

4 TYPES OF CUSTOMERS AND HOW TO SELL TO EACH OF THEM

Knowing the types of customers likely to walk through your business' doors can help you relate to each one better. Here are the four basic personality types of customers and some tips on how to deal with each one. As retailers, we deal with many different personality types on a daily basis. Of course, each customer is unique, but there is universal agreement that there are four basic personality types. These are the main customer personalities specific to the retail environment.

The Director

As the name implies, this personality is generally associated with demanding people. They are the take-charge types. They want what they want when they want it - and they want it now! In extreme cases they can be intimidating know-it-all's. Directors are generally not into small talk; they want the facts in order to make a decision as quickly as possible. If you try to get in the way of their goal they will plow through you and, as the expression goes, "take no prisoners." They don't care about anyone's interest other than their own. Their goals are very clear. They want the best possible product at the lowest possible price delivered when they want it - which is usually immediately.

How to Deal with a Director

Eliminate as much small talk as possible, lay out the facts, give your reasons why they should purchase something and make it brief and to the point. Generally, these personality types have high self-esteem, almost to the point of being obnoxious about it. One of the most valuable tools you can use here is to complement their direct style

The Analytical Personality

These types of customers usually have professions that require accuracy and analysis. These would include jobs such as accountants, engineers or scientists, whereby they conduct research and analyse all the possibilities before making a decision. What motivates this type of personality when they come into a retail store to buy? Facts, details, product descriptions, Consumer Reports information.

How to Deal with an Analytical

Give them facts and data. Do not make a statement unless you can back it up with pertinent information. If the product has detailed labeling, give it to them. There is one major advantage when it comes to dealing with the analytical personality: They have done their homework and/or comparative research. In many cases they will actually know more than a salesperson or owner, which makes them a valuable source of information. Don't be afraid to ask them why they came into your store, because there IS a reason. The biggest asset they have is all the research they have done about the product you are selling.

The one thing you never want to do is to tell this personality type they are wrong or they are not listening to you. You must let them make their own decision. You can try to make suggestions, but make sure they are short and to the point.

The Relater (or Belonging) Customer Type

The Relater/Belonging personality type has a strong need to feel part of a group. I like to use the "my" test on this personality type. This means when a customer refers to "my accountant," "my doctor," "my garage," "my electrician," "my lawyer," or "my store," your store becomes part of their network. These people are usually three calls away from getting anything they want. They always know someone who knows someone who knows someone - the classic example of "three degrees of separation."

How to Deal with a Relater

The reason we refer to the Relater shopper as "Belonging Type" is because they take an ownership position in anything they do. The easiest way to sell to this personality type is to simply ask them, "What is your opinion of this product and do you think we should carry it?" Their response might be something like, "I think it looks good and I think you should carry it. I might like something like that. Let me see it." The bottom line is to include them in any way you possibly can, because they want to feel a part of the decision-making process.

The Socializer

Socializers are exactly as the name implies. They are outgoing, love to talk and love to make new friends. The Socializer wants to build a relationship with people who work in the store. This personality type places likeability as one of the most important buying criteria. If they don't like you they are not going to do business with you. Socializers want to build friendships. If you talk to them like an Analytical, with facts and figures, they will shut right down. As similar as they might be to the Relater, loyalty isn't as important to the Socializer. However, they tend to be self-centred.

How to Deal with a Socializer

The most important thing to remember is that it's not all about the merchandise; it is about the relationship. Always remember that the first thing you are selling is yourself. You can be giving merchandise away, but the Socializer won't care if they don't like you. Use compliments liberally. Do whatever you have to do to remember the names of these people. Don't lose sight of the fact that although they look at the shopping experience as a fun, social event, your goal is still to sell them merchandise. Remember: Keep the Socializer focused yet be light enough to make their shopping experience fun and entertaining. The next time someone walks into your store, size them up and put them into one of these four personality categories (it's a lot easier than you think once you get the hang of it). You will then be better prepared to interact with each customer on a higher level, and increase your sales drastically.

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