



Secret of My Success

Selling With A Customer Service Attitude

Randa Stanley didn't plan on being Geiger's (*asi/202900*) highest-grossing salesperson last year with \$2.3 million. It just sort of happened. "I still feel that I am somewhat of a novice to it all, and I'm overwhelmed by all this success," she says. She's not being falsely modest (well maybe a bit); it's just that up until four years ago she had never sold anything in her life.

Stanley has experience with both distributors and suppliers, but never as a salesperson. Whenever her ex-husband's job relocated, the family would move to another part of the country and strong relationships always led her back to the industry. That's how Stanley came to work at Holt Marketing in 2001, soon after it was purchased by Geiger.

Hired as the office manager, Stanley saw her job quickly change as most of the back-office processes were assumed by Geiger corporate. She was left to choose either a position overseeing customer service, which she had done before, or the more ambitious job of sales rep. She decided to take the plunge into sales.

"I was very nervous," she says. "You go from a job with benefits and a salary to being only as good as your last order. And I'm not the most vocal and outgoing person there is. I'm kind of reserved, and far better at talking to people once I establish a relationship with them than I am cold-calling, which is horrible to do."

Stanley played to her strengths by focusing on her inherited client base, where scraps of a relationship already

existed. One of those clients was a cosmetics company that placed only one small order each year, and had been passed from one new rep to the next.

Soon after establishing contact, she was asked for help

by the cosmetic company when another company dropped the ball with its promotion. Stanley promised them she could do it. So in mid-November – one of the busiest times of the year – she set about finding a way to get 5,000 license plates in only eight weeks.

Two days were spent literally calling every supplier in the category. "I just kept calling," she says. "Some of these suppliers I ended up calling twice because they would be listed in several different categories and I would lose track of who I spoke with. One woman I called three times."

Sensing Stanley's desperation and dedication to her client, the woman promised to check on the impossible request. She called back to say there was a *slim* chance they could do it. Stanley placed the order and hit the client's deadline. "The client was happy. The vendor was happy. We even worked through Thanksgiving back and forth on the phone with China, which was kind of fun and a real learning experience."

Stanley attributes her success to listening, but to call working on a holiday to satisfy a client "fun" belies her real secret: a genuine desire to make clients happy. "Without a doubt, it's the most enjoyable thing that I

have ever done," she says. "And now in addition to our sales, they call me whenever they have a problem. If somebody else fails, they know we can do it." – *MH*



"I just kept calling. Some of these suppliers I ended up calling two times ... One woman I called three times."

– RANDA STANLEY,
GEIGER SOUTHWEST/HOLT
MARKETING
(*asi/202900*)

We Want To Hear Your Secrets

Have a successful story to share? Implemented a new business strategy that made your company take off? We want to hear about it for possible inclusion in a future issue of *Counselor*. Send an e-mail to Andy Cohen at acohen@asicentral.com.