

Are You Sending Unintended Messages to Your Customers?

Something as simple as your appearance can speak volumes to your prospects.

SMART STRATEGIES IN REMODELING & RENOVATION SALES

Feb/March 2021

Early in my sales career I was told a customer makes five decisions when determining who they will buy from, and that those decisions are made in a pre-determined order. They decide on 1) the salesperson; 2) the company that person represents; 3) the products they sell; 4) the price of those products or services, and 5) whether it's time for them to buy. That list of five decisions really resonated with me, although it's not always so cut and dried that these five decisions are made in a pre-determined sequence. Homeowners do make judgements or decisions on your company or your products before you arrive at their home – if not, you wouldn't be there, right? However, I do believe that when you arrive for the sales call the first decision that a homeowner will make is “Do I buy this salesperson?” They make decisions on your honesty, trustworthiness, knowledge, competence, and the like. Some of these decisions take time to work through, while others are pretty much instantaneous. An example of the latter, and the subject of this column, is appearance.

Dress for the Success You Want

The idea of appearance goes deeper than how you look, or dress. But dress does matter, I think, so let me address that first.

How your dressed when you show up for a sales presentation quickly leads to some perceptions of you by the homeowner. I realize I'm a bit “old school” in this position, but today I see more and more salespeople wearing blue jeans, t-shirts, boots and tennis shoes. For a guy who started out wearing a shirt and tie into the field (kind of glad those days are over), and still wears slacks, a collared shirt, and dress shoes every day, this is disappointing. I hear the same thing time and time again; “My customers would be uncomfortable with me if I dressed too far above them”. I call BS on that... you dress that way for two reasons – you can, and you want to. I come from the school of thought that says if you're a professional, dress like it. Dress for the job you want, not the job you have. Sorry for rambling on, but this is one of my pet peeves.

Look Deeper than How You Look

But as I mentioned, appearance goes deeper than how we look. The appearance of the product samples, literature, proposals, and leave behind packets are very important, as well. Take the time to clean, repair, or replace product samples as needed. Present sales literature that is crisp and new, not with dog-eared corners and coffee stains on them. And at the end of your sales call, hand them a professional proposal or quote, that details the scope of work and the price to accomplish that work, and not some words scribbled on a piece of paper with a dollar figure attached to it.

Behind the Wheel

Lastly, what is the appearance of your vehicle? Prior to Covid-19, a challenge I often heard from in-home salespeople was the issue of not even getting inside a prospect's home but being forced to conduct the sales presentation on the porch or driveway. I can only imagine with today's focus on social distancing that situation is becoming more prevalent. For that reason, it may be more likely that a homeowner will follow you to your vehicle to look at a product sample or a piece of literature. If they get to the door to your vehicle and it looks like a bomb went off in there... well, that too sends bad messages to your customer. Keep your vehicle as clean and neat as the other sales tools you use.

With a little focus and effort, you can ensure the messages you send to your customers within these three segments of appearance are positive, and not ones that make the selling of your company, product and price more difficult. It communicates to your customer that you are organized, and detail oriented which are good messages to deliver for a salesperson that is asking for a lot of money to beautify someone's most possession... their home.



Brian McCauley is director of sales training for Atrium and Simonton Windows and Doors, both part of the Cornerstone Building Brands family. He has trained thousands of people nationwide and speaks from coast to coast. Contact him at brian.mccauley@cornerstone-bb.com or 502-409-1816.