

Happy Customers Buy
Your Products!

22 Reasons Integrity Pay\$

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First Edition

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Original submitted to Library of Congress.

Printed in the United States of America by
Instantpublisher.com

International Standard Book Number:
978-0-578-02937-5

Books are available from Winkelman Inc at special discounts for bulk purchases, sales promotions, fundraising, or for educational purposes.

Dedicated to

John Christian, Vincent,

Faith and Joshua, for

enabling me to write without

hurting themselves or each

other while I did so,

And to Connie whose

example and enthusiasm

inspired me!

INTRODUCTION

When I was 19 years old, I was a lousy employee. I lost a job working at Hickory Farms in the Merced Mall and was hunting down my next meal ticket.

I really wanted to work at Thom McAn shoes (there was probably a cute boy involved), but no matter how many times I put in an application, and stopped by to say hello to the manager, he wouldn't hire me.

I found out later my "cheese-munching, profit-eating" reputation had preceded me . . . but my persistence eventually paid off. After all, I had nothing better to do than wander the mall all day reminding prospective employers of my existence.

The manager finally offered me a part-part-*part* time job, obviously thinking I wouldn't take it and hopefully, I'd go away. But I did take that job, and found I had a natural aptitude for sales.

Within a few weeks I had exceeded the sales of every other employee and was promoted to full-time salesperson.

Within a few months I was promoted to Assistant Manager.

Soon after I was transferred to my own store in which I earned the Rookie of the Year Award for sales and management, and numerous Tops Sales of the Month Awards for personal and overall store sales within our district. Whoo-hoo, yea me! Read on, I've got a point.

Since then, I've earned a Master's Degree in Clinical Psychology, become

a successful author and speaker, and spent countless hours studying *far* more successful business and marketing experts.

I've also talked to hundreds of people, *just like you*, who've taught me ***plenty*** about what's important to customers, *and* I've read countless books on sales and marketing, some of which I have noted in the following pages. **I have discovered why one person makes the sale, and the other loses a valuable customer.**

This book will give you the edge you've been looking for. The edge to show you how to make your customers *happy* and coming back for more, because **Happy Customers Buy Your Products!** So, please, read on because I want you to succeed!

First, easiest, but most important: ***smile*** when you speak, in person *or* on the phone. It comes across as friendly and inviting, even in your voice.

People assume anything going on with you *must* have something to do with *them*, and how you feel about them. If you want customers or prospects to feel liked, and therefore good about you, smile.

I recently went to a water park with my son, John Christian, and was really disappointed in the bored, sullen attitude of the teenage employees. It started to put a damper on our experience because we felt so unwelcome.

If you're like me, you want to feel good about where you spend your money, and won't come back to a business whose employees make it seem like you're imposing on *their* valuable time.

Another basic, but too often ignored technique is to **greet your customers** the moment they enter your establishment. If you are with another client, simply make eye contact, and say something to the effect of, "Good morning – I'll be right with you!"

Now you want to do this with a friendly and inviting tone to your voice, and a smile. Hey, if you can't be bothered with good manners, I'll spend my money with your competition, instead.

People love to hear their own name, so **call them by name**, and write to them using it! I love living in a small town because when I go into our local shops, I see familiar faces, and a lot of them have learned my name.

I frequently shop at Coborn's Superstore & Liquor Store in Little Falls, MN.

Managers Greg Zylka and Dan Moe make sure their customers are greeted by every employee. I guarantee if you ask about a product, you'll immediately be **shown** where the item is, *and* be asked if you need anything else!

Now, how many times have you gone into a store and felt like you were being done a *massive* favor by an employee

waving you in the general direction of an item?

Remember, attitude follows leadership. If you treat your staff like the valuable and likable people they ultimately are, they'll reflect those qualities towards your customers. Only you can make your customers important, to your staff.

Now, back to the name thing: I especially respect the ability to recall names because that's one of my failings. I survived a very tragic car accident as a teen. I talk about this more in my alcohol awareness presentation, **"Don't Live to Drink, Don't Drink . . . to Live,"** but the long and short of it follows.

I was riding with my boyfriend, Donny, in the back of a pick-up after a party. The

vehicle flipped over on a turn, throwing us across the asphalt, through a barbed wire fence and into a telephone pole. All six of us teens were tossed across the field like limp dolls from an upturned baby carriage. My boyfriend and his best friend, David, did not survive. I did.

Aside from the memories, and the physical scars which have been minor thanks to plastic surgery, I have only one constant reminder of the event: difficulty with name recall. It's not enough to derail my daily life, but it's enough to get really embarrassing at times!

You can understand now why I had a particular interest in the mechanics of learning and memory during grad school. Here's what worked for me, and what you can use to train yourself to

remember, and *acknowledge*, your customers:

Use a mnemonic device to remember a list of facts, or a person's name and their family's as well, if you want to get fancy with it. Simply make up a silly rhyme or story, and visualize the action. Make it as dramatic and humorous as possible to intensify the memory.

My kids and I made up this mnemonic to remember the planets: My Violet Elephant Marge Jumps Silly Under Naked Pineapples. I know, but the goofier, the better.

You can also associate a new customer's name with their typical clothing style or color, or a prominent facial feature. Imagine "Rose" with a big, red, thorny flower in place of her nose.

Tie in a client's name with someone else you know of the *same* name, one who's more memorable to you. Say their name out loud, or use it in a sentence, three times while conversing with your client.

Try using their name repeatedly as you describe their physical features, clothing, or anything else memorable (wait till you're alone for this one.) It helps to create multiple cues that include both visual and auditory information.

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Make note of any **personal information** a client or prospect relates to you, and keep it in a file you can refer to before speaking to them; things like their kids' names and ages, their buying preferences, and special dates.

It pays to take the time to see that your customers are real people, even friends that you can help. You know, nothing feels better than knowing you've made a difference in someone's life. You're creating a relationship based on more than the price of your products or services, and that can make the difference between a one-time customer, and a *repeat buyer*.

My husband's trucking company buys insurance from Connie Alexander, who is a *master* at client relations. She's effective because you can tell it comes from her heart.

Connie understands that people are investing in a relationship, more than a product. In addition, she knows the trucking industry inside and out and her advice is invaluable! That's why when