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SELLING: HOW TO ASK FOR THE SALE

A simple, respectful sales process for founders who don't think of themselves as "salespeople."

TYPE: GUIDE REVIEWED: NOVEMBER 2026 TIME: 8 MINUTES LEVEL: BEGINNER

AT A GLANCE

- Good selling is **helping someone decide** whether what you offer solves their problem. It isn't pushing.
- Follow a simple process: **listen, recommend, ask, follow up**.
- Most sales need **more than one conversation**. Follow-up is where many sales are won.

Why it matters

Many founders are great at their craft but uncomfortable selling. Without sales, though, there's no business. A clear, respectful process makes selling feel like a conversation, not a pitch.

The four steps

Step	What to do	What to say
1 Listen	Ask about their situation and what they need	"What made you reach out?" "What's most important to you?"
2 Recommend	Suggest the option that fits, and say why	"Based on what you said, the full package fits best because..."
3 Ask	Ask clearly for a decision	"Would you like to book Saturday at 10?"
4 Follow up	If they're not ready, agree on a next step	"Can I check in with you Thursday?"

Handling price questions

- **State your price confidently**, then stop talking.
- **Connect price to value**: what they get and what it saves them.
- **Offer options**: a smaller package, a payment plan, or a different timing.

- **Don't discount immediately.** Discounts should be a choice, not a reflex.

Selling to businesses

Business customers often take longer and involve more people.

1. **Find out who decides** and who else is involved.
2. **Understand their process**: budget, timing, paperwork.
3. **Offer a small first project** or a paid pilot.
4. **Put proposals in writing** with clear prices and next steps.
5. **Follow up on a schedule.**

> EXAMPLE
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> **Grace** pitched weekly lunches to an office manager. She asked about the team's size, diets and budget, then proposed two menus at $14 and $17 per person, with a free tasting for 6 people. The manager loved the tasting but needed approval. Grace followed up a week later with a one-page proposal. The company signed a 6-month contract.

Simple follow-up schedule

When	What
Same day	Thank them and send any promised details
3 to 5 days later	Check in with a helpful note or answer
2 weeks later	One more friendly check-in
Monthly	Add them to your updates, if they agree

Common mistakes

- **Talking more than listening.**
- **Never actually asking for the sale.**
- **Giving up after one "not now."**
- **Over-promising** to close the deal.

Your checklist

- ☐ Write your three best listening questions
- ☐ Practice stating your price out loud
- ☐ Prepare two or three package options
- ☐ Set up a follow-up schedule
- ☐ Track every sales conversation

Where to go next

- **I-09 Making Your First Sale**
- **L-11 Customer Service That Brings People Back**
- **M-07 Pricing Your Product or Service**

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