

How to Incorporate Energy Efficiency into Sales

Use your unique expertise to expand the sale.

As a NYSERDA Home Performance with ENERGY STAR® and BPI GoldStar Contractor, you’ve laid an excellent foundation to establish yourself as a credible resource in the marketplace, which can help you close more sales, grow existing sales, avoid seasonal slowdowns, and earn more referrals. However, it’s rare that customers will come to you looking for energy efficiency upgrades—it’s simply not top of mind. Converting your expertise into more business takes a conscientious effort to incorporate energy efficiency into your sales conversations. The following tips can help.

Make it relatable. Energy efficiency can be a difficult concept for customers to understand or engage with as an intangible concept. Very few people evaluate their homes and determine that they need improved energy efficiency. Instead, they may notice there’s a problem that needs to be fixed. What they don’t understand is that many of these problems relate to inefficiency issues, and energy efficiency upgrades can help solve them. Plant the seed for an energy efficiency discussion by asking customers if they experience any of the following common problems:

- High energy bills
- Hot or cold rooms
- Drafts
- Noisy ducts
- Smoky fireplace
- Peeling paint
- Soot deposits
- Stuffy air
- Headaches
- Allergy symptoms
- CO alarms
- Musty smells
- Dust
- Foggy windows

Get holistic. As a building performance professional, you have something that many other contractors don’t: the ability to view the home as an entire system. Use this difference to your advantage. When diagnosing the customer’s problem, give them a high-level explanation of how their home’s systems are connected. This will help establish your credibility and create greater opportunity to increase your sales through additional upgrades in other areas of the home.

Don’t sell. Solve. Closing sales for energy efficiency upgrades isn’t about convincing customers that their home will be more efficient. It’s about convincing them it will be safer, more comfortable, healthier for their families, and less susceptible to major issues that may impact them financially. Instead of taking a data-driven approach, emphasize the emotional benefit of energy efficiency upgrades. What problems will the upgrades solve?

SAY	NOT
Lower energy bills	Greater energy efficiency
Cleaner, healthier air	New ventilation systems
Provide a safer home for your family	Eliminate mold and musty smells
A quiet, peaceful home	Smoother running systems

See next page for four conversation starters to help your sales conversation.

Four Conversation Starters to Sell Energy Efficiency

Use these simple conversation starters to increase your sales.

Conversation starter #1:

“Have you experienced high energy bills?”

Situation: Customer looking into replacing windows and doors, heating and cooling equipment, appliances or lighting.

Why you ask it: High energy bills are a major pain point for customers, and their causes can be related to a number of inefficiency issues.

What it makes the customer think: “I’m always open to ways to save on my energy bills. If I’m already doing home improvements, now could be the perfect time to do these kinds of upgrades.”

Conversation starter #2:

“Is your home properly sealed and insulated?”

Situation: Customer replacing heating/cooling equipment.

Why you ask it: If a customer is replacing a furnace or central AC unit, it won’t have the desired effect unless their home is airtight.

What it makes the customer think: “I’m not sure if my home is sealed as well as it could be, but making a major heating and cooling investment could be a waste of money if air is escaping the house. I need to make sure my home is sealed up.”

Conversation starter #3:

“Have you felt drafts in your home?”

Situation: Any sales conversation related to home comfort.

Why you ask it: Drafts are a very common issue in homes, and their impact is both physical and emotional. It’s not just about feeling cold from time to time; it’s about the customer being ensured that their home is a safe, comfortable place to live.

What it makes the customer think: “I had no idea icicles were a potential indication of insulation and ventilation issues. I need to take care of this before it becomes a bigger problem.”

Conversation starter #4:

“Do you get icicles in the winter?”

Situation: Any sales conversation about roofing or attics.

Why you ask it: Icicles and ice damming are commonly misunderstood problems. Many people assume they are related to their roof or gutters, when the root cause is actually related poorly insulated and ventilated attics that cause snow to melt and refreeze near gutters.

What it makes the customer think: “I don’t like cold air blowing through my house. I’d do whatever it takes to make my home more comfortable.”

For more sales and marketing insights, look for the Selling Efficiency Series on your NY Home Performance Portal dashboard.