

## 'Stop Selling – Start Helping' (Quote by Zig Ziglar)

Although, you would all agree that every client should be given special treatment and unique customised service - in today's economic climate it is becoming harder to achieve. Taking into account funding cuts, budgetary restraints and with job losses at a premium it is less likely that 'added' resources can go into top end 'wooing' of Clients. Other possible reasons for this include having higher targets to reach in less time, constant restructuring resulting in less staff, more pressure, less resources and so on. The bottom line is that although you can't resource your client base the way you used to, there are some fundamental and easy ways for you to continue 'looking after your clients' that don't cost you a cent. A thought worth considering, is that your clients don't want to be seen as important solely because they helped you reach your target for that month. What your clients really want - is to be helped. That's right - helped to make the right choice regarding the needs that they have.

What needs to be remembered when selling is that client's needs should be be top of mind. Unfortunately, this is not always the case. As all too often – the pressure is on to 'reach the projected sales target for that month' or 'surpass the expected sales objective' that Management have set. What clients can often experience - in purchasing that house, car or superior technology is that they are secondary to the Salespersons agenda. What is also unrecognised (or even forgotten), is that this purchase is the fulfilment of the client's personal happiness and/or dream coming true!

The useful thing to remember is you – as the Salesperson - are part of an exciting time in their lives, so perhaps beginning to see the world and this sale through their eyes would make for a good start in building a long lasting and effective business relationship.

When selling remember that you are doing business with people, and they will present a myriad of different wants/needs/responses to you, so if you want to be very successful, you need to begin to really 'see' your Client. As we know - the market is too competitive out there, for you to be 'relaxed' and adopt a casual attitude. You need to view your clients as individuals with unique needs. Begin to turn the spotlight onto your performance and views of your Client Base instead of focusing on why you haven't sold in a while. The interesting thing to note here is that; **it is not your clients job to remember you, it is your responsibility to ensure they don't have a chance to forget you'** (Quote Paraphrased from Patricia Fripp). That doesn't mean you are a nuisance and won't leave them alone, rather it means that the quality of communication; whether it be face-to face over the phone or on email is of a high standard professionally.

Keep in mind, when you are dealing with clients face to face, they are picking up what you really think using the following ratios:

55% body language

38% tone of voice

7% words used

So it makes sense to develop your Communication Congruence by making sure all three are aligned. For instance if you are consistently talking softly so people have to check what you are saying, or you keep looking at your watch- they are likely to think you are disinterested in selling to them. This may seem very obvious, but interestingly enough, some Salespeople don't consider how 'loud' their body language is when communicating. When selling, the most effective behaviours to cultivate are:

- Smiling and using eye contact
- Using body language to convey respect
- Showing empathy
- Actively listening and asking for clarification
- Building rapport and trust
- Identifying a person's needs

If you are naturally conducting yourself in this manner – Congratulations, however I would check in with your colleagues to see whether their observations of your behaviour match your own. Keep in mind that if you think you are extremely good already, you allow yourself no room for improvement! One of the things that stand out with people who help compared with people, who sell, is the way they interact with their Client Base. Never underestimate how important it is to Clients to be heard, seen, valued and respected in the selling process.

If you're telling yourself you know this already - my challenge to you is to think about the last time you had a great customer experience. Reflect on how you felt listened to, respected and impressed by the salesperson you dealt with. Now compare that to the very worst customer service experience you've had. As you consider the difference between the two, focus on what stood them apart.

The chances are it was **Attitude**.

As W.Clement Stone once wrote -*Sales are contingent upon the attitude of the salesman not the attitude of the prospect*

When you reflect upon what constitutes your success, you will already know the formula that works best when selling your product and service, but regardless of what you think you know, keep in mind that the most important aspect of your role begins with your thinking and consequently your mind-set. If this is configured correctly, you cannot help but succeed. Simply put: The thoughts create the feeling you have and impacts on the subsequent action that you take. This results in the outcome you experience. So it makes sense to start to use your mind more effectively.

Some useful points to consider are:

- Your feelings when you have been successful at selling
- Your belief in your product/service
- Your knowledge of the product/service
- Your motivation when selling this product/service
- The view you have of your Client Base

Never underestimate how powerful your mind is in determining your success or otherwise. A Secret Weapon to use when selling is known as 'thought replacement'. This means, when approaching a potential sale, you are fully aware of how you are feeling, and adopt your thinking to optimise a sale. Being a bit anxious is normal, as you want to perform well and do the best deal you can. What can be challenging though, are the thoughts in your head dictating why you can't/won't be successful. To deal with this - try the following, as when done correctly, the outcome can be powerful.

#### THOUGHT REPLACEMENT EXERCISE

- Think about the last time you were successful in sales
- Remember how you felt, what you thought and then what you did?
- Now try the following exercise:
  1. See it (the successful sales experience in your mind)
  2. Believe it (Fill your mind with the knowledge that you have done this before, and can therefore do it again)
  3. Now prepare to approach this (new) Client holding those thoughts and feelings, and see what transpires. You have nothing to lose and everything to gain.

And finally, when selling, consider these common Sales Objections. Salespeople are often described as:

- ✓ Talking too much
- ✓ Not listening enough
- ✓ Not listening closely
- ✓ Misinterpreting body language
- ✓ Not being transparent

These can be overcome but you urgently have to start recognising how you are being perceived. You must 'figuratively' hold a mirror up and try to improve on those areas that need strengthening. It goes without saying that: 'It's not what you say but what the other person hears which is important' and after all isn't that what Successful Selling is all about?

For more on this topic, and some further ideas to address this issue - see the Workshop outlines and resources we provide, listed below.

### **For the individuals needing to lift Sales Figures**

Workshops and/or Coaching sessions on:

- Sales at Work
- Attitude at Work
- Personal Accountability
- Motivation

### **For the Managers leading Sales Teams**

- Stop Selling – Start Helping Workshop
- Leading Underperformers
- Mind-set Excellence
- Motivating Underperformers

### **Consultations**

Consulting Session (Groups of Managers/Leaders) dealing with specific Individualised issues concerning Selling performance

Consulting Session (one on one) with Managers/Leaders targeting specific Concerns regarding issues concerning Selling Performance

Please contact us if you would like information on any of the above.

By Gloria Masters  
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