

BRIDAL TIPS
SALES FLOOR

Man in the Desert

→ The Container Store is famous for its employee induction program: new hires get over 240 hours of training, and one of the central principles of that training is the “Man in the Desert” add-on sales approach. The idea is that selling a customer what he came in for is akin to offering a man who’s been lost in the desert a glass of water. “If you stop to think, you realize he also needs food, a place to sleep, a phone to call his family, a pair of shoes and a hat,” co-founder Garrett Boone explained to *BusinessWeek*. “When a customer comes looking for shoe storage, most retailers help her find a shoe rack — that glass of water. But we know she needs a solution for her entire closet,” he said. So the next time you have an engagement-ring or gift buyer in the store, remind yourself they likely need more than that one item. It’s about becoming “immersed in their needs,” says Boone.

String Theory

→ Over the years we’ve collected a number of suggestions on how to remove a stuck wedding ring (Windex, Purell, and Superfit Technology). Here’s a neat new one from *esquire.com* that involves using a string to “unwind” the ring. Watch it here: instr.us/11151 (it’s No 10).



Dog in a Bow Tie

→ Retail is detail, and at First Pennsylvania Precious Metals in Warrington, PA, nowhere is that more evident than in the dress code: Even the store dog is attired to the nines: “Possibly nothing in life is better than a dog in a bow tie,” notes store president Brian Berger.



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.

FRESH IDEAS TO BETTER YOUR BUSINESS

SIX BRIDAL-SELLING BLUNDERS

TO SELL TO THE YOUNG, YOU NEED TO UNDERSTAND THE YOUNG

Are your bridal sales less than you’d like them to be? The first thing you have to do is recognize the mistakes you’re making. Only then can you take action to remedy them. As I travel the country visiting stores each week, these are the biggest mistakes I see people consistently making in our industry:

Mistake 1: Placing a low priority on social media. Young people are online all the time, whether it’s communicating with their friends or researching possible purchases. So that’s where your bridal sale begins. A lot of the stores I work with have a young associates working two to four hours a day on connecting with customers via Facebook, Instagram, Pinterest and more. They are drawing more bridal traffic from these efforts than through bridal shows or traditional advertising. I’m not saying trunk shows and traditional advertising don’t work, but for this age group, social media is better.

Mistake 2: Having a boring and/or useless website. Most jewelers’ websites look like they were designed in the Dark Ages. Jewelers tell me they don’t want to spend \$15,000 on an awesome website, but then they’ll go and spend \$100,000 on advertising that’s not working. Young buyers

search the websites of jewelers in their area first. Guess who wins?

Mistake 3: Not hiring people who can connect with each generation. There’s nothing wrong with having older folks on your sales team; I’m over 60. But young people have a difficult time finding commonality with older presenters. The closing ratio is higher with people in your own age group — it’s called generational salesmanship. When you’re the same age, you listened to the same music growing up, you have the same slang, and so on. Recently, one of my clients interviewed a 24-year-old college and GIA graduate. He had full tattoo sleeves on both arms and a purple mohawk, and he was wearing \$500 Italian shoes. Despite his reservations, I convinced my client to hire the young man. His bridal sales last year — just bridal — were over \$1 million. The other salespeople on staff love him because he’s fun and he has integrity. Bottom line? Hire people from all age groups so every customer who comes in can find commonality.

Mistake 4: Putting salespeople on the floor who aren’t well-trained.

Too many of you have sales associates who can’t answer simple selling questions about gems, watches, diamonds or bridal product. Train your staff on the proper diamond terminology. Have a one-hour sales meeting (at minimum!) every week. Young people hate being lied to or misinformed. But they love having an educated sales associate waiting on them.



Mistake 5: Not understanding how to close sales. The closing ratio for bridal clients who come in for the first time is the lowest of all customers — but if you can get them in a second time, it’s the highest. These clients want you to reassure them that it’s OK to spend their money. You need to know how to close all the way through your presentation without being pushy. Your sales team needs to know how to ask relationship questions and closing questions. And they have to build trust so that by the time they ask for the sale, it’s a done deal.

Mistake 6: Lack of proper follow-up. Young people love instant communication. If the client was not closed the first time he was in, follow up with a text or phone message to set up the next appointment. And because they rarely get physical mail, young people also think it’s a big deal to get a written thank-you card in the mail.

He had full tattoo sleeves on both arms and a purple mohawk, and his bridal sales last year — just bridal — were over \$1 million.