

best. practices for top shops



Seven simple ideas guaranteed to increase your sales and professionalism while creating legions of loyal customers.

BY TIM HUCKABEE, AIFSE

The surefire way for any flower shop to boost revenue, increase service and encourage repeat business from customers is to follow the **L.O.G.I.C.A.L.** approach to sales, the proprietary system developed by **FloralStrategies**.

Here are sample highlights of this process, which is being used by successful florists on every continent.

BE WELCOMING

Greet customers with a smile on your face. A smile will translate to your voice if you're talking with a customer on the phone. First impressions do count. Your greeting will set the tone for the sale, establishing you as the professional with all the answers. "Good morning, Flower Shop Name, this is Tim ..." or (on the floor) "What are you celebrating today?" (instead of the old, tired, "How can I help you?").

BE COURTEOUS

Don't put customers on hold without asking their permission. Say "yes," "of course" and "my pleasure" instead of "no problem." Don't stand on the sales floor texting, eating or gossiping with a fellow employee. Doing so makes you look sloppy and unprofessional.

BE KNOWLEDGEABLE

Know your product lines. For example, for all the fresh flowers and plants you carry, know at least the basic care, their prices and something interesting about each one. *Florists' Review's*

Flower Flip and **Plant Flip** are great "portable" resources to have in all your sales areas (*check them out at* url.frinfo.net/flipbooks).

Also, make sure you study what's on your website so that you can offer professional information, answers and guidance when customers ask you questions about specific items.

BE EFFICIENT

Know your POS system so that you can quickly access each customer's average spending, shopping history, preferences, important birthdays and anniversaries, etc. Remember to never hang up without running a customer's credit card so that you can give them a confirmation and won't have to call them back with negative news (such a time-waster!).

BE ACCURATE

Double check the delivery date and time—an easy way to avoid mistakes. Run spell-check in the card message and confirm spellings. "Is that Stephen with a 'ph' or a 'v'?" Also, watch your accuracy when looking up an existing customer, and don't create a 9 millionth duplicate account for him!

BE ATTENTIVE

Don't just read the card message, *react* to it. Show some empathy about each order, whether it's happy news or sad news. "Congratulations, you must be so excited," or "I'm sorry to hear that, but I'm going to help you to choose

some special flowers." Most importantly, suggest appropriate items and prices to each customer based on the occasion (is it a *birthday* or a *BIRTHDAY!?!?*); relationship to the recipient; number of names on the card (when there is a group, leverage that by saying, "On behalf of the *entire* marketing department, I suggest you send this plant at \$XYZ."); etc.

BE THANKFUL

Customers don't have to come to your store; there are order-gatherers, grocery stores, direct shippers and even wire services chasing after their business. Always express your gratitude to every customer for his or her decision to shop at your store—a local, independent florist. Say whatever works for your personality. I usually finish an order by stating, "Thanks so much for calling us. We really appreciate your business." On the floor, I tweak it to, "Thanks so much for visiting us today. We really appreciate your business." ■



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