

CHAPTER 4

PROFESSIONAL SELLING ANALYZED

If you were to ask one hundred people to define selling, you would obviously get a lot of different responses, but the most common response would be “getting people to buy your product or service.”

“Getting” people to buy, however, sounds like something we are doing to people. Since most of us don’t like the idea of having someone do something to us, we really don’t like the idea of doing something to them. The end result is that most salespeople do not do a good job of actually helping the prospect make a decision.

My philosophy is that professional selling is not something we do to people, it is something we do for people. The way I see it, my job is to give prospects enough information to make a decision; their job is to make the decision. Based on what I’ve heard them say when they demonstrate their selling skills, many top producers apparently feel the same way.

When I first began to sell, I was told to “control the interview.” Well, that felt very much like doing something to the prospect, so in the beginning I didn’t do that very well. But once I understood that my job was to give information and the prospect’s job was to make the decision, then I became very comfortable controlling the interview. I decided that it was my job to control the part about giving information and to let them control the decision making part. Alice Dian did that very well in the preceding chapter. When Pete impatiently told her to “play a couple of tunes,” Alice did not know that he had already made a decision or why he was impatient. But she did understand that her job was to give Pete enough information to make a good decision.

She also understood that in order to give the right information, she had to know what he was trying to accomplish. So Alice took control of the

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interview by asking qualifying questions. Why did Pete write the ad the way he did? Why did he want the kind of music he specified? When she had the answers she was in a better position to explain and demonstrate her professional ability. And as she explained and demonstrated, Pete began to understand that he was seeing a real professional in action.

Finally, Alice did not have to “close” the sale. Pete “closed” it himself. Why? Because Alice gave him enough information to make a decision. Since the information clearly demonstrated that she knew her business and that she was indeed a professional, the decision was in her favor.

There is an old saying that “a good presentation eliminates objections and makes closing automatic.” I think the previous chapter demonstrates that very well. Pete started out with an unreceptive attitude based on the fact that he had already made a decision. Alice made a good presentation which eliminated that objection and let Pete close himself, automatically.

Now, let’s apply this to selling real estate.

When sellers decide to sell privately in order to save the commission that normally goes to real estate people and firms, our job is to give them enough information to realize the odds are against them and that, statistically, they will net more by listing with a professional real estate agent and paying a commission than by selling the house themselves.

In a different situation, a home owner is transferred to another town and must sell quickly. He believes he should talk to three or four salespeople and then list with the one who showed the most enthusiasm about the highest asking price. Our job is to give him enough information to understand that listing with the highest bidder is not the best way and that overpricing can cause a loss of time and ultimately a loss of money.

As you progress through this book, you will see, time and time again, that a successful sale was made because the salesperson gave the prospect enough information to make a decision and then let the prospect make the decision. This does not mean that salespeople do not “close” the sale by asking for the listing or asking the seller to accept the offer. It does mean that, in each case, the salesperson was careful to give his prospects the kind of

LIST MORE SELL MORE

information that would make them feel comfortable about making a good decision. If you can give your prospects and clients the kind of information that makes them feel comfortable in making a decision that is beneficial to them, then you have done something for them, not to them.

That's what professional selling is all about.

