



## FACING THE CHALLENGES OF TODAY'S MARKETPLACE

Today's marketplace presents many new challenges. Among them are:

1. More competition.
2. More products chasing limited consumer dollars.
3. Less brand name loyalty.
4. Profit squeezes.

To survive the coming years, retailers will have to maximize their people's skills – both their people's selling and customer service skills!

### COMPETING IN THE YEARS AHEAD

How will you survive and grow in profitability in today's very competitive marketplace?

*Consider these facts.*

1. Your margins are already stretched.
2. You're stretching your advertising dollars as far as they'll go.
3. You don't have the brand or product loyalty that you once had.

*Then how will you compete?*

It's simple!

You'll compete by maximizing your greatest source of productivity -- ***your people!***

Look at these realities.

1. Few companies budget sufficient dollars to professionally train their sales and customer contact people.
2. Most retail salespeople are poorly trained in professional selling skills.
3. Most training is product training.
4. Old-fashioned sales techniques are outmoded and contribute to turnover and poor job performance.

Modern day, value-focused selling can usually increase a salesperson's effectiveness around 15% to 25%.

*What would that do to your profitability?*



## **QUESTIONS THAT IMPACT YOUR SUCCESS**

Successfully answering these questions can form the foundation for a profitable future.

Please write some ideas under each category.

1. What are you really selling?

Points to remember:

- a. Not selling products or services.
- b. Selling end-result customer benefits.
- c. Creating value for customers.
- d. Your success will depend on how well you identify and satisfy customer wants or needs.

2. How will you differentiate yourself from your competitors?

Points to remember:

- a. Will you try to differentiate by price only?
- b. What value-added services will you give?
- c. What will you give customers that they can't get elsewhere?
- d. How will you establish stronger relationships with customers?

3. What can we do to train our sales and customer contact people?

Points to remember:

- a. What does it cost to get a potential customer into our store?
- b. Do our salespeople have as much people skills as technicians have in technical training.
- c. Do all of our people have a sales attitude?
- d. Do all of our people sell or support salespeople?



## **BECOMING CUSTOMER-FOCUSED**

It may sound overly-simplified, but, customers go where their needs are met, where they receive value!

Yes, price is a part of value, but there are other considerations. Such as:

- 1. Trust and rapport that salespeople are able to develop.**
- 2. Genuine concern for customer's wants or needs.**
- 3. Listening to customers.**
- 4. Valuing customers.**
- 5. Making customers feel important.**
- 6. Following up on customers.**

What specific things can we do to adopt and demonstrate a customer-centered focus?

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_
4. \_\_\_\_\_

A strange paradox develops when sales and customer contact people become genuinely customer focused. Here are a few.

- 1. Their sales go up.**
- 2. Their closing ratios increase.**
- 3. Their margins improve.**
- 4. They become more professional.**
- 5. They get fewer returns.**
- 6. They turnover less.**

What steps can we take to help everyone understand that our customers pay our salaries?

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_
4. \_\_\_\_\_

*All this amounts to greater profitability for **everyone in the company.***