

What Should Walther Do?

Walther Habers works for Global Architects, a Dutch firm that designs, installs, and supports network solutions for businesses involved in commodity trading. Habers had recently moved from a marketing position in the company to direct sales, and he is given his first lead, an Italian company, Ascoli and Sons, which is headquartered in Milan. Habers is to meet with the company president, Giorgio Ascoli, at 10:00 a.m. to discuss the services that Global could provide.

Walther arrives at Ascoli and Sons at 9:50 on the appointed day. He is told by Mr. Ascoli’s secretary that Mr. Ascoli cannot yet meet with him, and he is shown a place where he could sit. When Walther asks when Mr. Ascoli would be available, he is told “soon.”

At 11:00, Habers is still waiting. At 11:30, Mr. Ascoli arrives at the office and greets Walther cheerfully. He asks him to wait “just a minute” until he looks through a few papers and answers a phone call.

At noon, Ascoli comes out of his office, puts his arm around Walther’s shoulder and says, “Let’s go to lunch.” Walther, who was quite hungry by this time, assents. Lunch takes place over two hours during which time Mr. Ascoli talks about his family and his hobbies, including wine tasting and truffle hunting.

By this time, Walther is extremely annoyed. He wants to tell Mr. Ascoli about Global Architects, and what it could do for Ascoli and Sons. Just as he is about to start that conversation, Ascoli calls for the check and signals lunch is over.

Should Walther have done something differently up to this point? What should he do now?

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