



Preventing Backdoor Selling
by The Negotiation Experience

BACKDOOR SELLING

QUESTIONS & SUGGESTED REPLIES



Backdoor Selling Questions & Suggested Replies

Information is the currency of negotiations. Those with the most power tend to capture the most value in negotiations. It's up to you to guard sensitive information and ensure that your suppliers aren't gaining an unfair advantage when dealing with your procurement/sourcing organization.

When you get a question, remember to ask yourself, 'Do they really need this information to provide us with the best possible price, service, or experience?'

The following are typical questions you might get from suppliers and suggestions on how to answer them.

- Q.** I know that you typically pull a team together before making a decision. Who's involved in the decision-making this time?
- A.** Decision-making is a group effort weighing multiple criteria
- A.** Sourcing highly influences decision-making.



Q. What is it that you like about your current supplier?
What could they do better?

A. Your focus should be how you can best meet our request.

A. Our current supplier meets many of our top expectations

Q. What do you want from an ideal supplier?

A. A supplier that best meets the requirement.

A. Quality, reliability, on-time delivery, responsiveness, and competitiveness.

Q. Who are your biggest customers?

A. We're not allowed to divulge who our customers are, that's confidential.

A. We don't share that information.



Q. You've visited our site and met with our people; how do we compare to your other suppliers?

A. We have confidentiality agreements with our suppliers: I can't share that.

A. I'm surprised that you asked this question. You should know who you are competing against.

Q. Speaking of quality, how do we compare?

A. All of our qualified suppliers meet our quality requirements.

A. You're not asking me to give away confidential information about our other partners, are you?

Q. When do you really need this delivered?

A. That should have been shared in the RFQ.

A. What's your turnaround time?

A. What is your standard delivery time?

A. How quickly could you get it to us?



Q. What do you think your volume will be for this business?

A. This is a question for procurement/sourcing.

A. I'm not sure; what are your price breaks?

Q. Who else are you working with?

A. You should know who your competitors are.

A. This is confidential information.

Q. Does Purchasing have the ability to overrule your decision-making?

A. We work closely with procurement/sourcing on all supplier selection decisions.



Q. Would you mind if we took a plant tour?

A. Why do you need to visit our plant?

A. What would you like to learn from this visit?

A. We appreciate you taking an interest in our operations, but we don't allow our supplier to visit without an explicit reason.

Q. How is business going?

A. Business is great; how is your business going? (This is your chance to gather information about them)