



## The simple sales pitch

I received a lot of good feedback from my last column about the habits of successful salesmen. Thanks! There were many requests to provide more ideas on each of these habits, so here it goes.

The first habit is “keep the sales pitch simple.” In sales you’ll have greater success focusing on customer *benefits* over service *features*. For instance, telling the prospect that you’re better because you provide them with a dedicated account manager is good, but it’s only a feature. It’s not a benefit.

Demonstrating to the customer how this feature will get them answers when they want them or better—get them answers before they have to call you—is a benefit. When talking about valuable features, it’s imperative you marry them to a benefit statement.

For example, “When you work with us we dedicate an account manager to your property. He or she is your primary point of contact at all times. What this means is you’ll never be in the dark waiting for answers and, more importantly, you’ll get a plan showing you ways to manage your budget better and improve your property. Is this what you want?”

Let’s all agree that prospects are more interested in benefits that help them better manage their money, minimize their hassle and maximize their peace of mind than they are in the organizational structure of your company.

The successful salesman never forgets that customers are interested first and foremost in what’s in it for them. This is particularly true when it comes to talking about money. I said money, not price. The customer is spending money, but too many salesmen talk price instead of keeping the pitch simple and demonstrating how their services may help the customer spend money more effectively.

Here’s what I mean: Over the course of a few years, the landscape maintenance prospect will spend money in three ways with a contractor.

**1. Monthly maintenance:** This is not happy money and customers want to reduce it.

**2. Fixes (repair and replacement):** This is very unhappy money because it’s a “surprise.”

**3. Enhancement/improvement.** This is happy money and they like to spend more here.

The simplest pitch relates your service features to the prospect’s service experience. It may sound like this: “Our clients work with us because we help them manage their landscape dollars better. You’ll spend money in three ways with any contractor: **1.** monthly services; **2.** fixing, repairing and replacing things as they age like your irrigation system; and **3.** enhancement and property improvements. If you don’t spend enough on the first, you end up spending way more on the second, which leaves very little for the third. In your current situation where would you rather be spending your money?”

Now the effective salesman shuts up and gets the customer to talk.

That’s the purpose of your pitch: Get the customer talking about what he or she values other than the price of the monthly contract. If you can make this a habit, you’ll qualify better and separate the tire kickers from the buyers.

### Kevin Kehoe’s 6 habits of successful salespeople

1. They keep the sales pitch simple.
2. They’re grinders.
3. They’re direct.
4. They use a list.
5. They listen more than they talk.
6. They’re prepared for every call.

Read the original column from the November issue of *LM* at [ow.ly/r9MJl](http://ow.ly/r9MJl).