

Yard Sale

Have you ever had a yard sale or do you happen to frequent yard sales? The last weekend in June, we held another yard sale at our house to move out items that either we no longer want, need, or wonder; why we ever bought? A yard sale is a lot of work setting up and organizing. But I don't want to bore you about yard sales. I want to talk about our perception of the customers we serve by comparing it to a yard sale.

I probably met over 75 people at my yard sale and the funny thing is I miss-judged the majority of them. For example: The young man in his early 20's just getting ready to move in with his fiancé, he'll buy the golf equipment. Nope, he was so excited about the picture with the hearts on it for their bedroom. He just could not put it down. The guy that looked like he would love the tools we had there. No, he wanted to buy the dog statues for his buddy. How about those two ladies that should like the arts and crafts and the cool picture frames? They were looking at the old ties I had on the table. Yes, they were going to turn them into arts and crafts, but I would have never guessed they would be interested in those old ties.

You see, we do the same with our customers. Sales people prejudge what the customer's needs and wants are. I've learned in the profession of selling over the years to let the customer guide you to what they are looking for by asking the right questions. I also learned in my yard sale that these folks are the same way. Selling is involved in everything we do. Even for yard sales. The customer will guide you to their needs.

My first article I wrote on Pawfitability was entitled "Everyone's a Salesperson". In that, I discussed how everything we do in day to day life, involves selling. From interacting with our family and children, to our work environment, selling is involved and is a process that we all need to understand and manage. We need to keep our guard up and make sure that we are listening to the needs of our customers.

In selling, you should not go in to your prospect or customer with an agenda that is pre-scripted. Yes, you still need to know your company's key items, but you may find that your 'value proposition' might be your delivery standards, equipment, order entry program, information technology offered, or just plain old you. Whatever it ends up being, it is more than just the product you offer.

The funny thing is that I am always learning and improving my selling skills. I never thought that I'd learn from my yard sale something I already knew, but did not practice for that event. I let my guard down, but learned real quick and re-adjusted my yard selling skills.

Great Sales!

Mike Popella