



No. 10

This is the tenth in a 10-part series aimed at empowering Floral Management readers to build a foundation month by month, sale by sale, for higher sales, more confident employees and happier customers.

FINISH THE YEAR STRONG

> As I bring this column to a close, I hope I have inspired and motivated you to get more actively involved in managing the sales and service process in your shop. As I traveled the U.S. this year speaking at various educational events, including the Society of American Florists' annual convention and 1-Day Profit Blast series, I heard a recurring theme that pleased me and I hope inspires you. Many people told me they never thought that much about *managing* their staff before, but this column took away some of that mystique and gave them an easy-to-follow blueprint. That was music to my ears! I hope you will try it too. This month, I'm going to recap my favorite tips from 2018 and offer a few pointers for the holidays.

The Big Takeaways

The most important point you should take away from Smart Selling is the need for **regularly scheduled meetings**, no matter how many or how few employees you have. I've visited more than 6,000 flower shops in my career and the best run businesses have made staff-wide meetings part of their culture. Meetings don't have to be big, elaborate, catered affairs at a local hotel. My definition of a good meeting is one that takes place OUTSIDE of regular work hours, includes all staff (make attendance mandatory — and, yes, you have to pay them) and is driven by a written agenda presented by the owner or manager. Show respect for employees and encourage them to be active team players by allotting an "open mic" time at the end of the meeting when staff members can share their ideas and feedback. For more advice on setting up meetings, review the entire 10 installments of this column at floralstrategies.com/saf.

The easiest way to increase your average sales order? Get your team in the habit of **selling add-ons**, also known as "finishing touches" in FloralStrategies speak — terminology I've found makes the dialogue with the customer more relaxed and less like a sales pitch. Just take a look at your website sales data. You'll see that customers love to purchase chocolate, balloons, plush animals, luxe gift cards, candles, bath products, etc., when they are presented online; however, if your employees

don't mention them in the store or on the phone, these products won't sell. I recommend your staff uses this language: "As a *finishing touch*, we can add a 'Happy Birthday' balloon for just \$4.95." Don't ask for permission; give your professional advice. Look back at past issues and you will find a sales tool you can print for your staff, which will help them sell more finishing touches this holiday season.

Holiday Help

Don't let the holiday season stress you out; instead, get organized and sail through. There are a few preemptive management steps you can take to maximize efficiency and minimize friction, such as **giving all employees their printed schedules for December before Thanksgiving** so there are no last-minute requests for a Saturday off to go Christmas shopping. Additionally, load up on bottled water, because **keeping your team well hydrated** as they are running to and fro makes a difference. On that same topic, give your team advance notice that you will **buy staff lunch** during "crunch time," Dec. 19 to 24. Consider this money well spent, as it keeps workers in the store, well fed and motivated. Additionally, free food is a morale booster; employees definitely appreciate gestures like this. On that note, this is a great time to start **offering monetary incentives**. Consider paying a few dollars for every arrangement sold that's \$20 more than your average sale. I can tell you from experience that money motivates, and this program is literally self-funding: When applying all the sales skills they learned from this column, employees will generate more revenue, which you're simply sharing with them! 🎉



COMING NEXT YEAR:

Join Huckabee in January to read "Tim's Calling," a new Floral Management column in which he will "mystery shop" florists across the globe, write about the experience and then share the actual recording online.

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