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Salesmanship: Definition, Importance, Duties and Types!

“The personal selling” and “salesmanship” are often used interchangeably, but there is an important difference. Personal selling is the broader concept.

Salesmanship may or may not be an important part of personal selling and it is never ‘all of it. Along with other key marketing elements, such as pricing, advertising, product development and research, marketing channels and physical distribution, the personal selling is a means through which marketing programmes are implemented.

The broad purpose of marketing is to bring a firm’s products into contact with markets and to effect profitable exchanges of products for money. The purpose of personal selling is to bring the right products into contact with the right customers, and make ownership transfer.

Salesmanship is one of the skills used in personal selling, as defined by Stroh, “it is a direct, face-to-face, seller-to-buyer influence which can communicate the facts necessary for marketing a buying decision; or it can utilize the psychology of persuasion to encourage the formation of a buying decision”.

Salesmanship is seller-initiated effort that provides prospective buyers with information and motivates or persuades them to make favourable buying decisions concerning the seller’s products or service. The salesman of today has to react and interact in any different ways to many different people.

Apart from the knowledge of the product, a salesperson has to be a psychologist with one prospect, a human computer with another, an adviser with another, and at the same time a friend with some buyers. Salespersons must adjust their personalities on every call. Salesmanship may be implemented not only through

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personal selling but through advertising. Thus, advertising has been described as “salesmanship in print.”

Some definitions emphasize that salesmanship is the art of influencing or persuading people to do what sales representative wants them to do. For instance, contractors, teachers, ministers, authors, politicians, industrial engineers etc., practice the art of influencing others to do what they want them to do. Every man is a salesman in his own walks of life.

“He who works with his hands is a labourer.

“He who works with his hands and his head is a craftsman.

“He who works with his hands, HEAD and heart is an artist.

“He who works with hands, his head, his heart and his feet is a salesman.”

Salesmanship is the ability to persuade people to want the things which they already need. Salesmanship is the ability to convert human needs into wants. The work of salesman is a service i.e., helping the consumer. The salesman gives a solution to the customer’s problems. Salesmanship is the ability to handle the people and to handle the products.

Definition:

According to W.G Carter, “Salesmanship is in attempt to induce people to buy goods.” According to the National Association of Marketing Teachers of America, “It is the ability to persuade people to buy goods or services at a profit to the seller and benefit to the buyer.”

According to Knox, “Salesmanship is the power or ability to influence people to buy at a mutual profit, that which we have to sell, but which they may not have

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thought of buying until call their attention to it. Salesmanship is the ability to persuade people to want they already need.”

According to Prof Stephenson, “Salesmanship refers to conscious efforts on the part of the seller to induce a prospective buyer to purchase something that he had not really decided to buy, even if he had thought of it favourably. It consists of persuading people to buy what you have for sale in making them want it, in helping to make up their minds.”

According to J.C. Jagasia, “It is an ability to remove ignorance, doubt, suspicion and emotional objection concerning the usefulness of a product.”

According to Holtzclaw, “Salesmanship is the power to persuade plenty of people to pleurably and permanently purchase your product at a profit.”

According to Carfield Blake, “Salesmanship consists of winning the buyers’ confidence for the sellers’ house and goods, thereby winning regular and permanent customers.”

According to Sefred Gross, “Salesmanship is the art of increasing satisfaction by persuading those people who should do so to buy specific goods or service.”

Thus, salesmanship is the process of persuading a person to buy goods or services. It does not mean that salesmanship is applied only to personal selling; it can also be applied to advertising- printed salesmanship. Salesmanship in its broader meaning, includes all types of persuasion means, by a seller, viz., advertising, personal selling and other methods.

Modern Concept of Salesmanship:

In olden days, a salesman takes an order. He shows the goods. He waits for an order. Then he receives the payment. He never attempts to guide, or help or

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persuade the consumers. But the modern concept of salesmanship is entirely different from the old concept of salesmanship. Modern concept is creative in approach. He creates needs and converts them into wants. Customer satisfaction is the main problem of salesman. Mutual profit is essential both for the buyer and the seller. Salesman guides the customer to buy things which satisfy his want. Salesman motivates the feelings of the customers to act.

Importance of Salesmanship:

In the present day, salesmanship plays an important part. Salesman is the connecting link between sellers and buyers at every step., i.e” from the collection of raw materials to the finished products. , Of all, customers are the most benefited by salesmen. Present era is of large-scale production, which is in anticipation of demand. The market expands along with competition. This makes distribution a difficult and a complex factor in the face of still competition. The expansion of the market, growing competition etc., invite a better salesmanship.

1. Important to Producers:

Salesmanship is important to producers and manufacturers. For pushing products into the competitive market, salesmanship is necessary. To capture new markets also salesmanship is very important. Salesmen increase the sales volume. It brings larger profits to the manufacturers. Salesmen work as the “eye and ear” for the manufacturers.

They improve their products according to the taste of the consumers. They improve their sales policies by keeping in mind the suggestions, impressions and complaints of the consumers. He is the creator of demand. Hence it leads to

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increased production and increased business activity. As such it increases employment opportunity as well as personal incomes.

2. Important to Consumers:

Salesman educates and guides the consumers. He gives them more satisfaction. 'Consumers are right' in the marketing. As such, he gives more importance to them. Salesman helps the consumers in making the right decision and proper selection of the products which they want to buy. Salesmanship increases the rate of turnover, and hence reduces unsold stock. As such it minimizes the economic stagnation. Consumers can select the best products according to their requirements, taste and money.

Duties of a Salesman:

1. The principal duty is to make sales of products or services.
2. He has to do the assigned duty (travelling).
3. He has to make collection of bills relating to sale.
4. He has to make report-Sales made, Calls made, Services rendered, customers lost, competition and any other matters, relating to firm.
5. All complainants must be satisfied peacefully.
6. He has to attend sales meetings.
7. A salesman with his experience must supply information in order to solve problems relating to product or the firm.
8. He must maintain a good relation with the customers.

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9. He must assist the customers to make good selection.

10. He must develop a goodwill for the firm and the products.

11. He must have cooperative habits.

12 He takes periodic inventories of the stocks.

Characteristics or the Qualities of a Successful Salesman:

Reid gives the following characteristics of a good salesman:

1. Establishing good relationship with a variety of people.

2. Learning quickly and adapting smoothly.

3. Planning ahead and efficiently managing his time and efforts.

4. Working hard to achieve his goals, dedicating himself to provide long-term service, rather than having a get-rich-quick attitude.

5. Communicating clearly both in speech and in writing.

6. Thinking analytically and learning to break problems down to their basic components.

7. Producing constantly both in quality and quantity rather than performing erratically.

8. Persisting steadily his goal and not giving up easily.

9. Possessing and living up to high moral characteristics that enable people to admire,, respect and trust him.

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“Personality is the personal distinction or dynamic force which is felt by everybody who comes within the radius.” Personality is the sum total of the impressions made on people with whom one comes into contact. The impression is the result of many qualities that one possesses. There are a number of qualities which make a salesman successful.

To become a successful salesman, he must master all the traits. A number of evidences as given by RG Walters, J.W. Windate, Russel etc., divide the qualities of a successful salesman into the following major factors. They are: 1. Personality of a salesman, 2. Knowledge of the product and, 3. Knowledge of the customers and their buying motives.

Type of Salesmen:

1. Manufacturer’s Salesmen:

(a) Missionary Salesmen:

They are also known as Creative Salesmen or Pioneer Salesmen. They are employed by manufacturers and do the work, of missionary nature. They create demand for the products. They usually develop goodwill. They call on distributors- wholesalers, retailers, customers, in order to educate, train and induce them to promote the products. Manufacturers of medical supplies use this type of salesmen to promote their products.

(b) Merchandising Salesmen:

They assist dealers by giving suggestions on display, store- layout, service facility etc. They arrange wide publicity and conduct demonstration for dealer salesmen, by even working along with them. They are largely involved in drugs, medicines, grocery etc. There is a wide scope for this category.

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(c) Dealer-Servicing Salesman:

These salesmen call on retailers in their territory and visit them often. They bring samples of new products, take orders and make up window display.

(d) Sale Promotion Salesmen:

They are also known as Retail Salesman. They are specialised in promotional work. They are representatives of medical firms or publishers. They may not take spot orders but they try to convince people like doctors about the new drug, research work, testing, result etc. They create demand by calling on customers,

(e) Technical Salesmen:

They are trained technically. They provide technical assistance to company's customers on matter connected with the product, its quality, its design, its installation etc. Generally these types of salesmen deal with computers, equipment's, machinery items, chemical products etc.

2. Wholesaler's Salesmen:

Products reach the hands of customers through a number of channels, the main channel being wholesalers. They are the nerve-centres of distribution between manufacturers and retailers. These salesmen are mainly concerned with retailers through whom the products are to be marketed.

Their main concerns are:

1. To guide the wholesalers in giving credit transaction to retailers,
2. To collect bills from retailers and customers,
3. To collect information of the market trend,

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4. To help retailers to improve sales and

5. To take orders from retailers.

3. Retail Salesmen:

They are of two types: 1. Indoor salesmen and 2. Outdoor Salesmen. Indoor salesmen work within the store—counter sales over the counter. They do not need training as they have to face only customers and not the prospects. They deal with regular buyers. They are order filling salesmen.

They receive orders and execute them. They must have good manners and a helpful attitude. They must be able to guide the customers and help them to make quick decisions. They must also be knowledgeable and honest. Above all, they must maintain products in the shelves in an attractive manner.

Outdoor salesmen may also be called travelling salesmen. Their main job is to make regular travels, visit customers, canvass orders etc. They must possess all the qualities of ideal salesmen.

4. Speciality Salesmen:

They are to sell speciality products-expensive durable goods, furniture, books, house furnishings, washing machines, automobiles, refrigerators etc. People purchase these products only after a personal and careful selection, because they do not buy them frequently. Salesmen of this kind must be masters of the art of salesmanship. They are representatives of manufacturers, who produce special items.

4 Theories of Personal Selling –

There has been a lot of research by behavioural scientists and marketing scholars to examine whether selling is an art or science and various theories have been developed to explain the buyer-seller buying process. The process of

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influencing others to buy may be viewed from four different angles on the basis of different theories: thus there are four theories of selling viz.

1. AIDAS theory of personal selling
2. “Right Set of Circumstances” theory of selling
3. “Buying Formula” theory of selling
4. “Behavioral Equation” theory

The first two of the four above-mentioned theories, are seller oriented and the third one is buyer’s oriented. The fourth one emphasizes the buyer’s decision process but also takes the salesperson’s influence process into account.

AIDAS Theory of Selling:

This theory, popularly known as AIDAS theory (attention, interest, desire, action and satisfaction), is based on experimental knowledge. This theory is very common.

According to this theory potential buyer’s mind passes through the following stages:

1. Attention Getting:

It is the crucial step in the AIDAS process. The objective is to put the prospect into the right state of mind to continue the sales talk. The salesperson has to convince the prospect for participating in the face-to-face interview. A good beginning of conversation may set the stage for a full sales presentation. The salesperson must apply his social and psychological skills to draw the attention of the prospect to his sales presentation.

2. Interest Creating:

The second step is to intensify the prospect’s attention so that it involves into strong interest. To achieve this, the salesperson has to be enthusiastic about the product. Another method is to hand over the product to the prospect and let him handle it. Brochures and other visual aids serve the same purpose. Throughout the interest phase, the hope is to search out the selling appeal that is most likely to be effective.

3. Desire Stimulating:

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After the attention getting and creating interest, the prospect must be kindled to develop a strong desire for the product. This is a ready-to-buy point. Objection from the prospect will have to be carefully handled at this stage. Time is saved and the chances of making a sale improved if objections are anticipated and answered before the prospect raises them.

4. Action Inducing:

If the presentation has been perfect, the prospect is ready to act, that is, to buy. Very often there may be some hesitation on the part of the prospect at this stage. The salesperson should very carefully handle this stage and try to close the deal effectively. Once the buyer has asked the seller to pack the product, then it is the responsibility of the seller to reassure the customer that the decision was correct.

5. Satisfaction:

The customer should be left with the impression that the salesperson merely helped in deciding. After the sale has been made, the salesperson should ensure that the customer is satisfied with the product. The salesperson should sense the prospect's mind and brief his talks.

“Right set of circumstances” Theory of Selling:

It is also called the “situation-response” theory. It has its psychological origin in experiments with animals. The major emphasis of the theory is that a particular circumstance prevailing in a given selling situation will cause the prospect to respond in a predictable way. The set of circumstances can be both internal and external to the prospect. This is essentially a selleroriented theory and it stresses that the salesman must control the situation in such a way as to produce a sale ultimately.

“Buying Formula” Theory of Selling:

The buyer's needs or problems receive major attention, and the salesperson's role is to help the buyer to find solutions. This theory purports to answer the question: What thinking process goes on in the prospects's mind that causes the decision to buy or not to buy? The name “buying formula” was given to this theory by strong.

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The theory is based on the fact that there is a need or a problem for which a solution must be found which would lead to purchase decision, as shown below:

Whenever an individual feels a need, he is said to be conscious of a deficiency of satisfaction. The solution will always be a product or service or both and they may belong to a producer or seller. The buyer develops interest in buying a solution.

In purchasing, the “solution” involves two parts:

1. Product or service or both,
2. The brand name, manufacturer or the salesperson of the particular brand name:

The product or service (Brand name) must be considered adequate to satisfy the need and the buyer must experience a pleasant feeling or anticipated satisfaction. This ensure the purchase.

Behaviour Equation Theory of Selling:

This theory is a sophisticated version of the “right set of circumstances” and this theory was proposed by Howard, using a stimulus response model and using large number of findings from behavioural research. This theory explains buying behaviour in terms of purchasing decision process, viewed as a phase of the learning process, four essential elements of learning processes included in the stimulus response model are drive, cues, response and reinforcement, which are given below, in brief:

1. Drive is a strong internal stimuli that impel buyers’ response. Innate drives stem from psychological needs and learned drives such as striving for status or social approval.

2. Cues are weak stimuli that determine when the buyer will respond. Triggering cues activate the decision process whereas new triggering cues influence the decision process.

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3. Response is what the buyer does.

4. A reinforcement is any event that strengthens the buyers' tendency to make a particular response.

Howard believed that selling effort and buying action variables are multiplicative rather than additive.

Therefore, Howard incorporated these four elements into a behavioural equation that is:

$$B = P \times D \times K \times V$$

P = Response or internal response tendency, i.e. the act of purchasing a brand or a particular supplier.

D = Present drive or motivation level

K = "Incentive potential" that is, the value of product or brand or its perceived potential value to the buyer.

V = Intensity of all cues: triggering, product or informational.

"Sales Personality" or 'Personality of Salesman' includes his appearance, his characters, his mannerisms, his talk and the general impression which impresses and convinces the prospects. By using these qualities and abilities skillfully, the salesman is able to impress the customers favourably. As a result, the customers are attracted towards the product or service and ultimately purchase it. In other words of H. W. Morten "Personality is that personal distinction or dynamic force which is felt by everyone who comes within the radius."

Essential Qualities/Traits of a salesman:

1. Sound health

A salesman should possess a sound and physique in order to become efficient. A salesman who is not healthy cannot maintain a pleasing appearance. He will also not be able to carry on his duties efficiently.

2. Good posture

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Good posture enhances the appearance and personality of the salesman. A salesman should maintain an alluring posture, i.e. he should stand erect or sit erect while meeting a customer. It makes a good impression on the customer. Therefore the salesman should try to acquire certain good posture in order to attract customers.

3. Pleasant voice

Voice is the index of one's own feelings than the facial expression. The quality and the tone of the voice also have its influence on the hearer. The salesman should have pleasant, clear and forceful voice. The voice should not be coarse, high pitched, shrill, commanding or nasal. These types of voices generally irritate customers.

4. Good appearance

A good physical appearance is a big asset for salesman. The first impression on the customer is created by the appearance of the salesman. A good appearance generally gives more confidence to a salesman and he is able to convince the customers more easily. The appearance of the salesman may be divided into 3 important segments:

1. Cleanliness, 2. Grooming and 3. Clothes.

5. Cheerfulness

Cheerfulness is the greatest virtue of a good salesman. Everyone wants to be with persons, who are cheerful. If the salesman is cheerful, possesses a good health, vigour and a rich sense of humour, then he can attract large number of customers.

6. Imagination

It is an important consideration which detects the exact need of the customers. This quality helps the salesman to understand the problems of customers in his position. But it is depressing to see in India that many salesmen have absolutely no imagination.

7. Alertness

Alertness refers to active sensitivity to the situation before oneself. It is nothing but presence of mind as to what to say, how to say and on what occasion. It

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consists of keen power of observation and common sense to take correct decisions quickly.

8. Resourcefulness

It is a mental ability to think and find out alternatives. It includes devising new approaches to make people do what you want them to do. Resourcefulness has great role to play in salesmanship.

9. Initiative

Initiative is the ability to work on his own without any guidance from anybody. It is very useful quality for success in dealing with customers. Of course, in early stages a salesman has to work under the supervision and guidance of senior salesman. But in course of time, he has to depend upon himself and take independent decisions.

10. Observation

Power of observation is another important quality of a salesman. A good salesman must be a keen observer. He should observe the changes in style, fashion of people, activities of rivals, Government policies, general attitude of customers and other things.

11. Self-confidence

Self-confidence is another important quality, which every salesman should possess. The salesman should keep Self-confidence both on himself and the goods he sells to the customers. A salesman lacking Self-confidence can not convince his customer properly or overcome his objections.

12. Memory

Sharp memory is another important attribute of a salesman. Sharp memory refers to capacity to recognize this customer, recall his past interviews with them, recalling their requirements and

suggestions. As a matter of fact, lack of memory is responsible for committing many errors. For this purpose, it is better for a salesman to keep a notebook and write important points for future reference.

13. Sociability

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It refers to ability of salesman to meet the public and make friends with them. A true salesman must be an extrovert, i.e., a man who likes mixing with people in every type of situation. Moreover, he should not hesitate to meet unknown persons. He must be a friend, philosopher and guide to customers.

14. Enthusiasm

A salesman should be enthusiastic; otherwise he will fail to create interest in the minds of the prospects. Enthusiasm creates assurance in the minds of the buyers for a salesman's products and services.

15. Tact

A salesman should be a man of tact. Tact means doing the right thing at the right time, in the right way. It further includes mental awareness of the salesman to tackle all kinds of situations. However, tact should not mean cheating or cunningness. Tact or diplomacy helps in avoiding objections, obstacles in sales programme.

16. Court-operation

The modern salesman has to face several challenges in the market for better business. To meet these challenges a salesman should have a good co-operation with customers, fellow salesmen and employer. The customers depend upon the salesman to a great extent for selecting products. He (salesman) should extend full co-operation and help to them (customers) by recommending the best product to suit their needs.

17. Courtesy

There is a saying that "Courtesy costs nothing but returns high dividend". This particularly holds good in the field of salesmanship. Courtesy is a mixture of politeness and consideration. It is an indication of refinement and culture. The salesman must be polite, modest, and courteous to turn the hearts of customers.

18. Patience and tolerance

Patience and tolerance take a very important place in the development of a salesman. A salesman to become successful must be extremely patient in dealing with a buyer. In no case he should lose his temper, but to show a spirit impatient and angry, but a salesman should remain calm and cool.

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19. Effective speech

A salesman should be a good conversationalist. Ability to speak correctly and clearly impresses the customers favourably. The sales talk should be clear, pleasant and persuasive, but not like the situations; each situation may have to be treated in a special manner. The salesman should have a good command over English and other languages, sweet voice, clear pronunciation, fluent expressions, etc.

20. Honesty

The salesman should be extremely and thoroughly honest. An honest salesman is liked by every customer. While dealing with a customer, the salesman must be true and frank about the products he wants to sell. He should not misrepresent or exaggerate facts. If a salesman cheats a customer, that customer is lost forever.

21. Integrity

Integrity of a salesman is an important trait in his character. Integrity means uprightness of character, moral soundness, good behavior, honesty, fulfillment of promises, and strength of character. A salesman who does not have integrity of character will not be in a position to create good impression upon his employer, fellow salesman and customers.

22. Loyalty

Loyalty means willingness of obey. Loyalty of a salesman can be classified into four groups :(i) loyalty to the organization, (ii) loyalty to the customers, (iii) loyalty to the fellow-workers.

23. Reliability

A salesman should be trustworthy and reliable. He should take his work seriously and with responsibility. He should not give exaggerated promises. He must be truthful in his statements and honest in his dealings. If a salesman is reliable, customers will have no fear of being cheated while purchasing goods from him.

24. Industriousness

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It refers to the ability to work hard to achieve a goal. Unless a salesman works hard, it is very difficult for him to acquire the detailed knowledge of the customers and product. Absent a result he cannot achieve his targeted sales. The salesman, therefore, must remain active both mentally and physically. Dullness should be avoided.

25. Courage

It refers to moral strength of a person. Sometimes a salesman may commit mistakes and make false promises, which may lead to an unpleasant atmosphere. But a good salesman must have

enough courage to face such situations boldly. He should be daring enough to take risk and should be firm in his decisions.

26. Sincerity

Sincerity is another good quality of a successful salesman. A sincere salesman attends his customers sincerely and explains them all the merits and demerits of the product. He also attends to the customers promptly. A sincere salesman does not face any difficulty to achieve his target.

27. Maturity

Maturity refers to balance of mind. A salesman should be matured. He should accept gracefully both criticisms and praises. Equal weight age should be given to both for and against. Maturity compels a salesman to think before he takes any action.

28. Determination

Determination is nothing but will to succeed and go ahead. Patience and perseverance are the ingredients of strong determination towards his duties and responsibilities. At times he may face resistance from the customers but it should not distract him from his original aims. He should work patiently and calmly to achieve the predetermined target.

Types of Salesmen: Manufacturer's, Wholesaler's and Retailer's Salesman!

(1) Manufacturer's Salesman:

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He is employed to sell goods directly to the consumers, wholesalers or retailers. He deals in limited number of products and possesses specialised knowledge about the same. A manufacturer salesman can be of three types.

(a) Pioneer Salesman:

He is primarily concerned with the sale of the new product. He is very competent and creative in his job.

(b) Dealer Serving Salesman:

He supplies goods of his manufacturer to various dealers. He also imparts training to the salesmen of the dealers.

(c) Speciality Salesman:

He sells the manufacturer's products directly to the consumers. He usually undertakes costly items like washing machines, televisions and calculators etc. He tells the consumers about the use of the product by giving practical demonstration. He should be expert and well trained in his job.

(2) Wholesaler's Salesman:

He is appointed by the wholesaler and deals with the retailers. He informs the retailers about the availability of various products with the wholesaler and helps them in selecting the articles. A wholesaler's salesman is of two type's viz., indoor and outdoor salesman.

Indoor salesman serves the retailers at the wholesaler's premises and supplies them goods, whereas outdoor salesman goes to various retailers in order to collect their orders.

(3) Retailer's Salesman:

He is appointed by the retailer and deals directly with the consumers. He caters to the needs of the consumers both at the retailer's business place and attending the consumers at their place. He also distributes free samples of the goods to the consumers and also gives them practical demonstration of the products.

A retailer's salesman can be either creative or service salesman. A creative salesman is concerned with introducing a new product in the market whereas the service salesman is concerned with maintaining the demand of the existing products in the market.

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Definition: Selling Process

The selling process is the series of steps followed by a salesperson while selling a product. Selling Process is a complete cycle which starts from identifying the customers to closing the deal with them. It is more relevant in B2B business sales where the sales cycle is not short and might take a longer duration to close. In B2C the selling process may be transient and shorter.

Selling Process Steps

The process of selling a product covers various steps like prospecting, pre-approach, approach, presentation, handling objections, closing & followup. The 7 steps of selling process are explained below in detail:

1. Prospecting: The first step in selling process in which potential customers are identified by the salesperson is called prospecting. 2. Pre-approach: The stage where the salesperson collects information about the potential customers and understands them before making the sales call is called pre-approach. 3. Approach: Approach is the step where the salesperson actually meets the customer for the first time. 4. Presentation: The step wherein the salesperson talks about how the product will satisfy the customer's needs and add value to his/her life is called presentation. 5. Handling Objections: In this step, the salesperson clarifies all the doubts and questions that the customer has and eliminates all his objections to buying the product. 6. Closing: The step in which the customer is asked to place an order for the product is called closing. 7. Follow-Up: This is the final step in the selling process where the salesperson follows up with the customers to ensure satisfaction and builds the relationship in order to repeat business with them.

The above image is the selling process.

Example of Selling Process

Let us assume a newly open gym in a posh locality to understand the selling process steps. The gym owners will first search for prospects who can afford the

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gym fees and are in need of accessing a gym with facilities. The preapproach & approach stages would be when the owners of the gym would market the brand through leaflets, brochures etc. This would entice the people to give a call and arrange for a visit to the gym. Here the gym amenities, facilities, instructors etc would be shown, which would be a part of the presentation and demonstration. The queries regarding fees, trainers, equipments etc would be handling the objections of the prospect. Once a person is satisfied, they would be willing to join the gym by paying the fees & hence that would be closing the deal in the selling process. Followup would ensure that the customer keeps on attending the gym in the future as well.

SALES DISPLAY

Display is the act of putting things for view or on view. Sales display means "arranging systematically saleable goods so as to attract the attention of the customer". Advertising helps in giving awareness, reminding and informing about products and services to the target markets. Only a picture or an idea about the product is given in the advertisements. The actual product is

not displayed in advertising. Sales display fulfils that need by appealing to the eye of the prospects.

Introduction

By sales display, the manufacturer shows the goods or services in an attractive manner to catch the eye of customers. In fact, display is the silent salesman that calls the prospective buyer's attention to the product and hopefully makes him to purchase. In the past, sales display was the only media for exhibiting products and including prospects to buy the same. At present, sales display occupies an important place in marketing. Sales display acts as advertising at the point of purchase. The objectives of sales display are enlisted as below:

- * It presents the product or service to the potential buyers.
- * It gives an idea about every detail of the product such as variety, quality, size, colour, design etc.
- * It assists the customer to see and examine the goods before they actually buy them.
- * Sales display appeals visually to the prospects and stimulates them to purchase.
- * Sales display reminds the buyers about their need and they are attracted to buy.
- * It supplements the advertising efforts of the manufacturer.

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Wholesalers and retailers are satisfied by display tactics undertaken by the manufacturers they buy the goods without hesitation.

Forms of Sales Displays

There are three forms of display:

1. Interior display 2. Exterior display 3. Display at other places

Interior Display

As the name indicates, interior displays or demonstration are arranged inside the shop. It includes displays on the floor, walls, in the show cases and show boxes. Goods should be neatly arranged and displayed inside the retail outlet (shop). In this type of display, proper lighting and colour matching should also be made so that overall effect of interior display becomes pleasing and attractive. The principles of cleanliness and orderly arrangement of stock in a neat manner are the basic necessities of interior display. Further, the display should provide the customers and sales personnel adequate space to allow movement. The stock should be kept in such a way that it remains free from dust. Protection should be given to the displayed items so that they are not destroyed. It is also desirable to place related items together. For instance, vests and briefs, shirts and ties, shoes and socks etc. This creates a favourable impression. In case, the buyer is expected to handle the article it should be kept within reach. In other words, if there is

possibility of damage and spoilage to the goods by handling, such types of goods should be kept away from the customers.

Advantages

- ☐ Interior display helps the shop owner to hold attention of the buyers once he enters into the shop.
- ☐ Interior display helps to sell related items.
- ☐ Interior display makes the selling task bright and attractive with selected and systematic use of light and colour. It also makes the inside atmosphere of the shop pleasing, cheerful and congenial.
- ☐ With the help of interior display, the buyer is able to find and select the article easily.

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□ Occasional change of interior display helps to arouse interest of customers visiting such shops.

□ If the customer is satisfied or fascinated with the display, he becomes a regular customer and there is every possibility of his patronizing that shop.

Exterior Display

Exterior display is the display of product in the show window of the retail outlet. It creates that long lasting first impression. It also attracts the attention of passers-by as well as prospects and invites them in this way to enter the establishment. Window dressing, shop front (shop joint) and shop sign (sign board) are the major examples for exterior display.

Shop front

It is the face of the shop. It should clearly indicate the class and variety of products that the shop sells. The shop front should be designed in such a way that it will remain readily identified from among various shops. Therefore it should possess some unique features.

Shop sign

Like shop front, it is also the face of the shop. It should have the name of the shop, the brands it deals with and the name of the owner. The sign board be hung in such a place where it must be visible to the passerby. Either it may be kept at a high place or above the shop's entrance as found suitable for clear vision. The sign board should possess the characteristics of distinctiveness and attractiveness. Both the sign board as well as the shop front should be properly lighted.

Shop Window (Window Dressing)

It is an art of dressing windows by attractive display of articles inside the shop window. The idea behind window dressing is not only to display products to the prospects but also to induce them into the store by creating adequate interest among them. By creating favourable image or impression upon the prospects the window display also creates the desire to buy. Thus it creates and maintains the goodwill of the shop.

Importance points in window dressing

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- ☐ Selection of proper site and position of the window is important.
- ☐ Window position should lead the prospects to the entrance of the store.
- ☐ Window which opens on a busy square and leads the prospects into the shop is most effective.
- ☐ Adequate space should be allocated to windows.
- ☐ Projections of the shop window at the entrance should be avoided.
- ☐ Window should be neat and clean.
- ☐ Arrangement of the articles should be artistic and pleasing.
- ☐ Window should not be overcrowded.
- ☐ Adequate provision of space should be made inside the window.
- ☐ No glaring glasses which dazzle the eyes of prospects should be used.
- ☐ Proper lighting, attractive decorations, rotating stands, decorative materials etc., should be placed.
- ☐ The lighting should be bright not glaring.
- ☐ Shaded lights which do not affect the eyes of the prospects can be used.
- ☐ Lighting should focus on goods displayed instead of onlookers.
- ☐ Window displays needs to be changed at regular intervals.
- ☐ Changing of the arrangement of goods should be done during off hours and holidays not on business hours.

The following are the two types of window display:

- o Sole display: A single article may be displayed in the window, which is called as sole display.
- o Related display: In related display, many articles are displayed.

Advantages of Window display

- ☐ Window display attracts the passers by into the shop.
- ☐ It presents the product in real life through models.

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- Window displays demonstrate the products the shop is selling.
- Importance of particular shop can easily be estimated by the nature and contents of window display.

4. Display at Other Places - Show rooms, show cases, glass boxes, cupboards, etc. form part of display. They are used not only to sales display but also act as a publicity device for increasing sales. The success of show rooms and show cases depends, to a great extent, on the location, decoration, lighting and such other devices.

Show rooms and show cases

Show rooms and show cases are one of the latest types of advertising. Most durable and industrial products are introduced in the market with the help of these mediums.

Show rooms are specially designed rooms in which the products are displayed. While people pass through such show rooms, they get an opportunity to see, touch, handle and examine the products at close range. Price tags may be attached to the product items. The show room may be owner or hired. In general, the show rooms are opened by leading companies in important cities and towns. Here the purpose is to exhibit the product items to the prospects. Sometimes, the show room attendants also get the role of salesperson by providing information and clearing the doubts /objections of the prospects.

Advantages

- o Publicity device for increasing sales.
- o Place where orders are collected.
- o Customers are able to examine the things at close range.
- o Customers are given freedom to see, touch, handle and examine the products at close range.
- o Given opportunity to the newly recruited salespeople to train themselves.
- o Provide after sale services to customer.

Show cases are glass boxes or cupboards displaying a wide range of product items manufactured by a particular company. Usually transparent glasses are

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used on all sides and even at the shop. Show cases form a part of interior display. But they can also be located at public places like bus stands, railway stations, airports, cinema theatres and so on.

Advantages

- o Publicity device for increasing sales.
- o Meant to awaken the interests of the prospects.
- o Customers are able to examine the things at close range.
- o Form a part of interior display
- o Useful dealer-aid as prospects get adequate product knowledge before they decide to purchase.

Exhibitions and Trade Fairs

An ancient and popular method of advertising is the use of exhibitions and trade fairs to display product items. Exhibitions and trade fairs may be organized by an individual manufacturer or by a group of manufacturers or association of manufacturers or even by the government. This can be organized on local level, regional level, national level and international level also. Similarly exhibitions and trade fairs may be intended for either members of general people or for trade buyers or for trade members of one type only. In order to organize exhibitions and trade fairs, an extensive vacant space is hired and sheds are rented out to producers who want to exhibit their products in such exhibitions and trade fairs.

Exhibitions and trade fairs are meant to display product items before the general public, demonstrate their uses and merits and create market for them.

Exhibitions and trade fairs are also useful to introduce new products and exhibit their uses. Sales literatures, folders, handbills, notices are usually distributed to the general public and at times free samples are also given. At times, government also encourages producers to exhibit their products in international exhibitions and trade fairs in order to expand the export trade.

Advantages

- o Exhibitions and trade fairs provide a scope for the producers to display their product items to the general public in order to get a market for them.

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- o Exhibitions and trade fairs are the sources of amusement and recreation for the general public.
- o Exhibitions and trade fairs provide an opportunity for the manufacturers to advertise their product extensively and thus create brand consciousness.
- o Exhibitions and trade fairs help consumers to compare goods of various companies.
- o Exhibitions and trade fairs usually draw huge gatherings which consist of general public, trade representatives, middlemen etc.
- o International (Global) marketing is usually dependent to a great extent on creation of consumer awareness through trade fairs and exhibitions.

The following are various classes of sales display:

1. Product unit display:

The product unit displays use merchandise that is identical in size, design, colour, shape, use, etc. This type of display is used for bag, readymade garments, shirts, etc. Efficient merchandising is of interest to both the dealer and the producer. The following would probably matter to the dealer:

* Creation of a stocking point for his establishment based on an intelligent assessment of profitability and turnover. * Careful planning of shop floor layout – placing of shelves, displays, cabinets, etc-and to ensure maximum speed of the customer traffic during peak period, thus avoiding over crowding and bottleneck.

2. Assortment display:

In this type of display a retailer puts a large range of products for display. It can be classified into the following two types:

* Open display(e.g. super bazaar) * Close display(e.g. shoes ,electronics)

3.Videotape displays:

This is the latest development in the field of displays. These displays make use of technology to "speak" to and show shoppers the available merchandise.

These pre-recorded audio/video devices include "shelf talkers" and "rear screen

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projection" thus adding a new dimension to products which need demonstrations.

4. Life-style displays:

Using the market segmentation approach life style displays are used by retail stores/outlets focusing on life styles of customers. The purpose here is to make the retail store appear homely

for target customer and give him the feeling that he has come to the right place to shop.(eg; retail store of Bajaj Two wheelers)

5. Rack displays:

Clothing and household goods retailers for neatly hanging or presenting the products items mainly use this type of display. A variety of vertical chrome or steel tubing racks in circular and side-wards shapes as well as mobiles are used for displays.

6. Point of sale display

Marketers design special advertising vehicles, called point-of-sale displays, which are found near, on or next to a checkout counter. This is meant to entice the customer into buying more products, or products that are on a special offer. Such displays are colorful, to distract the customer while waiting in line, and to look at the product. They are meant to stand out from other items. They can also be related to a special event, either one going on in a shop, or a holiday-time sale.

Common items that may be there year-round are batteries, video tapes or writable CDs and DVDs, drinks, tobacco, ice cream, candy, chewing gum and magazines/comics. These displays are also useful in places with limited floor space, as there tends to be a lot of wasted room around counters.

The displays are normally covered with branding for the product they are trying to sell, and are made out of cardboard, and/or covering over a plastic stand. This means they are easily replaceable and disposable. This also means the designer can make full use of color and printing to make the box appealing to the eye. Some displays are fixed or non-disposable. These may contain lighting to make the display more visible. It may also contain a cooler, such as for drinks or ice

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cream. Some are like a metal basket, and have no design on the outside, and simply show a price. These types of displays are easier to refill.

Process of Sales Display Management

In order to get the maximum advantage from sales display it is essential that they are organized and managed effectively. The process of sales display can be divided in to two parts: Part – I (Planning of sales displays) and Part – II (Planning of sales displays).

Fig. Process of Sales Display Management

In therefore, it requires the use of experts as well as search for newer materials to attain a distinct edge in product display. MNC's are well-known to change their displays quite frequently and for this purpose even employ interior decorators and designers. Some MNC's even have an inhouse merchandising and display department/division.

Role of Retailers in Sales Displays

Retailer acts as a link between the wholesaler and the customer. Since retailers handle the sales displays, they do require training and motivation. Thus retailers have to manage sales display task in an effective manner. In order to do this, a retailer requires space in his outlet. Effective management of sales display has tow major aspects which are given below:

1. Training to Retailers

A retailer can make the sales display a success or a failure. Therefore, if any company wants to make it successful, it has to impart training to its retailers. The following are some important areas in which retailers can be offered training in connection with sales display.

- ☐ How to put up complicated display fixtures and materials?
- ☐ How to replace old and monotonous displays?
- ☐ How to set up creative displays?

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- ☐ How to manage incomplete display kits?
- ☐ How to attract consumers by sales displays?

This involvement on the part of the retailer becomes essential in the organization to conduct sales displays. The training to retailer and his staff for the purpose of making a display a success is always needed.

2. Motivating the Retailer

The retailers should be adequately motivated by the sponsoring organization, so that they can put their best efforts into the sales displays. the following are the few directions in this context:

- ☐ Conducting display contests among retailers.
- ☐ Publicity through newsletters mentioning the name of the retailer.
- ☐ Provision of display goods and fixtures at special subsidized prices (reduced prices).
- ☐ Photo-flashing of retailer's display to other retailers.
- ☐ Cooperative advertising and sales promotion, i.e., promoting the retail store as well as the producer's product on cost-sharing basis.

For instance, Bata India Limited in India attaches considerable importance to the retail trade. The company spends nearly 25-50 percent more money on shelf space than almost any other company in India.

Conclusion

Sales display plays a vital role in modern retailing. These help in improving the retail store image as well as attracting customers to the stores. Effective sales displays increase the level of sales and profitability. The process of sales display can be divided in to two parts: Planning of sales displays and Part Planning of sales displays. Effective management of sales displays requires an eye for detail on the part of the sponsors as well as retailers. Dealers and retailers are playing very important roles in the success of sales displays and hence require careful handling and proper motivation.