

Four Critical Aspects of Getting a Homeowner to Say “YES”

While I have been a real estate investor since 1975, I also was the owner of a number of stock brokerage and financial planning firms. I once had a national training company come into my office to help my account executives do better when working with clients. After spending tons of money, and weeks and weeks of my staff’s time, the most important things we got out of these trainings were eye contact, pacing your speech pattern and persistence. Eye contact was critical in face-to-face presentations but pacing was essential in every conversation – on the phone or in person. Persistence and follow-up were critical when the first two methods failed and is the core of the most successful individuals in any business.

The most critical aspect that I learned myself for dealing with sellers was to listen carefully to what they were saying about their personal situation and simply solve what they perceived as a problem. Some problems are obvious such as foreclosure or divorce, while others are not what you would consider a problem. Sometimes the solution was as simple as taking over their mortgage payments or cleaning out the property so they didn’t have to do it themselves. Instead of coming to them with a “canned” presentation, and expecting them to do what you want, listen to what they have to say and how they answer your probing questions, and do what they want – as long as it is a win-win for both parties.

Pacing is simply the act of listening carefully to how slowly or quickly your prospect is speaking and then you slow or speed up your conversation to match the speed of their speech. Some people speak slowly and these individuals are suspicious of people that speak faster (“city slickers”) than they do. Some people speak quickly and these people often think people speaking slowly (“country bumpkins”) are not the smartest people.

While neither of these two speed-speaking situations may be even remotely accurate, it is human nature to be uncomfortable around people who speak at a much different speed than you do – think about your personal experiences in this matter. This “issue” is easy to overcome if you listen to yourself and the person you are speaking to. Most people get excited and talk faster, or shut down all together. As a side note - never fake an accent whatever you do, just slow down or speed up slightly, no matter how uncomfortable you feel initially.

Eye contact is critical but it can easily be abused, which is what most “over-starers” do. Eye contact is important because it greatly impacts the inter-personal reaction with the person you are talking to. This is especially true since they have made a decision about how much they like, or dislike, you because of your general appearance and mannerisms. Remember the saying “A man is forever known by his first impression.”

What is true is that if your first impression (visual or emotional) is not clearly in your favor, you will have to overcome this stigmatism during your interaction with the client from that very first stare. So after the cordial handshake the next thing in your presentation is eye contact between you and your seller. This may not be obvious to you at first but think about this natural interaction with other people and hopefully it will become obvious how each of us treat this important social interaction.

These observations are not just for salesmen trying to sell a product or for you to buy a home; they are life issues in general. From first-time daters to longtime married people, eye contact is critical in building credibility with other people. Remember having a personal relationship and not remembering the other person's eye color? You may have been staring, but not really looking at the other person. If looking into people's eyes is a problem for you, you must work on it and analyze what is holding you back. It's probably the same fear or subconscious issues that control the limitations in life. Start to overcome this paralyzing fear of looking into people's eyes by making the conscious decision that you must do it and it won't hurt – really it won't. After all, what do you really have to fear?

Corporate trainers have actually measured people's brain-wave responses as to various stages of eye contact. This included carefully planned glances to dead on staring by eye locking - without the starrer even blinking. In brief, eye contact has a powerful control of the emotions of the giver and receiver. However, there was a critical threshold where eye contact became a diminishing asset. This threshold started at approximately the "three-minute" mark.

On average, after three minutes, the person receiving the stare began to feel more and more uncomfortable until they began to vocally agree with the starrer but subconsciously began to turn off to the advances of the overly "eye-aggressive" party. Agreeing with the person making the presentation can be the best way to get rid of him/her, instead of asking questions and better understanding the offer being presented.

I can tell you after making thousands of presentations to prospective home sellers; I believe that the proper amount of eye contact and pacing are critical to closing deals. If the people you are talking to are motivated, they will eventually sell their home, but will it be to you? Taking a little time to better understand human nature will pay for itself tens of thousands of times over. Again, think about interactions with other people who may remember you mostly for your overly eye-aggressive stares when you were talking to them. Is that the impression you want to leave in their minds - "I remember him; he was creepy because he just kept staring at me!" Believing that staring puts you in control is a major misconception.

Your success in life is dependent on believing in yourself and taking action that clearly helps you and not relying on others to do it for you. You can create the success that you are capable of and that you deserve. To do this you must take action to improve your life by taking charge of your destiny and doing what you know needs to be done. Only you can make the choices that will do this for you. Start now by deciding what is most important in your future and follow that dream – I did, and so can anyone reading this!

To your limitless success,

Dave Dinkel