

# The 15-Minute Sales Call

## How to run a first call that closes, without the pressure

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Most service businesses lose deals on the call, not before it. The enquiry was warm, the work was a fit, and then the call wandered, the price came out wrong, and the prospect said "let me think about it" and vanished. It was not the price. It was the call.

A good first call is short, structured, and mostly the other person talking. Fifteen minutes is plenty. This is the shape I use, the questions that do the heavy lifting, and the one move that closes more than any clever pitch: saying their problem back to them better than they said it.

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## The shape of the call

Fifteen minutes, six segments. The point of a structure is not to be robotic. It is so you are never lost, never rambling, and never the one filling silence with discounting.

- **Open (0 to 2 min):** set the frame and the time.
- **Discover (2 to 6 min):** ask, then shut up and listen.
- **Diagnose (6 to 9 min):** say their problem back to them.
- **Present (9 to 12 min):** one path, not a menu.
- **Close (12 to 14 min):** ask for the decision.
- **Confirm (14 to 15 min):** lock the next concrete step.

Notice the talking is front-loaded onto them. By the time you present, you have earned the right to, because you understood the problem first.

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## Open: set the frame in 30 seconds

Do not start selling. Start by setting expectations so neither of you is anxious about where the call is going.

"Thanks for jumping on. I have got us down for about fifteen minutes. What I would like to do is understand what is going on for you, and if I can help I will tell you exactly how. If I cannot, I will tell you that too and point you somewhere better. Sound fair?"

That last line does a lot. It lowers their guard because you have just said you are willing to walk away. People relax with someone who is not desperate.

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## Discover: the questions that do the work

This is the part most people rush. Do not. Aim to spend nearly half the call here. Ask, then let the silence sit. The four threads worth pulling:

- **Situation.** "Walk me through how you handle [the thing] right now."
- **Problem.** "Where does that break down? What is the bit that annoys you?"

- **Impact.** "What does that cost you, roughly? In time, in money, in lost customers?" This is the question that creates urgency, in their words, not yours.
- **What good looks like.** "If this were sorted, what changes for you?"

Write down their exact phrases. You are going to use them back, word for word, in the next segment. That is what makes it land.

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## Diagnose: the move that closes

Here is the single highest-leverage thing you can do on a call. Before you say one word about your service, summarise their situation back to them, more clearly than they described it.

"So if I have got this right: enquiries come in through Instagram and the form, you are replying when you can between jobs, and your honest guess is you are losing two or three a week because someone else replied first. And the bit that actually bothers you is not the lost money, it is that you do not know which ones you missed. Is that fair?"

When you reflect a problem back better than someone said it, they conclude you can solve it. You have not pitched anything. You have just proven you understood. Nine times out of ten they say "yes, exactly" and lean in. Now you can present.

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## Present: one path, not a buffet

A menu of options pushes the decision onto them and they choose the cheapest or none. Recommend one thing, tied to what they just told you.

"Based on what you have described, here is what I would do..."

Two or three sentences. Connect each feature to a problem they named, not to a spec sheet. Then give the price plainly and stop talking. The first person to speak after the price often loses. Let it sit.

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## Close: ask for the decision

Do not trail off and hope. Ask.

"Does that sound like what you need?"

If yes, move straight to confirming the next step. If they hesitate, do not discount. Ask what is on their mind. The hesitation is information, and it is almost always one of a handful of objections you can answer.

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## The objections, and how to meet them

- **"It is too expensive."** Do not drop the price. Re-anchor on the cost of the problem they told you about. "You said you are losing two or three a week. At your ticket, this pays for itself the first month and then it is profit."
- **"I need to think about it."** Find the real blocker. "Totally fair. Just so I know, is it the money, the timing, or are you not sure it will work?" Each one has a different answer, and you cannot give it until you know which it is.
- **"Send me some information."** Often a polite no. Test it. "Happy to. What is the one thing it would need to show you for this to be a yes?"

- **"Let me check with my partner / team."** Legitimate, but pin it. "Of course. What do you think they will want to know? Let us get that answer ready now."

A soft no is an objection, not a verdict. You owe it one honest, structured response before you let the deal go. After that, respect the no.

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## Confirm: never end on "I will be in touch"

A call that ends vaguely dies. End on something concrete and dated.

"Great. I will send the agreement and the deposit link within the hour. Once that is in, we start [day]. I will email you now so you have it before we hang up."

Then do it before the call ends, while you are still on the phone. Momentum is fragile and it cools within hours.

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## After the call

- **Within the hour:** send the recap, the price, and the next step in writing. Short. Three lines.
  - **Day three, if quiet:** one nudge. "Still happy to go ahead, or has anything changed?"
  - **Day fourteen, if still quiet:** the breakup. "I will close this off my end for now. If the timing comes back round, you know where I am." This one reopens more deals than any chasing.
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## The whole thing in one line

Talk less than them, say their problem back better than they did, recommend one path, ask for the decision, and lock a dated next step before you hang up. Do that and the fifteen minutes does the work.

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If you want a second pair of eyes on your own sales calls, or you would rather the enquiries got answered properly before they ever reach a call, that is part of what I build. **Book a 15-minute call** (yes, run this checklist on me): [consentleads.uk](https://consentleads.uk), or reply to the email this came with.

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*Sal, Consent Leads. Reply systems and SEO for UK businesses. Operated from the United Kingdom.*

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