

THOMPSON ENGINEERING

Tyler Houston sells for Thompson Engineering. He has been calling on Hudson Distributors for close to two years. Over the course of 15 calls, he has sold nothing to date. During an early call, Houston had Hudson's engineers in to look over and test the quality of his products. The tests and the engineer's responses were positive. He thinks that he is extremely close to getting an order. Houston knows that Hudson is happy with its present supplier, but he is aware that they have received some late deliveries. Tom Harris, Hudson's senior buyer, has given every indication that he likes Houston's products and Houston.

CURRENT SITUATION

During Houston's most recent call, Harris told him that he'd need a couple of weeks to go over Houston's proposal. Harris really didn't have any major objections during the presentation. Houston knows his price, quality, and service are equal to or exceed Hudson's present supplier.

QUESTIONS

1. Harris told Houston that he needed a couple of weeks to think about his proposal. How should Houston handle this?
2. What should Houston have done during the sales presentation when Harris told him that he needed to think it over?
3. What techniques should Houston have used to overcome the forestalling tactic?

Situation: Read Case 8; Thompson Engineering

Characters: Tyler Houston, sales representative; Tom Harris, senior buyer

Scene 1:

Location—Harris' office

Action—Harris has just stated that he needs a couple of weeks to go over Houston's proposal.

Role play how Houston should respond to Harris' needing two weeks to think it over.

Scene 2:

Location—Harris' office

Action—Houston is summarizing his product's advantages (i.e., price, quality, service).

Role play Houston's summary and his asking for the order.

Upon completion of the role plays, address the following questions:

1. Why do buyers hesitate and ask for more time to think over proposals?
2. How hard should Houston press to get Harris to act now?