



Annette Estes
Columnist

Professional Development

How to increase sales

Anyone who knows anything about sales will tell you that relationship selling is the key to success. Todd Korahais, CEO of KDS Property Group, reminded those attending a Greenville Chamber Sales Roundtable in October that we sell to people, not companies.

To sell to people, you need to communicate with them in the way that makes them most comfortable, not in the style you're most comfortable with. People buy from people they like. They like people who treat them the way they like to be treated.

How do you do that? Learn to read people's behavioral styles. When you understand the four behavioral styles, you'll know what to say and how to say it to each individual prospect. You may have read my previous columns on the DISC behavioral styles; if so, this will be a refresher.

First you determine the person's core behavioral style by observing his or her communication style, or you may ask the receptionist (or someone else who knows the person) beforehand if your prospect is extroverted or introverted. Then you want to find out if he or she is more people-oriented or task-oriented. Extroverts move fast, introverts move and talk more slowly.

When you learn these two things, you'll have an idea of their core behavioral style, and then you'll know how to communicate visually, verbally, and vocally.

Extroverted/Task-Oriented. This person has a core D (Dominant) behavioral style. You want to stick to business, be well prepared, and confident. This person wants you to be brief, be bright, and be gone. Give them information in bullet points. Sit opposite the person. Use linear gestures, such as hitting the palm of one hand with the edge of the other. These are forceful people and they respect those who have self-confidence. Give them lots of space and let them know you respect their position. They don't like a lot of socializing, so don't ramble or be chatty. If they feel you're wasting their time, you're out of there. Focus on how your product or service will make them more effective and help them get results.

Extroverted/People-Oriented. You're dealing with someone who has a core I (Influencing) behavioral style. Now you can be chatty and sociable, just let the prospect talk the most. These people love to relate and share experiences; so let them talk and

listen without talking about yourself. You'll make a hit with these people if you're friendly and animated. Smile a lot and use big open gestures. You can sit close to them; they like people and are naturally trusting. Focus on how your product or service will help them solve people problems and make them popular.

Introverted/People-Oriented. This is the person with the core S (Steadiness) behavioral style. Don't expect them to make a quick decision. Speak slowly with an even, pleasant tone. Be friendly and smile, but don't overwhelm them with personality. Be sincere. Don't touch anything on their desk; ask permission if you need to move something to put your materials down. Use slower, open gestures. Focus on how your product or service will make them safe and secure. They resist change, so give them plenty of time to adjust and accept your proposal.

Introverted/Task-Oriented. This person has a core C (Cautious, Compliant) behavioral style. These people want you to stick to business, no socializing. They want a lot of detail, so you must have facts and data to back up your claims. I'm currently negotiating with a man who obviously has this style. He's using another assessment, but he keeps talking about how the other consultant doesn't have research to prove his assertions that behavioral profiling will help the client hire better employees. I believe he's talking to me because I did send him research. I feel when his contract with the other consultant is up in February, I will get him as a client. When dealing with this type of prospect, sit opposite him or her; speak slowly and be professional. Don't say "trust me," show proof that your product or service will achieve the desired results. Give them time to go over the data before making a buying decision. Stress your product's proven reliability and how it will help them improve accuracy.

One last tip: Go into each presentation as if you have a core S behavioral style – friendly, pleasant, and calm. It's easier to become more outgoing with the core D and I style than to tone it down if you've come on too strong with one who has an S or C style.

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How to increase sales, part two

Being able to read and adapt to people's behavioral styles in order to make them comfortable is one aspect of relationship selling. Another key in helping prospects want to buy from you is to ascertain their values.

It makes sense that if people are passionate about learning, for example, you'll have a better chance of selling to them if you can demonstrate how your product or service will help them expand their knowledge.

Last year I wrote a series of columns on understanding values, which is now a book that was published in December. This column will guide you in recognizing clues that indicate a prospect's values. This can help you customize your presentation for each person and make more sales.

The six values or attitudes are: Theoretical, Utilitarian, Aesthetic, Social, Individualistic, and Traditional. Let's look at ways of discerning people's top attitudes and what they're looking for when buying.

High Theoretical: This prospect is passionate about knowledge, learning, getting to the truth. Listen for references to reading (especially non-fiction), taking classes or seminars, PBS or the Discovery channel, and words such as "research, data, and facts."

Focus on the reliability of your product, backed up by research and development. Be objective, give "cold, hard facts." Demonstrate how your service will help them learn and discover valuable information and knowledge.

High Utilitarian: This person is passionate about making money, getting results, and getting a return on investment of time, talent, and resources. Listen for references to investments, stocks and bonds, anything financial, and listen for phrases such as "bottom line, results, what's in it for me?"

Focus on the practicality and utility of your service and how it will help them get results, a return on their investment. Demonstrate how your product will save and/or make them money, how it will help them be more effective and efficient, and how it will make their company more profitable.

High Aesthetic: This prospect's passions are balance, form, harmony, and beauty. Their office will be beautifully decorated; there will be evidence of creativity. Listen for references to nature, art, personal development, having the finer things in life, and words such as "beautiful, I feel, and harmonious."

Focus on the beauty of your product or the life balance your service can give them. Center on subjective feelings rather than data, emotions rather than logic. Stress creativity, freedom, and quality.

High Social: Service to others is their passion. Look for service awards they've won and evidence of charitable activities. Listen for references to putting others before self, volunteerism, and words such as "helping, serving, and charity."

Focus on how your product or service will benefit others; let this prospect know of your company's commitment to charity, training, and to people. Let them see how your products and services can help them eliminate suffering or create win-win relationships.

High Individualistic: These prospects want for themselves and their company to be #1. Look for evidence of competitiveness, attainment, and goal setting. Listen for references to leadership, overcoming adversity, position, influence, and words such as "power, winning, being the best."

Focus on how your product can give them the edge over their competition or how your service will strengthen their power and influence. Show them what you can do for them.

High Traditional: These people's passion is found in their religious or spiritual beliefs. They put their faith above everything and it is likely an integral part of their work. Look for evidence of scriptural and inspirational sayings. Listen for references to God, church activities, family values, and words such as "faith, traditions, and moral standards."

Focus on how your organization's high ethical standards are reflected in your products and services.

Not everyone will want or need what you have to sell. What you can do is create a need or desire by showing how it will help fulfill their highest values. If it will, they should have it. If not, move on.

Annette Estes is a Certified Professional Behavioral and Values Analyst, Coach, and Consultant. Her passion is helping solopreneurs and business owners get results without sacrificing balance. She is also a professional speaker and author of the book, *Why Can't You See it My Way? Resolving Values Conflicts at Work and Home*. Contact her at Annette@CoachAnnette.com or call The Estes Group at 864-244-1156.

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