

How To Sell Yourself Effectively?

By Bev James

Are you currently looking for a job? Or are you trying to influence and persuade others to do things, for example buy a product or service from you, on a daily basis? Whether it's on a daily, monthly or yearly basis, all of us at some point in our lives have to try and sell ourselves to somebody else. The question you need to ask yourself is 'am I any good at it?'

In these difficult economic times prudence prevails. Companies still want to hire and people still want to buy things but everyone wants to make sure they are getting value for money. In such circumstances the ability to sell yourself effectively has become more important than ever.

Knowing your worth

So whether you have a job interview or are trying to win a new client, the key is to know your worth before you do any talking. For example, imagine you are in a shop trying to buy a new television and the sales person is unable to explain any of the features, why you should choose that particular brand over all the others and just seems to just be hoping you buy the item in order to earn him his commission. You probably wouldn't buy from him would you?

Likewise if you are selling yourself, a product or a service the same principal applies. You need to be able to clearly explain to the potential employer why you should be hired over all the other candidates or why your company will do a better job than all the others. If you cannot do that then it is very likely that you will fail.

Make a list

To start the process of getting to know your worth write down a list of strengths and weaknesses which is purposefully weighted in favour of your strengths –10 strengths and 3 weaknesses, say. These can be anything which you consider relevant to the situation such as interpersonal skills, qualifications, hard and soft skills etc.

Once you have finished your list look at the strengths and reflect on why they are such an asset and why any company would be happy to have access to these qualities. The next step is to take a look at your weaknesses and come up with a plan to overcome them.

By doing this before a meeting or interview you will be allowing your inner self to focus on the attributes you have to offer and they will be at the forefront of your mind when you have the meeting or interview. This should give you the confidence that you will effectively be able to communicate these attributes when the opportunity arises.

Which responses sound better?

Take a look at the following possible questions you could be asked and think about which of the responses are better:

Q: “Why should we employ you?”

Answer 1: “I really want to work here and if you just give me the chance I know I can show you what I can do. I’m really keen to work here!”

Answer 2: “With over 7 years experience of working in this industry in various different roles, I have had the opportunity to make mistakes and learn from them. I have a strong work ethic coupled with excellent analytical skills and I always want to get things done properly as my references will also tell you. Your company also fits my personality perfectly...”

Q: “Why should I buy your product and not the competitor’s?”

Answer 1: “Well ours is the best. It’s well known in the industry, and you just need to ask anyone on the street. Our service is excellent and we have been around the longest so we know what we’re doing. Our competitors often mark up their items before sales as well which is bad practice. We are definitely more trustworthy.”

Answer 2: “Good question. Our goal as a company is to provide the very best in quality and customer service in this area but we would understand why some might feel a little nervous about trying a new product. There are some customers who thought they may need our product but weren’t quite sure if it would fulfil all their needs. However we conducted a survey which revealed that 95% of customers who bought this produce were fully satisfied. The other 5% were given a no quibble refund. We feel it is important to treat customers with respect and to earn their custom...”

I think most of you would agree that in both cases answer 2 is more likely to get you the results you want. The key to giving the best answer in these situations is knowing your own worth, in other words who you are and what you have to offer. This will enable you to have the confidence to sell yourself effectively.