

Ten Rules of Selling

It may seem by now that selling has more rules than the guidelines regulating debate in Congress... but it only appears that way. Firstly, *nothing* has more rules than Congress, and secondly, the rules of selling are extensions of certain fundamentals that Tudog revisits almost monthly so that their importance is evident and their practice almost second nature.

The ten rules presented in this article are not the end-all to all selling rules. There may be some others or there may be other versions of these rules. But for sure, these rules are essential to the development of good selling skills and to the results that good selling skills deliver – sales. The ten rules are:

1. Direct Thinking

Good selling requires that you direct the thinking of your prospective customers so that they are able to relate to and identify with the case you are making for your products. Also, by developing the skills that enable you to direct customer thinking, you can also simultaneously develop the skills that allow you to better direct your own thinking. In many circles this is called focus, and it is a key to great selling.

2. Enthusiasm is Contagious

You cannot expect your customer to be enthusiastic about your company and your products if you are not outwardly enthusiastic yourself. You need to convey your excitement in a manner that preserves your credibility and allows the prospect to feel safe enough to join you in being excited.

3. There are Always New Prospects

Excellent selling means always selling and you cannot always be selling if you do not have the mechanisms in place (such as referrals, prospect listings, etc) that feed you need prospects. The success you enjoy in sales will be a function of your ability to create, maintain and grow your access to and exposure to new prospects.

4. Play Hide and Seek

Just like the prospectors of the gold rush, the people who kept looking were the ones who ultimately found what they were searching for. So too is it in sales. You may need to play some hide and seek to draw out the great customers, but if your products are genuinely purposeful, you will succeed. Don't be too proud or too busy to play. Hide and seek is always fun once you figure out all the good hiding places.

5. Shut Up and Listen

Perhaps not the most polite way to say it, but the point is made. The worst thing a salesperson can do is talk too much, and yet, ironically the personalities that are drawn to sales are the outgoing, friendly types that love to schmooze. A good chat is not a bad thing so long as it has a clearly defined ending and does not intrude on the time or focus of the meeting. In most cases it does, and therefore the idol chatter should be left to a minimum. Instead you should be listening to the customer, understanding their needs,

and formulating a way your company and its products can serve as a genuine and comprehensive solution.

6. Selling is Both Logical and Emotional

The reason why selling is both logical and emotional is because *buying* is both logistical and emotional. Success in selling means being able to balance what the customer needs (logical) with what the customer wants (emotional).

7. You Have to Want to Win

Like everything that requires great effort and some sacrifice, selling requires the will to win. The path to a closing can be long, complicated, frustrating, and difficult. If you lack the will to win you will inevitably surrender somewhere during the term of the process. If you have the will to win you will adjust as the process demands and come out with a sale.

8. Objections are Your Friend

Salespeople often try to discourage, or at least, minimize objections. They don't want to have to deal with customer issues or the excuses they use to push the sales approach away. However, it is far more effective to view objections as friends and welcome them into the process. In addition to being inevitable, objections also provide the salesperson with valuable insights into the challenges that lie ahead in the closing process, as well as what the customer needs truly are. By welcome, even encouraging, objections you are demonstrating both great confidence in your products and genuine concern for the customer. In the end, this combination most often serves to overcome the objections.

9. Understand Buyer Behavior

All buyers have habits and a great salesperson studies the information available to learn the prospect's habits. Whether it is seasonal, quantity patterns, or other indications of how and when buying decisions are made, the better you understand the buyer's behavior the greater the likelihood that you will land a sale.

10. Service is Everything

There is a lot of lip service being paid to service but not enough salespeople actually take it seriously. The salesperson of today often sees the role of service as being the responsibility of the customer service department and that the narrow definition of sales - getting the customer to sign on the dotted line - is the only role they need to fulfill. This might be an acceptable (albeit horrible) view of sales if all companies decided to forego service on the sales level. Insofar as this is not so, and the chances are that a competitor of yours still sees sales as meeting the needs of customers, you might be in an awkward and drastically poor market position if you neglect service. Service is the job of the salesperson because he or she is the face of the company and the person with whom the customer has a relationship. When the customer has a problem that requires attention the expectation is that the attention needed will be a priority for the salesperson as a way of reinforcing the relationship and demonstrating its importance. Without service on the sales level, your company will fail to establish and reinforce the relationships needs to sustain and grow sales.

The ten rules of this article run the gamut from customer behavior to salesperson behavior. The rules of selling reflect the dynamics of selling, and the ability of the salesperson to execute these rules well is what distinguishes the mediocre from the successful.

© 1998-2007 Tudog International Consulting, Inc. All Rights Reserved