



The Raphael Report

**Observations on marketing,
advertising, sales and
promotions
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November 2003 Number 54

Selling Rules, Part II

Are there magic words, phrases, sentences that make the customer decide to buy what you have to sell?

Through the years, by trial and error, watching and learning from superior salespeople, we found certain techniques work. (Well, most of the time.)

We put 52 of these proven ideas in our newest book, "Selling Rules!" Now you have one to try every week for a year!

Last month we shared three with you that readers told us they use with ongoing success. Here are three more for you to use in your next selling situation.

Listen

A man was invited by a prominent hostess to all her parties because her guests told her how much they enjoyed his company. The hostess was confused because, from her observation, he was no life of the party.

He was, in fact, quiet and subdued. What quality did he have that appealed to her guests she did not see?

At her next party the hostess introduced him to one of her guests and then, unobtrusively, remained in close proximity to hear what made him so well liked.

She soon discovered the secret. After being introduced he would ask the person he just met, "Tell me about yourself . . ." and then, he just...listened!

He listened to people talk about themselves. He encouraged them to tell him about their jobs, their family, their hopes, their dreams. Where would they like to go on their next vacation? Why? For how long?

Later, everyone told the hostess what a marvelous addition he was to the party.

Here's why: People who listen seem to care more, are more open-minded and concerned. Those who continually talk come across as pompous, self-centered and narrow-minded.

Dale Carnegie, author of "How To Win Friends and Influence People" wrote, "You can make more friends in two months by being interested in other people than you can in two years by trying to have other people interested in you."

Be Odd

The gods delight in the odd number - Virgil

Odd prices mean "bargain" to the customer.

If a product sells for \$29.99, it "sounds" less expensive than \$30.00. In fact it even "feels" closer to \$20.00 than \$30.00.

Example: A test was given to women members of church groups and PTAs in middle income Chicago suburbs by Robert Schindler, assistant professor of marketing and behavioral science at the University of Chicago Graduate School of Business.

His team put together two booklets of clothing, furniture and shoe ads from out-of-town newspapers so the women would not be prejudiced by names they knew.

They put even prices of merchandise in one booklet and odd prices in the other booklet for the same merchandise. Each group saw only ONE booklet. Here are the results:

- Odd prices had a positive effect.

- Reducing the item in price by as little as one cent increased the number of people who thought the advertised item was on sale, even though NONE of the ads said, "Sale!"

A study did an analysis of final digit prices used by retailers. The number "9" was used 36 percent of the time.

When LIFE magazine experimented with a subscription price ending in "7," sales jumped! Odd.

But true.

Copy Ideas From Other Businesses

Yes, read the trade magazines for your industry.

Yes, be aware of what's happening in your business.

Yes, listen to what your customers want to buy.

BUT - also watch, listen and steal ideas from other marketers in different businesses.

When Southwest Airlines wanted to speed its aircraft turnaround time, the company did not check to see what other airlines were doing. It knew that. Instead Southwest went to the Indianapolis 500 to see how pit crews fuel and service race cars. This gave Southwest new ideas about equipment fitting, material management, teamwork and speed that enabled the airline to cut its turnaround time in half.

Granite Rock wanted to improve the way it loaded gravel into trucks because its drivers had to leave their trucks to fill out paperwork. The company watched automatic teller machines in banks. Now, drivers put a card in a machine and don't leave the truck -- this speeds loading time.

When out-of-town retailers call Stew Leonard's famous supermarket in Norwalk, Connecticut for permission to tour his store, he tells them he is happy to oblige. BUT ONLY, when they arrive, they first have to give HIM one idea to increase his business.

"Selling Rules!" sells for \$14.95 plus \$5.00 postage and handling. Readers of The Raphael Report can have "Selling Rules!" with all 52 rules for only \$14.95 including postage -- a \$5.00 savings. Simply call our toll-free number: 877-386-5925 and mention the special Raphael Report price. Your copy is sent to you the day you call. (Customers outside US have additional postage charges.)