



*Put enthusiasm
on your front
line every time.*

inventory items are displayed. Using spare time to familiarise themselves with the store's inventory can give salespeople confidence in helping customers find exactly what they need quickly.

5. Misjudging the Customer's Intent to Buy

Martha Hill and her eighteen-year-old daughter were in the market for a new car. Dressed in Saturday casuals – sweatshirts and jeans – the pair attracted little attention. The usually overaggressive sales force observed their presence and ignored them. The women noticed that when couples or men came on the lot, a salesperson was quick to offer service. Martha and her daughter were offended by the treatment.

This incident happened nearly ten years ago. The Hills have purchased four vehicles since the snubbing incident, but the dealership that underestimated their intent or ability to buy has never been revisited. Four lost sales due to bad judgment.

6. Lack of Courtesy

Thomas Fuller said, "All doors open to courtesy". And we might add that they close quickly to rudeness. Research shows that nearly seven of 10 people who stopped doing business with a store or company did so because of the way they were treated.

Small businesses that are trying to compete with the big boxes can't afford to blow this opportunity to distinguish themselves from the masses. Courtesy, good manners, and politeness cost nothing.

7. Failure to Suggest "Go With" Items

When all front-line people are trained to view selling as a service, they begin to anticipate their customer's needs. For example, if a customer in a hardware store buys paint, a savvy salesperson might offer "go with" items such as masking tape, brushes, rollers, drop cloths, or spackling.

We know a small-business owner who sold more than \$4,000 worth of Scotch tape in a two week period just before Christmas, simply by having his checkout clerks ask every customer who purchased wrapping paper if they needed tape. Each clerk had a supply in the checkout area, and when a customer needed tape – more than half did – they pulled out two rolls and said, "Will two rolls be enough, or do you need more?" Nearly all customers bought the offered two rolls.

Here's a challenge for you and your employees. Each week select an item from your inventory, and have everyone come up with the list of "go with" items. Make it a game, get everyone involved, create rewards, and give plenty of recognition for good "go with" ideas. Using this tip can easily add several percentage points to your annual sales growth!

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