

# *Sophia's Knowledge*

Barbara Kay Winters

Ph: 515-229-8708



## 10 Sales “No-Nos”

We all know them, but it never hurts to periodically think about things that can hurt our sales efforts. So here are 10 things NOT to do.

1. Don't do all the talking. One of the central keys to good customer service is to understand what the customer needs. And that requires listening to him. And when you're talking, you're not listening. To help focus on listening and to keep the conversation going, prepare some questions that will elicit the information needed to provide the customer with the product best suited to satisfy her needs.
2. Don't be afraid to “back-off”. Closely related to not talking too much, is not using pressure tactics to make the sale. Remember: we don't like to be “sold” something, but we're a nation of shoppers. So, sometimes “backing-off” and giving the client the chance to decide he wants to “buy” is the best way to complete the sale.
3. Don't forget to “brand yourself.” Jim Meisenheimer notes: “One of the cardinal sins I observe salespeople making is your complete reliance on the branding of your products and your company. Please remember this. Most people don't buy the product. Most people don't buy the company. Most people buy - because they buy the relationship with the sales professional working with them.” So, although only quality products that deliver can keep her trust, remember that she's buying from you. Discovering your own strengths and building them into a personal style will enable you to tell your client why he should trust your recommendations about what he needs.
4. Don't forget it isn't not about you. Having just said that you need your own brand, it is very important to set aside your ego and the picture of that trip to Hawaii for the top sales person in your office. “Get the dollar signs out of your eyes when you're with clients. If they suspect you're pushing the sale because of what's in it for you instead of what's in their best interests, they'll find another company to do business with,” according to Tom Hopkins.
5. Don't exaggerate the features of your products. Not only is it against the law to mislead the client with inaccurate product descriptions, but it can undo all your efforts to build up trust and rapport. This requires knowing your products and which one can be used to satisfy what client needs. It also requires presenting the features of each product clearly so she doesn't think term life insurance will have the accumulation features of whole life insurance, for example. For repeat sales, it is better to sell a product that exceeds expectations than one that can't meet what you promise.

# Sophia's Knowledge

Barbara Kay Winters

Ph: 515-229-8708



6. Don't use industry jargon. Every profession has its own "jargon" – terms that carry special meaning for those in the industry. And sure, using it makes you feel "in the know." But it really doesn't impress clients for long. Remember, she needs to want to buy – and few people want to buy what they don't understand. So take the time to learn how to explain the product without the "jargon" and you'll find her trust in the authority of your recommendations will soar.

7. Don't spread rumors or misinformation about the competition. Defamation of a competitor is not only illegal, but it can be the grounds for civil law suits against you. Be on the more practical level, it will destroy your client's trust and can drive business away. Recently, I was shopping for a new computer and had a very informative talk with a sales person in store A. The next day I stopped in at store B to check out their offering. But I sure didn't stay long after overhearing a conversation between a sales person and another customer. The sales person told the customer that the staff of store A didn't know anything about computers. Since I had personal knowledge to the contrary, I was off to store A in a flash – where I talked extensively with another very knowledgeable person and bought his recommendation.

8. Don't manipulate your clients. You don't want to feel manipulated and neither do your clients. Be upfront about any hidden costs. Don't try to sell the client something she doesn't need because it will get you a sales prize. Or try to get him to buy *today* so you meet your monthly quota. Your client is likely to discover that you're putting your interests ahead of hers

9. Don't promise something you can't deliver. Poor fulfillment will quickly destroy a great relationship client. This means paying attention to the details. If you know home office approval will take a week, don't promise you're have it in two days. If you promise an estimate for Monday, plan to deliver it on Friday.

10. Don't promise something the product or service can't deliver. All products have their limits. They are designed to meet certain needs and not others. Misrepresenting the product is one of the surest paths to failure. An informed buyer is a satisfied buyer

Behind all these "do nots" is one simple positive: Do behave with integrity toward your customer, your co-workers, your boss, your competition and yourself.

# *Sophia's Knowledge*

Barbara Kay Winters

Ph: 515-229-8708



## Sources:

Hopkins, Tom. "Top 10 Sales Killers." Entrepreneur.com. July 3, 2006. Accessed August 27, 2006. <<http://www.entrepreneur.com/article/0,4621,328319,00.html>>

Oechsli, Matt. "A Recipe for Failure." Registered Rep. (2006): Prism Business Media Inc. Mar 1, 2005 12:00 PM. Accessed August 27, 2006. <[http://registeredrep.com/selling/finance\\_recipe\\_failure](http://registeredrep.com/selling/finance_recipe_failure)>

Zella, William. Online posting. Sales Tip Website. Accessed August 27, 2006. <<http://www.salestipwebsite.com/salestips.htm>>

Meisenheimer, Jim. "The Five Most Common Selling Mistakes." Meisenheimer.com. Accessed August 27, 2006. <<http://www.meisenheimer.com>>

Meisenheimer, Jim. "What Are The 12 Dumbest Things Salespeople Do." Meisenheimer.com. Accessed August 27, 2006. <<http://www.meisenheimer.com/articles/12dumbesttemplate.html>>

Brought to you by:

## *Sophia's Knowledge*

Writing with flare; research with integrity; editing with sophistication

**Barbara Kay Winters**

Proprietor

SophiaKnowledge@att.net

Des Moines, Iowa