

# ACCESSORIES RESOURCE TEAM BULLETIN

## TAKE OUT WHAT YOU PUT IN

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My daughter Erin is home from college this summer and has taken a job with a company called Vector Marketing – Cutco. This is a company that actively recruits college students to sell kitchen utensils. They train them intensely for 3 to 4 days and then turn them loose on their family and friends to sell...knives.

At first I was very skeptical....totally unimpressed in fact but then I attended a parent/guest meeting. I came away with a completely different attitude. This company puts emphasis on training, recognition and support for its sales team. Of course, this is not all that this company does but that is the short version. This experience could not be bought in any university program. My daughter has been taught to do cold calls, meet with total strangers, maintain poise and professionalism, develop communication skills, time management and most importantly goal setting.

Are you training, supporting and recognizing your staff? There is a saying I have heard all my life – “you get out of it what you put into it”. In this column over the next few months, I will give you some of the highlights:

Communication Skills, Verbal and Non-Verbal: Your customer will hear about 7 percent of your words, will recognize around 38 percent of your facial presentation and respond 55 percent of the time to the tone of your voice. Meeting with customers takes practice. You can't script the non-verbal presentation, but you can practice it. Just pointing out that most people respond in this way is eye opening. Think of it like this, babies and animals don't necessarily understand everything you say, but they respond and react to your facial expression and the tone of your voice. You can't see my face or hear my voice right now – “But this REALLY works!”

The Art of Listening: This is all about discovery. Exactly why did that customer come into your store or showroom? Are they looking for a specific product? Are they there for inspiration? Are they there for guidance and discovery themselves? Patience...most people are not very good communicators and need some time to reveal why they are there and what they are looking for. Remind your sales team to listen to the words and recognize the facial expressions and respond to their tone of voice.

Communicate with Confidence: Rule No. 1 is know the product!!! We all communicate more confidently when we know what we are talking about. Put that customer at ease and learn to offer options and logical solutions to their objections and concerns.

I have given you a glimpse into this training program that Erin is undergoing for her summer job and there will be more installments in the future. I say undergoing because they do this positive reinforcement every day. The sales managers are constantly in communication with her offering support and encouragement. They have weekly sales meetings to recognize the successes and to reinforce the team's confidence.

These college kids are responding . Erin can now sell dirt to a farmer. Are you investing in your sales team? Stay tuned there will be more – or better yet, join ART – the only association that represents the decorative accessory industry exclusively. We invest in our membership by giving you the tools to train. Happy summer! ■

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