



SHANE DECKER ON SALES STRATEGIES

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THE SECRET TO WINNING OVER MR. GRUMPY? HOT COFFEE

UNEXPECTED KINDNESS IS THE BEST RESPONSE TO “JUST LOOKING!”

You’ve had the client who enters your store in a very bad mood. Maybe he had a bad day; maybe he just had a hangnail. Maybe he shopped somewhere else and was mistreated or pre-judged. This person says he’s “just looking” in a nasty tone of voice or even says “leave me alone.” He might even say, “If I need anything, I’ll let you know!” He is the client who may be tired of extremely pushy salespeople jumping on him as soon as he walks through the door. I’m talking about a situation in which the client speaks first and is clearly agitated.

At this point, two different sale-killers happen. The first is when we say, “Go ahead and look around; if you find anything let us know,” and we walk away. The client is not re-approached, and we let him “just look” right out of the store. Usually, you turn to another salesperson and warn him away from the client. And then the client leaves and says, “Man, you can’t get waited on in there!” So when you tried to leave him alone as he said he wanted, it actually backfired on you.

The second sale-killer that can happen is when you bird-dog the



client even though he asked for space. You stayed too close to him, making him feel uncomfortable. He thinks you don’t trust him or that he’s trying to steal something. And, he still leaves empty-handed and unhappy.

Both of these are mistakes related to the salesperson’s skill set. What you do when the client comes in grumpy is kill him with kindness. It goes like this:

Client: “I’m just looking.”
 You (with a smile): “You know, I always do that before I buy! Take your time; we want you to have fun while you’re here.”

A few moments later, you re-approach the client with a mug of coffee in hand, asking “How do you take your coffee? We want all of our guests to feel at home.” The real secret to making this work is to go get the coffee without even asking. Bring back different types of cream and sweetener. It’s funny — when you bring it to him, he’ll take it. If you ask him if he wants it, he’ll say no. So always take it.

Become a servant and remove yourself from being a salesperson in his eyes. This breaks the ice. He may have been intimidated to come in. Anything you can do to soften his idea about how he feels about all salespeople is a win for you.

Additional tip: America’s No. 1 cookie is chocolate chip, and it goes great with coffee. It’s hard to refuse a chocolate chip cookie!

Don’t let your customer “just look” out the store without a re-approach. By now, he may have found something he wants you to hand him out of the case. With this client, always sell on the same side of the counter he is standing. It takes the power position away, makes him feel like you’re being more friendly, and allows him to feel he has more control. Become a servant with a smile. You will win most of the time.

If you bird-dog the customer even though he asked for space, he will leave the store empty-handed and unhappy.

↓ TIPS

FRESH IDEAS TO BETTER YOUR BUSINESS



DROOL-WORTHY

A savory or sweet smell, as you might expect, makes a shopper hungry — and not just for fresh-baked chocolate chip cookies. “They get your saliva glands going, and that makes you hungry,” Paco Underhill, author of *Why We Buy: The Science of Shopping*, told the *Los Angeles Times* recently. “And when you’re hungry, you’re more apt to buy anything, not just food.”

WATCH THE MOMS



At the leading edge of adopting new retail technology is a surprising group: moms. They’re all for anything they can do to save time and effort when it comes to shopping — including new tools and online support communities. According to the American Mom Report from BabyCenter and ComScore, new mothers were more than three times as likely to text a picture of a product before purchasing it as normal shoppers. Moms also view shopping as competitive in terms of saving and are much more likely to scan a bar code or QR code to save money — even for savings under \$5.

BRING OUT THE TRAYS

Perry’s Fine, Antique & Estate Jewelry in Charlotte, NC, runs against the crowd when it comes to the conventional wisdom that you show customers a few edited choices. “Whereas most jewelry stores can only give you one or two pieces at a time, we provide you with entire trays to view in one sitting. You can try on as many pieces as you like in a comfortably elegant setting with one-on-one sales service,” says store VP Hadley Perry Pacheco. “It’s like playing in your own jewelry box at home. If you want to try on a hundred pieces at once, you can! Our customers love it,” she says.