

Knack or technique: Honing your sales skills

 By [Grant Newton](#)

16 Apr 2014

Selling can be a wonderful and rewarding profession if it's conducted ethically, professionally and with integrity and many successful businesses today rely one hundred percent on having a proficient sales team.

In the past, the proverbial salesman at the door selling vacuum cleaners created a negative legacy that is now outdated. In the 21st century, selling is not about making someone buy something that they don't need, but rather about translating what the buyer's needs are, before providing the best possible solution.

This means that a sales person needs to have certain requirements in order to be effective.

So what are they?

- They should be comfortable with engaging with people. This doesn't mean they have to have the extroverted, party-animal type of personality to fit the bill. The quiet, analytical type will sell successfully in a quiet, analytical way. The fact is, that with sales, there is no getting away from dealing with people *vis a vis*.
- The other requirement that is absolutely necessary is resilience...and a huge amount of it. The seller will have to face many negatives before they reach a positive and they have to have the ability to bounce back with the same enthusiasm with which they started.

A positive attitude helps to work through the no's as well as with people being rude or dismissive, so a buoyant personality might be an advantage when it comes to confrontations of the unpleasant kind.

Understand the buyer

Sales techniques have certainly evolved over time as competition becomes fiercer. It's now imperative to become more involved with a buyer in order to sell more effectively, consequently there is a more collaborative or consultative way of selling. Discussion is crucial to fully understand the client's needs, before coming up with the perfect solution.

For example, if you go to a store with the intention of buying a TV, you're faced with a mind-boggling choice. The accomplished salesperson will start by asking what your needs are: where is the TV going to go, how much space do you have, what kind of quality are you looking for or is it going to go on top of the microwave? So the sales person has become a problem solver, an advisor who is not interested in a once-off sale, but rather in the longevity of the future relationship between buyer and seller.

Depending on what you are selling, whether it's a product, an idea or a service, the techniques remain the same the world over, ensuring that if you're in sales, there's always a job out there.

Good listener

But it's not necessarily the great talker who is going to reap the most sales. It's actually the good listener who establishes him or herself as the top seller in business. The skilled salesperson asks the relevant questions and listens to what the client needs. The ability to understand and acknowledge what the buyer wants and then to translate the product's benefits to the client, is what is going to clinch the deal.

A degree of EQ also comes into it, because understanding your target market and the kind of person you're dealing with refines your sales skills further. So perhaps this is an added requirement: adapting to different people will give you a different approach each time. Honing these sales skills means that your relationships with clients are going to be long-lasting, simply because you've understood and adapted accordingly.

However, ideally, the chameleon-like quality of the salesperson shouldn't mean that they must be disingenuous in order to engage the buyer.

Be honest with the consumer

At Avo Vision, we have a philosophy that we stick to: Be real and be yourself. It all comes back to ethics and not pulling the wool over someone's eyes.

Being honest will definitely get you return business, as most people want to deal with someone whom they can trust and who will deliver what they promise.

So the age-old profession of selling has come a long way from its humble origins of trade and barter. If you don't do the hard work and if you're going to take shortcuts, your exchange experience won't really be a good one; and anyway, you'll only be selling yourself short.

ABOUT GRANT NEWTON

Master trainer and coach, Avocado Vision
■ Knack or technique: Honing your sales skills - 16 Apr 2014

[View my profile and articles...](#)

For more, visit: <https://www.bizcommunity.com>