

Steps to ponder while increasing your sales efforts

Working in sales within the service trades is a great deal tougher than most people can imagine. There are many factors that must align with one another before a sale can happen. There are many events that seem to be passed over and forgotten when discussing sales. These missed occurrences can destroy a sale before it starts however many sales people refuse to recognize these details as important.

It seems that many sales trainers and companies start the training the meat and potatoes of sales. What is taught is how to sell. Teaching the service technicians to ask questions and whether the questions are open ended or closed ended questions. The next step that is taught is how to qualify the customer, presenting the proposal, close the customer and collect the money. These are parts of the sale.

The missed factors of the sale I would like to cover can and often will make or break the sale. These issues will have a huge impact on whether you get to the meat and potatoes mentioned stages of the sale. These things will be decided if you receive the permission to move forward and present the proposal that has the best solution for the problem the customer is facing.

The very first stage is talking with the customer and booking the call. This is a relatively short period of time rarely taking more than 10 minutes. At this stage the customer will form an opinion concerning the organization's professionalism and if they want to deal with the organization. How you or your office handles the beginning stage sets the perimeters of the sale.

Next is honoring and respecting the customer's time. Set the appointment and keep the time schedule. If for some reason the time cannot be kept the customer must be informed prior to arriving late. Once you arrive your body language will give the customer a first impression on you that will form a second impression regarding the organization. It is essential that you act like you are excited and want to be visiting with the customer. Your body language and demeanor should scream out to the customer that you are there to help them and do whatever it takes to satisfy them.

This stage is abused and missed most of the time and requires maximum effort from the sales person. Frequently the sales person walks slowly and without meaning to get to the customer. The body language shouts to the customer you are unimportant and I really do not want to waste my time with you and your petty issues. Walk like you have a place to arrive, stand tall and proud. Most of all it is the time to be happy that you are the only person important and vital to make their issues disappear. The

way you hold yourself will define who you are and how confident you are in yourself and your organization.

Consequently facial expressions are next on my list. Your facial expressions should never have a look of amazement that the customer has given you permission to continue your conversation with him or her. Your facial expression should never have a look of bewilderment or wonder while asking probing question concerning the issue at hand. Your expression while asking these type questions may give the impression that you have very little idea what is causing their issue and you cannot satisfy the customer with a legitimate solution. This will give the impression to the customer you are not the person to listen to and you surely are not the expert.

When you give your customer the solution and price and they object a look of bewilderment can be taken by the customer as frustration or inform the customer they are too stupid to understand your proposal because they object. Your facial expression should entice the customer to want to know more and that you are the one to tell the customer more.

Wimpy questions that come across as needy, insecure, and guessing have no place during the sales call. Your questions should be more of a statement question. Has this happened before? How often has this happened? As opposed to does this happen often? Some sales people have a way to ask questions that come across as not knowing or understanding the customer's issues or concerns. Your questions should not sound wimpy. Your questions are an indication that you have command of the situation and that you can deliver a solid solution designed especially for your customer.

Appearance is another major concern. I recently visited an area where the handyman and unlicensed and unqualified people that have entered the service trades and completing work due to losing their jobs. There are quite a few reasons why the professional tradesperson is losing the work and one area is appearance.

Recently a water line re-pipe was sold to a longtime client by a relatively new person to the company. There were 2 missed steps with this sale. Yes the solution was obvious to the client. Yes she is buying however the missed steps were; Receiving history of the client. This customer called to talk to me because she had second thoughts about the endeavor. Have no doubt that the solution is correct. The problem selling the products and service before the closing of the sale should have been sold. The client had many unanswered questions that needed answered. Those questions surrounded the installation of the new water piping. She wanted to know and understand where the new water pipes would be

installed and how we would get the water piping to specific plumbing fixtures. She had questions concerning her water source and if that would be affected by the new install.

Selling the solution prematurely caused a false objection and that objection covered trust, respect and having 100% confidence. These items were missing with the technician that sold the water re-pipe. It was a simple sale and the only real choice for the client. The technician used that as a weapon to force the sale.

Communication was lost. The technician did not understand how to convey the solution properly to the client. Discovering history when history is available will help the technician understand how the client wants to communicate. Calling different sales service technicians that have visited the client in the past is the ultimate way to discover how to communicate with certain long time clients. Use the resources that are available to you that will help make the transition and transaction easier for your client and you.

Giving the client enough information to make an informed decision is the sales service technician's job. The idea is to compel the client to have a belief in you and your solution. It is about building rapport that leads to trust and respect. Explaining details in terminology that the client understands and can acknowledge as true will add to the likability factor due to you being like the client in speech.

More information with the water line re-pipe story, the client is an artist who draws paints and is also a writer. This immediately informs the service sales technician that this client communicates visually. This is what separates a sales service technician that has experience with a person that believes they are just a technician, plumber, HVAC person. Conveying communication with visual aids expressing the why, what and how's of the requirements to complete the tasks benefits the client and you. Start enhancing your efforts with information that helps the client and you complete the transaction.

With this certain client she is also a writer and writes for a local newspaper, edits other people's writing. This informs the sales service technician that he or she needs to use complete sentences that are structured and concise. Incomplete sentences that are fragmented will add to the client's frustration and understanding. Fragmented and incomplete sentences will lead the client to believe some of the statements are false because they are not logical statements that are not clear. In the case of the water line re-pipe my purpose to discuss with her is the work scope clarity. Discovering history and improving communication is a very important step within the sales service industry.

Working with and improving these few factors will have an immediate impact with the sales service technician's ability to deliver a solution that is dependable, spot on, and drive the client to a natural conclusion to purchase from you. Pay attention to the small details that will drive your ability to receive additional sales that increases an organizations ability to implement new services that enhance your client's lives. Compel your clients to talk to other people about you and your organization driving referrals to an all time high.