

Top 8 Questions To Re-Energize Your Customers in 2023

PAUL CHERRY • Author of *Questions That Sell*



Discovering a new “normal” in 2023

The pandemic impacted business strategies across the globe. How do we move forward while accepting new corporate practices and economic realities?

Here are eight powerful questions to re-energize your customers to step it up and partner with you in 2023. Pick and choose the ones you find the most useful for your next phone conference or meeting. Tweak these questions to your words, your personality, and of course, where you are now with your client relationship.



QUESTION 1**Share with me what changes you have been dealing with this past year?**

The trigger word here is “**change**,” — it elicits emotions. It’s your job to use the word “change” to shake up a customer’s status quo. If your customer wants to talk about his or her fears and concerns — let them! It demonstrates you care and that you are receptive and willing to listen. And if you *really* listen, who knows, you might just develop a meaningful solution that your customer will want to know more about. It’s a win-win!

QUESTION 2**How are these changes affecting you and your team?**

This question allows the opportunity to unleash your customer’s emotions. When there is pain, the customer is more open to new ideas that will alleviate their frustrations. Don’t settle for a response that only touches the surface. Uncover what this “pain” is costing them — find out how long this issue has persisted, and why. It is important to understand what the consequence will be if they stay put with their current situation. It’s also vital to learn who else is involved in grappling with change, because the bigger and costlier their problem, the more receptive they are to fixing it.

QUESTION 3**What are your goals?**

A simple question. The purpose is to understand your customers' desired outcome. Stick with emotions. Get to know their desires, hopes and aspirations for the future, for 2021, and beyond. However, when you ask a goal-related question sometimes the response to this question can be general. Goals are meaningful when they are specific, tangible, and quantified — so dig deeper.

For example, a customer might say **“to make more money”** or **“to be more successful.”** Continue with one of these follow-up questions:

- When you say more money, how much?
- When you refer to making more money, what does that mean in terms of dollars or revenue?
- You mentioned, to be more successful. What does success look like?”
- I'm interested in your desire to be successful. How do you personally define success?

QUESTION 4**How important are these goals? or
How motivated are you to achieve them?**

This question is about understanding the customer's timing or seriousness. Sure you could be more direct and ask, "**What's your timing?**" but when you do, the answer too often is a wish or a best guess. After all, how many times have you followed up with a customer only to find out that he or she put off making a decision, procrastinated, or allowed other issues to get in the way? Make sure your customer sees this goal as a priority. A way to really test a person's commitment with a goal is to ask the impact question, "**What concerns do you have, if you don't achieve them?**" The answer will reveal how serious your customer is or is not. Their response will confirm that you are investing your time wisely.

QUESTION 5**What action steps are needed to achieve your goals?**

It's important to get your customers to describe **HOW** they plan to proceed. Do they have the people, resources, budget, and buy-in from others? Have they thought through the processes needed or required to achieve their goals? By asking this question, you'll uncover a plethora of opportunities, allowing you to present a viable solution.

QUESTION 6

Tell me what obstacles could get in the way.

Let's face it. Roadblocks and problems rear their ugly head when it comes to pursuing goals. It's a fact of life and by asking this question you are helping your customers to plan for any potential risks that could derail their goals. You must help them think through this. By doing so, you position yourself as a partner versus a vendor.

QUESTION 7

Help me to understand who and what is driving the need to achieve these goals?

It's critical to understand who the players are and what people have the most vested interest in achieving these goals. Furthermore, there are personal goals and corporate goals. Sometimes they go in tandem. Other times they compete. But 90% of the time, the personal goals are what drive the business. So make sure you get introduced to as many individuals as you can, so you can expand your relationships. When you get in front of the right people, results happen!

QUESTION 8

How can we work together now to ensure you achieve the goals you've shared with me?

You need to know how you can fit in with their plans and participate early in the goal-development process. As you know from selling, when you help write the specs, you create the opportunity and you have a much greater shot at closing. Otherwise, when you wait and let your customer dictate the process, or they figured out a solution on their own, too often you're just another me-too vendor competing on price.



About Paul Cherry

For over 25 years, sales success expert and author Paul Cherry has helped B2B sales professionals close more deals in all major industries. As a recognized thought leader in customer engagement strategies, he has been featured in more than 250 publications, including **Selling Power, Sales & Marketing Management, Salesforce, Investor's Business Daily, Kiplinger, and Inc.**



Paul is the founder of **Performance Based Results**, which delivers intense customized sales workshops, coaching, and leadership programs to companies throughout the USA and Canada.

He has worked with more than 1,200 organizations, including 175 of the Fortune 500, plus more than a

thousand entrepreneurial, small to mid-sized, cutting-edge businesses looking to dominate their niche markets. Paul's clients typically get 7 times their sales training return-on-investment (ROI) or better.

His top-rated bestseller, **Questions That Sell** (AMACOM) has been listed on BookAuthority's "100 Best Sales Books of All Time" and has been published in four languages. He is also the author of **Questions That Get Results** (Wiley) and **The Ultimate Sales Pro** (HarperCollins Leadership).

Need a speaker to motivate your sales team for an upcoming conference or event? Call today at **302 478-4443** or visit our website at **pbresults.com**.

