

How to Have the Conversation - Furniture and Ergonomics

Conversations about furniture and ergonomics work best when they feel natural and supportive. Most customers simply want to talk about how their people work and what they need day to day, so the dealer's role is to explore this in a straightforward, comfortable way. The approach will vary depending on whether the dealer already knows the customer or is speaking to them for the first time.

Talking to existing customers

Existing customers are often the easiest place to start because there is already a relationship in place. Dealers can build on what they know about the customer's organisation, recent orders and any changes they have mentioned.

Useful ways to open the conversation include:

- checking in on how their teams are finding their current workspace setup
- asking whether recent changes, such as new starters or hybrid working, have created new needs
- following up on previous orders to see if further support is required
- asking whether they have any upcoming moves, refurbishments or layout changes
- exploring whether they want more consistency across offices or shared spaces

These questions feel natural and help the dealer understand whether the customer needs additional support.

Talking to new business

Approaching new business requires a different tone. It is rarely appropriate to open a cold call with direct questions about how a customer's teams work. Instead, the aim is to start a light, professional conversation that earns permission to explore their needs.

Dealers can begin by:

- introducing themselves and explaining how they support other organisations
- mentioning the types of workspace challenges they commonly help with
- asking whether the customer is the right person to speak to about workplace setup or equipment
- offering to share simple guidance or options if helpful

Once the customer is engaged and the conversation feels warm, the dealer can gently explore their situation with simple, non-intrusive questions such as:

- "How are your teams working at the moment."
- "Are you mainly office-based, hybrid or a mix."
- "Do you have any upcoming changes to your workspace."

These questions should only be used once the customer is comfortable and the conversation has naturally progressed.

Keeping the conversation simple

The dealer's role is to listen, understand the customer's goals and guide them towards suitable options. If a customer raises something more complex, the dealer can involve colleagues, suppliers or manufacturer support.

Useful phrases that help keep the conversation safe and supportive include:

- "Tell me a bit about how your team works day to day."
- "What would make things easier or more comfortable for your people?"
- "Are there any areas of the workspace you'd like to improve?"
- "Would it help if I shared some simple options that support what you're trying to achieve?"

These prompts encourage open conversation without making assumptions about the customer's current setup.

When to introduce solutions

Solutions should only be introduced once the dealer understands the customer's goals. This ensures recommendations feel relevant and supportive rather than product-led. Dealers can keep it simple by linking solutions directly to what the customer has said, for example:

- "You mentioned hybrid working, so adjustable furniture might help your teams stay comfortable."
- "You said you're onboarding new starters, so we can help make sure they have the right setup from day one."
- "You're refreshing your meeting rooms, so we can look at options that support both in-person and hybrid meetings."

If budget is a factor, dealers can keep the conversation straightforward by offering a few options at different price levels. This helps customers choose what works for them without feeling pressured.

Key takeaway

Good conversations start with simple, supportive questions that match the level of relationship with the customer. Whether speaking to existing customers or new prospects, the focus should always be on listening, understanding their goals and offering solutions that genuinely support how they work.