

## Dear Tim...

### 'NICE' IS A FOUR-LETTER WORD

**I am tired of seeing orders that say "make it nice." I feel insulted when I read that. Help!**

NICHOLAS SMITH | OWNER | OPENING NIGHT FLOWERS | OAKVILLE, ON

I'm so glad that someone finally wrote me about this issue. It's a personal pet peeve and drives me crazy! We've all heard (or worse, used) some version of this response to a customer: "We only do nice on Tuesday." That's just corny sarcasm; it really doesn't get to the heart of the issue, but I sure will!

#### "Make It Nice!"

The first version of the "nice" statement is usually thrown in as a zinger at the end of the call. When customers say this, I bite my tongue, remind myself that the customer is king and try to hear beyond their annoying (and unnecessary) demand. When I do that, I hear concern, confusion or frustration. Perhaps on a previous order, the customer did not get what she expected and wants to make sure that this order will meet her expectations (concern). Maybe you didn't do a great job of describing the arrangement or failed to instill confidence in the caller (confusion). Or perhaps the last time the customer ordered, she went to great lengths to communicate what she wanted, but she felt like her wishes were ignored (frustration).

**Your job:** Try to flush out why she dropped the N word. Here's my approach: "Better than nice, it's going to be beautiful! Again, we're going to send your sister one of our small basket arrangements for her desk at work, filled with our best garden flowers in rich summer colors." Then wait for her response. If there is some concrete reason for her statement, she'll likely spill it: "Well, the last time I sent flowers..." and then you can reassure her of how you'll handle this order differently. Or she'll simply thank you, and then you can close the order.

#### "Will It Be Nice?"

The second twist on the statement is a bit easier to decipher and resolve. Like "make it nice," this question usually comes at the very end of the call — and that's because the customer is second-guessing what he spent and is considering increasing the budget. Really. My response is very similar to what I recommend saying in reply to "make it nice," but with a twist: "Better than nice, it's going to be beautiful! Again, we're going to send your sister one of our small basket arrangements for her desk at work, filled with our best garden flowers in rich summer colors. BUT if you want to make more of a splash, I suggest sending one of our medium arrangements with even more flowers for a fuller look. They're priced from \$X to \$Y."

In other words, very gently explain that what your customer chose is going to look great, but he can take it to the next size by increasing the budget. Plus, using the small/medium/large descriptors is an easy way to help the customer visualize what he's ordering. Trust me: This approach is simple, powerful and effective. 🙌



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