

From the Handbook of Business, the Bible

39: Everyone that asks, receives

As part of His sermon on the mount, Jesus declared, "Ask and it shall be given you...for everyone that's asks, receives..." - **Matthew 7:7-8**

In giving this simple, yet powerful principle, He was referring to spiritual matters; I contend that it can also be applied in the physical realm; that is, our lives and specifically for today, our businesses.

Too often in a sale & purchase transaction, sellers leave money on the table because they don't ask the right questions or give customers the best solution to their problem.

This is closely aligned to how you, as the seller, frame your offer; and how your customers' brain's function when they make a buying decision.

What about an example of this 'ask-and-receive' principle?

Recently I rang a retail store for an update on a product that was out of stock when I visited a month ago. The person I spoke to explained their supplier had issues and wouldn't be able to supply until would you believe, June next year; and that was about the end of our conversation.

Interesting, when I was in the store and then on this phone call neither staff member asked the obvious question: what about an alternative product? But no, they could not supply what I asked for so it was, 'see ya later'. I sense their attitude highlighted a deeper issue, namely a poor culture.

The bottom line: in not asking, this business likely lost my sale & others, thereby impacting GP.

What's that point about the brain's function in a buying decision?

You need to understand 3 aspects of the human brain...

First, the entry section (croc) constantly looks for ways to make life easier by solving problems:

- * Neither staff member actually addressed my problem or offered a solution; instead, they focused on their problem, namely, the inability to get the specific product I sought

Second, the brain hates confusion, having to deal with too many variables or a complex message:

- * In marketing, the rule is, 'if you confuse, you lose' so, keep it simple

Third, the brain loves to be offered a binary choice, that is A or B:

- * And for some offers the 'principle-of-three' works, that is, A, B or C (gold-silver-bronze).

How can sellers incorporate this knowledge into a sales pitch?

Retailers: Give the customer a choice of 2 or 3 products OR...having made a decision to buy, if appropriate, ask if they would like to buy two; a 'yes' means more GP on the transaction.

Service/trades: With repair jobs, ask 'while there, would you like us to also...' (e.g., customer wants a tap washer replaced...offer to replace them all; some will say 'yes' meaning you earn more GP)

Counsel: By understanding & planning, you can ASK customers better questions; ask for a sale or a ask for a greater sale...thus applying the Master's promise - **ask and you shall receive!**