



Selling the Senses

By Ric Harry

Rather than sharing statistics, tactics, strategies and scripts that manipulate an outcome, let's discuss what motivates consumers to buy and how that impacts closing sales.

A Nation of Consumers

We are all consumers, and by that, I mean we all buy stuff. We not only consume products and services out of need, we actually enjoy buying. Interestingly, there are several studies stating that we buy to soothe and satisfy emotional needs. Buying things has become a self-prescribed form of therapy.

Motivation to Buy

Did we need that Starbucks' coffee today? Was it a want we satisfied or was it just a habit? Oh, and is it the cheapest place to get a cup of coffee?

Even when times are tough, we have to wait in line at restaurants, even though it is more expensive than eating at home and may not be as good.

How many TVs do you own? What type are they, and how big? How about satellite—how much is that per month? And don't even get me started on cell phones and computers. You get the idea—we all consume, and price or quality alone do not matter.

Purchasing Styles

Emotional needs must be met when it comes to making purchases, as we all have a selling style we prefer to buy from. Knowing this as a salesperson can be critical to closing more sales. There are the "what will you do for

me," the "why should I buy from you," the "who else has one," and the "how does it work" types of buyers. Granted, all of these questions are generally asked by most buyers, but only one of them is the key to satisfying the emotional needs of an individual customer's buying style.

What is your style? Do you sell based on your style, or do you meet the individual buyer's needs? If they are a "what will you do for me" type, do they want to hear all about how it works? Probably not, and it could be a deal breaker.

Each personality type has specific needs as to how it prefers to communicate. Learning how to identify these different buying behaviors could make a difference in your closing ratio and income. This is why no single tactic, strategy or script will work with every consumer.

Each buying style is different, and needs to be met. Otherwise, you risk not giving individual customers what they need to make a buying decision. If you satisfy their emotional needs, you will close more sales.

Closing From the Start

Closing is not an event, but a gentle and empathetic conversation. It is a process that is personal and relevant to each individual buyer. It is not about following a script from beginning to end for process' sake; it is about the customers—what is of interest to them and what they want. It is all about the benefits to them—not about the product or the company, and certainly

not about the price.

Don't wait until the end of a sale—closing starts at the beginning. Help customers identify how they currently treat their water: Is it from a bottle or a jug, or do they use filters, lotions, soaps, detergents or chemicals? How is that working for them? How does their water smell, taste and feel, and how much are they spending to address the problems they may have?

The Role of the Senses

Selling is educating consumers on how they treat their water now and what problems they are addressing. Subsequently, you are effectively closing them one benefit at a time from the beginning.

If customers say the water smells, and you remove the smell, ask them if they can smell how conditioned water would benefit them. If the customers have an issue with the water's taste, and you remove the taste, ask them if they can taste how conditioned water would benefit them. If the customers are unhappy with color in the water, and you remove the color, ask them if they can see how conditioned water would benefit them. If the water makes their skin dry and itchy, and you can make it soft and smooth, ask them if they can feel how conditioned water would benefit them.

Ultimately, you are creating tangible experiences by using their senses—smell, taste, sight and touch—to help them on an emotional level to select a solution that is right for them. You are doing this from the very beginning, not waiting until the end.

Closing is a process that starts with listening and learning what personality style or buyer type the customer has to ensure that you are selling the way that customer likes to buy. It continues by asking questions relevant to the customers' interests or concerns so you are able to use their senses to provide tangible experiences. This helps them buy what they want to satisfy their emotional needs—which is how and why they buy. *wqp*

Ric Harry is a sales, management and technical consultant for the water industry. Harry can be reached at info@richarry.com or 905.734.7756.

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Reading a customer's needs and desires to help close a sale