

inyourstore

SELL MORE • SPEND LESS • MANAGE WISELY

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TRUE TALES

strange stories from the front lines



I worked with a salesman for 25 years and once witnessed him working a customer. The client had asked him if, in his professional opinion, a piece of jewelry she had purchased was really gold. He studied it for a while and then very seriously proceeded to 'sniff' it. And replied why yes, it was. The customer thought this perfectly acceptable since we use the scratch the pearl on the teeth method! It was incredibly funny."

BRENDA NEWMAN
THE JEWELRY SOURCE,
EL SEGUNDO, CA

ON SALES

poor excuse

It's hard to sell high-end when you're scared, says **Shane Decker**.



HOW DO you train salespeople to sell items over \$10,000?

Salespeople have to get over the "poverty-level mentality" and not assume the customer can't afford your more expensive jewelry. If the item costs more than your associate makes, then your associate will often have a hard time justifying the purchase in his or her own mind. However, the customer buys it because they can and because they want to. The more you romance it, the more the perceived value rises and price objections vanish into thin air. One thing that may help is to tell your salespeople never to use the words "thousands" or "hundreds" with regards to price (for example, \$13,999 would be stated "thirteen, nine ninety-nine"). Make sure they are turning over the sale if they are still having a problem with price. And always remember this: it's none of the salesperson's business what the customer can afford, it is their business to make sure the customer gets what they want.

We're a small store where customers want to talk to the owner for everything. While we appreciate the loyalty and want them to feel important, we have a new associate who we want them to be comfortable dealing with. How to make a smooth transition?

The problem in any small operation such as this is that the owners have spoiled the customers, and customers are now afraid that the new associate won't spoil them as much. As the owner, you need to have a conversation with each customer and let them know that your employee will give

Big mistake: assuming that since you can't afford to buy an item of jewelry, your customer can't either.

them the same price, the same deal, and the same service as you yourself would. Also, assure customers of your new associate's training and skills. Finally, you need to be less visible to the customer. This means moving your "busy work" to an area in the back and staying off the sales floor as much as possible. Be patient and give it time. There is no way to completely fix this problem unless the owner stays off the floor for good.

Is scripting valuable for sales staff?

Heck, no! Scripting makes the presentation robotic and mundane, and it quickly becomes boring to the customer. Selling has to be creative, enthusiastic, and passionate. Furthermore, the presentation should be changed to fit each person and personality. Some customers are technical-minded, whereas others need to be romanced more. Some will buy quickly, and still others need a lot of time to make up their minds. Bottom line? *No scripting!*

What is the most efficient method of conveying product knowledge to sales staff?

A great organization for educating salespeople is the Diamond Council of America (www.diamondcouncil.org). Another solution is to have each of your vendors come in to your store once a year and train your staff on their product. Follow up with training from your sales manager, in which he or she asks each salesperson 15-20 questions about each product. If they can't answer correctly, then it's *back to the books!* Proper product training is extremely important these days, as customers are very knowledgeable. So don't blow it!

Shane Decker has provided much sought-after sales training for more than 3,000 stores worldwide. He can be reached at (866) 424-2472.

