



« SHANE DECKER ON SALES STRATEGIES »

SHANE DECKER has provided sales training for more than 3,000 stores worldwide. Contact him at (719) 488-4077 or at ex-sell-ence.com.

A Happy Ending for Everyone

DON'T ASK, TELL, WHEN CLOSING.

SOMEWHERE along the way, salespeople became confused about the close at the end of a sales presentation. They thought it would be a good idea to *ask* the client to buy. Never ask — tell. You don't want the client to be able to say no.

Too many salespeople do a show-and-tell presentation, telling the client about the item and then leaving him hanging at the end. Remember: Between 60 percent and 70 percent of all clients cannot make up their own minds, so they're waiting for us to do that for them. Clients get self-confidence from your ability to reassure them that it's OK to spend their money.

Unlike the closing statements you might use throughout a presentation, the close at the end is more professionally direct (without being pushy or threatening). Assuming everything else was done properly, there's a 30-second window at the end of every presentation when the client has made up

A.J. SAYS: "18% of jewelers don't know their store's closing ratio." (2010 Big Survey)



his mind that he's going to take the item, but he's waiting on you to confirm his thought process. The secret is knowing when that moment has arrived and then not only saying the right thing but saying it in the right way. Never ask, "Can I wrap it up for you?" because the client can say no (don't say "May I," "Could I," "Would you," or "Let me," either).

Here are some strong closes for that 30-second window:

- » "This is exactly what you said you wanted."
- » "This is a decision you will not regret."
- » "You know this is a moment she'll remember the rest of her life."

- » "How are you going to present this to her?"
- » "Why wait until she has to ask you for it?"
- » "She'd do it for you."
- » "This is why you came in."
- » "Just do it."
- » "Go for it."
- » "Now's the time."
- » "This will tell her you'd marry her all over again."
- » "When you give her this, you won't have to say a word — it'll do all the talking for you."

If you're positive that your client should buy from you, he will. If you think he can't, you're right ... and if you think he can, you're right. Your level of belief will show in your presentation, and clients not only pick that up, they mirror it.

Telling your client to buy in a way that's professionally direct gives him peace of mind. He's coming in for you to help him make a decision. He leaves successful because he leaves with the package. He's not successful when he has to leave and start the process all over at another store because you didn't close at the end.

The best way to preserve client loyalty is to close the sale. The second time you close him is easier than the first, and the third time is easier than the second, because you're gaining momentum with the client, he trusts you more, and he enjoys working with you. To make sure your close is smooth, practice saying closes over and over until it comes out sounding the way you want it to. When the time comes, don't ask — tell. It's an ending that allows both you and your client to live happily after after.



TIPS

FRESH IDEAS TO BETTER YOUR BUSINESS

HOLIDAY SALES



GIFT CAUSE AND EFFECT

Knowing what customers really want from a purchase will go a long way to helping you close the sale, says Janice Mack Talcott of the Edge Retail Academy. "Special-occasion male shoppers, for example, want to know more about what effect the gift will have on the recipient than about the item itself," she told her audience at the SMART Jewelry Show in Chicago. "So be sure that your wish lists are up to date and you have several options to offer him in several price categories that you are sure his wife will love."

PULL THE GOALIE

In the last few days before Christmas, the staff at Diamond Designs in Marion IL, take all of the jewelry out of our window displays and put it in their cases. "I call it 'pulling the goalie,'" says owner Steve McNeil. "This is not a time for window shopping and when you're busy it's easy to forget that birthstone ring in the window."

MISSION ENJOYABLE

Last year was the year of the "mission shopper." She knew what was on her list and where she intended to get it. This year, says Alison Levy of consulting firm Kurt Salmon, that shopper is looking to enjoy herself a bit more, to touch and feel products again and find something different for her loved ones. This plays into the hands of small retailers who can offer a special, personal experience and carefully curated assortments that tell a story. "Small businesses' real advantage is their ability to build a relationship, so every opportunity you have, leverage that, through events and tips, and really providing that service. Shopping is emotional so they will remember and come back."