CLOSING AND FOLLOW UP

As you complete this section of the LEASING GUIDE, you will learn:

- The different types of effective closes.
- The closing ratio that is expected of you.
- How to follow up.
CLOSING AND FOLLOW UP

CLOSING TECHNIQUES

A key point to remember is that closing begins the moment you come in first contact with the prospect at the property. Everything you do in the leasing process leads to the close.

You may think that asking for a lease is one of the most difficult procedures involved in the leasing process. However, if you will review and practice various closing techniques, closing a lease will become a comfortable process for you. Below are some suggested techniques you may incorporate in closing the lease:

THE SUMMARY CLOSE

After you have been through the demonstration of the apartment and have noted the prospect’s comments on the Welcome Card, begin summarizing his or her comments remembering those features which the prospect especially preferred.

“I remember that you said the kitchen seemed to be the perfect size and that the color scheme would go with accessories that you have now. You really liked the split bedroom floor plan because you and your roommate would each have more privacy. The living room seems like it will fit your sofa and love seat perfectly.”

By summarizing the comments made by the prospect, you are able to convince them that this is indeed, the apartment he or she needs.

*Note:* You must pay careful attention to the prospect’s responses while demonstrating the apartment in order to use the summary close.

You might also summarize many of the benefits this apartment offers the prospect:

- Proximity to his or her employment
- Close to prospect’s friends
- The right size
- An affordable price

THE PERSONAL INVITATION CLOSE

This technique is one that can be used on every prospect and in conjunction with other closing techniques. It basically is a sincere invitation to the prospect:

“We would really like for you to make your home here with us at (your property).”

*Note:* Treat all prospects the same. If you ask one prospect, ask all.

THE ASSUMPTION CLOSE

After getting positive feedback throughout the demonstration and overcoming objections, assume the prospect is going to lease.

“While you are filling out your application, I can be preparing the lease paperwork for you. Then you will be all set to move in next week.”
THE WHICH CLOSE

This is an extension of the Assumption Close. By assuming they are going to lease, asking a “which” question can get a Yes or No answer.

“How carpet selection did you prefer?”
“How location did you like best?”
“How floor plan would best suit your needs?”

THE URGENCY CLOSE

This is many times your most effective close. After selecting THE apartment for a prospect, stress the urgency of leasing today, or it may be leased by someone else.

“This is the only two-bedroom upstairs with the gray carpet that we have available for your move-in date. Since it suits all your needs, I know you don’t want to wait and risk the chance of someone else leasing it.”

Be truthful, and this closing technique will not backfire.

THE BEN FRANKLIN CLOSE

Some prospects are very analytical and detail-minded. For these prospects, you must put things in writing. After making careful notes on the guest information sheet during the demonstration, sit down with the prospect and list all the pros and cons on a sheet of paper. The pros will always outweigh the cons, and should convince the prospect to lease.

THE “YES” CLOSE

This closing technique again begins from the minute the prospect enters the office. By asking questions that repetitively obtain a “Yes” response, the natural tendency will be for the prospect to say “Yes” when you ask for the deposit.

“Don’t you think your sofa and love seat will fit perfectly here in front of the fireplace?” Yes
“Do you like the wallpaper selections in the kitchen and bath?” Yes
“Isn’t the spacious kitchen great for cooking?” Yes
“Don’t you agree that this apartment fits all your needs?” Yes

At this point the prospect has agreed that the apartment fits all his or her needs. Get the application and a pen for the prospect and have him or her begin completing the paperwork.

DOUBLE-TEAM CLOSE

If the prospect does not lease, use teamwork and a sales manager approach to get the lease. Introduce the prospect to your Manager, and let the Manager attempt to close the lease again. If the Manager is not available, get another trained Leasing Consultant on your staff to help close.

Don’t oversell: a “yes” means start completing the paperwork!

Remember: ABC – Always Be Closing
THE FOLLOW UP

If you have made every effort to lease to the prospect and yet he or she still leaves without deciding to make your property their new home, you have not lost the lease. Follow up is the best way to continue to stay in contact with the prospect. Remember to always document every follow up in the “Follow Up” section of the Welcome Card.

FOLLOW-UP STEPS

These suggestions will assist you in following up the prospect’s visit:

- Contact the prospect by phone within 10 minutes of his or her visit. If you are too busy, make sure you do so before the end of the day. If you are unable to reach the prospect, leaving a message can still be a powerful tool. Simply explain that you enjoyed your visit and mention that if he or she thinks of questions to call you.

- Mail a postcard, note or thank you card to the prospect the same day of his or her visit.

- Place another telephone call or send an email 24-hours after the prospect’s visit, if this is in your budget. Refer questions to your supervisor.

- Any other creative follow-up you can think of should be noted on the Welcome Card also. Consider inviting prospects to a property function you’re having such as picnics, pool parties, etc.

Your goal in contacting the prospect is to:

- Let the prospect know that you are sincerely interested and genuinely want them to live at your property.

- Make an appointment for the prospect to return to see the apartment again. Encourage them to bring a friend or family member along; e.g., husband, wife, boyfriend, sister, etc.

- Offer any further assistance to help the prospect choose the right apartment. Answer any questions that the prospect may have thought about after the visit.

Remember, be courteous and always let the prospect know that you are interested. Do not be pushy and infringe on the prospect’s privacy. If the prospect asks you to stop contacting him or her make a note of this on the Welcome Card and stop contacting.

You are expected to close on 2 of every 4 prospects at the very minimum, or 50%.

Some of the most successful Leasing Consultants rely on follow up to close a lease. If the prospect does not lease on the first or second visit, opportunities still remain for you.

Utilize the Leasing Follow-Up Box. Always follow up! Should the prospect lease somewhere else, set up a tickler file so that you can contact the prospect no later than 45 days before his or her lease expires.

Ever have those “slow” days or need more traffic for a specific unit type? Your Welcome Cards, both past and current, can provide qualified traffic.