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BE SWEET TO YOUR CLIENTS

COVERING THE “SWEET SPOT” ISN’T JUST GOOD BUSINESS, IT’S OLD-FASHIONED MANNERS

By Shane Decker



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MOST PEOPLE DECIDE within the first 30 seconds whether or not they are staying to shop in your store. One of the easiest things to do to make a customer feel comfortable is to greet them correctly. The “sweet spot” for greeting a client is 10 to 15 feet from the front door on the client’s right as they walk in. Man this position with a friendly sales associate *at all times*.

Never greet from behind a showcase. When you’re behind a case, you’re in what’s called a “power position.” If you greet a client from the power position, he’ll feel like someone’s about to pounce on him.

Here are four other mistakes often made when greeting clients:

1. The door chimes and all of you are in the back, and one of you comes out and the client is already halfway in the store. Clients are uncomfortable in jewelry stores if nobody can see them when they walk in. It’s like

walking into a bank; everything is valuable. Besides, when you come from the back, your focus is on the work in the back and not on the client.

2. Everyone is huddling around the point-of-sales area at the back of the store.

3. Two salespeople are on the floor, the client walks in and the two salespeople look at each other, then the client, then at each other again to see who’s going to wait on the client. The client is watching both of them to see who has to wait on them. Rather, they should be



ASK INSTORE

Should we have an annual “summer sale” when we are not a sale-oriented store?

We understand your fear both in terms of your store’s image and the risk of training customers to expect sales. But an annual sale clearly signposted as an infrequent event is a good op-

portunity to move *dated* merchandise that is costing you money to keep in your cases, at a time when things are usually slow (see our lead story in this issue). It’s also undeniable that sales work. Our Big Surveys have repeatedly shown that sales promotions are by far the most effective way to get people



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seeing who *wants* to wait on them and one of you should approach them immediately with a smile on your face.

4. When all sales associates are with a client and another client comes in but no one greets them. This makes the client feel like they are bothering you. The person who should do the greeting is the one who isn't in the 30-second closing window, and ideally, the one closest to the door. If you're all busy, someone should say "Please be patient, someone will be with you in a moment. The wait will be worth it!"

There are several reasons to keep the sweet spot covered.

→ ***It is polite. Where do you greet people who come to your home?***

→ You're focused and ready to take care of the client's needs.

→ Depending on the client's age, mobility, children in hand and so on, it allows you to open the door for the client. It's old-fashioned politeness.

→ If it's a regular client and you know another sales associate on your team is the one they ask for, it allows you as a professional to alert your associate so they're ready and focused on giving their client an awesome experience. The golden rule is, everybody is smiled at, greeted, acknowledged, and spoken to within the first five seconds coming in. It makes them feel important.

Do not use habit opening lines like "Hi, how are you?" or "What can I help you with?" You're not practicing originality and spontaneous creative salesmanship. Try writing 10 opening lines out and practice them on each other in your sales meetings.

Clients want to have fun. They want to be acknowledged. They want a professional waiting on them. How long they stay depends on how good they feel from the beginning!



in the store and to move goods. It may help to reframe the way you think of markdowns. Rather than view them as losses, consider them as lessons: Your customers are telling you what they don't like. And the cash you generate will allow you to get lines in that your customers have said they do like.

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