

5 Truths About Selling: Violate Them At Your Own Risk

by Nanette Miner

Marketing and selling is one of those professional areas that has long been studied and perfected by professionals who are always looking for the “edge” that will make them more successful. Over the years there are a number of techniques that have become “truths” that all successful marketers adhere to.

Truth #1: It costs six times more money to gain a new customer than to keep one you’ve presently got.

Customers who are already doing business with you will be more inclined to continue doing business with you. It takes effort to search out a new professional and find one that you can be comfortable with. Most customers would rather stick with the professional they are already using – whether that is a doctor, dentist, plumber, or stylist. What this means for you, is that more time and energy should be spent on pleasing the customers that are already doing business with you rather than spending marketing dollars on trying to acquire new customers.

Truth #2: It takes six impressions to make a sale.

When you see a new product advertised on TV, or a new movie promoted, you don’t decide immediately to go out and buy the product or spend part of your weekend seeing the movie. Most consumers aren’t easy push-overs. They like to take their time considering their options and the best use of their money. This means that rarely will you find a consumer who will adopt a new technique or purchase a new product the very first time you suggest it. If you want to increase your sales, you and your staff need to become practiced at re-introducing the same item over and over. For instance, if you think a client would look wonderful with highlights, you should suggest that the customer consider highlights on more than one occasion. Most people’s first reaction is to say “no” – they do this to buy themselves time to think. Knowing this, you can confidently bring up the idea of highlights again during future visits.

Caution: a mistake on your part would be to change the suggested item from visit to visit. If you suggest highlights during one visit, straightening during another visit, and a different style altogether on a third visit – it looks like you are trying to make a sale at all costs, AND it appears that you don’t really believe in any of your suggestions if you are quick to give them up and move on to another one. Repeated exposure to the same suggestion is the key to making sales.

Truth #3:

People who have already bought from you once, are more inclined to buy from you again.

Once you have a client established as a styling client, and they are pleased with your work and trust your judgment and recommendations, it is easier to sell them additional product and services. It is much harder to sell anything to a person

who has never done business with you before. So capitalize on add-on sales with your current clientele. Once a client is a styling client, suggest products. Once that client is comfortable purchasing product from you – suggest accessories or additional services.

Truth #4: It's easier to increase a sale on the spot than try to sell someone at another time.

Do you know people who buy beauty supplies at the grocery store, or food at the drugstore? This phenomenon is because once someone has their wallet out, it's easier for them to keep buying than for them to make another purchase decision later on. Our society is so time-stressed that consumers are looking for any type of convenience that will make their lives a little bit easier. You can capitalize on this by suggesting additional purchases when your clients are checking out. If you've created a style using a specific brush or styling aid – sell it to them now, so that they can be successful with their style at home. If they are buying shampoo, suggest conditioner. If they've just had their nails done, sell them the polish for convenient touch-ups between visits. Very few customers will make the effort to come back to the salon between appointments in order to pick up something they could have bought the first time they were there.

Truth #5: Education and information sell.

The more information you can give your clients the more you are encouraging them to make a purchase. Many times people are afraid of the unknown. For example, a client may like the look of straight hair but be afraid that the process takes too long, is too damaging to their hair, or will cost too much. A simple conversation such as, "We can straighten your hair in under three hours. It's a five-step process that requires two of us to work together to...It is a bit expensive, but it lasts 8 to 12-months and since you'll only need trims, you'll be saving on your regular appointments." Consumers want to feel that they have made an educated decision and giving them as much information as possible (in terms that they can understand) helps you to help *them* make that decision.

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Nanette Miner is a small-business marketing expert and co-author of the book, *101 Media and Marketing Tips for Salon Owners, Stylists and Managers*.