GRIT GUIDE
BY GRIT BLUEPRINT

GRIT GUIDE
NO. 04

KEEPING IT SOLD KEEPING
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KEEPING IT SOLD KEEPIN

AFTER THE YES
KEEPING IT SOLD

How to Keep an Account Sold After the Order

Seven habits for the weeks after the yes, so the customer hears from you before they have to ask.

Featuring Michael Tull and Nick Talarico

gritguide.com/how-to-keep-an-account-sold-after-the-order/

7 steps 7 min read Checklist to print

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YOU'LL FINISH WITH

A one-page order log for each open order: what was approved, who the customer calls, the date of the next update, what happened at delivery and what the customer is building next.

THE STEPS

01 CONFIRM THE ORDER THE DAY IT IS PLACED

02 NAME THE CONTACT AND SET THE UPDATE DAY

03 CALL FIRST WHEN THE NEWS IS BAD

04 CALL WHEN THE NEWS IS GOOD, TOO

05 CHECK IN AFTER THE DELIVERY

06 FIX WHAT IS OPEN BEFORE YOU ASK FOR MORE

07 ASK ABOUT THE NEXT JOB AND WRITE DOWN WHAT YOU LEARNED

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From the episode: The Real Reason Customers Buy Again. Watch it at gritguide.com/grit-guide/videos/the-real-reason-customers-buy-again

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Michael Tull has a name for the work that starts after the customer says yes. He calls it “keeping it sold.”

Michael has been in the door business for fifty-five years. He runs Tull Sales as a manufacturer’s rep, a salesperson who represents manufacturers in a territory. On the Grit Blueprint Podcast he explained how it works: “The way you keep things sold is you do what you say you’re going to do.”

Then he gave two examples that point in opposite directions. If the plant is running behind, you call the customer and say so. If there is a week when you can get ahead, you call and tell them to use it. Both times the customer hears it from you first.

This guide turns that into seven steps. It is for inside and outside salespeople at dealers and distributors, and for reps. It fits special orders best. A special order is a product your company does not stock and has to order from the manufacturer for one job.

BEFORE YOU START

- The approved quote, with its date or version number
- The name of the person at your company who handles order and delivery questions
- A way to check the order’s status with your supplier
- Your company’s rule on credits, returns and replacements, so you know what is yours to promise
- A calendar you really look at

01 CONFIRM THE ORDER THE DAY IT IS PLACED

Before the day ends, send the customer a short note. Say which quote version they approved, what it covers and what happens next. Then check that your own team is ordering from that same version.

Write down what kind of yes you have. A verbal yes, an approved quote and a purchase order are three different things. A purchase order is the customer’s written order. Follow your company’s payment and order-release process before anything goes to the supplier. To release an order is to tell the supplier to go ahead.

02 NAME THE CONTACT AND SET THE UPDATE DAY

Tell the customer two things: who to call about the order or the delivery, and what your next update will cover and when it will come.

“I will check with the plant Tuesday and text you by noon” is a promise you can keep. “I will keep you posted” is not a promise at all. Keep your promises small enough to keep and clear enough to check. Put the update on your calendar before you do anything else.

03 CALL FIRST WHEN THE NEWS IS BAD

This is the heart of it. When the plant is behind, the customer should hear it from you before they have to call and ask. Michael’s words: “If your manufacturing company is behind, you call your customer and tell them we’re behind.” Have the hard talk up front. If the band-aid is coming off, pull it.

Say what you know, who is working on it and when the next update will come. Do not give a new date until your supplier has confirmed it.



Michael Tull’s words, from The Real Reason Customers Buy Again. Credit: Grit Guide

04 CALL WHEN THE NEWS IS GOOD, TOO

Michael's other example is the fun one: "If you've got a week where you can jump ahead, you call them and say I'd encourage you to do this this week, because we have an advantage right now."

Open time at the plant, a shorter lead time, a product back in stock. Lead time is how long an order takes to arrive. If the news helps this customer's job, pick up the phone. Make sure it is true before you say it. Never use a deadline you have not checked or a made-up shortage to hurry an order.

05 CHECK IN AFTER THE DELIVERY

The sale is not over when the truck pulls out. Ask if the package arrived the way they expected and if anything needs attention. Make sure they know how to report a problem.

If something is wrong, get it to the right person and tell the customer when they will hear back. Do not promise a credit, a replacement or a fix that is not yours to give.

Stefanie Couch writes that every product has a bad day. Something gets damaged in shipping. Something does not fit. What matters is how you respond. Fast, helpful and easy to work with keeps a contractor. Slow or defensive sends them to someone else.

Learn more from Stefanie Couch: Why Contractors Will Control Your Revenue in 2026 (And What to Do About It)

06 FIX WHAT IS OPEN BEFORE YOU ASK FOR MORE

Look at the account before your next sales call. Is anything unresolved? A damaged piece, a missing part, a question nobody answered? Handle that first. An open problem on this order deserves your attention before a pitch for the next one.

Small things count here. Nick Talarico of Do it Best Group tells the story of a store associate who spent 20 minutes helping him with a small replacement part for a dripping shower head. The store made almost nothing on it. He bought other things on the way out. "People want to know that they're noticed," he said. Watch the interview

07 ASK ABOUT THE NEXT JOB AND WRITE DOWN WHAT YOU LEARNED

Now ask. Use the last line of the second script below.

Then write down what this order taught you about the account: what they prefer, who decides and what they order again and again. Next time, check before you copy the last order. Confirm that the new job really has the same needs. A repeat customer still deserves a fresh look.

FINISH LINE

You should now have: A one-page order log for each open order: what was approved, who the customer calls, the date of the next update, what happened at delivery and what the customer is building next.

TWO SCRIPTS

Use it when: an order is going to be late.

SCRIPT

"I have an update on **[order]**, and it is not the one I wanted. **[Supplier]** is running behind. Here is what I know: **[fact]**. Here is what I do not know yet: **[open question]**. **[Name]** is working on it, and I will call you **[day and time]** with a confirmed date. What does this do to your schedule?"

Use it when: the delivery has landed.

SCRIPT

"Hi **[name]**. Did **[the order]** arrive the way you expected? Is there anything we need to look at? If there is, I will get it to the right person and tell you when you will hear back. And what is coming up next? Is there a selection or a lead-time question we should work through earlier this time?"

REAL STORY

Michael Tull tells this one in the episode. The normal lead time on the doors he sells was four weeks. During COVID it went to six weeks, then eight, ten, twelve and fourteen. His competitors were stretched out the same way.

He did not wait for customers to call and ask. He stayed close to them. When they were discouraged, he encouraged them to go ahead and place their orders, so they would stay ahead and not run out of doors. His reason: “People depend on us for doors.”

Whose story **Michael Tull**, CEO, Tull Sales

Michael tells it at 23:35 in The Real Reason Customers Buy Again.

CHECKLIST: KEEPING IT SOLD: ORDER LOG

- [ ] I confirmed the approved quote version with the customer the day the order was placed
- [ ] My team ordered from that same version
- [ ] The customer knows who to call about the order and the delivery
- [ ] The next update is on my calendar
- [ ] Every change from the supplier reached the customer from me first
- [ ] No new date went to the customer until the supplier confirmed it
- [ ] I checked in after the delivery
- [ ] Nothing is open on this order, or each open item has a name and a date
- [ ] I asked about the next job and wrote down what I learned

YOU’RE DONE WHEN

- Every open order has a named contact and a date for the next update.

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- The log shows the customer heard about each change from you before they asked.
- The delivery check is written down, with what the customer said.
- Each open problem has a name and a date.
- The account notes say what the customer is working on next.

WHAT TO DO NEXT

For more wording you can copy, open the Customer Follow-Up Scripts. If your notes from a jobsite visit are a mess, this AI prompt turns visit notes into a follow-up email.

EPISODES IN THIS PIECE

Independent Retailers Need Better Data. Do it Best Has The Tools.
With Nick Talarico · The Grit Blueprint Podcast · Mar 2026

The Real Reason Customers Buy Again
With Michael Tull · The Grit Blueprint Podcast · Feb 2026

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SOURCES

1. The Real Reason Customers Buy Again (Grit Blueprint Podcast, Michael Tull with host Stefanie Couch) Grit Guide
2. Why Contractors Will Control Your Revenue in 2026 (And What to Do About It) Stefanie Couch, Grit Blueprint
3. Independent Retailers Need Better Data. Do it Best Has The Tools. (Grit Blueprint Podcast, Nick Talarico with host Stefanie Couch) Grit Guide

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ONLINE
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