



Secrets of Success (And Other Unsolicited Advice)

Time has a funny way of passing, sometimes very quickly and sometimes unbelievably slowly. I am sure that many of you have sat in a dentists' chair and or at a family function listening to Aunt Tillie telling you again for the 40th time that night how smart her kid are and felt that time was standing still.

For me, my career in sales has been like a flash. I used to walk into shows and look around and see all these 'old geezers' and wondered what they were still doing there. Lately, I look around and I see all these young guys and gals and wonder when they let high school kids into the business. Maybe I am now one of those 'old geezers'.

I recently had the pleasure of enjoying a longer than expected stay as a guest of my beloved airline company. I have learned that the time my ticket says the plane will be taking off is merely a suggestion. So I had some time to drink a few Starbucks Coffees and find a plug to keep my computer running so I could jot down some thoughts about what things have worked for me.

Put yourself in the buyers' position. This, at least to me, is extremely important. The person whom I am selling to has the power to say YES! or no. My motivations, my reasons, my needs are totally unimportant to them. That is unfortunate but true.

It is solely their needs that dictate whether I will be given a YES! and not a no. I have found that if put myself in their shoes, more often than not, I will see what they see. If I address my 'pitch' to what is important to them, the magical word YES! will be heard.

Being fair with my customers is paramount to success. I know a lot of really talented salespeople. They could sell ice to an Eskimo in a blizzard. My problem with that is, does that person really need ice in a blizzard? If the answer is no, why do it? You are probably thinking, that is my job and somebody is going to sell that ice. That person is not going to be me. And if you ever want to come back and sell that Eskimo a jacket, you ought to think about whether you are really doing that person a service by selling them something that is not right for them at that time. Maybe come back to that Eskimo when they are on vacation on the beach in Florida.

There is no excuse for 'taking advantage' of your customer or for that matter, your salesperson. The notion of justifying your action by excusing bad behavior and poor ethics by claiming 'it is not personal, business is just business' is not acceptable. What ever happened to treating others as you would have them treat you? For me, no sale is worth compromising my ethics for. Over the years I

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have dealt with a small number of buyers that would have done anything to 'get a better program or price'. They believed that the ends justify the means, but it does not. The best buyers and salespeople get the best programs and pricing because they take the higher road. Over negotiating may win the buyer the battle, but rarely the war.

Chas Wolfson represents the Rock Miracle brand for Samax, Inc. He knows everything you'd ever want to know about restoration, paint stripping and deck preservation. His articles and observations about the industry are informative and funny, and he manages to bring a lighthearted touch to the heavy duty world of restoration. You can find his articles in various publications to the trade.