

# How to Be Unique and Irreplaceable in the Buyer's Eyes?

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**“If you want to stand out, don't be different; be outstanding”** —Meredith West, designer

Imagine that a potential buyer needs a particular solution, maybe in healthcare or one in Security. However, when the customer does his research, he finds that all the solutions seem pretty similar. How does he decide? Is it cost? Often, what makes the difference when solutions seem quite similar is how the salesperson presents himself. The salesperson that is likely to get the contract is the one that stands out, the one that is unlike the others.

Now, as a salesperson, think about whether a customer would describe you as someone who is different from the rest or “run of the mill?” If you think you are unique, ask yourself why. Those salespeople that are outstanding do the following – and really, really well.

- They do a lot of homework. I know it sounds ridiculous, but most salespeople don't do a lot of research on their customer. Consequently, they describe their wonderful solution without really understanding the whole issue. Ask yourself, how much do you know about the client's environment? What's going on within the company that must be addressed or hasn't been looked at? What caused their current problem? What systems does the current environment support? Where is the company going in the future? What does that environment look like? If you didn't have the time to do much research, did you get the outcome you wanted?
- Great salespeople listen. Is this you? A lot of people think they are terrific listeners, but the reality is very few listen attentively. Most think about what to say next, versus staying in the moment. Real listening takes hard work. Ask yourself, do you interrupt because you are excited to share a particular point? Do you talk

over the person to change their way of thinking? If so, you've got some work to do.

- Those that are unique work at building rapport from the moment they shake hands. They notice pictures, sports memorabilia, and comment on it. They also make reference to things they have learned about the client or company in LinkedIn or Google. They are not afraid to talk about their own family, recent travel or sports activities. They actively look for links to build the relationship.
- They also get the customer talking by asking thought-provoking questions, questions that can't be answered by anyone else in the organization. They don't bore the customer by asking for information that could have been gotten on the web. As much as possible, they focus the customer on issues that are future-oriented or need his/her perspective. By doing so, the salesperson becomes unique, different from his competition.
- They communicate well. Those that are successful discuss their solution without rushing. They aren't afraid of silence when the customer is thinking or digesting a slide. They answer questions in a simple, clear manner. When the idea is complicated, they aid comprehension with a story, an example or an analogy. They also use their body well. For example, they easily gesture, smile and look people in the eye. When they talk about a solution, the customer hears their excitement in their voice.
- Lastly, they go above and beyond. Follow-through is expected of any salesperson. Outstanding salespeople think how else they be of assistance. After the sale, if they think the buyer is unaware of a trend or study, they shoot a copy to him. They check in with the customer every so often. Ask yourself, what do you currently do that is beyond what is expected?

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Being outstanding, being unique is difficult. However, it does make a tremendous difference when solutions are similar and even when they aren't. As Dr. Suess would say, "If you always do what you've always done, you'll always get what you've always got. But if you start to do what you've never done, you'll start to get what you never got— and more."

**Question:** *Would others describe you as an outstanding salesperson, someone unique and irreplaceable? We're interested in your reaction to this article. Click here – to comment on this article, share your concerns or ask questions. Judy will respond to all questions.*

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