

Features and benefits – a quick reminder of the difference

Prospect needs have to be fulfilled if the sale is to be successful, so however skilled you are in questioning and uncovering needs, the prospect will be unlikely to buy until he is satisfied that your product/service will meet his needs. Therefore during the buying cycle, you will have to give them key information.

Many people fall into the trap of talking about their product/service before they understand what the prospect is looking for. This leads to the prospect raising objections and reduces the chances of a sale.

Prospects buy when they recognise that the needs they have can be matched by the benefit that your products can offer.

Some ways of describing your products to your customers are more persuasive than others and therefore the chances of making a sale will be increased. It is essential that you have a clear understanding of the definition of Feature, Advantage and Benefit, so that you are aware of the degree of persuasiveness each represents. Bear in mind, that prospects buy what your product or service will *do* for them, not what it *is*.

Feature Statement	So what is a Benefit?
<p>A feature is a statement made by the salesperson which relates directly to the characteristics of a product and can usually be answered by the question "What is it?"</p> <p>Because a Feature Statement has little meaning on its own, it usually has little effect on the customer.</p> <p>Advantage Statements</p> <p>An Advantage Statement describes what the product feature does or how it can help the prospect.</p> <p>Because Advantage Statements expand on the feature and explain what the feature means and what it will do, it is apparent that an Advantage Statement is going to be somewhat more persuasive than a Feature Statement.</p>	<p>However, people buy because of the benefits which they will derive from your product in answer to their needs.</p> <p>A Benefit Statement is an Advantage Statement which is related directly to a pre-stated need of the customer and answers the specific question "What will it do for me?"</p> <p>We must always remember "telling isn't selling", so before we begin to discuss our solution we must first determine what it is the prospect wants and for what reasons. Before we tell a customer all about our solution we should first ask the questions: "Does he really need to know this? Is it going to be of interest to him?", "Do both of you have a clear understanding of the prospect's needs?"</p>