

## Dodging Questions

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Thursday, 29 December 2016 14:00

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Frequently I receive questions I prefer not to answer immediately. Sometimes it is because I believe I need more background information before I answer the question. If I answer the question without background information, I could turn my prospect off and lose the opportunity to connect further. On the other hand, I don't want a prospective client to think I am dodging the question.

I was talking to "Roy" about buying a water damage restoration service franchise. Roy asked me, "What is the royalty on sales?" I knew the answer was 16% which was considerably higher than some other damage restoration companies. However, I also knew that the franchiser provided significant additional services in return for the higher royalty. I was concerned that if I simply said 16%, it would end the conversation with my prospect. Instead, I said I would get the elements included in the royalty and report back.

I researched the services, outlined them and contrasted these services against several other competing brands. My goal was to get my prospect to understand what service the royalty cost included. When I communicated the 16% royalty to my prospect, I was able to explain that if the client preferred a lower royalty; I could show him different restoration companies with lower royalties. By deferring the question briefly rather than dodging it, I was able to keep the prospect in open discussion.

I talked to an expert in Internet marketing who made a proposal to me to improve my search engine optimization. During our conversation I asked six principal questions. He totally dodged three of them, providing no promise to address them later. I followed up three times, and he still provided no answers to the original ignored ones. That's when I decided not to do business with the person.

There are other times I get rapid fire questions faster than I can answer them. In these instances I write them down on paper or on my iPad and make sure I return to them to provide an answer. When I defer answering a question, I rephrase the question to confirm that I've correctly heard the question. Then, I provide a response. In most cases I confirm whether the question has been answered completely and to the satisfaction of my client.

In scripture when the queen of Sheba visited King Solomon, we learn that "Solomon answered all her questions; nothing was too hard for the king to explain to her." (1 Kings 10:3, NIV) When you work with customer questions, address them directly or defer them; do not dodge them.

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