

The Importance of Product Knowledge Training

TEST LINK:

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Today’s consumers are digitally connected, socially networked and prefer to have gathered all the required information on the product that is to be purchased, before they even speak with our sales agents. However, an intelligent consumer may approach our salesperson with a difficult question—one without an answer on our website, the internet, social media posts and so on. Is our staff adequately equipped to make that personal connection, provide a trustworthy experience for our prospective customers and tip the scale toward a win situation?

Importance of Product Knowledge

Product knowledge is the most important tool for closing sales. It instils faith, trust, and respect in the customer, which creates a positive customer experience. The importance of product knowledge represents itself the most in these situations.



Answering Difficult Questions:   
Many customers will have answered just about every question on our products or services before they even call on us. But, there are usually a couple questions which don’t have answers online, and normally they are difficult questions like: “I have read some mixed reviews on your customer service. Can you tell me what I can expect if I have problems down the road?” This is where product knowledge training is crucial. If our team is educated on these negative perceptions ahead of time and have prepared responses for them, the answer the customer receives will be very powerful and concise. If we are caught off guard, we might become defensive, stumble over our response, or completely ignore the question, which will result in all faith being lost with the customer because the one question they couldn’t find an answer for ahead of time, was answered insufficiently.



Building Trust:   
Customers have to trust the product, company, and person they interact with before they make a purchase, and by now, you probably know that the person they interact with is weighed much more heavily than the other two sources. This makes it vital for our sales agents to be seen as trustworthy sources of information. As mentioned earlier, customers enter conversations armed with information about our products and services. Imagine what it says to your customer if what they hear from the agent is not the same as what they have taken from your website or marketing releases. It eliminates all trust in not only the company, but also in the agent, because they don’t know who to believe. This makes it crucial that not only our agents has enough product knowledge, but that they also have the most current product knowledge.

Making Lasting Impressions:   
One of the reasons that customers are doing so much research on our products and services is that tremendous competition has driven consumers to believe that all products are similar. With such a small margin of difference in the product itself, we can make up for the difference in other areas. One easy area that we can make a difference is in the buying experience, but it requires an in-depth knowledge of our products and services to do so. For example, a customer starts the conversation by asking about one product, but our agent recognizes that this customer is actually a better fit for a different product (or even an add-on product.) The agent then proceeds to explain the reasons why, and in doing so, has now taught the customer something and shown that the agent has the customer’s best interest in mind. With so many “order takers” in the sales industry right now, this is sure to create a lasting impression.



Benefits of Product Knowledge

Knowledge is power and for our sales agents, product knowledge can be the vehicle to increased sales. We have already discussed the reasons why product knowledge is important to our business, but the list below highlights the benefits of product knowledge—as they directly relate to our sales agents.

* Strengthen Communication Skills – A thorough and wider understanding of a product enables a sales agent to use different techniques and methods of presenting a product to various types of customers. Stronger communication skills empower a sales agent to suitably adapt a sales or product presentation for greater impact.
* Boosts Enthusiasm – Armed with deep product knowledge, a display of enthusiasm and belief in the product may generate excitement among our customers and alleviate uncertainty about the solution that the product provides for the customer.
* Grows Confidence – If a customer isn’t fully committed to completing a sale, the difference may simply be the presence (or lack) of credibility or confidence a sales agent has towards the product. Becoming educated in the product and its uses will help cement that confidence.
* Assists in Overcoming Objections – Factual information gained from product knowledge, may be used to strike down objections voiced by customers. Solid knowledge about our product coupled with parallel information about similar products sold by our competitors—gives you that added advantage to easily counter objections.

Product training with emphasis toward product knowledge will be more effective in helping us deliver customer experiences that “Wow” before our competitors do. In closing and to reiterate the importance of product knowledge, here’s a quote:

*An investment in knowledge pays the best interest.  
-Benjamin Franklin*

