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## **Selling - What to avoid**

Drawing on The Podiem Academy Kevin Kelly outlines what not to do when it comes to sales and selling.

### **Do not prejudge**

Pre-judging one customer as exactly the same as another means that the salesperson is less likely to ask questions, listen attentively and discover the real needs and values of the second customer - which may be quite different. Never assume, never pre-judge, always listen and treat each customer as a unique person.

### **Do not ignore the smaller sale**

Even if a customer does not seem able to buy big, provided that the sale is profitable, concentrate just as hard. Selling is not only about making the big sale. It is also about building up relationships, demonstrating customer care, building a reputation and getting third party references. Small customers may be a useful source of these even if they do not spend a lot of money with you.

### **Do not be clever**

A sales meeting is not an opportunity to show how clever you are. Do not attempt to show each and every customer that you know all there is to know and that you are smarter than they are. The essence of successful selling is to meet each and every customer on their terms and to build a relationship.

### **Do not waste time**

If a customer is not going to buy, has criteria which are not in keeping with your firm or wants a price which is out of line with what you professionally consider is right, then do not waste time. Politely say to the customer that it would not appear that you can meet their criteria or their price expectations and leave. Sometimes they will call you back but this is not the real reason for leaving. You only have so much time. Ensure you invest it with the right customers.

### **Do not tell lies**

Never make a product or service claim that you know to be untrue. Never quote a third party reference that is not correct. Customers will inevitably find out. Remember that the essence of selling is to create a relationship such that the customer will buy from you again. Second and third sales are always more profitable, in terms of time expended, than first sales.

### **Avoid win-lose**

Never get into an argument with a customer such that one of you wins and the other loses. Even if you win the argument, you will lose the customer. Find a way of backing off gracefully.

### Do not ignore complaints

A complaint is a danger signal but it can also be a selling opportunity. It can be an opportunity to demonstrate your commitment to the customer. Follow up on any complaints your customers make. Listen attentively and find out what led up to the complaint. Find out what went wrong and get it put right. Ensure that the customer feels that he or she has been treated properly even if you cannot resolve the complaint because it arose from something the customer did or misunderstood.

### Do not ignore your colleagues

Team selling works. Whenever possible, take a colleague with you on a sales call. Not only can they give you feedback, which is integral to learning, but they may be able to spot things that you miss.

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