



This is the eighth in a 10-part series aimed at empowering Floral Management readers to build a foundation month by month, sale by sale, for higher sales, more confident employees and happier customers.

## NEXT-LEVEL SALES SKILLS TO MASTER

> As we enter the autumn and begin preparing for the holiday season, it's time to turn up the heat and cover some more advanced sales and customer service techniques that have proven successful in shops of all sizes. Here are my three favorite "next-level" concepts to share with your staff.

### Nix the Nice

Customers regularly ask, "Is this design going to look nice?" Please understand that they are *not* questioning whether your shop is going to use the freshest flowers or create a lovely design. If they were truly worried about those factors, they wouldn't be ordering from you in the first place! So, don't get defensive.



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Instead, discuss with your staff what customers are *really* asking — albeit in a veiled way — when they pose the "nice question," namely: "Am I spending enough?" The best way to answer their real question is delivered in two parts. First, say, "Yes, that will be beautiful!" Doing so confirms your ability. Then follow up with, "To make more of a splash or a statement, you can spend another \$X to \$Y dollars for a fuller look." That second statement addresses their unspoken concern about money — and, of course, gives them the opportunity to spend more.

### Find New Celebrations

As salespeople, we tend to be far too conservative when selling, often using our own spending patterns as a guide to what customers should/would spend. That thinking needs to change. Customers show us all the time online that given the chance to spend more, they will.

Here is my easy guide to help your team better identify and respond to those opportunities. Keep an ear tuned to customers sending flowers for ANY type of celebration: new baby, wedding anniversary, promotion, etc. Then, automatically start those sales at the larger size and bigger price points. Trust me, you will close many more big-ticket sales this way. Plus, you'll educate customers on the services you offer and maybe even inspire them to buy flowers for new events, beyond birthdays and holidays. Remember, people can't buy what you don't offer.

### Leverage the Card Message

The card message provides incredibly valuable insight into what is motivating the customer to shop and how to price the most appropriate design for their needs. Talk to your employees about *always* doing two things upon taking the greeting: comment and leverage.

Once the customer has shared the card message, *make a comment* relevant to the situation, thereby showing the customer that you are involved and paying attention and expressing empathy. For example, I use simple one-liners like, "You must be so proud" and "What a great reason for sending flowers" or "Congratulations on your grandchild!" When a smart salesperson pays attention to the occasion, relationship between the sender and recipient, and the number of names on the card, he or she can leverage that data to sell higher. For example: "A great way to celebrate your parents' wedding anniversary is with one of our large designs" or "Since these get-well flowers are coming from the entire marketing department, I suggest sending one of our *large* arrangements, priced at..." Customers truly appreciate this extra, personalized touch — and they spend accordingly! 🌸

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### COMING NEXT ISSUE:

Your holiday planning meeting outline and setting sales goals for your team.



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