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Jeweller



G U E S S

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DO WE NEED MORE Cs
TO SELL DIAMONDS?



Work or play

THERE'S A WATCH TO SUIT
EVERY TYPE OF MAN



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WHEN ACTIONS S
LOUDER THAN W



BUSINESS

USING YOUR BODY (LANGUAGE) TO MAKE SALES

The ability to read and use body language can help a salesperson discern whether a customer is ready to buy or ready to walk, according to international body language expert Allan Pease.

Recognising the inaudible signals or "tells" that everyone exhibits is useful not only when playing poker; it can benefit retail salespeople, too.

Interpreting body language allows staff to know when it's time to talk, when it's time to listen, when it's time to act and when it's time to close a sale. It can also tell staff when it's time to give up and move on.

Using, and reading, body language in its simplest form can go a long way towards improving the chances of sales in any store, regardless of size.

START AT THE BEGINNING

Even after all these years, many people in retail still find the greeting the most difficult part of the sales process.

The worst thing to ask is, "Can I help you?" Nearly all new sales assistants will make this

mistake, and it's important to help them to realise that customers enter stores for a reason, not because they have nowhere else to stand.

A salesperson's job is to find out exactly what they're seeking and sell it to them.

Instead of a typical greeting, try two things before saying anything. When someone walks into the store, give them an eyebrow flash – it's an inbuilt acknowledgment signal that says "I know you're there, and I see you."

When a salesperson does this, customers feel they've been acknowledged.

Studies show that when people queue for service, they usually stand in a line to ascertain how quickly it is moving before deciding to stay or go. If they're acknowledged by the serving staff, they are inclined to remain in the queue for up to seven minutes longer.

In a retail store, this can be enough time to finish serving a customer before moving to them.

The next thing to do is to smile with teeth

CUSTOMERS CAN GIVE OFF A NUMBER OF TELL-TALE SIGNS THAT SALESPEOPLE CAN CAPITALISE ON ... IF THEY KNOW WHAT TO LOOK FOR AND HOW TO RESPOND

visible. This is another hard-wired signal that says staff are friendly, non-threatening and playful. This signal also works well over a distance, especially when being heard would require shouting.

Of course, if customers are within speaking range, staff should simply say "Hello", which is still the best greeting.

PUT ON A HAPPY FACE

Most often, when staff smile at someone, they receive a smile in return – it's a reflex action. When a customer smiles back and doesn't instantly look away, this is the cue to say, "If there's anything you need to know, I'm here anytime."

Initially, this is the best level of help to offer – customers who know what they're seeking will start searching without any help, while others who are seeking inspiration will often accept an offer of assistance.

If staff aren't busy with another customer, they should be mindful to monitor what this new customer is viewing. If the customer lingers over an item, or returns to one, staff can compliment them on their taste.

"That ring/watch/necklace is a lovely piece. Do you know that it is available in other styles/contains a diamond from the Ekati mines/comes with a free gift (or any other attributes)?"

Alternatively, try asking what they like most about that piece, and hopefully get the customer to start talking.

If one item in particular continues to draw the customer's attention, ask if there's anything they would like to know about that piece. One way to start might be to say, "I can see that you really like

it. Do you have a specific purpose for it? A special occasion, perhaps?"

The key is for staff to ask open questions that help them to appear genuinely interested in the customer, rather than the product.

IT'S CHEAPER ON THE NET

Every product and service has an in-built liability, and a cheaper price on the internet is a common liability nowadays for nearly everyone in traditional retail. Rather than wait for the customer to raise the

issue – especially if that customer enters the armed with web print outs – staff should get

Bringing up the issue of online pricing should staff are aware and prepared.

If someone comes in and talks about a diamond they want to buy, but shows shock, disappointment or bemusement when told the price, staff should say something like, "This ring has a retail price of \$2,000 – I've even seen one myself for \$1,500 – pretty common but when you look closely at

READING THE SIGNS – SOME NEGATIVE BEHAVIOURS



NOT INTERESTED

If a customer is thinking critical thoughts, staff might see the Critical Evaluation gesture: hand to the face with the index finger pointing up the cheek, while another finger covers the mouth and the thumb supports the chin. Sometimes the index finger may rub or pull at the eye as the negative thoughts continue.

CRITICAL EVALUATION

If a customer is polite enough to still want to appear interested, the Critical Evaluation position will alter so that the heel of the palm supports the head as boredom sets in.

CROSSED ARMS ON CHEST

Further evidence that a customer is having critical thoughts are tightly-crossed legs, arms crossing the body (defensive), while the head and chin are down (negative/hostile).

In this case, a customer is non-verbally signalling that they don't like what is being said, that they



disagree or that they're holding back negative feelings, but that's not all – studies reveal that when customers fold their arms they are also paying less attention to what's being said.

CHIN STROKE

The chin stroke signals that decision-making is in progress. Staff should stay quiet and watch what happens next. The gestures that follow the chin stroke will show whether a customer is deciding yes, no or maybe – leaning back in a chair says no; leaning forward and picking up the item or brochure says yes.

SEE YA!

A foot pointing to the exit is a sure sign the customer is about to leave. This is your last chance to convince them to make a purchase.

MAKING EXCUSES

Customer's expose their palms when they are giving valid reasons.



WHO WEARS THE PANTS?

When presenting ideas, products and services to a couple, be sure to watch who mirrors whom. This will show where the ultimate decision-making power lies.

WHAT TO DO

Upon seeing any of the above gestures, staff should act quickly to move a customer into a more receptive position. A simple but effective tactic is to give the customer something to hold – handing them the item, a catalogue or a sales card can work wonders.

Asking a customer to lean in to look more closely at an item can also be an effective means of opening the arms-folded position. Lean forward with palms up and say, "I can see you have a question. What would you like to know?" or "What's your opinion?" Then sit back to indicate that it's the customer's turn to speak. Any palms-up gesture tells a customer to be open and honest because that's what you're being.

COMMON RETAIL MISTAKES

- Failing to acknowledge the customer, who then feels "invisible";
- Staying behind the counter – the counter is a barrier to open and honest discussion;
- Giving another customer a warmer welcome, one that might make the initial customer feel second rate;
- Not having a strategy to challenge cheaper price elsewhere objections.

they're really selling, you'll soon see why theirs is so much cheaper."

At this point, staff can follow up with why their ring is so much better, and therefore, dearer.

Never be embarrassed by price difference. If anything, it's best to brag about why an item is dearer. Salespeople who do this and list the added features and benefits will end up with customers who believe they are getting a bargain.

HEADING FOR THE DOOR

Once customers turn to leave without making a purchase, they're basically a lost cause.

The trick is to recognise the body language of someone about to leave and head them off, non-physically, before they do.

Most people will turn their hips towards the exit and often their front foot will point in the direction they wish to take. People do this in general conversation when they're about to make their escape.

When staff see this happening, they should know it's the last chance to convince customers to purchase.

At this point, quickly and succinctly reiterate the products that have been discussed, including the benefits and features.

Mention once more of any emotional attachment the client might have shown with an item but remember that not everyone is in a position to buy all the time.

If customers really want to go, let them go, but make sure they leave with a smile – they might be back soon. ✱



ALLAN PEASE has co-authored more than a dozen books on body language and is considered an expert in the field. He offers keynote addresses, books, video and audio programs, TV shows and advice on personal image. Visit: peaseinternational.com

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Sydney • Melbourne • Brisbane
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