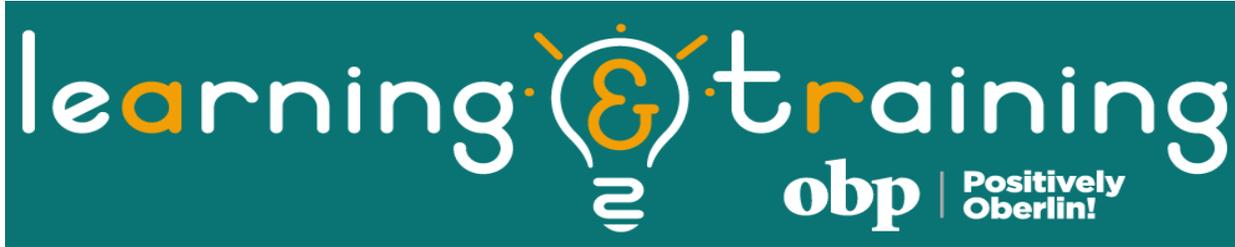


5 steps for training your staff to sell.



This is a process I developed back in the mid-90s when I owned my store and it WORKS. I've trained hundreds of employees – many of them teenaged boys! – using this system.

1. The first step is to write the training manual.

In essence, you need to write a course on retail selling. Retail selling isn't hard, but there are lots of important nuances, techniques, and concepts you have to teach.

I teach the Six Steps to the Perfect Purchase. You might come up with something different. But the point is that you have to figure out and write down everything you want your team to know about selling.

If it ain't written it ain't real! And if it ain't written you have to make it all up again every time you hire someone new and need to train them. That's no good.

So, a written course on retail selling – that's first.

2. The second step is to make videos.

That's right, videos. You can't expect your team to just read the manual and miraculously become selling pros! By making videos of your retail selling manual, you add listening and looking to the learning process. Some people love to read and learn well through reading, but lots of people don't.

And if your team includes younger employees from the Millennial Generation, video is an absolute MUST to engage them and keep their attention. They've grown up on video and it's an essential learning tool for them.

I recommend breaking your retail selling manual down into many short videos so your team can learn in bite-sized chunks.

3. The third step is to create a test.

You need to have some mechanism for making sure your employees are actually learning the material. The test does three very important things...

1 - It focuses their attention. If your employees know they have to pass a test at the end, they are more likely to pay attention during the training.

5 steps for training your staff to sell.

2 – It reinforces key points in the training. By taking the test your employees are actually re-learning the most important parts of the training. Especially if they get a question wrong. Learning the right answer re-teaches the concept.

3 – The test lets you track who is getting it, and who is struggling. And it lets you track who is actually doing the training and who is slacking off!

Now the test doesn't have to be long or tricky, In fact, it shouldn't be. The idea is simply to see if the employee is paying attention and learning.

You should have one test for each of the videos you've created.

4. The fourth step is to do immediate follow-up

Immediately reinforce the training and have them put what they've learned into action. I call it the "Show Me." You want to know that they can take what they've learned and apply it to their real experience on your selling floor.

When they demonstrate that they can do something – whether it's properly approaching the customer or adding on during the sale - you know that the initial training has worked. They can do the job.

5. The fifth and final step is continuous, on-going training.

And this is the step that most people leave out.

Which is unfortunate.

Because study after study has shown that if learning is not reinforced and re-taught, people will forget 90% of what they have learned within ten days. 90%!

It's called The Forgetting Curve.

And it means that if you don't follow up with continuous, on-going training everything you've done up until this point will be... not completely useless, but certainly less than effective.

From Bob Negan at the Retail Sales Academy



5 steps for training your staff to sell.

The good news is that through repeated re-teaching, people REMEMBER most of what they learn. But you can't stop reinforcing and re-training. EVER. As soon as you do, skills will start to decline.

Think about something you knew by heart in high school or college – maybe it's how to solve a quadratic equation or the ability to recite one of Shakespeare's sonnets. Can you still do it?

What if you had been reminded about the quadratic equation or the sonnet say once a month from high school until now? Do you think you would remember it then?

Here's another way to look at it... Do NBA players stop practicing free throws just because they've shot 100,000 free throws in the past or have a high free throw percentage in games? No! They are good because they practice.

Just like pro athletes, your team has got to keep re-learning, practicing, and advancing their selling skills.

So there you have it – the 5 steps for creating a killer sales training program in your store!

The upside is huge. Immediate and long-lasting sales increases, a better customer experience leading to stronger loyalty and more referrals, and less stress for you every time you hire someone.

Make no mistake; creating this system will take time, energy, and expertise.

By Bob Negen – Retail Sales Academy