

SALES | THURSDAY

When dealing with people, let us remember we are not dealing with creatures of logic. We are dealing with creatures of emotion, creatures bustling with prejudices and motivated by pride and vanity. —*Dale Carnegie*

FOR SOME LUCKY SALESPEOPLE, READING PEOPLE CORRECTLY is a natural talent, a heaven-sent gift. For the rest of us, it's something we have to strive to achieve.

In sales relationships, buyers need to feel they got the best deal you have to offer. Just as important, you have to feel that way, too. This balance is what makes long-term sales relationships—negotiation is required for everyone to be equally satisfied.

People are not creatures of logic, as Carnegie says in perhaps too kind an understatement. When you're making a sale, there's always the wild-card factor. The customer may not go for the date you offer to deliver a product, the price, the warranty or the maintenance deal, and who-knows-what-else. Even if you feel you've worked out every detail, the "creature of emotion" you're negotiating with may still not behave logically.

You have to be prepared with backup solutions for all contingencies of the sale. Also be prepared to say "no" to some things, in a way that won't hurt the customer's vanity. Every sales negotiation will teach you more about people. As a result, you will grow more comfortable anticipating their demands and reading their behavior.