

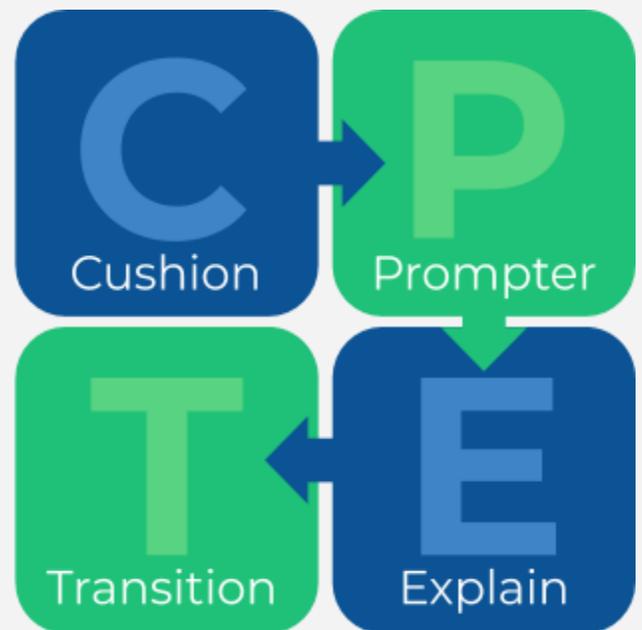
Overview

The DNA of great selling is concise and thought provoking differentiating factors that lead naturally into insightful questions that open up an opportunity-generating conversation. This is one of the keys to what top performers do better than other salespeople. They learn to pack a lot of punch into the differentiating factors and can communicate them one at a time to set-up great questions. It's important to remember to combine a differentiating factor and an open ended question together. In most sales conversations the prospective client or decision maker often asks a question or two that often tries to accomplish one of the following:

- Help clarify what you are saying
- Gain a deeper understanding of how your product/service stands out from your competition
- Truly understand how your product/service will benefit them

The C-P-E-T framework is a great way to harness the power of customer-oriented phrasing and relevant open-ended questions, all while building credibility and rapport with your prospective client while answering such a question. Let's take a look at the different components of CPET:

C	Cushion - Short, conversational phrase to take the friction out of our response
P	Prompter Phrase - Reminds us to use customer-oriented phrasing
E	Explain - Use a headline to introduce a competitive advantage and weave in customer-oriented phrasing to be more engaging
T	Transition Question - Use a relevant, conversational open-ended question at the end of the CPET response





Cushions

A cushion is a simple phrase to begin responding to a question. We use cushions to show our customers that WELCOME their questions and concerns. This helps lower resistance and takes some of the friction and pressure out of the conversation. Cushions should not be formulaic; they should be conversational. Here are a few examples:

- That's an interesting question and one on the mind of a lot of executives I work with...
- I really appreciate you asking that, you are clearly focused on the right things...
- That's a question I have been getting a lot recently and I appreciate you asking about that...
- I'm glad you asked about that because it's a critical topic that we should spend some time discussing...



Prompter Phrases

Promoter phrases are quick statements that move us into customer-oriented phrasing and they are critically important to sales messaging. When we use them, we immediately become more effective and interesting communicators. This simple trigger works wonders to help us shape a response in a client centric way. Here are a few examples of effective prompter phrases:

- What our customers like about our approach is...
- What we hear from customers all the time with respect your question is...
- I was speaking to a customer just the other day who told me something that relates directly to your question. What she said was...
- If you were to call some of our customers and ask them that same question, here's what they would tell you...



End With Headlines & Questions

The "E" which stands for Explain is simply a customer-oriented headline that highlights one or two specific competitive advantages that you think will be relevant to that customer. Once you have delivered that headline then smoothly "T" or transition with an open-ended question that engages your customer and gets them talking about an area where you have a strength or where you'd like the conversation to move to.



>> What to do next...

Now that you understand the concept, the next step is to look at some specific examples that top communicators in your company use when communicating with customers.

GO TO YOUR COMPANY'S EXAMPLES