

Greeting

- One of the biggest obstacles we face as salespeople is the statement “I’m just looking”.
- The definition of browsing is to aimlessly wonder.
- An ineffective greeting does not set up for a positive interaction with your guest.
- A guest left to shop your floor alone will make decisions based on the price tag and not on the product.
- Guests are not an interruption to your day, rather they are your purpose. You are accountable for each and every guest that walks into your showroom.

How To Have An Effective Greeting

- Take a look at the entrance to your store and how you approach guests when they enter.
- Always stand at an angle and let the guest walk towards you. Everything you say or do has an effect on your guest. The more prepared you are to greet a guest the more effective your greeting will be.
- Mentally prepare yourself for guest interactions throughout the day. Similar to a batter taking practice swings in the batter’s box, allow yourself time to get in the correct mental space for every interaction. We must be guest ready, everything you say and do must be centered around your guest.
- The “million dollar smile” A positive smile invites a guest in and will start every interaction you have with your guests in a positive direction.
- Thank your guests! Guests will feel appreciated and valued when you thank them. This will make them more comfortable and help you bring them to the next step of qualifying.
- A good greeting will lead you into effectively finding the needs and wants of your guests. Practice makes perfect, write down and practice your greetings to see the results you desire.

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Qualifying

- Your guests are not professional buyers, they are professional shoppers that need you as the professional salesperson to help them qualify their needs and wants.
- The more effective you become at qualifying the more valuable time you can save both you and your guest.

What can we determine from qualifying questions?

1. Wants and needs 2. The guests budget 3. Find the main decision maker in the group

Wants and needs

- Your guest may not even realize what it is they are truly looking for. Its very important to ask questions that reveal a guests wants and needs. Ex: “What are you thinking of adding or replacing in your home?”, “What do you dislike about the products you currently own?”
- These types of questions will help you not only gather valuable information on the guests wants and needs but also identify the products in your store that will fill those wants and needs.

Categories

- In your stores we have different categories. For example, we need to distinguish between furniture, mattresses, and appliances.
- Its important to have separate qualifying questions for each category
Ex: For mattresses you can ask “What size mattress do you currently have, are you a back, side or front sleeper?”
- Confidence sells, it’s important to practice these questions and have as much knowledge on the products as possible. The more comfortable you are with qualifying, the easier it will be to find your guests needs.
- When we ask the proper questions to find our guests wants and needs we begin to raise not only their satisfaction with the products they are looking at, but also raise the dissatisfaction with the products they currently have, leading to a higher chance of sales.

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Comparison Selection

- Comparison is a step that's often missed between qualifying a guest and presenting a product but it can be one of the most powerful superpowers a salesperson can possess.
- Comparison selection can turn shoppers into buyers by raising their level of satisfaction for a product.
- We all know about goldilocks and the three bears, one bed is too soft , one is too hard and one is just right. Imagine if goldilocks only had the just right bed to try, she would probably continue to believe there is something better out there. If a guest has nothing to compare to they will probably ask for your card and continue shopping at a competitor.
- It's very important to know where your comparable products are and compare multiple products with your guests. This comparison can increase the satisfaction of a guest in the product they desired.
- Identify the most favoured and least favoured product that a guest tries out. This will help you to not only identify your guests needs but also help the guest realize what they want and why it is they want it.
- We need to be ready at all times to show our guests a variety of comparisons including comfort, style, configuration, and budget.
- Budget and price can be one of the most influential things in completing a sale. Properly comparing features of products at different prices can often lead a guest to raise their budget or become more satisfied with the budget they have as they see the features they are gaining and missing out on.

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Presentation

- We are actors on a stage not a set, in sales we have to be at our best all the time, we don't get cuts or second takes we need to be sure we make every guest count every time.
- We need to be prepared to sell the invisible, when a guest looks at a product they see only the surface level. It is up to you to give them a deeper understanding of the product. Presenting all of the benefits of a product will increase the value of the product in the eyes of the guests.
- When the benefits of a product exceed the price, guests will make the best buying decision.
- Remember benefits might not be as clear to guests as they are to you. Make sure to highlight the hidden benefits of each and every product. Ex: A sofa may have an engineered hard frame that guarantees a lifetime, the foam in every back is weighed and seems so that every back will have a consistent comfortable feel.
- Guests don't buy on features alone, they buy on the benefits that the features offer. Every product in your store has a multitude of features that you must educate your guest on in order for them to see the true value of the product.
- Benefits sell! The best way to sell your guest on the benefits is not simply just to communicate the benefits to your guest, but to make it an experience that they will take ownership of themselves.
- Our job as presenters is not simply to inform guests but to give them real-life experience in the benefits, we are selling them on.
- Remember that practice makes perfect! Don't be afraid to role play scenarios and interactions to help you become the best presenter you can be.

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Asking For The Sale

- Selling is simply supplying each and every guest with all of the information needed for them to make the best buying decision.
- Sometimes it can feel daunting for salespeople to ask for a sale. It's important to remember that there is nothing wrong with going back to previous steps. Reusing previous steps can often be essential to making a sale.
- If a guest seems unsure about their buying decision take them back to the qualifying or comparison selection stage. Ex: Mr and Mrs Jones I really appreciated your time, I'd love to earn your business. Is there anything I could have missed, if you could change anything on this product what would it be?
- A trial close is simply talking about all of the objectives you handled that the customer agreed to. Ex: Listen the measurements are fine, we measured it out and it's going to fit perfectly. You fell in love with that beautiful black leather and the comfort of this couch. Would you want to get that set up for delivery on Tuesday or possibly Friday?
- You can use a trial close to help gauge the customer's interest or readiness to make a purchase.
- Sometimes your guest may already have a product in mind at one of your competitors. If a guest is hesitant on buying you may need to ask them if there is another product they are comparing it to or something they have seen somewhere else. This will help you identify what product they are comparing to as well as what benefits they may be looking for.
- When you identify products and benefits a guest is comparing in other products you can help them find these benefits in the product you are showing or in another product that you have available on your salesfloor.
- Sometimes waiting on tag orders can turn a guest off of a sale. It's up to you to help them understand the benefits they will gain in waiting for that tag order. Ex: The product you picked out is amazing and I know you don't want to wait 8 weeks. But let me tell you the manufacturer is not going to rush this product, they take care in providing you with the best quality product and I promise you, you won't be disappointed.
- Most professional sales people when asked about completing a sale simply say "I just write it up". They are so confident in their process that even when the process doesn't work they are unwilling to change.
- One of the biggest challenges salespeople can face is the budget of the guest. It's important to offer financing and other offers such as VIP cards that your store may offer.

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Reinforcing The Sale

- Reinforcing the sale is an opportunity to show the guest all of the benefits they loved about a product and gives them confidence in their buying decision.
- Review the benefits and value of the product, you don't have to highlight every benefit but there will always be one or two benefits that led the guest to make the purchase. Ex: "That sectional that you just purchased will suit your family greatly, there are more than enough seats to sit your whole family for a comfortable evening".
- The easiest person for a sales associate to sell is a guest that they have already sold to. It is very important to maintain customer relationships, once you have talked about the benefits and reaffirmed your guests buying decision take the opportunity to advance the relationship into the future. Ex: "Mr and Mrs Jones I so appreciate you coming in today, I know you will love this product and the great movies you will enjoy in the living room with your family. I would love the opportunity to earn your family's business one more time. It may be 6 months in the future, maybe even a year from now, if there is a product you could replace in your home, what would it be so I can keep my eye out for you".
- Most guests when asked will tell you the product they plan on replacing next. This is our chance to take them back to the qualifying stage. By asking them what they dislike about the product they currently have, and what they are looking for out of a product in the future, you will make that guest feel the need to replace the product that much more when they return home.
- When your guest is in a rush or not willing to talk about further sales at the moment, simply ask them if it is ok for you to follow up with them in the future. You can let them know about future sales or offers you might be having soon that they will not want to miss out on. The easiest sales you can make is to guests you have already sold to in the past.

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Follow Up

- When you sell a guest you aren't just hoping to make one sale, you are hoping to make a lifetime of sales with that guest.

Follow up with a guest who has made a purchase

- Follow up with a guest within 24 hours of them bringing home a product. Reinforce the benefits of the product they purchased and let them know you are always available if they have any questions or concerns.
- When a guest sees you reach out to them after the sale has already been made they will become more open to business with you in the future. Guests become more comfortable and confident to shop with you when they feel you have a genuine interest in their well being and satisfaction
Ex: "Hey it's Rick, hope you're enjoying that amazing chair you purchased. Just following up with you, if you have any concerns or questions I am always available for you."
- Guests who order a product that takes a certain amount of time to come in will often call before the scheduled delivery date. This gives us a great opportunity to follow up with them, reaffirm their buying decision, let them know everything is on track with their delivery, and let them know you are available for any products they are looking to replace in the future. A good tip is to follow up with guests halfway through their product's order period.
- When a product a guest orders arrives it gives us yet another opportunity to follow up with the guest. Go over all the delivery and contact information, and the features of the product that led the guest to make the purchase. Reviewing an order will reaffirm and boost a guests confidence not only in the product but also in their relationship with you.

Follow up with guests who are on the fence

- It's important to follow up with guests who are on the fence in a timely and effective manner.
- It is up to you to assist your guest in overcoming mental barriers stopping them from making a purchase.
- Let your guests know that you will be working for them, doing some research, checking the warehouse for a product that will best meet their needs. Show your guest you care through actions, let them know that even once they leave the store you will still be working to help them find the perfect product for them.
- Guests are the most powerful asset we have as salespeople and maintaining and building relationships can be one of the most powerful tools in sales.

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Product Knowledge

- As salespeople, our job is to give every guest the information they need to make the best buying decision. To do that, we need to know the products on our floor—what we carry, what sells, and why.
- Start by identifying your top sellers. I like the 20/80 rule: 20% of your products will do 80% of your business. You should know those key products inside and out—what they are, who makes them, and why they work.
- Use a product knowledge book. It should list your manufacturers and their products. Begin with your best sellers and write down the benefits they offer—not just features, but how they'll help the guest.
- Guests buy benefits, not features.
Example: "This Decor-Rest frame is kiln-dried, solid hardwood with a lifetime warranty. That means no cracking, and years of reliable use."
- If you're stuck, work bottom-up. On a sofa, start with the feet, then the frame, coils, cushions, and finally fabric. Think about how each piece helps the guest in real life.
- Know more than just what's on the floor. What options are available—fabrics, sizes, colours? Is the product in stock or special order? What are the exact dimensions? Ask delivery staff how long setup takes. Keep this info handy—tag the products or have it close by so you're not scrambling while helping a guest.
- Walk the floor with your product knowledge book. For every product, list its features and at least three guest-focused benefits. Practice recalling them until you know them cold.
- Product knowledge is memorization, plain and simple. The more you study and review, the easier it gets. Practice until it's second nature.
- And don't forget—know what your competitors carry too. If a guest mentions they're looking elsewhere, you should be ready to compare and show them the value in what you're offering.

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Inventory

- One common thing million dollar sales associates have in common is that they are the first ones in their store everyday. They make it a habit to check their inventory and to know exactly what they have in stock.
- 20% of your product provides 80% of your business. It's very important for us to know how much of this product is in stock and how long it will take to order in each of these specific products.

Special Orders

- When doing tag orders it is very important to keep in touch with your manufacturer, things can change and become delayed. It's very important that we keep up to date with delivery times.
- It's very important to have the most accurate information when giving your guests delivery or order times. We need to keep our guests informed of any changes that may take place, why they are happening, and how we are doing our best to get every guest the product they desire in the most timely and effective manner possible.
- As salespeople we need to not only know the inventory of our store but also to keep an eye on the inventory of our competitors. You can make a guest's decision to buy very simple if they know they can get a product from you the same day, that may take weeks to come in if they shop with a competitor.

Delivery Dates

- Never underestimate the power of knowing the delivery dates of all your products. The difference between you closing a potential sale could be as simple as your ability to inform them of the delivery date off the top of your head. When we have to go to the back or leave our guests to check with someone else on when they can expect a product, we give our guests time to change their mind. When we know the delivery date we not only remove this potential time for a guest to change their mind but we also build confidence and trust with them, giving us the highest chance to close the sale.
- Check what delivery times are available first thing in the morning as well a few times throughout the day. This will allow you to stay on top of delivery times and have the most accurate information available.

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Financing

- I believe financing is the eighth wonder of the world. Your guest can come into your store and get a product that they will enjoy the benefits of without having to pay for a whole year.
- Financing allows you to continue a sales relationship with your guests after they have left your store and their product has been delivered. I remember when I had my store I would love it when a guest would come in and say “We just paid off the bedroom suit now we are looking to upgrade our living room suite”.

Benefits of Selling Financing

1. Financing increases your closing ratio
2. The guest doesn't have to settle because of their budget
3. Financing makes it easier to sell warranties and extended service plans
4. Once a guest establishes credit with you they are far more likely to return

Introducing Financing

- It's very important to offer or introduce financing early on in an interaction somewhere during the greeting or qualifying. Remember a guest could walk into your store with a certain budget that suddenly shrinks your showroom in half. With financing we can open up all of the options and products and once again have our full showroom to sell from.
- Financing is an important first step that can save you and your guest valuable time and energy. The last thing you want is to spend hours with a guest helping them pick out products only for them to get denied for the amount they need financed. When we find out if a guest qualifies for financing early on into our interaction we can tailor the products we show to their specific needs and budget. This will ensure the best interaction between you and your guest and make sure no one is left feeling let down.
- As a final effort sometimes financing can be the thing that pushes a sale over the top. Even if a guest turned down financing as an option when they first walked in, sometimes they may not have realized the amount they would need to spend or they have fallen in love with a product outside of their budget. Sometimes reminding them that you have financing options and walking them through it can be all you need to complete the sale.

Add Ons

- Financing gives us a great opportunity to include add ons in any of our successful sales. Don't hesitate to inquire about your guests' next purchase. You would be amazed at how many guests come into your store needing or looking for multiple products, but feeling that it's just out of their price range to get them all at once. With financing we can offer them an option to afford not just the product you originally sold them, but also a path to get all of the products they desire today, not 6 months to a year from now.

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Policies & Procedures

- Policies and procedures is what separates the amateurs from the professionals in the sales business. The little things can make the biggest differences.
- Be punctual, arrive on time, and make sure you abide by the store dress code.
- Keep up to date with all of your store's delivery and financing policies. Make sure you have the most accurate information for your guests at all times.
- Keep procedures and operations consistent so that everyone is on the same page at all times.
- A business policy procedures should be ready and accessible to all employees at all times. It's important that policies apply equally to all of the individuals working at the business.
- Never be afraid to ask questions if you are unsure or a policy is unclear to you.
- When we have effective policies in place that everyone is aware of and on board with, it keeps us all at the top of our selling game.

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Advertising

- Advertising is what lights a spark for your guest, it brings them into your store already thinking about the products you offer and primed to make a great buying decision.
- It's important to be aware of the specific products your store may be currently advertising. When you know the details of a product being advertised inside and out, it gives you a head start on interactions with guests brought into your store by that advertisement.
- Flyers can be very powerful tools to bring guests in seeking a specific product. It's very important to know where the products in your flyer are on the sales floor at all times.
- Just because a guest is brought into your store by an ad for a certain product it doesn't mean the guest can only be sold on that specific product. It's very important to not just show the guest the product they desired but to still take them through the qualifying and comparison selection stage of sales. A guest may come in to look at one or two products in your store but it may be the products they hadn't thought of that get the sale done.
- It's very important for you to know what advertisements or sales your competitors' stores may have currently going on. Guests may come in looking to compare deals, prices, or specific products they have seen elsewhere with the products in your store. Knowing the sales and ads you are competing against gives you an advantage in convincing your guests to trust you with their business over your competitors.
- Advertising can create urgency in a guest with limited time offers. It's important to highlight these offers to your guests and let them know the opportunity they have in front of them today.

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Fuel the Fire of Your Guest's Desire

You've heard me say it before: Fuel the fire of your guest's desire and you will not fail to make the sale.

Let me tell you a quick story. About 30 years ago, I had just opened my first store. My wife and I were expecting our first child. Money was tight. Then I got a call from John F. Lawhon, a sales trainer I worked with. He asked me to help at the Chicago show. I told him I couldn't afford it — new store, baby on the way — but he was a great salesperson, and he convinced me.

I told my wife I wouldn't spend much. First day there, Mr. Lawhon took me to lunch — \$50 USD. That was a lot for me back then. The next day, I skipped lunch with him, grabbed a hot dog and Coke for \$2.

While I was eating, a man approached me. "You must be from the furniture show," he said. Then he asked, "Are you a 40 short?" — my exact size. He told me about a jacket he brought in for someone else who never showed up. Said it would fit me like a glove.

Next thing I know, I'm in his shop, standing in front of a mirror. He shows me the jacket — Four Seasons material, silk lining, beautiful buttons. He puts it on me and says, "You look like a million bucks." And honestly, I did.

"How much?" I asked.

"\$500," he said. My jaw dropped.

Then he said, "You're a Canadian? We offer \$100/month over five months for our Canadian clients." So, yeah — I bought it. I didn't want to spend \$50 on lunch, but I walked out with a \$500 jacket. Why? Because the benefits outweighed the price.

When I got home, my wife said, "What's that?" I showed her the lining, the fit, the feel. She said, "Good thing you love it so much."

I still have that jacket. It still fits. And I still tell this story — because it's sales in a nutshell.

He greeted me with enthusiasm. He compared the value. He asked for the order. He offered financing. And he followed up with a thank-you note. He fueled the fire of my desire.

In our stores, 20% of guests know what they want. The other 80% are unsure — the spark is there, we just need to bring it forward.

Love your products. Show the benefits. When benefits outweigh price, guests see value.

Fuel the fire, and you won't fail to make the sale.

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- Metrics are very important for us as salespeople. Remember what you measure will improve! It's important for us to know where we are at all times and where we are trying to get to.
- One of the first things we want to start tracking is our sales closing ratio. For every 10 guests that come in our store how many are we closing. If you are closing 3 of every 10 guests, that means that 70% of your guests are unsatisfied guests, that are leaving your store and probably heading to your competitor.
- We also want to be tracking our average ticket. It is important to know the value of your sales, this can tell us valuable information, like the quality of the products we are selling most as well as how often we are able to successfully sell guests on add ons.
- Its very important that we keep our measurements as accurate as possible. Don't concern yourself with where other sales associates are. When you focus on accurate metrics it gives us the best opportunity to improve and get to the numbers we desire.
- Reflect, Detect, and Correct. I often say these 3 words can help any salesperson get to where they want to be. For example if someone is having trouble with their greeting. It is very important to document and analyze everything we do in our greetings with guests. This allows us the best opportunity to analyze and detect the area of our greeting that may not be working or is letting us down. Finally once we have found the area of concern we can come up with a plan to correct this and have the best greeting possible.
- I often recommend sales associates to go through the Reflect, Detect, and Correct process for all 7 of our sales steps. Document and go through your Greeting, Qualifying, Comparison Selection, Presentation, Asking for the sale, Reinforcing the sale, and Follow up. We can review every sales interaction from start to finish to see what works and what doesn't work. This will help you become the best sales associate you can be.
- Product knowledge makes selling easier. The better we know our product the more easily we can have a guest experience its benefits. We can also track our knowledge of products and our six groups of knowledge. The more you know the easier it will be to sell.

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Service Plans

- Anytime your company has a benefit that you can offer your guest, you need to fully understand it and be able to talk to guests about it. Present every benefit possible to your guest when selling.
- Product knowledge extends beyond just the specs of a specific product. It's important for us to know all of the benefits or services offered on every specific product. For example if you are selling a sofa it's important to not only be knowledgeable on the details of the sofa, but also extended warranties and service plans.
- Extended warranties and service plans are invisible to guests, it's not something they can tangible see or experience. It's up to us as salespeople to help the guest see the value of these programs.
- Extended service plans and warranties give you an amazing opportunity to stay in touch and follow up with your guests. When guests feel valued, and see the benefit of a service plan when a problem occurs, they are much more likely to return to your store for future purchases.
- The more knowledge you have on an extended service plan or warranty the easier it will be for you to sell. Bring up the service plan your store offers early on in interactions with guests and let them know that you have them covered far beyond the sale of a product. Promote the key benefits of the service plan to drive its value up. When the value of the plan begins to outweigh the price the guest will be far more likely to purchase the plan.

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Objections

- Objections can often be the make or break point of sales interactions. The top 1 percent of sales people are masters at handling objections and dealing with concerns. The way you deal with guests' objections can set the stage for the rest of the interaction with the guest moving forward. Objections can be spun to impact the sale in a positive or negative way and it's up to you to navigate what outcome an objection may take.

Overcoming Objections Is All About Your Approach

The 5 Most Common Objections

1. The Price:

Remember to do a comparison selection, this will allow you to show a product with a lower cost and all of the benefits the guest is losing when going to a product with a lower cost.

2. I need to check with my partner/spouse:

Always stay focused on the guest in your store. Enthusiasm is contagious. If a guest leaves your store with a positive mindset about a product or even your store, they are far more likely to speak highly to their partner and to return to the store together. Never be afraid to set up an appointment when the guest can return with their partner and you can help them together.

3. Just Looking:

Don't let "I'm just looking" be the end of the conversation. Many guests will walk into your store unsure themselves of what it is they are truly looking for or need. It's up to us to help steer and guide a conversation to take a guest who is just looking and unlock their true desires.

4. Guest does not want to wait on a tag order:

It's very important to sell a guest on the benefits. Similar to price, when a guest sees the true value of the product outweigh the time it will take for them to receive it, they will be happy to wait on the tag order.

5. Competitors prices:

A guest may say to you "I have seen this product at another store for a better price". They may be right but a majority of the time the product that they are thinking of may be similar, but is often not the same product you are offering. It's important for you to find out what product exactly they are comparing it to. This way we can do a comparison selection and show why even though the products may seem the same, the product in your store has a lot more value to offer. Even if you are matching a price it's still important to take them through a comparison selection. A guest may not ever fully realize the benefits your product has to offer. When you can help them to see these benefits they are far more likely to not only give you their business today but in the future as well.