

The Seller's Bill of Rights

In general people tend to perform better when two critical elements are in place; they know what is expected of them, and they know what's in it for them. The American Bill of Rights is a great historical document because it defines expectation and the promise of freedom as a reward. In the world of sales, there is a need for everyone – both buyer and seller – to understand both their rights and their obligations. True patriots, Tudog herein does its civic duty and presents the Seller's Bill of Rights.

Let it be said that on this day, in this place, and at this time, Tudog hereby declares that individuals who sell products, goods or services are both obligated and entitled to certain liberties, justice, and the pursuit of profit. And let it be said that the obligations of an individual involved in sales shall be as follows:

Obligation: Treat Your Customer as You Wish to Be Treated

The salesperson's primary obligation is to the customer. This includes making sure the product is right, the price is fair, the support is appropriate, the service is timely, the options are understood and the usage is practical. Salespeople who do not place their customer first are in violation of not only this Bill of Rights, but also the rules of good business.

Obligation: Know Your Product

Yes, it has been said that sales is an art and the application of the art does not require knowledge of the product, but rather a deep understanding of how and why people buy. This is true from a theoretical sense, but not from the customer's perspective. People want to buy from other people who understand what they are selling, what benefit it delivers, why it offers advantages to other, similar products, and why it is the right product for the task at hand. Know thy product as thy know thyself might be written here if this was a business version of the Ten Commandments. Insofar as it is a rendition of the Bill of Rights, it should suffice to say that you're obligation under the laws of good business is to know your product so that you can give good advice and be seen as a resource.

Obligation: Enjoy Yourself

It may seem odd that having a good time is considered an obligation. In fact, some may argue that the fact that it is an obligation makes it all the more difficult to obtain. Yet, enjoying oneself is indeed an obligation when it comes to sales because the arduous task of selling requires that it be offset by a positive, uplifting, and happy demeanor.

Let it be said that just as a salespeople have the burden of obligations so too do they have the relief that comes with certain rights. Let it be said that the rights of the salesperson include:

Right: Not to Have Negative Replies Postponed

Too often people being pursued by a salesperson will try a number of tactics to postpone giving a negative answer. Perhaps this is rooted in the positive and kind effort not to hurt feelings or cause a feeling of being rejected. In fact what it does is cause the salesperson to invest more time and energy chasing a sale the avoiding party already knows will not be forthcoming. The salesperson has the right to an answer. While a positive buy decision would be preferred, the notification of a decision once one has been made is always appreciated.

Right: To Receive Feedback from Customers

Salespeople are blessed with the power of persuasion, not the power to read minds. Once a salesperson has battled to win an account, the customer should meet the salesperson's right to know more about customer satisfaction, product performance, pricing discounts being offered by competitors and other vital market data. The customer should afford the salesperson the opportunity to make changes needed to retain the business, particularly if the salesperson is abiding to the obligations portion of the Seller's Bill of Rights.

It is true that there is a slight imbalance between a seller's obligations (there are 3) and the seller's rights (only 2). This is a reflection of the nature of the marketplace in that the responsibilities of selling generally far outweigh the rights one derives from making the sale. According to the law of good business, that's just the way it should be.