

WINNING AT SELLING PODCAST

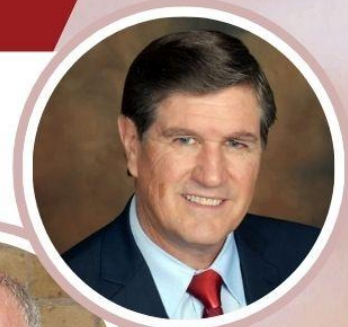
What Salespeople Need to Know About Selling

The 10 Greatest Selling Questions

*How and When to Use Them —
Intent, Application, and Why They Matter*



Scott 'Professor' Plum



Bill Hellkamp

Welcome to show number 700! For Bill and me this is show #300. Every week for the past 5 years, 8 months and 24 days Bill and I have worked to deliver the latest sales advice, strategy and tactics so you can win at selling. Asking the right questions is a key capability of the sales professional.

So let us answer your questions with our questions as Bill and I reveal the Ten Greatest Selling Questions and other incredible information on Episode 700 of the Winning at Selling Podcast. From episode 700 (<https://mnsales.com/podcast-700/>)

1. What has changed since the last time we met?

Intent: To uncover shifts in priorities, strategy, leadership, market conditions, or internal pressure that could dramatically affect the buying decision.

When to Use It: At the beginning of any follow-up meeting or ongoing client relationship.

Why It's Important: Assumptions kill relevance. This question immediately resets the conversation to *current reality* instead of yesterday's context.

Application / Example: A client reveals their focus has shifted from market share to profitability. Without this question, you might deliver the right solution to the wrong problem.

2. Which specific sales behaviors do you want to see demonstrated more consistently?

Intent: To translate vague performance goals into observable, coachable actions.

When to Use It: During discovery for training, coaching, or performance improvement initiatives.

Why It's Important: Results don't change until behaviors change. This question forces clarity instead of generalities like "close more" or "sell better."

Application / Example: A leader identifies better questioning, disciplined follow-up, and improved opportunity qualification—not just higher revenue.

3. On a scale of 1–10, how would you rate your current provider? Why so high? What was missing that you didn't give them a 10?

Intent: To surface dissatisfaction without attacking the incumbent and uncover the true competitive gap.

When to Use It: When a prospect already has a provider or vendor in place.

Why It's Important: It creates an honest conversation about what's missing—your opportunity—while keeping the prospect emotionally safe.

Application / Example: A prospect rates their provider an 8 due to slow response time and lack of follow-through. That gap becomes your positioning.

4. What concrete outcomes should this program deliver for your business?

Intent: To define success in business terms, not activity or effort.

When to Use It: Early in solution design, before proposals or recommendations.

Why It's Important: It prevents misaligned expectations and vague ROI discussions later.

Application / Example: Instead of "increase revenue," the client specifies faster ramp-up, larger deal size, and improved margin discipline.

5. What criteria are you following to make a purchase like this?

Intent: To understand how the decision will actually be made—and influence it.

When to Use It: Before pricing discussions or formal proposals.

Why It's Important: You can't win if you don't know the scoreboard. This question reveals what truly matters in the decision.

Application / Example: The prospect admits price matters, but consistency, implementation support, and leadership alignment matter more.

6. How will success be defined, measured, and evaluated over time?

Intent: To establish accountability and long-term value.

When to Use It: Before implementation begins.

Why It's Important: It protects both sides from subjective disappointment and shifting goalposts.

Application / Example: Success includes behavior change, pipeline health, coaching activity, and improved morale—not just short-term numbers.

7. What expectations do you have of me between now and then?

Intent: To clarify follow-up, communication cadence, and next actions.

When to Use It: At the end of every meaningful meeting.

Why It's Important: It removes guessing, hesitation, and fear of being seen as a pest instead of a professional.

Application / Example: The prospect asks for a written summary, a proposal by Friday, and a follow-up meeting next Tuesday.

8. What expectations does the sales team have of leadership to support execution and results?

Intent: To surface leadership accountability and reinforce shared ownership.

When to Use It: When selling training, coaching, or any change initiative.

Why It's Important: Training fails without leadership reinforcement. This question makes that visible and explicit.

Application / Example: Leaders commit to ongoing coaching, ride-alongs, and reinforcement instead of treating training as a one-time event.

9. Why now? What happened last week that caused you to look at options this week?

Intent: To uncover urgency, pain, or pressure driving the buying conversation.

When to Use It: Early in discovery.

Why It's Important: Deals stall without urgency. This question reveals the real reason the conversation exists.

Application / Example: Missed targets, leadership pressure, competitive losses, or internal change finally triggered action.

10. What is the next best time for us to meet and align on next steps?

Intent: To maintain momentum and control the sales process.

When to Use It: Every meeting. No exceptions.

Why It's Important: Sales processes require forward motion. Hope is not a strategy.

Application / Example: You schedule the proposal review or decision meeting before ending the current conversation.

Find out more information about the show and listen to past episodes at www.winningatselling.com.

Please subscribe and share the podcast with your colleagues and on your social media. Go out and get better, 1 skill at a time. Joyful Selling!

Bill Hellkamp, Co-Host	Scott Plum, Co-Host
612-247-1455	612-789-5700
bill.hellkamp@reachdev.com	scott.plum@mnsales.com