



HOW TO SELL ABSOLUTELY ANYTHING

How do Girl Scouts sell cookies?

"I'm going back to my regular customers," the youngster informed her mother some years back, as she headed down the block in her Brownie uniform for her second door-to-door cookie sale.

That just might be the oldest sales tip, and it's never going out of style. But there are plenty of others, as well.

Star-Ledger business writer Beth Fitzgerald asked a diverse group of business folks to share their bits of sales wisdom that can stand the test of time.

"The thing to remember in selling is that you have to sell yourself. You have to make an authentic connection that shows who you are and what you have to offer. People work with and buy products from people they are comfortable with."

Alfred Bundy
President of Bundy Productions, a public relations firm in Newark

"Make sure you have a really effective elevator pitch. You should be able to explain what you do — and how what you do matters to a potential client — in less than a minute."

Peggy McHale
Principal of Consultants2Go in Newark, a marketing consulting firm

"If you believe in what you do, that conviction is something you can communicate to a potential client. Conviction is 90 percent of sales."

Gloria Bryant
President of the Writing Co., a public relations company in Newark

"You have to like your customers, and you have to enjoy selling. I can tell when a salesperson doesn't like the customers; it completely changes their attitude. I'd say 99 percent of the customers who walk into this store are very nice people — and the other 1 percent, I don't have to worry about them."

Larry Kates (above)
a shoe salesman at Mastro Shoe Store in Bernardsville

PHOTO BY NOAH K. MURRAY
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"It's just two words Follow up. It seems obvious, a lot of people don't follow and that is why deals through. Real estate is not impulse purchase; some deals take five years to close. But a good salesman knows how to prepare a follow-up."

Richard Brun
President of R.J. Brun, a retail real estate broker in Old Brick