

How to be a salesperson

External Relations - Chapter 2
BEE Tutorials

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Why is this important?

As we said, External Relations is not just about getting income, thus about “selling” things. But it is about making deals that are beneficial to your Group. So, it is important for you to have the mindset of a good a salesman in order to reach the best agreements possible.

But what makes a good salesman?

Let's start with a very famous exercise.

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If I asked you to sell me a pen... what would you do?

Normally when faced with this question, the natural instinct is to try to convince the other person that the pen is amazing and it should be bought due to its awesomeness.

Nevertheless, that is not the best approach. Why? Because you are focusing too much on your product and not on what the other person wants. For example:

- You don't know what characteristics of a pen the other person likes;
- You don't know if the other person even wants or needs a pen.

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Then how do we sell a pen?

Ask questions:

- Are you looking for a pen?
- What type of pen are you looking for? A simple one, a stylish one?
- What would you use the pen for?
Common day-to-day use or more of an ornamental usage?
- Have you tried other pens? What did you like, what didn't you like?

From questions such as these you get an idea of what your counterpart wants and you can tailor your proposal based on that. This way, you will not only be able to sell a pen, but sell a pen to someone that truly wants it.

Follow-up: how do you sell the second pen?

Selling the second pen means that your client came back. This means - generally - that they are pleased with your service and that you are able to continue selling pens.

This is the result that any salesman wants: that his first-time clients come back and continue buying his goods.

But how does a salesman continue to sell pens to the same clients?

It is all about trust and meeting expectations.

If you foster the relationship with your clients and focus on their needs besides your own, you will build trust and ensure that the relationship lasts - a good salesman is not the one that is able to trick clients into buying anything, but the one that makes them satisfied and makes them come back.

That is another reason why questions are so important! By understanding the client a good salesman is able to make them an offer that does not only sell a pen, but the pen that the client wants. This will create trust and make them come back

Your pen is ELSA

And through external relations you want to convince someone to support you.

How? Precisely how we did it in the example.

During the negotiation phase, you should try to understand if the research you did is accurate and that the initial proposal you had in mind will be good. For that reason, one of the first tasks during negotiations: ask questions! Understand who you are talking to! Understand if the project/initiative you are offering is relevant to the other person and if they get their needs satisfied with your proposal.

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What if the interests do not align?

There is no problem at all! Simply you are not meant to partner up, at least with the initial framework you had. Maybe you can cooperate in some other activities. But even if that does not happen, there is no problem. You will find other organisations that will have matching interests.

Remember: the goal is not to get a new partner that in a few months gets disappointed and leaves. The goal is to get a partner for you and for your successors. So, focus on getting fewer but stronger, than a lot that will leave.



This in practice



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In practice

Having this mindset of reaching an agreement that is beneficial to both is important throughout the partner hunting process.

When you research an external, you should research areas where ELSA aligns with them. The same as when you approach as well as with your first contact and meeting. You must at all times ask yourself what does the other party want, how can I benefit them while also supporting my own interests.

If while doing your research you find that you have no common interests, then there is no need to approach. Better use your efforts in finding those that can mutually benefit from an eventual cooperation.



Lesson 2 done!

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