

4 keys to get the order without being pushy

BY ROBYN HENDERSON



It's a known fact that many people do not want to be sold to. Even those people who actually walk into a shop looking for something to purchase, visit a website and seek information or meet a stranger at a networking event. No one enjoys the heavy sell and for many, irreparable damage can be done without the sales person being remotely aware. So let's look at 5 keys to ensuring you get your next order without being pushy.

1. Communicate Clearly

This includes both the spoken and the written word. Make sure your language is jargon-free. Talking about CRMs, ROIs, B2Bs, SMEs, etc. can be totally acceptable in a specific institute or association where this language is commonly used. However, it can be seen as confusing, annoying and sometimes quite intimidating at networking events. People outside your industry or profession don't have a clue what you are talking about. If they are polite, they may in fact ask what does the jargon means, so that your story has some relevance to them. But most remain confused. And even if they were a prospect, they are unable to identify that for themselves. The result for you is of course a missed opportunity and no sale. You may like to think of your communication with others as being like building a bridge between two people. The more we communicate, the more they understand where we are coming from, the more trust we build, the stronger the connection becomes.

TIP: Avoid using professional jargon outside of your industry network.

2. Act Like The Host And Not The Guest

Sometimes people feel quite awkward attending a networking event, which is supposedly filled with prospects and potential referees. All they are seeing as they enter the room is a sea of strange faces. Master networkers always act like the host and not the guest. In a nutshell, they often approach people who are standing alone and looking a little shy and introduce them to others. Good networkers also have a genuine interest in meeting new people and connecting them with like minded people. By taking the focus off you and putting it on to the person you are speaking to, you are bound to learn something new. Not to mention expand your network

TIP: At networking events, don't let your comfort zone become a cage.

3. Listen, Listen, Listen

Master networkers are great listeners. They listen with their heart as well as their ears. Within the Chinese symbols for listen, is a character

representing the word "king". What would happen if we practised listening unconditionally as if the person who we're listening to was a king and had our total respect. You may believe that people must first earn respect, rather than just be given it. However, if we want to stand out from our competitors, why not practise listening as attentively as possible.

TIP: Listen with your ears as well as your heart.

4. Always Follow Up

There are actually three parts to attending a networking event:

- a. Preparation prior to the event
- b. Attending the function
- c. Following up after the event

Most people just show up, often unprepared, with no strategy, no business cards and basically no idea of what they want from the event—other than the magic word BUSINESS. Many people also overcommit that they will send something "this afternoon", "tomorrow", "asap" only to find that unexpected events have taken them away from that task.

I have learned through my mistakes that it is better to under promise and over deliver. Sometimes people need things urgently—often a brochure, profile or even an email, that we have broken our necks to get to them, which may sit for days or even weeks before they get to it.

Smart networkers allow themselves time post event to follow up. They know that doing what they say they are going to do, within a specified time frame is critical to building their credibility with a potential client or referee. Always ask the question, "When would you like to receive this information?" Most often, the response will be "whenever you have time."

TIP: Don't overcommit and promise things within a time frame that you know will put pressure on you. Allocate 15 minutes per day follow up time after attending networking events.

Hold on, we didn't mention anything about closing, or getting the sale. That's right, we didn't. My experience tells me, that if you consistently work on the four keys above, you too won't have to ask for the sale. Your customers will become advocates quickly and effortlessly. And when your name is mentioned, they will describe you as "really easy to understand", "very professional", "always follows up", "really listens to me and my situation and makes me feel special". And of course, the magic words: "here's his phone number, I recommend him. You'll enjoy doing business with him too, I always do."

With leads like that, who needs to close a sale?

Robyn Henderson

Global Networking Specialist, Robyn Henderson, invites you to visit her website – www.networkingtowin.com.au for more articles, ideas and recommendations. Or you can contact Robyn on Ph: 02 9369 1025

Fax: 02 9369 1053

or email: inetwork@ozemail.com.au