

## The six stages of selling: how to contribute to store results in 4 + 2 steps

Identifying a Store Seller's direct responsibility for reaching the store's results can be the solution to increase the likelihood of a unique customer experience and an effective turnover.

Retail is developing and redefining a few rules. Leading companies are getting organised to offer their Customers unique, memorable and distinctive *experiences*. Although Customers have a wider choice of brands, assortments and channels, they tend to be much more careful when they buy.

### **Success belongs to those who grab the Customers' attention and create a special occasion for them each time**

Store Managers and Store Sellers are those who have a first-hand experience of the store and who increasingly contribute to making a difference.

This post is about them. The goal is to support them in their strategic journey. This requires excellent selling and relational skills, openness, willingness to embrace change, and commitment, to offer Customers the experience they are looking for and guarantee brand loyalty and a financial return for the store.

A Customer's purchase does not always depend on Store Sellers, therefore it cannot be always considered as their responsibility. On the other hand, we think that the *non-purchase is more likely to depend on Store Sellers*. Why? The reason can be found in their role and, as a result, in their responsibility: *creating the right conditions to facilitate the customer's decision to buy*.

### **Selling in stages**

One possible way to influence the Customers' decisions is to gradually bring them closer to the actual selling process. The Store Sellers' responsibility is to move the relationship to a higher level. In order to achieve this goal each time, they will have to implement a series of selling behaviours during the Customer's buying experience.

### **The 4 steps of selling**

When a potential Customer enters a store, Store Sellers consider him/her an **unknown visitor**, someone at the *first level* whom they should get to know.

Once the Customer has been welcomed appropriately and consistently with what the Store Seller has observed about him/her, the Customer moves to the *second level*: a **curious visitor** who begins to appreciate the surrounding environment and familiarises with the products and the setting.

This is when the Store Seller will have the opportunity to start exploring and analysing the Customer's needs by asking few effective questions, to move the Customer to the *third level*: a **visitor who is interested** to find out about the store's products.

During this stage, the Store Seller has the opportunity to use his/her skills by presenting a proposal which is consistent with the earlier exploration, and prepare the visitor for the next level. At the *fourth level*, the **visitor is engaged** and shows all his/her interest either in front of a mirror or in a fitting room, or simply by holding the product, probably making objections to try to know more about it. This is when the Store Seller manages objections in an effective way to approach the end of the journey and the sought-after finish line.

### **The last 2 steps of selling**

The *fifth level* - closing a sale - is where, after going through a structured journey, the visitor will most likely have become a **Customer** after buying the product, thanks to the Store Seller's input.

This journey can be completed with a final *sixth level*, where the Store Seller can invest on a long-term relationship with a good aftercare service, which will turn the Customer into a **loyal visitor** either in the store or in terms of brand, because he/she will be able to fulfil his/her wishes in that store and enjoy a high-level customer experience.

To summarise, the Store Seller's main responsibility is to move the visitor to a higher level and continue practicing his/her skills in each selling stage.