

Share and Sell Your Gifts - 4 Handy Tips for YOU!

By Barb Girson



To sell your gifts this season, connect with customer mind set. Take notice of how you position verbal and printed messages as you recommend the gift-giving option. Think about what the average consumer spends for the different components of their holiday priority list and use this information to give practical suggestions. As conversing evolves into questions, be prepared to move the conversation to one of new opportunity, for a stronger, more successful holiday season.

Trends influencing gift-giving this season includes themes, such as, simplicity, streamlining, convenience shopping (online and catalog), improving health and fitness and nesting. (Source: <http://Giftingresources.com/gifts/hottrends>) If you can package your product or service in accordance with one of these trends, you will be much more apt to spark interest.

Here are 4 handy tips to help you share and sell your gifts this season:

1. Terrific Opening Phrases (T.O.P.)

A terrific opening phrase is one that gets your conversation spinning in the right direction. With a little thought and preplanning about an opening phrase, you are more likely to create initial intrigue, and then revenue. Please note that this preparation is different than memorizing a canned conventional elevator speech. By having a few thoughtful phrases in mind, you can select the key words to match the moment. While you are mingling and mixing this holiday season, remember to give a thoughtful reply to common opening questions. When someone asks you what it is that you do, steer clear of functional responses. Mechanically stating functions, titles, or job tasks do not sell. When you respond with "I am a marketing manager; I sell kitchen tools; I am a director of communications; you are essentially stating functions of what it is that you do versus what it is that you do for others. To get to the root of what you offer, I encourage you to consider what it is that you *really* sell? The responses take form when you focus on the feelings and benefits your customer gain from your product or services. Notice the impact of addressing a common inquiry with meaningful action words. "I help", "I lead", or "I teach customers... " are just some of the ways you can create consequential exchanges. What is it that you do for your customers?

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2. Make your message resonate with the mood

Take a recent advertisement for gift cards from a local restaurant. The headline reads, "Give the gift of togetherness". While the actual product they are selling is a gift card, their message evokes the feelings from being with family and experiencing friendship. Strategic communication bridges a product to an experience. Is your message strategic and experiential? How does your message resonate?

3. Remember the intangible gifts - the gift of acknowledgement

It is essential to remember the gift of acknowledgment. Consumers face many choices today when it comes time to spending money. As an entrepreneur, you send a powerful message when you personally connect with your customers. I was personally the recipient of this connection last week during an appointment at Charles Penzone Salon.



While sitting in the chair, **Debra Penzone (pictured)**, president of [Charles Penzone Salon](#), stopped by the station and shook my hand. She thanked me for my business and for being a loyal customer.

I was immediately impressed by her gratitude and appreciation, and the gesture of her walking the floor. Charles and Debra Penzone have been one of the leading salons in the region for over 40 consecutive years. They have received numerous awards for their work including, **1**"Top 20 Salon Owners from Salon Today Magazine in 2003" and they were recognized by Salon Today Magazine as "Power Players" in the salon and spa industry in 2008." We can all learn from Debra's action. Despite all of the success Debra and Charles have already achieved, she still takes the time personally to recognize her valued customers. Have you acknowledged your customers lately?

4. Always be Ready

Sometimes opportunities for potential business or possible referrals present themselves in the least convenient places. In continuation of my story above, as Debra and I chatted, we found common connections through people we both know from NAWBO (National Association of Women Business Owners). She recognized that I must have my own business and asked me what I do. With joy and as much professionalism I could muster up, with my hair color slathered all over my head, I said, "I help companies, teams and entrepreneurs gain confidence (a feeling), get into action (a benefit) and most importantly g-r-o-w sales (a result)...by designing and delivering custom training/coaching programs." And as I asked her to kindly remember the face on my business card, instead of messy one sitting before her, we shared a laugh. I was

glad to have had a prepared opening phrase and a business card handy. Otherwise, I would have allowed the special moment to pass and the potential connection to perish.

So carry your business cards, think about your terrific opening phrases and realize that you never know where or when the next opportunity to grow your business will appear. Are you ready?

¹Chicago: History - Charles Penzone Family of Salons,
<http://www.charlespenzone.com/charles-penzone-inc/history.aspx> (accessed December 2, 2009).

Note: *To learn how to set up or refine your follow up systems, or to determine who to call, what to say or how effectively to get your follow up done, join me on **Tuesday, Dec. 8**. I will devote my day and share my system for [Unforgettable Follow Up™](#) with registered participants.*

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