

## Boosting Sales for the Fall Season

**S**ales. It is the foundation of every successful business. How do you keep business flowing in, retain lucrative customers and stay solidly in the black, through strong and weak economies? This month, we provide some helpful advice to shore up your sales efforts. As the busy fall season approaches, you'll be armed with some powerful tips to strengthen your revenues and generate many happy returns.

### Focus on existing customers is key.

Want to increase sales dramatically? Then why not shift your sales focus from attracting new customers to enticing your proven customers to buy again. The best sales prospect is a prospect that's already converted – in other words, one of your current customers! With this overall focus in mind, here are some powerful sales-boosting strategies

#### 1. Set up a sales incentive program.

Motivate your sales staff to get out there and sell. It is true that offering sales staff the trips and/or TVs for x amount of sales works. The trick is to make your sales program “sweet and simple and attainable”

#### 2. Encourage your sales staff to up sell

Up selling involves adding related products and/or services to your line and making it convenient and necessary for customer to buy them. Don't expect that placing more products near your usual products are going to increase your sales much. To upsell successfully, your customers have to be persuaded of the benefit.

#### 3. Give your customers the inside scoop.

Have you ever been in a store purchasing an item such as a vacuum cleaner and had a sales person unobtrusively make a helpful comment to you. Something like: “I see



you're interested in that vacuum cleaner. We're having a sale next week and all our vacuums will be 20 percent off. This extremely helpful information giving is a powerful sales tactic – and has been proven to make people return. Make some friends with them too.

#### 4. Value your core customers.

Let your regulars know they are special. There should be a clear difference between how regular customers and other customers are treated and incented. How can you expect customer loyalty if all customers are treated as “someone off the street”? There are all kinds of ways that you can show your regular customers the appreciation they deserve, from greeting them by name through giving extended credit or discounts.

#### 5. Set up a customer rewards program.

There's no reason that your smaller business can't have a customer rewards program like the big guys. It can be as simple as a discount on a customer's birthday or as complex as a points system that earns various rewards such as discounts on merchandise. Done right, rewards programs can really help build customer loyalty and increase sales



## Sales Savvy

helping you boost your sale



### Six Surefire Tactics to Teach Your Sales Force:

Looking for some advice to kick-start your flagging sales force? Here are some words of wisdom to pass on to them:

#### 1. Care about your clients.

Many clients don't engage with salespeople fully or honestly because they have been "abused" by a salesperson who was only interested in themselves at some point in the past. In fact, most salespeople care only about their sales and themselves, not their clients. Prove you are different by genuinely caring about your clients – and adopting their mindsets.

#### 2. Set big goals.

Set your sights on the stars. Go for gold. Think big and go for it. Mediocre goals are not appropriate targets for sales superstars! What do you want to achieve in 2010? What clients do you want to engage with? How much revenue do you want to secure? What are your goals for yourself, your business and your life?

#### 3. Take action.

Nothing happens when no-one does anything. Most people sit chatting, surfing the internet and rifling through "to-do" piles. Meanwhile dreams and goals?

#### 4. Ask great questions.

Sales superstars ask great questions. Great questions come from a mindset of genuine interest in the client, their business and their life. Do an audit of your questioning skills and habits. Plan and design some new questions to try out. What can you do to improve your questioning techniques?

#### 5. Listen.

No point asking questions if you don't listen to the answers. Listen to what your clients say. Listen to what they nearly say. Listen to what they didn't say. Listen to what they meant. Listen to genuinely understand. Listen without an agenda. The objective of listening is to understand, really understand, what your clients are talking about... from their perspective. How would you rate your listening habits?

#### 6. Ask- don't pitch.

Pitch is the worst and most misleading word in selling. Think about it: In baseball it means to throw, fling, hurl, or toss... certainly not the most convincing strategy to close a sale! You shouldn't talk solutions until you know what a client wants and needs and why. Ask and listen- don't pitch. Be sure you understand, "What does this client want and need and why?" Don't guess, ask! Then all that remains is a creative way to solve his problems and help him achieve his dreams!

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**INFOPAYS** is published monthly.

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