurately 1 and 3*.

Remember how the questions that have a *Yes/No answer* go up and questions that *start with wh- words* can go down.

What sort of customers do you have? ↘

Would you like me to show you our new product? ↗



2 Listen again to the questions from *Saying it accurately 1 and 3* and repeat them.

Grammar note

When forming questions, invert the subject and the auxiliary verb.

Examples from the text:

Can I help you with anything in particular? What field of business are you in?

Would you like me to show you a tool that does that for you?

Saying it appropriately

 **1** Listen to three people on a stand who are trying to generate interest in a new product. Match the speakers to the descriptions.

- | | |
|-----------|---|
| speaker 1 | A pushy and aggressive |
| speaker 2 | B assertive and excited about their product |
| speaker 3 | C shy and bored |

 **2** Which speaker is likely to generate the most interest in the product and why? Listen again to this speaker and repeat what is said.


3 Sometimes on a stand, you cannot do what a customer would like.

C: *Can I take one of these demo software packages?*


A: *Unfortunately, I'm afraid I can't give you one. I'm sorry about that.*

When you apologize, it is important to use the right phrase *and* to sound apologetic. Listen to these apologies and write in the missing words.

- 1 I'm sorry but I haven't got any brochures left.
- 2 Unfortunately, I forgot to bring my business cards. I do
- 3 I'm I can't help on you on this. I'll ask a colleague.

 **4** Listen to the apologies on the audio CD and repeat them. Make sure you really do sound apologetic.

Get speaking

 You work for a technology company on a stand at a trade fair. Start a conversation with a potential customer. Play the audio CD and follow the cues. You start with the first question.

- 1 Ask him if you can help.
- 2 Ask him what line of work he is in.
- 3 Ask him who his customers are.
- 4 Ask him what his customers want.
- 5 Ask him what challenges he faces.
- 6 Ask him if he would be interested in hearing about a new video link teleconferencing system that would allow him to have meetings with customers around the world.

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Closing a sale

We only have this offer for a short time.

USEFUL TIPS: When closing a sale, frame the sales pitch as an open question so that, if the customer has any questions or objections, it is still possible for the salesperson to respond. Once the request has been made, be quiet and let the customer decide!

These are three possible styles for closing a sale:

- Hard close: assume that the customer wants to buy the product/service and ask for quantities or delivery dates.
- Emotional close: point out to the customer the advantages of having the product or the disadvantages of not having it and appeal to their emotions.
- Urgent close: tell the customer that the product is only available for a short time due to scarcity, or that the price will soon rise.

Conversations



Amanda and Steve from Compix Inc are talking to four different customers at a computer industry trade fair in Los Angeles about a new gadget from their company, a hand-held product scanner.

1

Amanda: ...really does the job, so with our PriceChex product scanner, you just scan the price tag of any product in a shop and it does an automatic Internet search and tells you if the price in the shop is fair. But that's not all. It can also tell you where you can buy it cheaper! And it only costs \$49.99!

Customer: Wow! That is so cool! But I want to have a look around at the other stands first and then —

A: Sure. I understand. But I should tell you, **we only have** ten of these items here at the trade fair...

C: Ah, um, I see. And how much did you say it cost?

2

Steve: ...software performs an automatic Internet search and tells you if the price in the shop is fair. But that's not all. It can also tell you where you can buy it cheaper! And it only costs \$49.99!

C: That could be very useful for my team.

S: Definitely. So, **how many can I put you down for?**

C: Um, I'm not quite sure. Well, I think I'll take two for now and try them out with...

3

A: ...But that's not all. It can also tell you where you can buy it cheaper! And it only costs \$49.99!

C: Really? My brother is always driving me crazy telling me how I paid too much for something.

- A: Sounds like my mother-in-law. Just think. **What will you feel like when** you can scan something he's bought and then tell him he could have got it 50 per cent cheaper somewhere else?
- C: That would be awesome! OK, I'll take two and I'll give him one for his birthday...

4

- S: ...It can also tell you where you can buy it cheaper! And it only costs \$49.99!
- C: I see. I need to think about it. I'll come back tomorrow.
- S: No problem. Only I wouldn't want you to be disappointed. The PriceChex **is only available at this price today! It's a special promotion** for the trade fair opening...
- C: Oh dear! Well, could I reserve one and come back in a few minutes?

Understanding

Which style of close – hard, emotional, or urgent – is being used by the seller in each conversation?

- conversation 1:
- conversation 2:
- conversation 3:
- conversation 4:

Saying it accurately

1 Unscramble these words to make sentences that you could use when closing a deal.

- 1 it's / do / installed / you / How / think / look / will / it / when
..... ?
- 2 put / many / you / can / for / down / How / I
..... ?
- 3 available / today / at / only / It's / this / price
..... ?
- 4 start / Shall / paperwork / we / the
..... ?
- 5 offer / time / for / have / only / this / short / a / We
..... ?
- 6 six / stock / only / this / left / in / item / We've / got / of
..... ?
- 7 see / What / people / it / say / will / when / they
..... ?
- 8 in / you / it's / What / feel / when / will / like / place
..... ?
- 9 start / you / When / like / would / to
..... ?

- 2** Look again at the sentences from *Saying it accurately 1* and decide in which category they belong. Follow the example.

a hard close:	
an emotional close:	1
an urgent close:	

Saying it clearly



- 1** Listen to these three sentences and read the following notes.

Hard close: *How many can I put you down for?*

Emotional close: *What will you **feel** like when you can see it in place?*

Urgent close: *It's **only** available at this price **today**.*

Note also how the speakers stress the emotional and urgent words in their sentences to reinforce their style of close.

- 2** Listen again to the sentences in *Saying it clearly 1* and repeat them, using the same stress and intonation.

Saying it appropriately



- 1** Listen to the following sentences from *Saying it accurately 1*.

Note how the speaker uses a *determined, business-like tone* of voice to make a **hard close**.

Note how the speaker sounds *friendly* when *empathizing* with the listener during an **emotional close**.

Note how the *urgency* can be detected in the speaker's tone of voice when they are making an **urgent close**.

- 2** Listen again to the sentences from *Saying it accurately 1* and repeat them, using the same tone.

- 3** What mistakes do these sellers make? What should they have said instead, to stand a better chance of closing the deal? See *Useful tips* for hints.

1 Seller: It's a great opportunity. Do you want it, yes or no?

Customer: No.

Seller's mistake:

Seller should have said:

2 Seller: Would you like to take the offer now, or do you want to think about it?

Customer: I'll have a think about it and get back to you.

Seller's mistake:

Seller should have said:

3 Seller: How many can I put you down for? It really is a great opportunity. And not one that comes along very often. In fact, I can't remember when we offered a better price on this. And we've been inundated with requests. Very high level of demand, which means that there might not be much stock left. And so it would be good if you could –

Customer: Sorry, I'm late for my next appointment. I'll get back to you.

Seller's mistake:

Seller should have said:

Get speaking

Practise closing sales using the strategies outlined below. Follow the example.

Example: 1. *We have a special offer on this. The 24-hour call-out feature is included in the basic package at no additional cost. But we only have this offer for a short time.*

Product/service	Price/features	Closing style
1 IT support service	There is a special offer for limited time only. A 24-hour call-out feature is included in basic package at no additional cost.	urgent
2 Catering for company conference	The price is £8.99 per head for a full buffet.	hard
3 New office furniture	€10,000 will cover the supply of handmade Swedish desks and chairs throughout the office.	emotional
4 Audit of company accounts	\$10,000 will cover the entire job.	hard
5 Cars for employees	The price is \$5,000 per unit when you order more than twenty vehicles. Only fifty vehicles are left, otherwise you'll have to wait three months for next shipment.	urgent
6 Gym membership for employees	Corporate membership will cost only £30 per month and will be very popular with employees.	emotional

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Saying 'no' politely

Thanks, but I have to say 'no'.

USEFUL TIPS: Saying 'no' is difficult for many people. It is, however, quite possible to say no without causing offence by adopting these strategies:

- Include an apology and, if possible, a brief explanation.
- Suggest that saying no is not your personal wish but is imposed by outside circumstances, for example, regulations or another appointment.
- Use emphasizeers such as *really*, *so*, and *very* with the word *sorry*.

Conversations



Amanda and Steve from Compix Inc are talking to different customers at a computer industry trade fair in Los Angeles.

1

Steve: ...an automatic Internet search and tells you if the price in the shop is fair. But that's not all. It can also tell you where you can buy a product cheaper! And it only costs \$49.99!

Customer 1: That could be useful for my team.

S: Definitely. So, would you like to make an order straight away?

C1: **I'd rather not, thank you.** Although it *is* a nice piece of software.

S: Exactly! Now, what if I gave you one to take away for yourself and then if you like it you can keep that one but order ten more for your team.

C1: **I'm really sorry, but that's not possible.** Company policy doesn't allow me to make that kind of deal.

S: I see. But let me just show you a couple of extra features that are so cool!

C1: **No, I'm sorry,** I have an appointment in ten minutes. **I don't really have the time right now.**

S: But you really need to see the way this program can slice and dice any information that—

C1: **Thanks, but I have to say no.** Ah, Terry, there you are, shall we go for that meeting? I was beginning to think that...

2

Amanda: ...an automatic Internet search and tells you if the price in the shop is fair. But that's not all. It can also tell you where you can buy a product cheaper! And it only costs \$49.99!

Customer 2: 'Well, that is interesting. I work for a computer magazine, which specializes in comparing different products.

A: Well, that's perfect! And as a journalist we can give you a special discount price if you order three licences. You only need to pay \$125!

- C2: **Unfortunately, that's just not possible.** I'm a freelance journalist so I really don't need three licences.
- A: I understand. But maybe if you wrote a friendly article about us, you could have one licence for nothing.
- C2: **Sorry, but that's out of the question.** I'd lose my job! We have to keep our independence from the computer industry.
- A: I see. But would it be possible for me to visit your company later this month and maybe I could do a presentation for you and your colleagues?
- C2: Well, thanks, **I'll get back to you on that one.** I must go now, but I have your card so I could give you a ring next week, if you like. Now I have to...

Understanding

Look again at the strategies outlined in *Useful tips*. Which strategies do the customers employ when saying no politely? Underline the relevant parts in the conversations and note the strategies used in the margin.

Saying it accurately

- 1** Complete the sentences with words from the box.

rather no back sorry possible not time thanks work question

- 1 No, I'm
- 2 Unfortunately that's just not
- 3 I'm really sorry, but that's not going to
- 4 I'm afraid
- 5 I'd not, thank you.
- 6 Thanks, but I have to say
- 7 I'm afraid I don't really have the right now.
- 8 Thanks, I'll get to you on that one.
- 9 Thanks, but no
- 10 Sorry, but that's out of the

- 2** Drewery is trying to sell Jess some office equipment. Complete the conversation using sentences or phrases from *Saying it accurately 1*. Note that in some places, more than one answer is possible.

Drewery: And so you can see what a great offer it is. Shall we sit down and discuss figures?

Jess: (1).....

D: I could look at knocking down the unit price if you put in a large order?

- J: (2)..... because my manager has to place large orders.
- D: Well then, perhaps you could just order a few samples?
- J: (3)..... because I'm meeting a colleague at 1 p.m.
- D: I won't keep you a minute. Just have another quick look. These monitors really are state of the art. And, I tell you what, if you order just five, I'll throw in an extra free.
- J: (4)..... I'll give you a ring if we decide to proceed. Goodbye.

Saying it clearly



- 1** Listen to different ways of saying no from *Saying it accurately 1*. Note how the speakers use a firm tone and how their voices go *down* to indicate their rejection of the proposal.

- 2** Listen again to the ways of saying no from *Saying it accurately 1* and repeat them.



- 3** Listen to these sentences, noting how the sounds between words are connected. When one word ends with a consonant and the next starts with a vowel, the sounds are linked.

Sorry, but that's out of the question.

Thanks, but I have to say no.

I'm afraid I don't really have time.

- 4** Listen to the three sentences again and repeat them.

Saying it appropriately

- 1** Jean is trying to say no to John politely. Choose the most appropriate response in each case.

1 John: So, shall I put you down for 100 units?

A Jean: No.

B Jean: Thanks, but I have to say no.

2 John: Are you sure? This offer is only valid until the end of the day?

A Jean: I'm afraid I can't make any orders without my boss's authorization.

B Jean: No, I don't want them.