



## *"Does your dog bite?"*

One of the most important skills in our business is the ability to ask the right questions. Too often, we assume we understand what a customer wants—or we hesitate to ask a follow-up question because we don't want to seem uninformed or repetitive. But the reality is that clear, precise communication is the key to delivering exactly what our customers expect.

What happens when we assume? Ass-u-me.... right? We've all been there—thinking we understood an order or request, only to find out later that we missed a crucial detail. A builder needed a specific door swing, a certain finish on their hardware, or an exact delivery time to meet their schedule. A single missed question can lead to delays, reorders, additional costs, and unnecessary frustration. In our industry, where lead times, labor schedules, and budgets are tight, miscommunication isn't just an inconvenience, it's a real problem.

The Power of Follow-Up: Asking a customer, "Just to clarify, you're looking for XYZ?" or "Would you like this delivered in one shipment?" can mean the difference between a smooth transaction and a costly mistake. Follow-up questions show that we care about getting it right, and they help prevent misunderstandings before they become issues.

I always think back to the classic Pink Panther movie scene [\(YouTube clip below\)](#) where Inspector Clouseau walks into an office, sees a dog, and asks the man behind the desk, "Does your dog bite?" The man replies, "No." So Clouseau reaches down to pet the dog, and it immediately bites him. He looks at the man and says, "I thought you said your dog doesn't bite!" The man responds, "That's not my dog." The lesson? Miscommunication—no matter how small—can lead to big misunderstandings.

At Kimal Lumber, we pride ourselves on being more than just order-takers—we are problem-solvers and partners in our customers' success. That means making sure we fully understand their needs, confirming details, and not hesitating to ask one more question if something seems unclear.

Let's all challenge ourselves to take the extra step in every conversation. Before finalizing an order or scheduling a delivery, let's make sure we've covered every detail. And let's encourage our customers to do the same—because when we work together with clear, open communication, everyone wins.

Clark Willis

Regional Sales Manager - Kimal Lumber

<https://www.youtube.com/shorts/ILR-V2S0DC8>