Since good selling means searching for a fit between your product or service and the customer's Concept, your principal attitude in a sales call should be that of an interviewer—a specialist in the art of asking questions. In Conceptual Selling we define five types of questions that should be asked in every sales call interview. Each type has its own distinctive purpose; that is, each one is designed to elicit a unique and specific kind of information. Each type is phrased in a specific manner, using distinctive key words. And as you put the five types of questions together into an effective interviewing process, you should also give some attention to their sequence.

Before we go into detail about the purpose, phrasing, and sequencing of the five question types, here are some thumbnail definitions.

1. *Confirmation Questions* validate your data or reveal inaccuracies in what you thought was true.

2. *New Information Questions* force you to listen and accept the reality of current data; they help you clarify the customer's Concept and desired business results.
3. *Attitude Questions* identify the customer's personal needs, values, and attitudes.
4. *Commitment Questions* help you locate your current position in the sale by identifying what action the customer is willing to take to move things forward.
5. *Basic Issue Questions* are specialized Commitment Questions that help you identify customer concerns that could result in the loss of the sale.

We'll discuss Commitment Questions and Basic Issue Questions in Part 5. This chapter concentrates on the first three types of questions. We begin with the one type that should always be asked near the beginning of a sales call, but that few salespeople ever ask at all: the Confirmation Question.