



"It's a No-Brainer!" Part 2 of 3.

A Wise Guy told me, "An expert is someone who knows more and more about less and less until they know everything about nothing." I believe there is challenge in knowledge. Gathering or assuming knowledge may narrow one's view, limiting resource optimization. It is difficult to return to the beginner's mind – curious, impartial and unassuming - pregnant with possibility. With a beginner's mind, one may be aware, entertaining and empathizing with phenomenal perspectives - essentially compassionate action.

Another challenge is not knowing what one does not know. However, the prospect of not knowing all the doctrines and disruptions of energy is exciting! Infinite unripened revelations are holding bloom until auspicious causes and conditions manifest. Casting a vast net and probing "why not?" and "how?" will facilitate breakthroughs in knowledge and impact. Even without such inquiry, change is constant - wisdom evolves.

When we bring these two challenges together – what we know and what we don't - we have a salesman's conundrum. We know something, or enough, that impels us to acts of persuasion. However, we often do not fully regard customers' desires from *their* position or view of knowledge. This mismatched love affair precipitates 40% closing rates sprinkled with self-justified frustration.

But it is solar! "You made a sale, moved the needle, good on you!" And it is true. And probably truer is the carbonization of our atmosphere and the unpredictable global knock. At least from a humanist approach, I'm feeling like I want to close 100%. Maybe more. How might one do this? Focus on the *clients'* pain and ideas, creatively connect the dots, substantially deliver value for them, and one will convert the day, never mind the earth.

Listening to, or reading, a prospect's concerns and seeing *their* situation from *their* history and angle is a helpful practice of exchange. Adequately listen to and reflect a prospect's pain (pacifying), understand and empathize with them by addressing *their* points in *their* language and style (enriching), personally address and challenge *their* concerns (magnetizing), and, when necessary, cut off what is not working (destroying), and you may well "move the needle".

Here is my reply to [last month's letter](#) from a contractor, which expressed a common view of solar as "a thief of a better environmental solution to carbon reduction".

You are NOT full of it! I agree - it is a case-by-case basis. Folks call all the time trying to save money with solar. Most of the time, I steer them towards a boiler or heat pump. I find it very difficult to say what the "better" or "best" solution is for anyone other than myself.

From a cost-effective basis, right now PV is winning with subsidies. Even when I receive a custom incentive for a boiler job, it is a long payback. PV can payback very shortly, and with the benefit of a non-mechanical system set to last 30+

years. Also, if folks are adding load, like an EV, I say run it on the sun and start leaning on transportation carbon.

From a carbon reduction basis, I'd have to see the numbers. I don't necessarily agree that the PV offsets less carbon per dollar than a boiler. Boilers have many operating variables that are difficult to accurately predict. I see many "condensing" boilers running in non-condensing applications. PV's embodied energy is recaptured within a few years. I don't think it is the same for a boiler.

I disagree that conservation should always be the first choice over generation. For example, for the Environment not to pump and burn all the buried carbon, I suppose we need to have widespread adoption of alternatives. If you do the global math, it is absolute that we must capture more solar energy, to the extent that it will persuade the Environment to leave the carbon in the ground. So I think it may be useful to encourage the generation industry as we conserve with efficiency. Also, if one is generating solar energy, they're not buying the utility energy (conservation?), which is highly inefficient by the time the coal trains leave Wyoming, inefficient conversion to electricity, and transmission losses over 75%... Solar generation compounds all those inefficiencies in reverse! Considering a broad view of the Environment's cost for electricity, I doubt there is a technology more powerful than PV in offsetting carbon.

My cents. Glad you are considering solar for your home!

This is one example of many positive responses that hopefully guides this colleague's understanding towards solar solutions. It incorporates variously the activities of pacifying, enriching, magnetizing and destroying. Developing and articulating valuable solutions oriented towards others' perspectives requires time, thoughtfulness, organization and editing. As solar implementers, we need to be effective listeners and persuasive communicators in a way that establishes trust, expertise and formula.

But wait – there's more! The clients are also guiding us to *their* solutions. Yes! And this is much more important than our own knowledge given how little of humanity subsists on clean solar energy. Reading between the lines and finding a new wisdom and opportunity to help benefit others from a less self-referenced vantage point helps bring us back to the beginner's mind, where creative courses might pour forth uninhibited by maturity of knowledge.

Tune in next month for the rebound!

Jason Jepsen, CEM, is the Principal of Commercial Energy Consulting, an energy management and construction company. Jason installed his first solar hot tub 10,000 feet high in the Rockies (he used a come-along and trees to bring equipment the last ½ mile). PV-direct, it consisted of a closed-loop glycol thermal loop heating a dual-coil 80-gallon glass-lined indirect heater, mated atmospherically to the hot tub with a bronze circulator and a thermostatic mix valve run by a differential high-limit control. It relentlessly overheated, melting the tub gaskets. But the view was amazing.

