



“An orange is not as good as an apple.”

In the May edition of *The Word*, I talked about features, advantages, and benefits. It was the beginning of a three-part series. The first episode was entitled ***What Do You Get When You Buy a Lock?*** I made the point that most salespeople sell features, not benefits. I used the example that when you buy a lock, you're buying safety and security. This episode deals with selling the right benefit.



What's your favorite fruit? Why is that your favorite fruit? If you picked the apple, you probably value its shiny red image, self-packaging, ease of consumption, and the idea that if you drop a few seeds, some future generation benefits from that crop of apples.

What if you picked the banana? Poor you. The aroma of a banana is good only for a short while. Its attractive yellow color becomes brown and ugly, and the scent of a spoiling banana is...ugh! And it's dangerous. People slip and fall on banana peels. (Is that really true? I've never known anyone who did.)

The orange is in the middle. It has the best aroma, is self-contained, and it provides juice and meat. It's not as good as an apple, because you can't eat it as easily. It's superior to a banana because it smells better and no one drinks banana juice. However, it is not as good as an apple, because it doesn't keep the doctor away.

Okay, time to earn my pay. The foregoing silly exercise has only one purpose. It's hard to sell your favorite benefit to a prospect that values something else. You can talk until you're blue in the face about the virtues of a banana to someone who only likes apples or oranges.

The trick is to find the benefit that fits the prospect's need *AND* which he or she accepts. Don't fall into the trap of selling what you like. It has to be from the prospect's point of view. So remember what we've said so far:

1. Sell benefits, not features. Convert features to benefits by answering the question so *what?*
2. Sell the benefit that matters to your prospect. You can't force someone to eat a fruit they don't want.

The next tip —July 31 — concludes the three-part series with an episode entitled *High Definition Provides the Best Picture Possible*. It's all about painting word pictures so vivid that your prospect thinks they're real.

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