

# The Nature of Residential Sales

*It is in our nature to live by habits. In the absence of good habits, we find ourselves cutting corners only to discover later that by not following a well thought out process, we do not achieve our desired objectives.*

By Ric Harry

It is important to develop good habits, some of which serve to create sound communication skills and in turn, translate into crucial benefits to ourselves, our customers and our business. How we dress, personal hygiene and how we present ourselves are all habits.

Selling is also a process—a series of well thought out steps to achieve an objective, and the objective in selling is to create satisfied customers. The process needs to be simple to follow and make sense or it will be at risk of not being followed.

This brings us to the processes that create the habits of presentation selling. Selling styles vary, as they should, since personalities, cultural differences and buying behavior differ from one customer to another. That being said, the processes are still the same. Water chemistry, applications and even the benefits to the customer may vary; however, the manner in which our residential customers buy are all the same.

## Superior Communication

One of the differences between strong and weak salespeople is their maturity and competence in being skilled communicators. The ability to mirror the personalities and styles of their customers comes from experience and a genuine interest in their audience—the customer. This is a skill and a habit learned by keeping the focus or subject of conversations on the customers. All attention needs to be on the customers and their expectations, and in doing so, you will discover what they want and need. Conversations about anything that is not of interest or relevant to them changes their focus and distracts from your reason of being in their home.

Customers make their final buying decision based on gut feelings. They want to know what they are getting and that the purchase will deliver all of the benefits that have been sold

to them. The intuitive feeling that directs the customer's decision is not determined by anything we say or even demonstrate to them.

Communication is more physical than verbal. The customer can sense our passion through our deeply rooted beliefs and first-hand experiences of the benefits of better water. We need to be enthusiastic customers of the products, services and benefits that we offer to competently transfer that sentiment to our customers.

## Natural Expertise

We should already be experts in the field of in-home selling. We are residents and have first-hand experience both as consumers and residents. Selling in-home should be natural for us all, beginning with our own high standards of conduct, particularly as a visitor. We should have a clear understanding of what our customers want and how they want it, which should mirror our own expectations.

Consider the following questions from a consumer's perspective and use them to develop your in-home selling processes:

- When do I expect a salesperson to arrive?
- Where do I want a salesperson to park?
- How do I expect a salesperson to treat my property?
- How do I expect a salesperson to be dressed?
- Do I expect a salesperson to remove their shoes?
- How do I expect a salesperson to address me?
- What do I expect a salesperson to bring?
- What do I expect a salesperson to ask?
- What do I expect a salesperson to know?
- What experience do I expect a salesperson to have?
- What do I expect a salesperson to say?
- What do I expect a salesperson

to do while in my home?

- How do I expect a salesperson to treat me?
- How much time do I expect a salesperson will need?
- What do I expect the result to be by having a salesperson visit?
- What do I expect the salesperson to leave behind?

## Valuable Knowledge

In any business, knowledge is empowering. A salesperson is generally more confident when they are also competent. We are not simply selling a product or a service, but selling the benefits. Confidence is one of the benefits and it greatly affects our customer's gut check. We need to have superior knowledge of all of the benefits our customers will be receiving by doing business with us.

To assure our customers are fully satisfied with a purchase, we must also be knowledgeable in our industry and competent in providing proper applications. Reading articles are a great source, but it is important to also be actively involved with suppliers and association training.

Residential sales should be natural for all of us when we are enthusiastic consumers of our own products and services. Residential applications represent the largest segment of our industry, both in unit count and opportunity. It is also the easiest process to be naturally proficient at. *wqp*

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