

What Women Want: After the Sale

By Jennifer Smith

Tips on post-sale
followup &
customer service

In a predominately male industry like water quality, the differences between men and women can result in little things that can cost big sales. In Part 1 of this three-part series (“What Women Want,” February 2014), we discussed how to prepare for your sales appointment. In Part 2 (“What Women Want: The Sales Appointment,” June 2014) we discuss what to do—and not do—during the appointment. In this last installment, we will cover the closing and, most importantly, what to do after the sale.

Tip #1: Women Want Options

Women want to make sure they are getting the most for their money. Offering “good, better, best” options and explaining the limitations and benefits of each solution will help her make a decision that fits her needs.

Tip #2: Silence is Golden

Once you have presented her with options, make sure to give her a chance to process and think about those options. Break the silence by asking if she has any questions. Always make her feel comfortable about the decision she has made—it is her story and she has a good reason for why she made that decision.

Tip #3: Always Leave the Place Cleaner Than When You Came

A man who cleans up after himself is a keeper. Make sure to wipe down any counters or water spots you may have left. Keep a small baggie in your test kit to store used chemical

packets. This will show her that you respect her property.

Tip #4: It’s Okay for Her to ‘Sleep on It’

Did you know only 17% of Americans will make a purchase “the day of”? Many sales trainers note, “If you don’t close the deal that night, you significantly reduce your chance for the sale.” That is no longer the case—people have veered away from “impulse” buying. Many of my friends have told me they dislike high-pressure sales. I recently had a carpet salesperson tell me I “had to purchase that night to save \$500.” What that told me was his carpet was not worth the price I would pay if I decided to buy tomorrow.

Tip #5: Don’t Worry if She’s Shopping Around

That’s what women do! Again, they want to make sure they are getting the most for their money. When I go into a home, one of the questions I ask is, “Have you researched water treatment?” Sometimes she will tell you about other companies she has had out or plans to have out. Get familiar with your competitor’s product. Focus on the benefits that your product offers that fit her



The “What Women Want” series concludes with a final installment on closing the sale.

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needs. Most importantly, do not speak poorly of your competition. If a homeowner tells me she is going to “get a few more prices,” I ask that she call me with any questions she may have about my equipment, so I have the opportunity to compare “apples to apples.”

Tip #6: Ask for a Second Date, a Third Date & Many More

So your customer wants to “think about it.” Ask her when would be a good time to call back and the best number at which to reach her. Ask her if she prefers phone, text message or e-mail. I had a new sales professional who was shocked that she closed two sales via text in her third month of sales. I do not suggest being a pest; however, gentle reminders that “I am still here” with the method of communication she requested go a long way.

And now—congratulations! You have been able to help your customer resolve her water quality issues with a new softener, but the relationship has just begun. When discussing the sale, let her know that you like to set up two dates. One is the install date; the second is to swing by a couple of weeks later to make sure everything is installed to her liking and to answer any questions she may have. When you return in two weeks, show her how to set the clock if the power goes out and how to change any filters, remind her to use less soap, and answer any questions. That is “wow” service.

Tip #7: Never Love ‘Em & Leave ‘Em

So many times I hear, “That salesperson sold me a system and I never heard back from them.” I recommend calling your customers every six months. Many times I would call during the day while the customer was at work and leave a message: “Hi, Ms. Jones. Just wanted to give you a call and see how everything is going. If you have any questions or concerns, please feel free to give me a call.” This was a gentle reminder that “I am still here.” When Ms. Jones had a question about her water, or her sister’s water, she called me—the water expert.

I happened to call a customer named Carol, who had been a customer for three years, although I had been in the industry for only two months. The salesperson before me had left the company, and Carol was what we call an “orphan.” When I called Carol, she had recently had surgery and could not drive. I asked how everything was working, and she said, “I am so happy you called. I am getting horrible iron staining and realized I forgot to add salt.” I told her I

could swing by that afternoon with a bag of salt and set up a salt delivery. I ended up selling her a reverse osmosis system that day and received two referrals later.

Men and women are not planets away with their buying habits. As famous makeup entrepreneur Mary Kay Ash

said, “Pretend that every single person you meet has a sign around his or her neck that says, ‘Make me feel important.’ Not only will you succeed in sales, you will succeed in life.” *wqp*

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