

CELEB ENCOUNTERS



A FOX-Y REP

JIM WAS MY rep for a line we had carried for a little over a year, but we had never met. We started moving pieces regularly and he dropped in one day. Very personable guy — we hit it off and chatted about all kinds of things. He mentioned a couple of times being “in a band.” The third time he referenced that, I asked. He sort of hemmed and hawed, so I pressed him. Turns out Jim was James Fox, drummer of The James Gang. I went bananas — *what!* No way! Several of their songs were in rotation on my MP3 player. I drum as a hobby, so I was meeting a personal icon.

He told me he got started slinging jewelry when he was traveling in the band. (The second time he visited our store, his phone rang and he smiled and held it up — caller ID read “Joe Walsh.”) Jim was everything I value in a sales rep: he knew his product, listened to our concerns, wanted to help us succeed, and he never pushed. Great guy and a great drummer. **Cliff Yankovich, Chimera Design, Lowell, MI**

DUMB CRIMINALS

CODE RED



I HAD A GUY from a foreign country come in to buy a ring and a large diamond. He said he could pay for it with a cashier’s check. We advised him that he would have to fill out tax forms for such a large purchase, and

we would hold the item until the check cleared (one week minimum). He came in the next day with a credit card. It was immediately declined. He said he would call his bank and get the funds authorized. He calls up his “bank” and hands me his cellphone, telling me that the bank will give me an authorizing code. The person on the phone had the same broken English and accent as the customer, and proceeded to talk me through a forced authorization on the credit card machine. Having done this before, I knew the credit card machine would take anything as a code. When I realized what he was attempting to do, he argued with me and insisted that I take the authorization from “his bank.” Ultimately, we let him leave without a ring or diamond. **Note: “Dumb Criminals” tales were provided anonymously to our Big Survey.**

THE TECHNICAL DILEMMA

Knowing how much technical information to deliver in your presentation can make or break the sale.

Shane Decker
on Sales



With bridal season upon us, diamond sales are at their highest peak that they’ll be all year (mid-April through September). With that said, we need to be at our best when selling diamonds, and that means knowing when, how much and what technical information we should give each client.

Technical information can be a major sale builder or a major sale killer, and it takes an educated salesperson to discern how to use it. Millennials are the most educated, research-based shoppers ever in our industry. Some clients want to have a Ph. D in diamond knowledge when they leave the store. But others just want some information, while some don’t want any. They all want to buy a diamond, but they all want different amounts and kinds of information to make the purchase.

So when it comes time to talk about technical information, always ask this question: “Would you like to know more about it?” Find out how much they want to know and *no more*. If you assume they don’t want to know about the 4 Cs but they actually did, they will think you’re stupid and leave the store. If you’re a gemologist (and that’s great that you are), don’t think that because you have all that knowledge that the client wants to know all that you know. If you get technical and the client doesn’t want this information, they glaze over and the sale is dead.

If the client does want to get technical, always present the 4 Cs in the proper

order of value: cut, color, clarity and carat weight. If they want to see the lab report, always get on the same side of the showcase as the client and have a scope ready to assist you with the presentation (not a loupe).

When showing the 4 Cs chart, always use it to build value. Too many sales professionals start at the top of the chart and go down (from Flawless to SI1 or SI2). This devalues the diamond because it shows how far down the scale it falls. So always start at the bottom with an I3 and go up to an I1 and stop — then talk about how small the internal characteristics are starting to be. If it’s an SI1, stop and let them know that the internal characteristics are now invisible to the naked eye.



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Do the same thing with color: start at Z and go up to F or G or whatever it may be. Talk about how the diamond becomes more colorless as you go up the chart.

Ask questions as you present and explain the technical information as you go — don’t ask questions when you’re done.

Cover everything as thoroughly as needed but no more. Keep this as simple or as complicated as the client’s needs are.

When you ask questions all the way through (Ask-Listen-Paraphrase close), this gives your client self-confidence about the purchase, and with this type of presentation based on the technical aspects of the product, it gives them reasons to purchase based on quality information.

Sometimes the lab report and your ability to sell it is the closing tool you need.

CONTACT SHANE AT:
sdecker@ex-sell-ence.com
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