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# MDRT Minute

## Getting a Commitment in the First Meeting

Traditional selling models focus on a prospect's pain and fears, or simply disturb them into making a decision. If your sales process instead focuses on empowering the prospect to make decisions and remain in control, it could shorten your process and improve your ability to close and to build long-term, profitable relationships. The following three parts of the sales process provide practical steps to put your prospects in a position to buy while feeling confident about moving forward.

### **Distinguish yourself and your approach**

Make a strong and lasting first impression. Avoid overwhelming prospects with information in the first meeting, and allow them to share their thoughts and ask questions. Getting them to open up depends on your being seen as trustworthy, caring, and ready and able to help them address their issues. Think about your language and how you want to position yourself. Just remember to make sure they feel like it's all about them.

### **Demonstrate a clear process for driving results**

Clients want results. By showing prospects that you have a well-defined approach and process that allows them to make decisions, you will build their confidence in you. Following is an example of a four-phase process that demonstrates how we can help clients achieve the results they want:

- **Discovery:** Identify vision and goals to gain clarity around the current gaps.
- **Creative solutions:** Collaborate and discuss solutions to close identified gaps.
- **Strategy deployment:** Implement the solutions specifically designed to close the gaps necessary to accomplish goals.
- **Results management:** Establish a plan to manage and sustain the desired results.

### **Provide prospects an easy opportunity to say yes**

Providing prospects with an easy opportunity to say yes and to commit to moving forward is an overlooked element of any good sales process. First, define what you're trying to close. Simply call the fact-finding meeting exactly what it is, or come up with a creative name for it. Naming the meeting allows you to set an expectation around it; it can be your natural closing point.

Next, create a simple agreement outlining what will occur in your second meeting. It should include the date and time of the meeting, specific discussion points, any documents you would like to receive ahead of time and any reports that might be generated from the meeting. You should also provide a space for a signature. The prospect's signature is a good way to get a commitment.

Defining your second meeting, outlining what they can expect, and asking them to sign as an acknowledgment of their commitment to you will have a dramatic impact on your engagements.

**Todd Fithian** is a 20-year veteran of the financial services industry, having followed in the footsteps of three generations. As managing partner of The Legacy Companies, Fithian's primary focus is helping financial professionals optimize the way in which they profitably attract, engage and retain clients for life. His client list includes insurance companies and practitioners throughout the U.S., Canada and Australia. Fithian is the co-author of "The Right Side of the Table: Where Do You Sit in the Minds of the Affluent?" His entire 2011 Annual Meeting presentation is available at [www.mdrtpowercenter.org](http://www.mdrtpowercenter.org).