

Why Saleswomen Excel: And What Every Salesman Should Know

By Elinor Stutz

During my corporate sales career, upon entering the sales bullpen for the first time at each company, the men would smile and ignore me. I was seen as shy, demure and weak. They assumed “no way” would I be able to sell. I would return the smile and take on the challenge.



The biggest mistake salesmen make is to let their egos get in the way of common sense. I equate this to the same issue of not asking for directions when they are driving and become lost. In the sales arena, if you are constantly talking, you cannot find out how the prospect wishes to be sold to or what they need. Salesmen instead, talk to show off what they know without stopping for directions in terms of the prospects challenges and needs. They kill the sale.

Women are considered weak because they want everyone to like them. Men view this as a complete waste of energy. They ask, “Who cares?” The answer is, “The prospect cares.” It is the prospect who will become the saleswoman’s client, repeat client, and the one who will offer testimonials, referrals and repeat business.

The ability to build relationships is the biggest advantage women have over men. Women, upon entering an office or a home will find something nice to say to start the conversation off on the right track. This could be something as simple as, “Your furniture is beautiful”, or “The picture of your children is adorable.” They then ask where the furniture was purchased or the age of the children. Women demonstrate true interest in the other person.

Next on the saleswoman’s agenda is to find how long the other person has been in their position. If it has been a short time, the prospect is asked what they did prior. Next they are asked their personal hopes and dreams as well as those for their work. Both parties get to know one another on a very personal level.

Men, on the other hand, will launch into a conversation by saying, “The reason I’m here is blah, blah, blah.” They will talk for the next 45 minutes. Their prospect is thinking “Boring”, or “I can’t wait until he leaves.”

I question how the men can accurately pinpoint what the prospect truly needs if he

is always talking. *By listening, questioning, and clarifying for true understanding, saleswomen are far more likely to accurately propose solutions.*

Another perceived “weakness” of saleswomen is their nurturing style. They are accustomed to taking care of their families, so it is felt they waste time taking care of their clientele. They pay too much attention to requests, details and follow-through. We are, generally speaking, slower out of the gate to get started. Quick hits are not our style.

However, time and again, clients large and small all told me, “You are a breath of fresh air!” In the beginning I wasn’t certain what that meant. But I knew once I was in, my sales were much larger than those of my counterparts, and I was able to acquire entire campuses as my clients within months of first setting foot on their premises.

Within 4-5 months, in all new sales positions, I would easily become the top sales producer. In one case, I was the second top because the salesman had already been in place for 10+ years. The men in the bullpen wiped the smirks off their faces and began to wonder what I was doing differently.

The difference was and still is relationship building. I excel in taking care of my prospects and clients. In fact, the title of my new book, “Nice Girls DO Get the Sale: Relationship Building That Gets Results” was taken from the stories shared.

To bring down the barriers between you and your prospects and move your sales cycles along smoothly, my advice is to approach each new prospect as a potential friend and turn your new friends into clients.

Additional Ideas to build business are:

- Invite your “better” clients to lunch
- Talk about personal goals and minimize business,
- Always stay in touch through varied mediums
- Ask how business is when you call
- Remember to ask about personal activities they shared with you and
- Always continually thank each client for their business.

Your center of influence will grow...
And Your Business Will Prosper

Elinor Stutz through Smooth Sale delivers: Sales Advice for Building Business Swiftly and Easily as original work in the form of Professional Sales Training, Licensing of Programs, Speaking Engagements and the "Sales Tips e-zine". Contact Elinor at www.smoothsale.net or elinor@smoothsale.net. Elinor is also Smooth Sale Mentor with our [WS Team](#). Watch for her new book - "Nice Girls DO Get The Sale: Relationship Building That Gets Results" to be released by Sourcebooks September '06. Her Sales Toolkit and "Smooth Selling 4-CD audio seminar" are available now at Smooth Sale.