

TRUE TALES

STORIES FROM THE FRONT LINES OF RETAIL



This happened

about 20 years ago. A young lady comes in to buy a ring for a young man she has only seen at church from afar. Shortly after, a young man comes in with his parents, talks to

me about “when you buy a ring for a girl” and buys a diamond engagement ring. You could have floored me when later the young man and woman walk in together to size the ring the woman had bought. She opened an account to pay for the \$35 ring, and every month they would come in together. Each time, she would drool over the diamond counter. But there was nothing from him about the ring he bought. Finally, a year later, he comes in and trades in the ring he bought for a larger diamond. He then offers it to her, and she accepts. Over the next 20 years we see them only a few times. Last year, they re-appeared, and since then he has bought her a \$2,000 diamond ring, \$500 diamond earrings, a \$1,200 wedding band for him, and a syn star sapphire ring. She has no idea there was ever the other ring. They are nice, everyday people — no children, two dogs and as happy as clams in an ocean of plankton. — WARREN LAKEIN
LAKEINS JEWELERS OF HAMILTON, BALTIMORE, MD

SALES TRUTHS

EITHER-OR CLOSES MANY SALES

WHY IT'S TRUE

During the course of the sale, customers will frequently express their interest in an item with a statement such as, “I think she would really like that.” This is a very clear buying signal and represents a great opportunity to use the “either-or close.”

PLAN OF ACTION

Respond by offering the customer two options that will meet their needs and close the sale. To someone who is buying a gift you might say, “Great, why don’t I gift wrap this for you?” To someone purchasing for herself say, “Would you like to wear it or would you rather have me place it in one of our beautiful boxes?” Their response will automatically close the sale. — DAVE RICHARDSON

SHANE DECKER

COMMENTARY / ON SALES



➔ “No” is often THE FIRST ANSWER on the way to “yes.”

Find the Truth Behind the ‘No’

What would happen if police detectives gave up on a case just because their first lead didn’t pan out? We’d have a lot more criminals roaming our streets. The great detectives know that the solution is out there, and it just takes asking the right questions to uncover it.

Sometimes, being a good jewelry salesperson means being a great detective.

After all, there will be times when you make your presentation correctly, you romance the product, you close all the way through, and yet when you ask for the sale, the customer says, “No.” Now, studies tell us that about 60 percent of customers say “yes” after saying “no” four times. Yet most salespeople give up after a single “no.”

Just because your customer doesn’t whip out his wallet when you ask, it doesn’t mean it’s time to quit. It also doesn’t mean you should be pushy or condescending. The key is to be professionally persistent, and find the truth behind the objection.

Think of it as a game of “20 Questions” — only you won’t need nearly that many, in most cases. Your goal is to pinpoint whether the problem is: a) the price, b) the product, or c) something else you haven’t adequately answered. The conversation should go something like this:

You: “Are you happy with this price?”

Customer: “Yes.”

Pause. (This gives the customer an opportunity to let this sink in.)

You: “Do you want a bigger one?”

Customer: “Oh, no, this one looks great!”

(Asking if he or she wants a bigger diamond is flattering, in that you think they can afford it.)

You: “Is this what you had in mind?”

If the customer says, “Yes, but I was hoping to pay less,” then you can reply that you can insert a smaller diamond into the mounting and the price will be lower. The customer may respond, “Oh no, I want this one,” to which you would reply that the price of this item is the price that you previously stated. This reestablishes the integrity of your store and your pricing.

If the customer says that the item is indeed what he or she had in mind, you should then ask, “Do you have any questions I haven’t answered?”



At this point, your customer should tell you the problem. Remember, he or she didn’t stand there for 30 minutes without an intent to buy. If the customer is still reluctant to answer you, ask this:

“If you’re comfortable with the price, this item is what you had in mind, and you don’t have any questions, then what do we still need to discuss?”

Sometimes, a customer just needs the reassurance that he is doing the right thing. By asking these questions, he may come to realize he is happy with the price and the item. At worst, you will be able to better address his concerns.

It’s possible the customer still won’t be forthcoming with their reasons. If that’s the case, T.O. the sale to a team member — but only do so once. Ideally, you would call in the owner. Often, all the owner has to say is how much she loves the item in question, and how happy the customer (or his significant other) will be with it. Reassurance from the owner, who they perceive to be the ultimate authority on jewelry, can often tip the scales.

So, never resign from the case just because a customer says “no.” Keep searching for clues, offer reassurance, and you’ll find that most customers will walk out happily with the jewelry of their dreams.

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