

What sales people don't want you to know

Introduction

This article is part of our [sales guide for contractors](#).

In this section, we will look at how to avoid being manipulated by sales people into buying something you are unsure of. Make no mistake, good sales people are highly trained individuals and are skilled in the art of making you buy before you willing to do so.

There are ways to make the 'sales process' not as effective for the sales person and for you, the customer, to retain control over the conversation and not be steered into doing or saying something you do not wish to.

Control Your Reactions

Some of the hardest people to sell to are lawyers. This is for one main reason and not necessarily due to their level of education or intelligence. Lawyers are trained not to react to people with whom they are dealing with. They are taught to look impartial in spite of anything being said to them. Sales people are trained to seek out the reactions in their customers and act upon them, and here is the point. If you the customer show no reactions, to what is the sales person going to act upon?

Ideally, even if you are keen to buy the product being sold to you, you should never show this in your facial expressions or in comments that you make. As far as possible, like a lawyer, appear neither impressed nor unimpressed. This will make the sales person feel unsure as to how well they are doing and they may offer you a better deal than if you had made it clear that you liked the product they were selling.

As a contractor, if your skills are in short supply and high demand agents will certainly try to lure you to interviews. Further, if you are offered a position they will be trying to get you to accept, and also close the deal with a nice hefty margin. If you appear far too keen and excited about the contract then you are unlikely to get the best deal possible.

Don't Be Rushed

Never be rushed. Almost all sales people work to targets. This means that not only do they need you to buy from them, they need you to do it now!

It is quite standard for sales people to explain that there is a 'current offer', but it is closing soon so you must buy quickly to take advantage of it. In fact, being rushed into buying products is very often the incidents where we buy something only to regret having done so at a later date. In almost all cases, take your time. Check with competitors to see if you can find a better price and make sure you really want the product.

For contractors, agents might try to rush you into [accepting and signing a contract](#) by suggesting the client needs an answer today or they will choose someone else. This is highly unlikely, since you are the chosen candidate, and the agent is certainly not going to drop you completely if you do not sign up straight away. They might also wish to rush you if they have managed to secure you at a very high margin, to avoid you perhaps finding out before signing that you should be on a better deal.

References

In most commercial sales where the product or service is of a high value, buyers often request a conversation with an existing customer of the product or service being sold (known as a reference site). This way, the buyer can ask how happy the customer is, how well the product works and any issues they might have had. Where possible, employ this technique too. It is often the best way of assessing how good a product is. If the sales person cannot provide a reference site, this may be because they do not have any happy customers!

For contractors this might be as simple as asking to speak to existing contractors on their books to find out if they are happy contracting through the agency.

Frequency of Sales

It is important to understand that sales people are in the business of making money. This is the reason they are dealing with you. It is not the job of the sales person to sell you the best product for you. You may think that this is morally unsound, and it may well be, but this is the commercial environment we work in.

When you buy from one supplier on a regular basis, they must be more cautious in how they deal with you. They want you to continue buying from them as repeat business is far easier than selling to new customers all the time. For this reason, be more cautious when buying a product or service on a one off basis. They have less motivation to give you the best deal.

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Contractors rarely use the same agency again over their contracting lifetime, and for that reason you should be very careful to ensure you get the best deal you can from the agent.

Size of Company

Sales people are not cheats and liars, but there are cheats and liars among sales people, as in all professions. Dealing with reputable and well established companies is normally a far safer bet than when dealing with companies you have never heard of.

It can also be said however, that the best deals can be found with smaller less known suppliers as they must compete with their bigger and better known competition.

Summary

Sales people are not the enemy and a good sales person can assist you in finding the right product or service for you. As a buyer, take your time and ask lots of questions. Do not believe everything you here and you can always look for a better deal.

Negotiation can be fun and you can certainly become quite proficient at it with a little attention to what you are doing and the techniques that are being used on you.

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