

Don't Be Afraid To Sell

We have the privilege of assisting community bankers with training, coaching, and leadership development. As we work through the various stages of our training and educational workshops, the energy in the room frequently shifts when the discussion migrates from customer service to sales. The topic of selling can cause fear to surface and anxiety to increase. Service skills are engaging, while sales skills are intimidating. Why is service a buy-in and building relationships a buy-out?

Change that condition over the remainder of this year by building on your existing foundation.

Helping Customers Is The Key

Sales does not have to be threatening. Helping your customers find the product that will deliver value-added benefits for their unique situation is a positive activity. I think back to my early days of banking when a customer came to our branch to close her checking account. She said she was headed across the street because they had debit cards. What? Wait a minute. We had debit cards. Unfortunately, no one took the time to check her account to determine if she had a debit card with her checking account. No one had suggested the convenience of using a debit card. We had missed a great opportunity to help this customer with their basic banking needs.

Community bank employees are focused on their customers. They will work long and hard to ensure their customers receive great service. They have a genuine interest in customer satisfaction. A strong service culture is the best foundation for successful selling.

Bad Selling Is Not Good Business

No one enjoys a bad sales experience. Employees have life experiences that included a bad salesperson delivering a terrible experience. We can picture a car dealership with a pushy, manipulative salesman. Maybe a furniture store with a sales representative that follows you around trying to talk you into a living room sectional. We do not have to be that salesperson.

Let's avoid producing a bad experience.

Help Move Mindsets

Great service is simply helping people. So is great selling. Taking a genuine interest in the financial success of your customers will be the catalyst for both serving and selling.

Find ways to move mindsets away from pressure-packed bad sales. Focus on a sincere desire to find a great solution for each customer. That's sales...looking for every opportunity to help customers with products and services that make their banking financial life easier. There are things they do not know they need, but that will provide benefits they will enjoy. This idea turns sales from buy-out to buy-in.

Who can you help next? Look for opportunities to make someone's day by suggesting a new product or service. Take a chance and see what happens.