

Counter Intuitive: Smart sales and service tactics

By Tim Huckabee



"We have something for \$75. It's kind of big, you know...about yea-high."

Sympathetic Selling

At almost every shop I visit, complaints about funeral flowers are an issue. The problem: Most employees sell by price, without properly describing a customer's options. Customers don't know how price translates into the size and overall look of an arrangement, so many are disappointed upon seeing the arrangement in the funeral home. To minimize complaints, be sure your employees know how to thoroughly describe funeral flowers, including sizes according to price points.

As I mentioned last month, asking for the card message before the product gives insight to the sender and recipient relationship. With funeral flowers, this approach helps you find out how many people are sending the arrangement and what the appropriate size should be.

The following is a list of descriptions for the funeral designs that I use in my on-site training. These are general prices and sizes that should be customized for your shop. If you'd like a copy of this template to customize accordingly, e-mail me at tim@floralstrategies.com.

Traditional (mache container): This is our classic design, a one-sided, fan-shaped display of our best garden flowers. **Starting size** is approximately three feet tall and priced \$50 to \$75.

Medium size is a more impressive, fuller design, close to four feet tall and priced \$75 to \$100.

Large size is a truly elegant design, presented on a three-foot stand, and priced \$100 to at least \$150.

Standing Spray is a beautiful, one-sided display of garden flowers presented on an easel.

The Basic design, created with lovely flowers, is approximately two feet wide and three feet tall. It's priced \$100 to \$150.

The Premium version is designed on a four-foot easel and includes an even larger assortment of upscale flowers. It's priced \$150 to \$200.

The Deluxe version, presented on a five-foot easel, really makes a statement. It's priced \$200 to at least \$300.

Fireside Basket is a handmade basket that is open on both ends and overflowing with garden flowers.

The Basic design is presented in a 16-inch wide basket and priced \$75 to \$100.

The Premium version, designed in an 18-inch wide basket, includes roses and lilies. It's priced \$100 to \$150.

The Deluxe version, presented in a 20-inch wide basket, includes even more roses, lilies and other upscale flowers. The price is \$150 to \$200.

Remind customers: "We can personalize any design with a sash ribbon for an additional \$5." Suggest the appropriate size and price and immediately see your sympathy sales increase and complaints decrease.

Tim Huckabee is president of Floral Strategies, a one-on-one sales and customer service training company exclusively for florists. Got a customer service challenge? Tell Tim and he'll tackle it in an upcoming column. E-mail tim@floralstrategies.com or call (800) 983-6184.

Just Browsing Online Sources for the Floral Industry

www.Misterfixit.com

If the basement of your shop flooded this spring or the battery of your delivery truck died recently, check out this site before blindly trying to fix the problem. While it doesn't offer much eye candy, the site does offer detailed information and solutions for everyday problems with plumbing, electronics, auto repair and more. And if Misterfixit.com can't answer your questions, it'll send you to a site that can. Check out the links under "roofing" and "plumbing."

Don't Miss: Bob Hewitt, the Web site creator's, auto repair page. Scroll down on the homepage of Misterfixit.com to get helpful information about brakes, clutches, transmissions and more.

www.LearningMeditation.com

You're probably thinking "I don't have time to learn meditation, I'm running a business here," but it's worth it – the National Institute of Health estimates that companies lose \$200 to \$300 billion annually due to employee stress-related absences and poor performance. Lose that mental image of someone sitting cross-legged, chanting and contemplating the meaning of life. Learn what meditation is really about by clicking into "meditation room" and browsing the bevy of options such as "reducing stress" and "soothing session."

Don't Miss: The "learning to relax" link for helpful background information about meditating. It's easier than you think, the site says, it just takes practice.