

Sales - Approaching Customers

WHY	<p>The truth is... customers would like a starter... a main course... AND a desert! They're just not sure and a good seller would be required to convince them. But often, instead of a seller, they get an order-taker.</p> <p>This short course will allow sales people to be more daring when approaching customers, multiplying their chances to sell more (and better).</p>
WHO	<p>Audience:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Hospitality professionals of all levels - Anyone curious about sales <p>Facilitator:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Self-learning - Managers of all levels
WHAT	<p>Content includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Different types of sales techniques - Different times of service - Which techniques to use at each time of the day - Opportunities to sell <p>Content length:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Approximately 30 minutes
HOW	<p>1st Read content and select what you believe to be useful for you/your team</p> <p>2nd Decide what element you/your team will apply and make a plan</p> <p>3rd Set a deadline for application to be reviewed</p> <p>4th Review results, amend methods according to specific needs and apply again until satisfied</p>
PLUS	<p>Internal resources:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Although each course can be taken independently, the course on Sales Techniques will be useful to complement the learning of this course.

Observation

“We should not judge a book by its cover”... but we sometimes do. We observe guests standing at the door, and in just a few seconds must have made the decision to where to sit them and what to recommend. Their experience and how much they will spend depend partly on that quick decision we made them at the door, at a glance.

What can you learn about a customer by just observing them for a few seconds?

- Their mood?
- Their budget?
- Whether they are in a rush?
- Their origin? (Cultural differences)

Although this information is helpful – it helps to build up a quick profile of our customer – it is unlikely we will read our guests correctly each time. Are rich people only wearing gold? Are youngsters in hoodies only drinking coke? Observation gives us helpful information, judgement doesn't! So let's keep the information gathering on a positive note!

Remembering names

People are just not very good at remembering names. “I'm great with faces but not good at remembering names” is the common comment. Yes, but why? We are good at remembering two things:

1. Emotions – how we felt in a particular situation
2. Senses data – what the environment looked like, the light, the temperature, the smell anything that touched our senses

Can we improve and remember data (such as people's name)? Yes, we can! We can learn from memory athletes – memorising decks of cards so that they can recite them back. To remember all of this information a memory athlete uses a technique that uses memory hooks – things that attach information to their senses so he might be thinking of the Queen of hearts in a sexy outfit!

Names on their own we're not great with, but if we attach something else to it – an emotion or senses data – we're much better. So to bring it all back to your business: when a customer walks into your site and they don't already know us – all they see is the company and team members as an extension of the company

As soon as the customer sees a team member as a person, the team member is no longer an extension of the company, but someone they can connect with. We want guests to have these positive emotions and senses data attached to team members.

So whenever possible, team members should use their name at the beginning of a conversation – Hi I'm Michelle... If it's not the right time at the beginning, then wherever is appropriate. It then becomes personal, the customer attaches the senses data and emotions to the person and probably then tells others about Michelle who was great - and they are likely to want to repeat that experience.

Approaching

Why is it “how can I help” always get answered by “I am good thanks”? Actually – as demonstrated in the **Sales Techniques** course – telling customers what they should try works a lot better than asking them what they would like to try. Here is why:

Dennis Regan was a researcher into influence and human behaviour and in 1971 he ran a famous experiment. He wanted to understand what the impact would be if he gave a small low value gift to people on how many raffle tickets they would then buy.

The gift he chose was a can of coke. What do you think the results were?

His experiment showed were three things

1. People he gave a coke to bought about twice as many raffle tickets
2. The effect lasted over time. If he gave them the coke in he morning and then offered the tickets in the afternoon, they still bought more
3. The power of the gift trumped whether the person liked the experimenter. Part of the set up was some of the people saw the experimenter being nasty before they were asked to buy a ticket. Even if people said they did not like the experimenter the impact was still there

This shows something that we are all aware of and is part of many classic stories. If we give something to people first, they are far more likely to give us something back. In fact, twice as likely.

We suggest this rule: “The Rule of Reciprocity states that we are all bound — even driven — to repay debts of all kinds. Someone does something for you. Then you feel obligated to repay.”

So an approach can be one of any of these – it’s just about giving first rather than asking for something

- Compliment: *‘you have ordered a bottle of the Pinot Noir with your Charcuterie Platter and squid tapas. This is the perfect match. You’re an expert!’*
- Suggestion: *‘As you have opted for the Pinot Noir for your aperitif, you may wish to try the Squid. They really complement one another beautifully’*
- Suggestion: *‘I see you are reading the menu Sir/Madame. Have you seen our Sharing Plates? They are our signature dishes here’*
- Promotion: *‘I see you are fan of our house wine. We actually have a special offer on today, including the house wine. Here it is ’*

Connecting

So I've observed my customer – taken in all that lovely intel and then made my approach with: *“You have ordered a glass of champagne? What a great idea! “* – and the customer replies – *“thanks!”* And nothing else... What now? Do I linger around feeling awkward and making the customer feel awkward too? Do I try another approach?

Our suggestion is to give the customer a “calling card” – a reason to come back to you when they feel they need you. Here are examples: *“My name is Michelle and I am a wine specialist. I will be looking after you today. Please do let me know if you need anything at all”*

“My name is Michelle... As you can imagine I am a true food lover... So I’ll just be about if you want to know anything about our menu and offer.”