

THE ART OF THE CLOSE

122 Techniques for Moving People to Yes



A Comprehensive Reference for Sales Professionals

From the Sales Pillar of the Polaris System

CONTENTS

Preamble: What Is a Close — And Where Did It Come From?

PART I: THE CORE 100

Closes 1-10: The Foundational Closes

Closes 11-35: Classic Zig Ziglar Closes

Closes 36-45: Question-Based Closes

Closes 46-60: Psychological Closes

Closes 61-70: Logic & Value Closes

Closes 71-80: Negotiation Closes

Closes 81-90: Timing & Pressure Closes

Closes 91-100: Soft & Consultative Closes

PART II: THE BONUS VAULT

Closes 101-107: The Lost Closes

Closes 108-114: The Modern Closes

Closes 115-122: The Hybrid Closes

Appendix: Authors to Study & Essential Reading

PREAMBLE

What Is a Close — And Where Did It Come From?

THE WORD

In sales, to "close" is to complete the transaction. To move a prospect from consideration to commitment. To transform interest into action.

The terminology itself comes from real estate. In property transactions, "closing" refers to the final step — the moment when documents are signed, funds are exchanged, and ownership transfers. The deal is "closed." Before that moment, it remains open. Uncertain. Incomplete.

Salespeople borrowed the term because it captures something essential about what happens at the end of a sale: a door that was open finally shuts. The prospect, who could have walked away at any moment, has now committed. The opportunity that existed in potential now exists in reality.

But here's the nuance that separates amateurs from professionals: a "close" is not a single moment. It's a process. It's a skill. And, when done masterfully, it's an art.

THE HISTORY

The formal study of closing techniques began in the 1880s with a man most people have never heard of: John Henry Patterson.

Patterson acquired the National Cash Register Company (NCR) in 1884 and faced a problem. His product was good, but his salesmen were inconsistent. Some sold. Most didn't. So Patterson did something revolutionary for his time: he systematized selling.

He created the first sales scripts — the "N.C.R. Primer" — which told salesmen not only what to say but what to do while saying it. He established the first formal sales training programs. He taught techniques like the "assumed close," instructing his salesmen to ask "What color should I make it?" rather than "Would you like to buy one?"

Patterson is now recognized as the father of modern sales training. His protégés went on to shape American business: Thomas J. Watson Sr. took Patterson's methods to IBM, building it into one of the most dominant companies in history. Others carried his systems to General Motors and beyond.

But it was nearly a century later that the art of closing was truly codified.

In 1984, Zig Ziglar published "Secrets of Closing the Sale" — a book containing over 100 named closing techniques, each tested and refined through decades of real-world selling. Ziglar didn't invent these closes. He collected, organized, and taught them with a clarity and enthusiasm that made the book a phenomenon.

Alongside Ziglar, other masters contributed to the canon: Tom Hopkins ("How to Master the Art of Selling"), Brian Tracy ("The Art of Closing the Sale"), and dozens of practitioners who named, refined, and passed down techniques through generations of salespeople.

What you hold in your hands is the synthesis of that tradition.

THE PHILOSOPHY

Before we proceed, a word about what closing is — and what it is not.

Closing is not manipulation. It is not trickery. It is not bludgeoning a reluctant prospect into submission.

Zig Ziglar put it best: "Selling is essentially a transference of feeling. If I can make you feel about my product the way I feel about my product, you're going to buy my product."

The closes in this document are tools. Like any tool, they can be used well or poorly, ethically or not. A hammer can build a house or break a window. The tool doesn't decide — the person holding it does.

The best salespeople understand something fundamental: closing is a service, not an imposition. When you've done your job — when you've understood the prospect's problem, presented a genuine solution, and addressed their concerns — closing is simply helping them take the final step they already want to take but hesitate to make.

Fear holds people back. Uncertainty paralyzes. The close is often nothing more than giving someone permission to do what they already know is right.

As Brian Tracy observed: "The closing is not something you do TO someone. It's something you do FOR someone."

THE INVITATION

This is not a document to read once and forget. It is a reference — a toolbox to return to again and again.

Study it. Practice the techniques. Notice which ones fit your style and which feel foreign. Pay attention to when certain closes work and when they don't.

Most importantly, remember that techniques are secondary to intention. If you genuinely believe in what you're selling and genuinely care about the person you're selling to, the right close will often find you.

But having 122 of them in your back pocket doesn't hurt.

Let's begin.

PART I: THE CORE 100

CLOSES 1-10: THE FOUNDATIONAL CLOSES

These are the bedrock techniques — the closes every salesperson should master first.

1. THE ASSUMPTIVE CLOSE

Attribution: John Henry Patterson / Universal

What It Is:

Act as though the prospect has already decided to buy. Skip asking "if" and move directly to "how" — discussing delivery, color options, payment terms, or implementation details.

Example:

"So, would you prefer we start the installation on Monday or would Wednesday work better for your schedule?"

Why It Works:

The Assumptive Close leverages commitment and consistency. By speaking as if the decision is made, you shift the prospect's mental frame from "Should I buy?" to "How should I buy?" It removes the explicit yes/no decision point, making it easier for a prospect who already wants to say yes to simply go along.

2. THE ALTERNATIVE CLOSE (Either/Or Close)

Attribution: Universal / Tom Hopkins

What It Is:

Offer two options, both of which result in a sale. The question isn't whether to buy, but which option to choose.

Example:

"Would you like the standard package or the premium? The premium includes the extended warranty, but the standard covers most people's needs."

Why It Works:

The Alternative Close narrows the decision space. Instead of an open-ended "Do you want this?" — which invites hesitation — you present a constrained choice. Psychologically, choosing between two things is easier than choosing between something and nothing. Either answer moves the sale forward.

3. THE BEN FRANKLIN CLOSE (Balance Sheet Close)

Attribution: Traditional / Zig Ziglar

What It Is:

Draw a line down the middle of a page. On one side, list reasons to buy. On the other, reasons not to. Help the prospect see that the "pro" side outweighs the "con" side.

Example:

"Let's do what Ben Franklin used to do when he had a tough decision. Let's list out the reasons this makes sense on one side, and any concerns on the other. Then we'll see where we land."

Why It Works:

This close externalizes the decision-making process. It makes the abstract concrete. By writing things down, you help the prospect organize their own thoughts — and if you've done your job in the sales conversation, the pros will naturally outweigh the cons. The visual evidence becomes hard to argue with.

4. THE TAKEAWAY CLOSE

Attribution: David Sandler / Brian Tracy

What It Is:

Suggest that the product or service might not be right for the prospect, or that they might not qualify. Reverse the dynamic so they have to convince you.

Example:

"You know, based on what you've told me, I'm not sure this is the right fit for you. This really works best for companies doing at least \$5 million in revenue..."

Why It Works:

The Takeaway Close triggers reactance — the psychological tendency to want what we're told we can't have. By pulling back, you create scarcity and shift the power dynamic. Suddenly the prospect isn't being sold to; they're trying to qualify. It also builds trust because you appear willing to walk away from a bad fit.

5. THE SUMMARY CLOSE

Attribution: Universal

What It Is:

Recap all the benefits and value the prospect will receive, then ask for the order. Stack up the value until the decision feels obvious.

Example:

"So let me make sure I have this right. You're getting the complete system, installation, three years of support, the training package, and we're throwing in the extended warranty at no extra charge. All of that for \$12,000. Should I get the paperwork started?"

Why It Works:

The Summary Close works by creating a value pile. When benefits are scattered throughout a conversation, they can feel less substantial. When you stack them together at the end, the sheer weight of value becomes undeniable. It also signals that you've been listening and that you understand what matters to them.

6. THE URGENCY CLOSE

Attribution: Universal

What It Is:

Create a legitimate reason why acting now is better than waiting — a deadline, limited availability, or expiring offer.

Example:

"The current pricing is only guaranteed through the end of the month. After that, the new pricing takes effect and it's about 15% higher. If you want to lock this in, we'd need to get the agreement signed this week."

Why It Works:

The Urgency Close combats the prospect's natural tendency to delay. Without a reason to act now, "later" always feels safer. By introducing a deadline or scarcity element, you shift the calculation — the cost of waiting becomes real. Note: manufactured urgency destroys trust. Only use real deadlines.

7. THE SHARP ANGLE CLOSE

Attribution: Zig Ziglar / Tom Hopkins

What It Is:

When a prospect asks for a concession or condition, immediately turn it into a commitment. "If I can do X, will you do Y?"

Example:

"Prospect: 'Can you include the training at no extra cost?' You: 'If I can get the training included, are you ready to move forward today?'"

Why It Works:

The Sharp Angle Close turns objections into commitments. Instead of giving away concessions freely, you exchange them for a decision. It also tests whether the objection is real or a smokescreen — if they say no to your counter, the training wasn't really the issue.

8. THE TRIAL CLOSE

Attribution: Tom Hopkins / Universal

What It Is:

Ask a question that tests the prospect's readiness to buy without directly asking for the sale. Gauge their temperature before going for the full close.

Example:

*"How does this sound so far? Does this approach make sense for what you're trying to accomplish?
On a scale of 1-10, where are you on moving forward with this?"*

Why It Works:

The Trial Close is diagnostic. It lets you check where you stand before committing to a hard close. If they respond positively, you know it's time to ask for the order. If they hesitate, you've surfaced an objection you can address. It reduces the risk of a premature close that might kill momentum.

9. THE FEAR OF LOSS CLOSE (Loss Aversion Close)

Attribution: Zig Ziglar / Robert Cialdini

What It Is:

Help the prospect see what they stand to lose by not acting — lost opportunity, continued pain, competitive disadvantage, or wasted time.

Example:

"What's it costing you every month that this problem goes unsolved? You mentioned you're losing about \$15,000 in inefficiency. Every month you wait, that's another \$15,000 out the door."

Why It Works:

Loss aversion is one of the most powerful forces in human psychology. Research shows people feel the pain of loss about twice as strongly as the pleasure of an equivalent gain. By framing inaction as a loss rather than the purchase as a gain, you tap into a deeper motivational trigger.

10. THE OWNERSHIP CLOSE (Puppy Dog Variant)

Attribution: Universal / Car Sales Tradition

What It Is:

Help the prospect mentally or physically take ownership before they've officially bought. Let them experience what it feels like to own it.

Example:

"Go ahead, sit in the driver's seat. Adjust the mirrors. How does it feel? Picture this system running in your office. Where would you put the main terminal?"

Why It Works:

The Ownership Close leverages the endowment effect — once we feel like something is "ours," we value it more and become reluctant to give it up. By encouraging the prospect to visualize or experience ownership, you make the "loss" of not buying feel more real than the "cost" of buying.

CLOSES 11-35: CLASSIC ZIG ZIGLAR CLOSES

These techniques come primarily from Zig Ziglar's "Secrets of Closing the Sale" — the definitive collection.

11. THE PUPPY DOG CLOSE

Attribution: Zig Ziglar (named)

What It Is:

Let the prospect take the product home to try it, no commitment required. Just like a pet store letting you take a puppy home "just to see" — they know you'll fall in love.

Example:

"Tell you what — take this home for the weekend. Use it. See how it fits into your workflow. If it's not everything I said it was, bring it back Monday, no questions asked."

Why It Works:

The Puppy Dog Close combines trial experience with the endowment effect. Once someone uses something and integrates it into their life, giving it back feels like a loss. The "no commitment" framing reduces resistance to trying, but very few people actually return the puppy.

12. THE IMPENDING EVENT CLOSE

Attribution: Zig Ziglar

What It Is:

Reference an upcoming event that makes acting now more advantageous — a price increase, product change, inventory depletion, or deadline.

Example:

"The manufacturer is raising prices on January 1st. If we can get your order in this week, I can lock you in at the current rate and save you about \$2,000."

Why It Works:

The Impending Event Close creates legitimate urgency through external factors. It's not "buy now because I want you to" — it's "buy now because circumstances outside both our control make it advantageous." This external attribution makes the urgency feel less manipulative.

13. THE 1902 CLOSE

Attribution: Zig Ziglar

What It Is:

Named after a technique used to sell cookware. Ask the prospect: "Do you know what most people say when they see this product?" Then reveal that most people say it's too expensive — but those same people end up buying because of the value.

Example:

"Do you know what most people tell me when they first see the price? They say exactly what you're thinking — 'That's more than I expected.' But here's what's interesting: about 80% of those people end up buying anyway. Want to know why?"

Why It Works:

This close normalizes the objection. Instead of the prospect feeling alone in their hesitation, they learn that everyone feels this way. It also creates curiosity — "Why would people who think it's expensive still buy?" The answer, of course, is value.

14. THE EMBARRASSMENT CLOSE

Attribution: Zig Ziglar

What It Is:

Point out that the prospect has already invested significant time and emotion in the process. Walking away now would mean that time was wasted.

Example:

"We've spent three meetings together. Your team has evaluated all the options. You've told me this is the best solution you've seen. At this point, wouldn't it be embarrassing to go back to your team and tell them you decided to do nothing?"

Why It Works:

This close leverages sunk cost and social pressure. We don't like to feel that our time has been wasted, and we especially don't like to look indecisive to others. Use carefully — it can feel manipulative if overdone, but used gently, it reminds prospects that delay has its own costs.

15. THE SNOOKER CLOSE

Attribution: Zig Ziglar

What It Is:

When a prospect says they need to "think about it," gently ask what specifically they need to think about. If they can't articulate it, the objection isn't real.

Example:

"I completely understand. Just so I can help — what specifically is it that you need to think about?"

Why It Works:

"I need to think about it" is often a polite brush-off, not a real objection. This close surfaces the real issue. If they have a specific concern, you can address it. If they can't name one, you've revealed that their hesitation is emotional, not logical — and you can address that differently.

16. THE AFFORDABLE CLOSE

Attribution: Zig Ziglar

What It Is:

Break the price down into the smallest possible unit — daily, per use, per unit — to make it feel manageable.

Example:

"The annual subscription is \$1,200. That's \$100 a month, or about \$3.30 a day. For less than the cost of your morning coffee, you get the entire platform."

Why It Works:

Large numbers feel large. Small numbers feel small. By breaking the price into daily or per-use terms, you make the investment feel trivial compared to the value received. This is especially effective when you can compare the cost to something they already spend money on without thinking.

17. THE BRIDE CLOSE

Attribution: Zig Ziglar

What It Is:

Just as a bride says "yes" to a proposal but still has wedding planning to do, help the prospect separate the decision from the details. Get the "yes" first; sort out logistics after.

Example:

"Look, the question is simple: Is this the right solution for your problem? If the answer is yes, we can figure out the timing, the payment schedule, all of that. But first — is this what you want?"

Why It Works:

Sometimes prospects get stuck on implementation details when they haven't yet committed to the core decision. This close separates the emotional "yes" from the practical logistics. Once they commit to wanting it, the details become collaborative problem-solving rather than obstacles.

18. THE FAIR ENOUGH CLOSE

Attribution: Zig Ziglar

What It Is:

After presenting your case, simply ask: "Fair enough?" This invites agreement without demanding a hard commitment.

Example:

"So we've got a solution that solves your problem, fits your budget, and can be implemented by your deadline. Fair enough?"

Why It Works:

"Fair enough?" is low-pressure but still asks for agreement. It feels like a reasonable question rather than a sales push. When they say "yes, fair enough," they've psychologically committed — even if they don't realize it. From there, the next step feels natural.

19. THE NEW DECISION CLOSE

Attribution: Zig Ziglar

What It Is:

When prospects say they need to think about it or discuss it, help them see that making a new decision (to delay) is still a decision — and often the wrong one.

Example:

"I understand wanting to think it over. But here's something to consider: you've already made a decision to solve this problem — that's why we're talking. The only new decision is whether to solve it now or later. And later usually just means more of the same pain."

Why It Works:

This reframes "doing nothing" as an active choice rather than a safe default. People often feel that delay is neutral, but it's not — it's choosing to continue with the status quo. By making this explicit, you help them see the real decision they're making.

20. THE VOICE INFLECTION CLOSE

Attribution: Zig Ziglar

What It Is:

Turn a statement into a question simply by raising your voice at the end. Let your tone do the closing.

Example:

"So we'll go ahead and schedule installation for next week? (voice rising at end)"

Why It Works:

A rising inflection invites agreement without demanding it. It's softer than a direct ask but still moves toward commitment. The prospect can nod along without feeling pressured. It's particularly useful for low-stakes trial closes.

21. THE COST CLOSE

Attribution: Zig Ziglar

What It Is:

Distinguish between "price" and "cost." Price is what you pay. Cost is what you pay over time. Help the prospect see that cheap prices often have expensive costs.

Example:

"The competitor's solution is \$5,000 cheaper upfront. But their support costs \$200/month. Our support is included. Over three years, their 'cheaper' solution actually costs you \$2,200 more."

Why It Works:

Price objections often disappear when you expand the time frame. This close educates the prospect to think about total cost of ownership rather than just sticker price. It repositions your higher price as actually being the more economical choice.

22. THE QUALITY CLOSE

Attribution: Zig Ziglar

What It Is:

Acknowledge that yes, your product costs more — and explain exactly why it's worth more. Quality has a price.

Example:

"You're right — we're not the cheapest option. But here's what you get for the difference: [list superior features]. The question isn't whether you'll pay more — it's whether you'll get more. And you will."

Why It Works:

Instead of defending against price objections, this close leans into them. It positions higher price as a feature, not a bug. It attracts customers who want quality and helps filter out those who will never be satisfied regardless of what you do.

23. THE SHAME CLOSE

Attribution: Zig Ziglar

What It Is:

Gently point out that the prospect already knows this is the right decision, and continuing to hesitate doesn't serve them.

Example:

"You've told me this solves your problem. You've told me you can afford it. You've told me your team needs it now. What would you tell someone else in your position who was hesitating for no clear reason?"

Why It Works:

Sometimes people need permission to stop procrastinating. This close holds up a mirror, gently. It's not accusatory — it's clarifying. Use with care and warmth; the tone should be helpful, not judgmental.

24. THE EXTRA CLOSE

Attribution: Zig Ziglar

What It Is:

Add something extra to sweeten the deal and create reciprocity. "I'll throw in X if we can close today."

Example:

"Tell you what — if we can finalize this today, I'll include the premium training package at no extra charge. That's a \$500 value. Does that help make the decision easier?"

Why It Works:

The Extra Close creates reciprocity — you're giving something, so they feel inclined to give something back (their commitment). It also creates urgency since the extra is usually tied to acting now. Make sure the extra has perceived value; otherwise, it signals desperation.

25. THE ADD-ON CLOSE

Attribution: Zig Ziglar / Universal

What It Is:

After the main sale is complete, suggest complementary products or services. "Would you like fries with that?"

Example:

"Now that you've got the main system, most customers also add the backup module. It's \$200 and it protects your entire investment. Want me to include it?"

Why It Works:

A customer who has just said yes is in a buying mindset. The psychological barrier to purchase has already been crossed. Adding a smaller complementary item feels minor compared to the decision they just made. This is why fast food restaurants ask about fries at checkout, not when you walk in.

26. THE GLOOMY GUS CLOSE

Attribution: Zig Ziglar

What It Is:

For the perpetually pessimistic prospect who finds problems with everything, agree with their pessimism — then show how your solution is the least bad option.

Example:

"You're right — nothing's perfect. Every solution has tradeoffs. But given all the options you've looked at, which one has the fewest problems? Which one gets you closest to where you need to be?"

Why It Works:

Some prospects will never be enthusiastic. They see risk everywhere. Fighting their pessimism is futile. Instead, work within their frame: "Yes, there are risks — now let's minimize them." This validates their concerns while still moving toward action.

27. THE LOOK AND LISTEN CLOSE

Attribution: Zig Ziglar

What It Is:

Pay careful attention to verbal and nonverbal buying signals — excitement, leaning in, asking about details, using ownership language. When you see them, close immediately.

Example:

"Prospect: 'So this would integrate with our existing CRM, right?' You (recognizing the buying signal): 'Absolutely, it integrates seamlessly. Should I set up the integration consultation for this week?'"

Why It Works:

Buying signals indicate that the prospect has mentally crossed the line. They're already seeing themselves as an owner. Continuing to sell past this point can actually unsell them by introducing doubt. When you see the signal, close before it fades.

28. THE NARRATIVE CLOSE

Attribution: Zig Ziglar

What It Is:

Tell a story about another customer who was in the same situation, hesitated, and then succeeded after they bought. Let the story do the selling.

Example:

"You remind me of a client I worked with last year — same industry, same concerns. She wasn't sure the investment would pay off. Six months later, she told me it was the best decision she'd made. Her team's productivity was up 30%."

Why It Works:

Stories bypass resistance. When you make logical arguments, prospects can argue back. But a story is just... a story. It provides social proof, demonstrates outcomes, and lets the prospect see themselves in the narrative without feeling sold to.

29. THE WANT IT CLOSE

Attribution: Zig Ziglar

What It Is:

Simply ask: "Do you want this?" Sometimes the most direct approach is the most effective.

Example:

"So here's my question: Do you want this? Not 'should you buy it' or 'can you afford it' — just, do you want it?"

Why It Works:

This cuts through all the rationalization and gets to the emotional core. People often want things but talk themselves out of them with logic. By asking about want rather than should, you tap into their true desire. If they want it, you can help them figure out the rest.

30. THE PERSUASION CLOSE

Attribution: Zig Ziglar

What It Is:

Ask the prospect: "What would it take to persuade you?" Let them tell you exactly what they need to hear.

Example:

"We've covered a lot of ground. You've seen the product, you understand the value. What would it take to persuade you to move forward today?"

Why It Works:

This close hands control to the prospect — or at least makes them feel like they have it. It also gives you invaluable information. Whatever they say is the key to the sale. Sometimes they'll realize, in trying to answer, that there isn't anything holding them back.

31. THE NEXT ONE CLOSE

Attribution: Zig Ziglar

What It Is:

When a prospect says no, ask if they know anyone else who might benefit. The no becomes a referral opportunity.

Example:

"I understand this isn't the right fit for you right now. But is there anyone in your network who might be dealing with the kind of problem we solve?"

Why It Works:

This salvages a lost sale by opening a new opportunity. It also leaves the door open — the prospect who says no today might become a referral tomorrow, or might even reconsider themselves. It shows professionalism and reduces awkwardness.

32. THE REVERSE CLOSE

Attribution: Zig Ziglar / David Sandler

What It Is:

Instead of pushing forward, pull back. Create space and let the prospect convince themselves.

Example:

"Maybe we should slow down. I want to make sure this is really the right solution for you. Why don't you tell me — why do you think this would work for your situation?"

Why It Works:

The Reverse Close uses psychology judo. By pulling back, you reduce pressure and trigger the prospect to argue for the sale rather than against it. When people articulate reasons to buy out loud, they convince themselves. Let them do the work.

33. THE MOTHER CLOSE

Attribution: Zig Ziglar

What It Is:

Ask: "If your mother were considering this decision, what would you tell her to do?" Appeal to their wisdom when giving advice to others.

Example:

"Let me ask you something. If your mother came to you with this exact situation — same problem, same solution, same price — what would you tell her to do?"

Why It Works:

We often give better advice to others than we take ourselves. By asking what they'd tell someone they care about, you bypass their self-doubt and access their clearer judgment. Most people realize they'd tell their mother to buy — so why won't they do the same?

34. THE PROBABILITY CLOSE

Attribution: Zig Ziglar

What It Is:

Ask: "On a scale of 1 to 10, how likely are you to move forward?" Then explore what it would take to get them to a 10.

Example:

"On a scale of 1 to 10 — where 10 is 'let's do this' and 1 is 'no way' — where are you right now? (If they say 7): Interesting. What would it take to make it a 10?"

Why It Works:

This close does double duty. It surfaces their current state and reveals what's missing. If they're at a 7, you know you're close. The follow-up question tells you exactly what objection or concern is keeping them from full commitment.

35. THE SIMILAR SITUATION CLOSE

Attribution: Zig Ziglar

What It Is:

Reference others in their same industry, role, or situation who faced the same decision and chose to buy.

Example:

"We've worked with several roofing companies about your size — \$3-5 million in revenue, 15-20 crews. Every one of them had the same concerns you do. And every one of them has told me afterward that they wished they'd done it sooner."

Why It Works:

This combines social proof with relevance. It's not just "other people bought" — it's "people exactly like you bought." This makes the proof feel more applicable and reduces the prospect's sense that their situation is unique or that the solution might not fit.

CLOSES 36-45: QUESTION-BASED CLOSES

The power of questions: they engage the prospect, surface objections, and lead to commitment without feeling pushy.

36. THE QUESTION CLOSE

Attribution: Universal

What It Is:

Close by asking a question rather than making a statement. Questions invite engagement; statements invite resistance.

Example:

"Does this solution address the problems we discussed? Is there any reason we shouldn't move forward? What would you need to see to feel confident about this?"

Why It Works:

Questions lower resistance because they feel collaborative rather than confrontational. They also give you information. Every answer tells you where the prospect stands and what they need next.

37. THE PORCUPINE CLOSE

Attribution: Tom Hopkins

What It Is:

When the prospect asks a question, answer with a question that moves toward commitment. Throw the "porcupine" back.

Example:

"Prospect: 'Does it come in blue?' You: 'Would you like it in blue?' Prospect: 'Can you deliver by Friday?' You: 'If I can get it there by Friday, are you ready to move forward?'"

Why It Works:

Questions from prospects are often buying signals. Instead of just answering and waiting, the Porcupine Close uses their question as momentum toward the sale. It also tests their seriousness — are they asking because they're curious or because they're ready to buy?

38. THE TIE-DOWN CLOSE

Attribution: Tom Hopkins

What It Is:

Add a short question to the end of statements to get continuous small agreements. "Right?" "Don't you think?" "Isn't it?" "Wouldn't you agree?"

Example:

"Having reliable support is important, isn't it? You'd want to get this resolved before the busy season, wouldn't you? A 30% improvement in efficiency would be significant, don't you think?"

Why It Works:

Tie-Downs create a pattern of agreement. Each small "yes" makes the next "yes" more likely. By the time you reach the big ask, the prospect has been agreeing with you throughout the conversation. Momentum carries them forward.

39. THE FINAL OBJECTION CLOSE

Attribution: Universal / Sales Tradition

What It Is:

Ask: "Is there anything else holding you back?" Surface all objections, then address them. Once they're handled, the path is clear.

Example:

"Before we move forward, I want to make sure we've addressed everything. Is there anything else — any concern, question, or hesitation — that's holding you back from saying yes today?"

Why It Works:

Prospects sometimes hold back unstated objections. This close invites them to put everything on the table. Once you've addressed their full list, they've run out of reasons to say no. If they can't name an objection, they often realize they're ready to commit.

40. THE "IF I COULD, WOULD YOU?" CLOSE

Attribution: Universal

What It Is:

When a prospect raises an objection or asks for something, tie it to a commitment. "If I could do X, would you do Y?"

Example:

"If I could get approval to match that price, would you be ready to sign today? If I could extend the warranty to five years, would that address your concern?"

Why It Works:

This close transforms objections into negotiable terms. It also tests whether the objection is real or a smokescreen. If they say "no, I still wouldn't," you know the stated objection isn't the real issue. If they say yes, you've just closed — contingent on your ability to deliver.

41. THE SCALE CLOSE

Attribution: Universal / Training Tradition

What It Is:

Use a numerical scale to measure the prospect's buying temperature, then work to increase the number.

Example:

"On a scale of 1 to 10, how interested are you in moving forward? (They say 6) What would need to change to make it an 8 or 9?"

Why It Works:

Numbers are concrete. They give you a measurable baseline and open the door to productive conversation about what's missing. The prospect often reveals their real objection while explaining why they're not at a 10.

42. THE OPINION CLOSE

Attribution: Universal

What It Is:

Ask for the prospect's opinion rather than a commitment. Opinions feel safe; decisions feel risky.

Example:

"In your opinion, does this solution address the issues we discussed? What's your opinion of how this would work in your environment?"

Why It Works:

Asking for an opinion feels low-stakes, but a positive opinion is essentially a buying signal. Once they've said "yes, I think this would work well," transitioning to "great, let's move forward" feels natural rather than jarring.

43. THE NEEDS ASSESSMENT CLOSE

Attribution: Consultative Sales Tradition

What It Is:

Summarize the needs you've uncovered, confirm them with the prospect, then show how your solution addresses each one.

Example:

"Let me make sure I have this right. You need X, Y, and Z. Is that accurate? (Yes.) Okay, so our solution addresses X by doing this, Y by doing this, and Z by doing this. Does that cover what you need?"

Why It Works:

This close demonstrates that you've listened and understood. It creates a logical bridge from problem to solution. When the prospect confirms their needs and sees them systematically addressed, the path to "yes" becomes obvious.

44. THE PAIN POINT CLOSE

Attribution: David Sandler / Consultative Tradition

What It Is:

Return to the pain that started the conversation. Remind them why they're here and what happens if they don't solve it.

Example:

"You came to me because you were losing \$10,000 a month to this inefficiency. We've found a solution that fixes it. Every month you wait is another \$10,000 gone. How much longer can you afford to let that continue?"

Why It Works:

Prospects sometimes lose sight of why they started the buying process. The Pain Point Close brings them back to the original motivation. It's especially powerful when the pain is quantifiable — real dollars, lost time, specific frustrations.

45. THE "WHY WAIT?" CLOSE

Attribution: Universal

What It Is:

Simply ask: "Is there any reason to wait?" Often there isn't.

Example:

"We've established this solves your problem. We've agreed on the price. You've said you have budget. So I have to ask — is there any reason to wait? What changes between today and next month?"

Why It Works:

Delay is often unconscious. People default to "later" without examining whether later is actually better than now. This close forces the question into the open. More often than not, the honest answer is: "No, there's no reason to wait."

CLOSES 46-60: PSYCHOLOGICAL CLOSES

These closes leverage deep principles of human psychology — scarcity, social proof, authority, and emotion.

46. THE SCARCITY CLOSE

Attribution: Robert Cialdini / Universal

What It Is:

Emphasize limited availability — limited time, limited quantity, limited access.

Example:

"We only have three of these left in inventory. Once they're gone, we won't be able to get more for 8 weeks."

Why It Works:

Scarcity is one of Cialdini's six principles of influence. We value things more when they're rare. The fear of missing out (FOMO) often outweighs the fear of buying. Only use real scarcity — manufactured scarcity destroys trust.

47. THE FOMO CLOSE

Attribution: Modern / Social Media Era

What It Is:

Help the prospect see what others are gaining that they're missing out on. Make inaction feel like a loss.

Example:

"Your competitors are already using this. While you're deciding, they're getting faster, more efficient, more competitive. How long before that gap becomes a problem?"

Why It Works:

FOMO is scarcity plus social proof. It's not just that something is limited — it's that others are getting it while you're not. This creates urgency through comparative loss rather than absolute loss.

48. THE SOCIAL PROOF CLOSE

Attribution: Robert Cialdini

What It Is:

Reference how many others have bought, what they're saying, or who else is using the product.

Example:

"Over 500 companies in your industry are using this platform. Here are a few you might recognize..."

Why It Works:

Social proof reduces perceived risk. If many others have bought and are satisfied, the prospect feels safer following. It's the "nobody got fired for buying IBM" effect — when in doubt, do what others are doing.

49. THE TESTIMONIAL CLOSE

Attribution: Universal

What It Is:

Share a specific customer success story, quote, or case study that demonstrates results.

Example:

"One of our customers, a company about your size, said this: 'Within 90 days, we had recovered the entire cost of the system. I wish we'd done it a year earlier.' Would you like to see their full case study?"

Why It Works:

Testimonials are social proof with a face and a story. They're more compelling than statistics because they're human. The prospect can see themselves in the customer's story and imagine similar results.

50. THE CASE STUDY CLOSE

Attribution: B2B Sales Tradition

What It Is:

Present a detailed story of a similar customer — their situation, challenge, solution, and results. Show the journey.

Example:

"Let me tell you about a company in your exact situation. They were struggling with X, we implemented Y, and within six months they saw Z. Here's the full case study — take a look at their numbers."

Why It Works:

Case studies provide proof that your solution works in the real world. They're longer than testimonials and more detailed than references. They answer the question: "Has this worked for someone like me?"

51. THE ENDORSEMENT CLOSE

Attribution: Universal

What It Is:

Reference a respected authority, expert, or organization that endorses or uses your product.

Example:

"This technology was developed in partnership with MIT. It's the same system NASA uses for their logistics operations."

Why It Works:

Authority is one of Cialdini's six principles. When credible experts or organizations endorse something, we trust it more. The endorsement borrows credibility and reduces the prospect's need to evaluate on their own.

52. THE BANDWAGON CLOSE

Attribution: Universal / Psychology

What It Is:

Show that "everyone" is doing something, buying something, or moving in a certain direction. Tap into the desire to belong.

Example:

"Over the last quarter, we've onboarded 150 new customers. There's a real movement happening in your industry toward this approach."

Why It Works:

Humans are social creatures. We want to be part of the group, not left behind. The Bandwagon Close positions buying as joining a movement rather than making an isolated decision.

53. THE EXCLUSIVITY CLOSE

Attribution: Luxury Sales / Premium Brands

What It Is:

Position the product as exclusive, elite, or not for everyone. Make the prospect want to qualify.

Example:

"We're selective about who we work with. Not every company is the right fit for this approach. Based on what you've told me, I think you might be — but I'd want to make sure."

Why It Works:

Exclusivity triggers desire. If something isn't for everyone, we want to be among the few. It also reverses the power dynamic — instead of you trying to sell them, they're trying to qualify.

54. THE BELONGING CLOSE

Attribution: Psychology / Community Sales

What It Is:

Emphasize the community, group, or identity that comes with purchase. You're not just buying a product; you're joining something.

Example:

"When you become a member, you're joining a community of 10,000 business owners who support each other, share insights, and grow together."

Why It Works:

People have a deep need to belong. When purchasing means joining a community or adopting an identity, the decision becomes about more than features and price. It becomes about who you want to be.

55. THE STATUS CLOSE

Attribution: Luxury Sales / Premium Positioning

What It Is:

Position the purchase as a status symbol — something that signals success, sophistication, or achievement.

Example:

"Companies at your level typically make this investment as a signal that they're serious about growth. It's how industry leaders operate."

Why It Works:

Status is a powerful motivator, even when people won't admit it. The Status Close ties the purchase to identity and self-image. Buying becomes an expression of who the prospect is or wants to be.

56. THE EGO CLOSE

Attribution: Sales Tradition

What It Is:

Appeal to the prospect's pride, expertise, or self-image. Make them feel smart for recognizing the value.

Example:

"You clearly understand the value here — not everyone does. It takes a certain level of sophistication to see past the initial investment to the long-term returns."

Why It Works:

Ego is a powerful driver. When you make someone feel intelligent, perceptive, or special for considering your solution, they don't want to undermine that self-image by not buying. The purchase becomes consistent with how they see themselves.

57. THE COMPLIMENT CLOSE

Attribution: Dale Carnegie Influence

What It Is:

Offer a genuine compliment about the prospect's judgment, process, or company. Warmth opens doors.

Example:

"I have to say, your team has done the most thorough evaluation I've seen. The questions you've asked show you really understand what's at stake. Companies with that level of diligence usually make great decisions."

Why It Works:

People like people who like them. A genuine compliment builds rapport and goodwill. It also creates subtle reciprocity — they want to reward your kindness with a positive response. Key word: genuine. False flattery backfires.

58. THE EMPATHY CLOSE

Attribution: Consultative / Relationship Sales

What It Is:

Acknowledge the difficulty of the decision. Show you understand their position and concerns.

Example:

"I know this is a big decision. You've got a lot of factors to weigh, and the consequences matter. I get it. I'd be nervous too if I were in your shoes. What would help you feel more confident?"

Why It Works:

Empathy builds trust. When prospects feel understood, they lower their defenses. The Empathy Close shows you're not just pushing for a sale — you see them as a person navigating a difficult decision.

59. THE EMOTIONAL CLOSE

Attribution: Sales Tradition

What It Is:

Tap into the emotional benefit — the feeling they'll have when the problem is solved, the fear that motivated them, the aspiration they hold.

Example:

"Imagine six months from now. The system is running smoothly. Your team isn't frustrated anymore. You're not waking up stressed about this. How would that feel?"

Why It Works:

People buy on emotion and justify with logic. The Emotional Close bypasses the rational mind and connects with what the prospect really wants — not features, but feelings. Relief, pride, security, excitement.

60. THE STORY CLOSE

Attribution: Universal / Ancient Tradition

What It Is:

Tell a story that illustrates the transformation or result. Let narrative carry the message.

Example:

"Let me tell you about Sarah. She was where you are two years ago — overwhelmed, under-resourced, losing sleep over this exact problem. Today, she runs a smooth operation and actually takes vacations. Here's how she got there..."

Why It Works:

Stories are how humans have transmitted wisdom for thousands of years. They bypass resistance, create emotional connection, and allow prospects to see themselves in the narrative. A good story sells without feeling like selling.

CLOSES 61-70: LOGIC & VALUE CLOSES

For the analytical prospect — the one who needs to see the numbers and make a rational case.

61. THE ROI CLOSE

Attribution: B2B Sales / Universal

What It Is:

Show the return on investment in concrete terms. Make the math undeniable.

Example:

"The investment is \$50,000. Based on the efficiency gains we've documented, you'll save \$8,000 per month. That's a 12-month payback, and after that, it's all profit. The ROI over five years is over 800%."

Why It Works:

ROI closes the gap between price and value. It reframes the purchase from a "cost" to an "investment" and shows exactly what return to expect. For analytical buyers, clear math is more persuasive than any emotional appeal.

62. THE VALUE CLOSE

Attribution: Universal

What It Is:

Stack up all the value components and compare them to the price. Make the disparity obvious.

Example:

"You're getting the software (\$10,000 value), implementation (\$5,000 value), training (\$3,000 value), and ongoing support (\$2,000/year). That's \$20,000 in value, and you're paying \$12,000. You're getting nearly twice what you're paying for."

Why It Works:

Value Closes make the purchase feel like a deal. When you itemize everything they're getting and compare it to the price, the decision feels rational and advantageous. They're not spending money — they're capturing surplus value.

63. THE INVESTMENT CLOSE

Attribution: Universal / Financial Framing

What It Is:

Reframe the purchase from an "expense" to an "investment." Expenses are costs; investments generate returns.

Example:

"This isn't an expense — it's an investment. Expenses disappear. Investments grow. In two years, you won't remember the money you spent, but you'll still be benefiting from the results."

Why It Works:

Language shapes perception. "Expense" feels like loss; "investment" feels like gain. By reframing, you change how the prospect thinks about the money. Investments feel smart and forward-thinking; expenses feel like something to minimize.

64. THE OPPORTUNITY COST CLOSE

Attribution: Economics / Business Strategy

What It Is:

Help the prospect see what they're giving up by not buying — the opportunities lost, the problems that continue, the competitors who pull ahead.

Example:

"If you don't make this change, what happens? You keep losing \$10,000 a month to inefficiency. Your competitors who do invest will pull ahead. The opportunity cost of waiting isn't just the price — it's everything you lose while you wait."

Why It Works:

Opportunity cost makes inaction expensive. People tend to focus on the cost of buying; this close forces them to see the cost of not buying. When both sides are visible, the decision often tips toward action.

65. THE ANALYTICS CLOSE

Attribution: Data-Driven Sales

What It Is:

Use data, benchmarks, and metrics to make the case. Let the numbers speak.

Example:

"Companies in your peer group average a 25% improvement after implementing this system. The median payback period is 8 months. Here's the data from our last 50 implementations."

Why It Works:

Data builds credibility and reduces perceived risk. For analytical buyers, "we've measured this across 50 companies" is far more persuasive than "trust me, it works." Numbers feel objective, even when they're carefully selected.

66. THE COMPARISON CLOSE

Attribution: Universal

What It Is:

Compare your solution to alternatives — doing nothing, using a competitor, or handling it internally.

Example:

"You have three options: keep doing what you're doing and accept the current results, hire three more people at \$150,000/year in total salary, or implement this system for \$50,000 one-time. Which makes the most sense?"

Why It Works:

The Comparison Close provides context. Prices feel expensive or cheap only relative to alternatives. By putting your solution alongside the other options, you help the prospect see it as the rational middle choice.

67. THE COST-PER-DAY CLOSE

Attribution: Zig Ziglar / Retail Sales

What It Is:

Break the price down to a daily cost. Small numbers feel manageable.

Example:

"This service costs \$1,800 a year. That's \$150 a month, or about \$5 a day. Less than a fancy coffee. For \$5 a day, you get [all these benefits]."

Why It Works:

Large numbers trigger loss aversion. Small numbers don't. By breaking the investment into daily terms, you make it feel trivial — especially when compared to things they already spend money on without thinking.

68. THE TOTAL COST OF OWNERSHIP CLOSE

Attribution: Enterprise Sales / IT Industry

What It Is:

Look beyond the purchase price to include implementation, maintenance, support, upgrades, and hidden costs. Compare total cost, not sticker price.

Example:

"Their upfront price is lower, but let's look at total cost over three years: their support costs, upgrade fees, and implementation. When you add it all up, they actually cost \$15,000 more than us."

Why It Works:

This close educates the prospect to evaluate properly. Many cheaper options have expensive hidden costs. By expanding the frame, you help them see the true comparison — and often reposition yourself as the better value.

69. THE BREAK-EVEN CLOSE

Attribution: Financial Sales / B2B

What It Is:

Calculate exactly when the investment pays for itself. Show them the break-even point.

Example:

"Based on the savings we've projected, you'll break even on this investment in 6 months. After that, every dollar saved is profit. Over three years, you're \$200,000 ahead."

Why It Works:

Break-even analysis reduces risk perception. Prospects worry "what if it doesn't work?" Showing a short payback period means they don't have to believe in infinite future gains — they just have to believe it works for 6 months.

70. THE PAYBACK PERIOD CLOSE

Attribution: Financial / Capital Investment Sales

What It Is:

Frame the investment in terms of how quickly it pays for itself. Short payback = low risk.

Example:

"Most of our customers see complete payback within 14 months. After that, the system essentially runs for free — all the benefits, no ongoing cost."

Why It Works:

Payback period is a risk reduction metric. A 14-month payback on a system that lasts 10 years feels safe. The prospect isn't betting on a distant, uncertain future — they're looking at a near-term return.

CLOSES 71-80: NEGOTIATION CLOSES

For when the negotiation is on and you need to move toward agreement.

71. THE CONCESSION CLOSE

Attribution: Negotiation Tradition

What It Is:

Make a concession, but tie it to a commitment. "I'll give you this if you give me that."

Example:

"I can bring the price down 5%, but I'd need you to sign today. Is that a trade you can make?"

Why It Works:

Concessions create reciprocity. When you give something, people feel obligated to give something back. By tying your concession to their commitment, you transform a discount into a closing mechanism.

72. THE SPLIT THE DIFFERENCE CLOSE

Attribution: Negotiation 101

What It Is:

When you're stuck on price, propose meeting in the middle.

Example:

"You're at \$40,000, we're at \$50,000. What if we split the difference and call it \$45,000? We both give a little, we both get a deal done."

Why It Works:

Splitting the difference feels fair to both parties. It's a face-saving way to compromise. Note: be careful about anchoring — whoever states a number first influences where the "middle" lands.

73. THE GOOD GUY/BAD GUY CLOSE

Attribution: Negotiation / Law Enforcement

What It Is:

One person plays hardball, another plays sympathetic. The sympathetic person "works to get you a deal."

Example:

"Look, my manager isn't budging on the price, but let me see what I can do for you. If I can get her to include the extended warranty at no extra charge, would that work?"

Why It Works:

This classic technique creates an ally for the prospect. They feel like you're on their side, fighting against the "bad guy" to get them a deal. The resulting concession feels earned and valuable.

74. THE HIGHER AUTHORITY CLOSE

Attribution: Negotiation Tradition

What It Is:

Reference a higher authority who needs to approve — but position yourself as working to get that approval.

Example:

"I don't have the authority to approve that discount myself, but let me take it to my VP. If I can make a strong case that you'll sign today, I might be able to get it done."

Why It Works:

The Higher Authority Close creates urgency (the authority might say no) and positions you as an ally (you're advocating for them). It also protects you from making concessions in the moment — you need to "check with the boss."

75. THE BUDGET CLOSE

Attribution: B2B Sales

What It Is:

Work within the prospect's stated budget to find a solution that fits.

Example:

"You said your budget is \$30,000, and this solution is \$35,000. What if we phase the implementation over two fiscal years? You'd pay \$18,000 this year, \$17,000 next year — well within your annual budget."

Why It Works:

Budget constraints are often real. Fighting them is futile. The Budget Close shows flexibility and problem-solving. It positions you as someone who works with the prospect, not against them.

76. THE TERMS CLOSE

Attribution: Financial Sales / Negotiation

What It Is:

When price is stuck, negotiate on terms instead — payment schedule, financing, milestones.

Example:

"I can't move on the price, but I can restructure the terms. Instead of paying everything upfront, what if we did quarterly payments? Would that make this work for you?"

Why It Works:

Sometimes the objection isn't the total price but the cash flow impact. Adjusting terms can make the same price feel affordable. You maintain your price integrity while still solving the prospect's problem.

77. THE TRADE-OFF CLOSE

Attribution: Negotiation Best Practices

What It Is:

Offer to reduce price in exchange for removing something. Make them choose.

Example:

"I can bring the price down to \$40,000, but I'd have to remove the premium support package. If price is more important than support, we can do that. If support matters, it's \$50,000. Which would you prefer?"

Why It Works:

The Trade-Off Close reframes discounting as value removal rather than margin sacrifice. It also forces the prospect to articulate what they actually value. Often, they'll realize they want the full package.

78. THE PACKAGE CLOSE

Attribution: Bundle Sales / Value Selling

What It Is:

Bundle products or services together at a combined price that's better than buying separately.

Example:

"If you buy these three separately, they're \$18,000. But if you take them as a package, I can do \$15,000. That's a \$3,000 savings. Makes sense to bundle, doesn't it?"

Why It Works:

Bundles increase deal size while offering perceived savings. Customers feel like they're getting a deal, even as they spend more. Packages also simplify decisions — instead of three choices, it's one.

79. THE NIBBLE CLOSE

Attribution: Negotiation Tactics / Herb Cohen

What It Is:

After the main deal is agreed, ask for something small extra. "Now that we've agreed, could you also...?"

Example:

"Great, I'm glad we could make this work. One small thing — would you be able to include the training materials at no extra charge?"

Why It Works:

After a big decision, small asks feel minor. The prospect has already committed and doesn't want to re-open the negotiation over something trivial. Use sparingly — excessive nibbling damages trust.

80. THE WALK AWAY CLOSE

Attribution: Negotiation / David Sandler

What It Is:

Be willing to walk away from a deal that doesn't work. Sometimes the most powerful move is standing up.

Example:

"It sounds like we're too far apart on this. I appreciate the conversation, but I don't think I can help you at the price you need. If anything changes, feel free to reach back out."

Why It Works:

Willingness to walk away shifts power. It signals confidence and that you don't need this deal. Often, the prospect will stop you — "Wait, let's talk about this more." Even if they don't, you've preserved your margin and self-respect.

CLOSES 81-90: TIMING & PRESSURE CLOSES

When urgency matters and time is a factor.

81. THE DEADLINE CLOSE

Attribution: Universal

What It Is:

Set or reference a deadline that makes acting now advantageous.

Example:

"The proposal is valid until Friday. After that, I'll need to re-quote, and I can't guarantee the same pricing."

Why It Works:

Deadlines create urgency. Without them, delay is always the path of least resistance. A deadline forces a decision and prevents indefinite postponement. Make sure deadlines are real — fake deadlines destroy credibility.

82. THE LIMITED TIME CLOSE

Attribution: Retail / Promotional Sales

What It Is:

Offer is only available for a specific time period.

Example:

"This promotion ends on the 31st. After that, the price goes up \$2,000. If you want to take advantage of the current pricing, we'd need to finalize by then."

Why It Works:

Limited time creates scarcity of opportunity. It's not that the product is scarce — it's that the deal is. This gives prospects who already want to buy a reason to act now rather than later.

83. THE STANDING ROOM ONLY CLOSE

Attribution: Zig Ziglar

What It Is:

Emphasize that demand is high and availability is limited. Others want what you're selling.

Example:

"We only take on four new clients per quarter, and we've already committed to two. If you want one of the remaining spots, we should decide soon."

Why It Works:

Standing Room Only combines scarcity with social proof. Not only is availability limited, but the reason it's limited is that lots of other people want it too. This creates urgency through competitive desire.

84. THE BEST TIME TO BUY CLOSE

Attribution: Seasonal Sales / Automotive

What It Is:

Explain why right now is the optimal time to purchase.

Example:

"End of quarter is actually the best time to buy. We're motivated to hit our numbers, which means you have the most leverage you'll have all year. Want to take advantage of that?"

Why It Works:

This close reframes timing as strategic advantage. The prospect isn't being pushed to buy; they're being coached on how to get the best deal. It positions you as honest and helpful.

85. THE CALENDAR CLOSE

Attribution: Implementation-Based Sales

What It Is:

Work backward from when they want results to show why they need to start now.

Example:

"You said you want this running before Q2. Implementation takes 8 weeks. If we want to hit that deadline, we'd need to start by January 15th. That means we need to finalize by next week."

Why It Works:

The Calendar Close makes urgency logical rather than salesy. It's not "buy now because I want you to" — it's "buy now because of math." The deadline emerges from their own timeline, not your pressure.

86. THE END OF MONTH CLOSE

Attribution: Sales Operations / Quota Culture

What It Is:

Reference your own timing pressure — end of month, end of quarter, end of year — to explain why you can offer a deal now.

Example:

"I'm going to be honest with you. It's the end of the quarter, and I need to close this deal. I can offer you 10% off if we can finalize by Friday. After that, I can't justify the discount."

Why It Works:

Honesty about your own motivations can build trust. The prospect understands why the deal is available and knows it's real. They get to feel like they're taking advantage of your situation.

87. THE SEASONAL CLOSE

Attribution: Industry-Specific Sales

What It Is:

Reference seasonal factors that make now the right time.

Example:

"Most roofing companies buy this system in the winter when things slow down. That way, they're trained and ready when spring hits. If you wait until spring, you'll be learning while your competitors are working."

Why It Works:

Seasonal logic makes timing feel smart rather than pressured. You're not pushing them to buy now; you're advising them about optimal timing based on industry patterns.

88. THE PRICE INCREASE CLOSE

Attribution: Universal

What It Is:

Inform the prospect that prices are going up, and current pricing won't last.

Example:

"Our costs have gone up, and we're raising prices January 1st. If you sign before then, you lock in the current rate. After that, it'll be 12% higher."

Why It Works:

Price increases are often legitimate business reality. Communicating them honestly creates urgency without manipulation. The prospect has a real incentive to act — saving money.

89. THE LAST CHANCE CLOSE

Attribution: Retail / Promotional Sales

What It Is:

Present this as the final opportunity to get this deal, product, or offer.

Example:

"This is the last one we have in stock, and I have two other people asking about it. If you want it, I need to know now."

Why It Works:

"Last chance" is the ultimate scarcity message. It triggers loss aversion intensely — this is about to be gone forever. Use only when literally true.

90. THE WINDOW OF OPPORTUNITY CLOSE

Attribution: Strategic Sales

What It Is:

Frame the current moment as a unique window that won't remain open.

Example:

"Right now, you have a unique window: the market conditions are favorable, your competitors haven't moved yet, and we have capacity. Six months from now, at least one of those things will be different. Windows like this don't stay open."

Why It Works:

The Window Close creates urgency through circumstance rather than artificial deadlines. It positions the salesperson as a strategic advisor pointing out a time-sensitive opportunity.

CLOSES 91-100: SOFT & CONSULTATIVE CLOSES

Sometimes the lightest touch is the most effective.

91. THE SOFT CLOSE

Attribution: Consultative Sales Tradition

What It Is:

Suggest the next step without explicitly asking for a commitment.

Example:

"It sounds like this could be a really good fit. Why don't I send over a proposal so you can see exactly what it would look like?"

Why It Works:

The Soft Close reduces pressure by not asking for a decision — just a next step. It moves the process forward without triggering resistance. It's particularly useful early in complex sales cycles.

92. THE CONSULTANT CLOSE

Attribution: Solution Selling / Consultative Sales

What It Is:

Position yourself as an advisor, not a salesperson. Offer your recommendation as expert counsel.

Example:

"Based on everything you've told me, here's my recommendation: Option B is your best path forward. Here's why..."

Why It Works:

Consultants are trusted; salespeople are suspected. By positioning your recommendation as professional advice, you lower resistance and elevate your credibility. The prospect is receiving counsel, not a pitch.

93. THE PARTNERSHIP CLOSE

Attribution: Enterprise / Strategic Sales

What It Is:

Frame the purchase as the beginning of a long-term relationship, not a one-time transaction.

Example:

"We're not looking to make a sale and walk away. We want to be your partner for the next five, ten years. This is just the first step in a long relationship. Are you ready to take it together?"

Why It Works:

Partnerships feel safer than purchases. They imply ongoing support, shared commitment, and mutual investment. For complex or high-stakes purchases, this framing reduces perceived risk.

94. THE COLLABORATION CLOSE

Attribution: Modern B2B Sales

What It Is:

Emphasize that success requires working together. The purchase is the beginning of a joint effort.

Example:

"This works when we work together. We'll bring the technology and expertise; you'll bring the commitment and team engagement. If we both show up, we'll succeed. Are you ready to do this together?"

Why It Works:

Collaboration implies shared responsibility for outcomes. It reduces the prospect's fear of failure (it's not all on them) while increasing their sense of agency (their contribution matters). It's inviting, not pushing.

95. THE DIRECT CLOSE

Attribution: Universal / Classic

What It Is:

Simply ask for the order. No tricks, no techniques — just a direct request.

Example:

"I think this is a great fit for you. I'd like to move forward. Can we do this?"

Why It Works:

Sometimes the simplest approach is best. A direct ask shows confidence and respects the prospect's intelligence. It doesn't work in every situation, but when rapport is high and value is established, directness is refreshing.

96. THE SILENT CLOSE

Attribution: Tom Hopkins / Classic Sales

What It Is:

After asking a closing question, stop talking. Let the silence work.

Example:

"Are you ready to move forward? (Silence. Maintain eye contact. Wait.)"

Why It Works:

Silence is uncomfortable, and people fill it. The prospect will either commit, voice an objection, or ask a question — all of which move the conversation forward. Many salespeople talk themselves out of sales by breaking the silence too soon.

97. THE BACKWARDS CLOSE

Attribution: David Sandler

What It Is:

Start at the end. Ask what happens if they decide to buy, then work backward through their process.

Example:

"Let's assume you decide this is right for you. What happens next? Who needs to sign off? What's the approval process? Let's map this out."

Why It Works:

The Backwards Close uncovers process and buying signals simultaneously. By walking through the "yes" scenario, you help the prospect visualize the path forward and reveal any obstacles you'll need to address.

98. THE REFERRAL CLOSE

Attribution: Relationship Sales

What It Is:

Ask for referrals as part of the close — who else might benefit?

Example:

"Assuming we move forward, who else in your network should I be talking to? Who's dealing with the same challenges you were?"

Why It Works:

The Referral Close does two things: it assumes the sale (assumptive) and opens future opportunities (leverage). Even if this deal doesn't close, the referral conversation might yield something valuable.

99. THE COMMITMENT LADDER CLOSE

Attribution: Psychology / Cialdini's Commitment Principle

What It Is:

Get small commitments throughout the conversation, building toward the big commitment.

Example:

"Does the approach make sense? (Yes.) Do you see how it addresses your problem? (Yes.) Is this in line with your budget? (Yes.) Then it sounds like we should move forward, right?"

Why It Works:

Small commitments create psychological momentum. Each "yes" makes the next "yes" more likely through consistency — we like to behave in ways that match our prior behavior. By the time you reach the big ask, they've been agreeing all along.

100. THE HANDSHAKE CLOSE

Attribution: Traditional / Relationship Sales

What It Is:

Extend your hand for a handshake. The physical gesture invites commitment.

Example:

"I think this is going to be a great partnership. Let's do this. (Extend hand)"

Why It Works:

A handshake is a commitment ritual hardwired into human culture. When you extend your hand, the prospect almost automatically takes it. The physical act of shaking creates psychological commitment. Simple, old-fashioned, effective.

PART II: THE BONUS VAULT

CLOSES 101-107: THE LOST CLOSES

Obscure classics from sales history — techniques that have been forgotten but still work.

101. THE COLOMBO CLOSE

Attribution: Inspired by TV Detective Columbo

What It Is:

Pretend to leave, then turn back with "just one more thing." Catch them when their guard is down.

Example:

"(Gathering your things, heading for the door) Oh, one more thing — if we could make the numbers work, is there any other reason you wouldn't move forward?"

Why It Works:

The Colombo Close catches prospects off guard. When they think the sales conversation is over, their defenses drop. The casual "one more thing" often surfaces the real objection or triggers a reconsideration.

102. THE DOORKNOB CLOSE

Attribution: Medical / Therapy Origin

What It Is:

Wait until your hand is on the doorknob (literally or figuratively leaving), then ask the real question.

Example:

"(Standing to leave) You know what, before I go — what's really holding you back?"

Why It Works:

Like the Colombo Close, the Doorknob Close exploits the dropped guard at the end of an interaction. The casual setting often triggers honesty that wouldn't emerge in the formal part of the meeting.

103. THE THERMOMETER CLOSE

Attribution: Unknown / Training Tradition

What It Is:

Use the image of a thermometer to gauge interest and move it up.

Example:

"If zero is 'no interest' and 100 is 'ready to sign,' where are you right now? (60) What would get us to 80?"

Why It Works:

The thermometer visual makes abstract feelings concrete. Unlike 1-10 scales, the 0-100 range allows for more precision. The follow-up question reveals exactly what's needed to close the gap.

104. THE DUKE OF WELLINGTON CLOSE

Attribution: British Military / Negotiation History

What It Is:

Present two columns: "Reasons to Act" and "Risks of Inaction." Named after Wellington's decision-making method.

Example:

"Let's do what the Duke of Wellington did before any major decision. Reasons to move forward here... risks of doing nothing here... let's see which column is heavier."

Why It Works:

Similar to the Ben Franklin Close but framed around action vs. inaction rather than pros vs. cons. The historical reference adds gravitas and makes the exercise feel consequential.

105. THE LOST SALE CLOSE

Attribution: Sales Training Tradition

What It Is:

After a prospect says no, ask them to help you understand what you could have done better. The debrief often reopens the conversation.

Example:

"I appreciate your honesty. Before I go, would you help me improve? What could I have done differently? What didn't land for you?"

Why It Works:

Asking for feedback is disarming. The prospect drops their guard because you're not trying to sell anymore. Often, their explanation reveals that their "no" wasn't as firm as it seemed — and the conversation reopens.

106. THE ERRONEOUS CONCLUSION CLOSE

Attribution: Insurance / Financial Sales Tradition

What It Is:

Deliberately state something incorrect and let the prospect correct you. Their correction reveals their true position.

Example:

"So it sounds like price is the main concern here? (when you suspect it's really timing) Prospect: 'Actually, price is fine — it's more about the timing.'"

Why It Works:

People love to correct others. By stating something wrong, you invite them to reveal the truth. It's a subtle way to surface the real objection without asking directly.

107. THE "IF YOU WERE MY BROTHER" CLOSE

Attribution: Relationship Sales / Insurance

What It Is:

Ask them what they would advise if the roles were reversed — if you were their sibling or close friend.

Example:

"If I were your brother, and I came to you with this exact situation, what would you tell me to do?"

Why It Works:

Similar to the Mother Close but flipped. By asking what they'd advise a loved one, you tap into their clearer judgment. People often give better advice to others than they take themselves.

CLOSES 108-114: THE MODERN CLOSES

Digital-era adaptations for remote selling and new communication channels.

108. THE LOOM CLOSE

Attribution: Modern / Video Sales

What It Is:

Send a personalized video walking through the proposal instead of (or in addition to) a written document.

Example:

"I recorded a quick 5-minute video walking through exactly what we'd do for you. It's personalized to your situation — give it a watch and let me know what questions come up."

Why It Works:

Video is more personal than text and harder to ignore. It shows effort and allows you to control the narrative. The prospect sees and hears you, building trust and connection even asynchronously.

109. THE VOICE MEMO CLOSE

Attribution: Modern / Mobile Sales

What It Is:

Send a voice message instead of a text or email. More personal, harder to ignore, faster than video.

Example:

"Hey, just wanted to send a quick voice note instead of another email. I think we're really close here. What would help you feel ready to move forward?"

Why It Works:

Voice adds warmth and urgency that text lacks. It's more personal than email but less demanding than a call. Most people will listen to a voice memo before they'd read a long email.

110. THE "REPLY 1 TO CONFIRM" CLOSE

Attribution: SMS / Chatbot Sales

What It Is:

Make it absurdly easy to say yes — just reply with a single character.

Example:

"Reply '1' to confirm the appointment. Reply 'YES' to lock in your spot."

Why It Works:

Friction kills conversion. The easier you make it to say yes, the more people will. Single-character replies feel effortless. This is particularly effective for appointment confirmations and simple commitments.

111. THE CALENDAR LINK CLOSE

Attribution: Modern / SaaS Sales

What It Is:

Instead of "when can we meet?", send a link to your calendar and let them book directly.

Example:

"Here's my calendar — pick any time that works for you: [link]. Looking forward to it."

Why It Works:

Every back-and-forth about scheduling is friction. Calendar links eliminate the negotiation and put control in the prospect's hands. They feel empowered rather than pressured.

112. THE SLACK DM CLOSE

Attribution: Modern / B2B Tech Sales

What It Is:

If you're in a shared Slack (or similar) with a prospect, close the deal in a casual channel message.

Example:

"(In shared Slack channel) Hey, quick check — are we good to move forward? I can have the agreement over this afternoon."

Why It Works:

Slack feels casual and immediate, not like formal sales correspondence. A closing question in Slack can feel like a natural continuation of collaboration rather than a sales push.

113. THE SCREENSHOT CLOSE

Attribution: Modern / Social Selling

What It Is:

Take a screenshot of something relevant (a result, a testimonial, a relevant data point) and share it directly.

Example:

"(Screenshot of a customer's dashboard showing results) Just saw this from a customer in your space. Thought you'd want to see what's possible."

Why It Works:

Screenshots feel informal and authentic — like you're sharing something in the moment rather than in a prepared pitch. They're visual, concrete, and hard to argue with.

114. THE ASYNC PROPOSAL CLOSE

Attribution: Modern / Remote Selling

What It Is:

Send a complete proposal with embedded video explanation, FAQs answered, and a digital signature field. Let them close themselves.

Example:

"Here's the full proposal. I've included a video walkthrough, answers to the questions you raised, and a signature field at the bottom. When you're ready, sign and we'll get started. I'm here if you need anything else."

Why It Works:

Some prospects prefer to buy without being sold to. This close gives them everything they need to make a decision independently. It respects their time and autonomy while making it easy to commit.

CLOSES 115-122: THE HYBRID CLOSES

Combination techniques that stack multiple closes together for maximum impact.

115. THE ZIGLAR STACK

Attribution: Components: Puppy Dog + Ownership + Assumptive

What It Is:

Let them try it (Puppy Dog), help them feel ownership while trying (Ownership), and speak as if the decision is made (Assumptive).

Example:

"Take the software home for two weeks. Use it with your team. By day three, you'll already be thinking of it as 'your' system. When the trial ends, we'll set up your full implementation."

Why It Works:

This triple combination removes risk (trial), creates psychological ownership (endowment effect), and frames the outcome as assumed (commitment). Each element reinforces the others.

116. THE HORMOZI HAMMER

Attribution: Components: ROI + Opportunity Cost + Why Wait

What It Is:

Show the return, show what they lose by waiting, and ask why they would wait. Hit them with logic from three angles.

Example:

"This investment returns 300% in year one. Every month you wait, you're losing \$10,000 in unrealized savings. Given those numbers, what's the argument for waiting?"

Why It Works:

This close overwhelms logical objections. Each component supports the others: the ROI makes it attractive, the opportunity cost makes delay painful, and "why wait?" challenges them to articulate a counterargument (which they usually can't).

117. THE SANDLER SANDWICH

Attribution: Components: Backwards + Pain Point + Silent

What It Is:

Start from the desired outcome (Backwards), reconnect to the pain (Pain Point), then ask and stay silent (Silent).

Example:

"Let's say you decide to move forward — walk me through what changes... (they describe future state). And right now, what's it costing you to not be there? (they describe pain). So... what's holding you back? (silence)"

Why It Works:

This combination takes them from future (desire) to present (pain) to decision (commitment). The silence at the end lets the weight of the contrast settle.

118. THE TRUST TRIFECTA

Attribution: Components: Mother + Testimonial + Direct

What It Is:

Appeal to their wisdom (Mother), show that others have succeeded (Testimonial), then directly ask (Direct).

Example:

"What would you tell your mother to do if she were in your shoes? Here's what happened when another company like yours took the leap: [testimonial]. Given all that — can we do this?"

Why It Works:

This combination builds trust through multiple channels: their own judgment, social proof from others, and your direct honesty. Each element reinforces that this is a good decision.

119. THE SCARCITY STACK

Attribution: Components: Impending Event + Standing Room Only + Last Chance

What It Is:

Layer multiple scarcity elements: deadline, limited availability, and final opportunity.

Example:

"The pricing expires on the 31st. We only have two implementation slots left this quarter. After Friday, I have to offer those spots to the waiting list. This is really the last window."

Why It Works:

Each scarcity element compounds the others. It's not just one reason to act now — it's three. For prospects who respond to urgency, this can be decisive. Use only when all elements are genuine.

120. THE CONSULTATIVE COMBO

Attribution: Components: Needs Assessment + Summary + Soft

What It Is:

Confirm their needs, stack up how you address them, then gently suggest next steps.

Example:

"So you need X, Y, and Z. We address X with this, Y with this, and Z with this. It sounds like a pretty good fit — why don't I put together a formal proposal?"

Why It Works:

This combination feels collaborative, not pushy. You're demonstrating that you listened, showing alignment, and suggesting (not demanding) a next step. It's low-pressure but forward-moving.

121. THE NEGOTIATOR'S BRIDGE

Attribution: Components: If I Could Would You + Concession + Handshake

What It Is:

Find their condition, offer a concession that meets it, and seal with a physical commitment.

Example:

"If I could include the training at no charge, would you be ready to move forward today? (Yes.) Let me make that happen... (arranges concession). Great — let's do this. (extends hand)"

Why It Works:

This combination creates a clear path from objection to commitment. You identify the hurdle, remove it, and immediately cement the deal with a handshake. Clean, professional, decisive.

122. THE EMOTIONAL LOGIC BRIDGE

Attribution: Components: Story + Fear of Loss + Calendar

What It Is:

Tell an emotional story, connect to what they'll lose by waiting, then tie to their timeline.

Example:

"Let me tell you about a company that waited. They had the same concerns you do... (story of negative outcome). You mentioned you need this running by Q2. That's 14 weeks away. If we start today, you make it. If you wait, you risk being that company."

Why It Works:

This combination moves from emotion (story) to fear (loss) to logic (calendar). It's a complete journey: feel something, fear something, and realize the rational path forward.

APPENDIX

Authors to Study & Essential Reading

The closes in this document didn't appear out of thin air. They were developed, tested, refined, and taught by generations of sales professionals and researchers. If you want to go deeper, study these people.

PART I: AUTHORS TO STUDY

JOHN HENRY PATTERSON (1844-1922)

The Father of Modern Sales Training

Patterson acquired the National Cash Register Company (NCR) in 1884 and revolutionized how selling was taught. He created the first sales scripts, the first formal training programs, and the first systematic approach to closing. His protégés — including Thomas J. Watson Sr. (IBM) — carried his methods into the 20th century. Every sales training program since owes a debt to Patterson. Study him for the origins of the craft.

ZIG ZIGLAR (1926-2012)

The Master of Named Closes

Ziglar catalogued and popularized more closing techniques than perhaps anyone in history. His 1984 book "Secrets of Closing the Sale" contains over 100 named closes, each with examples and psychology explained. Known for his warmth, humor, and ethical approach to selling, Ziglar taught that sales is about serving the customer. Study him for technique, mindset, and heart.

TOM HOPKINS (1944-)

The Builder of Sales Champions

Hopkins failed miserably for his first six months in real estate, then learned the craft systematically and earned over \$1 million in three years. His 1980 book "How to Master the Art of Selling" became a cornerstone of sales education. Known for practical, repeatable techniques — especially question-based closes like the Porcupine and Tie-Down. Study him for structure and methodology.

BRIAN TRACY (1944-)

The Productivity-Focused Closer

Tracy has written over 55 books on sales, leadership, and personal development. His approach combines closing techniques with time management, goal setting, and self-discipline. "The Art of Closing the Sale" (2007) distills his decades of experience into practical, daily techniques. Study him for integrating sales skills with personal effectiveness.

ROBERT CIALDINI (1945-)

The Scientist of Persuasion

Cialdini is a psychologist, not a salesperson — but his 1984 book "Influence: The Psychology of Persuasion" explains WHY closing techniques work. His six principles (Reciprocity, Commitment/Consistency, Social Proof, Authority, Liking, and Scarcity) underpin most of the closes in this document. Study him to understand the psychology behind the techniques.

DAVID SANDLER (1932-1995)

The Contrarian

Sandler flipped traditional sales on its head. Where others taught pursuit, Sandler taught qualification. Where others taught enthusiasm, Sandler taught skepticism. The Sandler Selling System emphasizes "reversing" — getting prospects to convince themselves. His Backwards Close and techniques for disqualifying bad-fit prospects are legendary. Study him for a completely different philosophy.

NEIL RACKHAM (1942-)

The Researcher

Rackham led the largest-ever study of sales effectiveness, analyzing over 35,000 sales calls. His 1988 book "SPIN Selling" introduced research-backed methodology for complex B2B sales. While not focused specifically on closing, his work on questioning revolutionized consultative selling. Study him for evidence-based selling.

DALE CARNEGIE (1888-1955)

The Relationship Builder

Carnegie's 1936 classic "How to Win Friends and Influence People" isn't a sales book, but it's essential reading for anyone who sells. His principles on listening, empathy, and genuine interest in others form the foundation for relationship-based selling. Study him for the human fundamentals.

PART II: ESSENTIAL READING

These are the primary sources. If you read nothing else, read these.

THE CORE CANON

SECRETS OF CLOSING THE SALE

Author: Zig Ziglar | Year: 1984 | Publisher: Fleming H. Revell Company

The definitive book on closing. Over 100 named techniques, 700+ questions, and examples from Ziglar's decades in sales. If you only read one book on closing, make it this one.

HOW TO MASTER THE ART OF SELLING

Author: Tom Hopkins | Year: 1980 | Publisher: Warner Books

A comprehensive guide to the entire sales process, with particular strength in questioning techniques and structured methodology. Known for being practical and actionable.

THE ART OF CLOSING THE SALE

Author: Brian Tracy | Year: 2007 | Publisher: Thomas Nelson

Tracy's focused treatment of closing, distilled from decades of selling and training. Contains 50+ techniques with emphasis on confidence, psychology, and daily practice.

INFLUENCE: THE PSYCHOLOGY OF PERSUASION

Author: Robert Cialdini | Year: 1984 | Publisher: William Morrow

Not a sales book per se, but essential reading for anyone who wants to understand WHY people say yes. Cialdini's six principles explain the psychology behind nearly every close in this document. Over 5 million copies sold.

EXTENDED READING

SPIN SELLING

Author: Neil Rackham | Year: 1988 | Publisher: McGraw-Hill

The research-backed approach to complex B2B sales. Based on analysis of 35,000+ sales calls. Essential for consultative and enterprise sales.

YOU CAN'T TEACH A KID TO RIDE A BIKE AT A SEMINAR

Author: David Sandler | Year: 1995 | Publisher: Bay Head Publishing

The Sandler Selling System explained. Contrarian philosophy that emphasizes qualification over pursuit, and getting prospects to sell themselves.

HOW TO WIN FRIENDS AND INFLUENCE PEOPLE

Author: Dale Carnegie | Year: 1936 | Publisher: Simon & Schuster

The foundational text on human relations. Principles like "become genuinely interested in other people" underpin relationship-based selling. Over 30 million copies sold.

NEVER SPLIT THE DIFFERENCE

Author: Chris Voss | Year: 2016 | Publisher: Harper Business

Former FBI hostage negotiator applies high-stakes negotiation tactics to business and sales. Techniques like "mirroring" and "tactical empathy" translate directly to closing conversations.

A NOTE ON READING

You don't need to read all of these. Start with the Core Canon — Ziglar and Hopkins especially — and branch out based on your needs. If you struggle with confidence, read Tracy. If you want to understand psychology, read Cialdini. If you sell complex B2B, read Rackham. If you want to challenge your assumptions, read Sandler.

The techniques in this document are tools. The books behind them are the workshop where those tools were forged. Spend time in the workshop, and you'll understand not just what works — but why.