



SECRETS BEHIND SALES NEGOTIATIONS

Sales negotiations secrets unlocked

SALES NEGOTIATIONS



Sales negotiation is a work of art. You need more than theoretical knowledge, you need to have the instinct, tenacity and drive. While you can learn how to deal with customers, and their demands overtime, here are some pointers that we've learnt through experience, and these are points that you can store in the back of your mind.

So, the next time you are conversing with a potential customer, maybe you can try these tricks that you've stored up your sleeve!

THE PRE-SALES PREPARATION WORK

Well, when we say 'pre-sales prep work' it might talk about anything, from the product to the setting. But what we are talking about here, is the actual sales prep work. When you are in the process of negotiation, you might face a customer who is hell bent on getting a concession. These are moments when you can appreciate yourself for your preparedness.

Before you begin a negotiation, set up the amount indicating the maximum concession you can provide. This will make sure you have not struck a deal that is not useful to you all at once it's done with. So, if a 5% discount is all that you can afford, do not step down from that.

THE INITIAL APPROACH

The initial approach matters more than anything else. How you present yourself to the customer. If it is a face-to-face scenario, make sure you appear confident, and you have a smile on your face. Even if you are drowning in debts, do not let that smile falter. A desperate salesperson becomes a prey.

If your conversation is through a phone call, make sure your voice is light. Speak in a calm and clear voice. One that is not too loud, one not too soft. Another key rule for telephonic conversation is to never cut your customer when they are talking. It is rude under normal circumstances also, so it seems worse when it's a sales call.

So, keep the 3 C's in mind. Cool, Calm and Confident. These are important for coaxing the customers subconscious.

LISTEN MORE TALK LESS

Always let the customer talk about their requirements, find out about their necessities. This will help you find out what it is they are looking for, and therefore serve them better. But we're talking about Sales Negotiations here. How will listening help there? More than you can imagine. As you listen to your customer, you get a chance to learn your customer.

How they speak, how they emote and how they respond are crucial factors. When you understand the pulse of the customer, you can outsmart them, and thereby convince them to your way of thinking or pricing easily. We have two ears and one mouth for a reason – that reason being twice the listening and half the speaking.

PRICE OPTIONS ARE BAD

Providing range whilst any negotiation is not a great move. When you are giving a range, you know you have to give this or that. Now, let's consider an example. Suppose you tell your customer, "Sir, we can give a discount of 15% to 20%" you unknowingly provide them with a bigger discount than you intended. So, fix up a specific rate you can concede, and stick to it.

VERBAL COMMUNICATION & WRITTEN CONFORMATION

While negotiations are on, the prices, the concessions and add-ons may change from time to time, so the best thing to do would be to get verbal confirmation and then finally get a written one, probably through an e-mail. The problem of having multiple written confirmations is, that it will look both sloppy and confusing. that you can afford, do not step down from that.

MAKE IT A WIN-WIN NEGOTIATION

There will be times when you give in to your customer's requests, and that is when your mission should be to make it a win-win situation. When it comes to selling a product, or even getting a project, make sure it happens on an equal footing. A salesperson-customer relationship is borne out of mutual respect, so make it profitable for the both of you.

When you are trying to negotiate, there will be many occasions when you will be dealing with a difficult customer. They will talk in ways that will test your patience to a whole new level. That is when you have to maintain your cool. Be calm and do not give into shouting and screaming, no matter how much you want to.

Although prospect and salesperson sit on opposite sides of the table during a negotiation, they will be partners if the deal is signed. Keep the talk light and jovial to avoid creating bad blood.

NOT MERELY A NUMBER GAME

Price is the most commonly negotiated aspect of a sales deal, so you as a salesperson should be prepared to talk discounts. However, since price is tied to value, and value is tied to a customer's perception of and satisfaction with a product, you can consider offering other add-ons or freebies in lieu of a smaller price tag. But bear in mind that this is not a hard and fast rule — the specific concessions a salesperson can offer depends on the situation.

Negotiation is purely a psychological strategy. Psychologically, a sales professional must be the master of his or her own mind and emotions. You need to enter the negotiation prepared, knowing the needs of the potential customer through research, listening, spending time and paying attention.

When you enter a negotiation well-informed, you can keep your expectations under control. The most effective working relationships, which can then evolve into long-standing partnerships, are always based on trust between partners. In this way negotiation is not about winning but rather about mediating for the best outcome for all involved.

So be strong mentally, and do not let any signs of emotion get the better of you. Remember, a desperate salesperson does not win.

WALK AWAY IF NECESSARY

Sometimes, it's okay to let go of a bad deal. You don't have to be willing to accept any curveball thrown at you. If demands become unreasonable or unprofitable for the company, don't be afraid to walk away from the deal. A customer who only agreed to sign if the contract was radically amended or the price be drastically dropped is bound to cause problems down the road. And since they clearly don't see much value in the offering, it's only a matter of time before they become dissatisfied. Get out for your and your prospect's sake. A break set in a good foundation is bound to be rekindled. An unhappy break might burn that bridge altogether.

These are some pointers that might help you out with your next customer, but know that each customer is different, so your experiences with them will be unique as well. All that you as a salesperson can hope for is a mutually beneficial sales deal, one that profits your company and your customer, with little or no friction while negotiating.

Since ideal situations and experiences rarely happen, you can always hope for the best and take up each deal as your last and so do your best.

