

START STRONG

You can't close sales unless you ace the first 30 seconds.

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On Sales



Have you ever walked into what appeared to be a nice store, only to spin and leave faster than you came in? Or, have you ever walked into a nice place of business and watched two salespeople look at each other, then you, then each other again, like they're seeing which one of them is going to wait on you?

You're not alone — we've all had this experience, and jewelry stores are no exception. At too many stores, you're not greeted at all, and sometimes, you can't even find anyone to take care of your needs. This is one reason the Internet is doing so well.

People today are time-starved, and they will decide within the first 30 seconds of entering your store whether or not they're going to give you their money.

Let's begin with the first five seconds: every customer must be greeted — ideally, from the "sweet spot" in your store (15 feet inside your door to the customer's right as they walk in). When you're a client and you're acknowledged, you feel important. It's a relief subconsciously to realize that the sales associates know you're there.

Never allow your sales floor to be vacant when clients come in. Many say they are just looking, but that's an opportunity for you to use your first close by saying, "I always do that before I buy; let's get started!" or "I'm glad you came in to take care of that today." "I'm just looking" means "I'm just spend-

ing." It means "I'm on a mission, and when I find what I'm looking for, I'm gonna buy it." It does *not* mean, "Leave me alone." Like I said before, we are a time-starved nation, and *nobody* is just looking.

Do not come from the back of the store to the front; you should be there already. When you come from the back, your mind is focused on the busy work you were doing or the donut you were eating.

Never greet a customer from a group huddle. It's good to laugh in your store, but if you're all laughing about something when the client walks in, they may think you're laughing at them.

Do not use canned openings like "Hi how are you?" or "What can I help you with?" Clients don't need "help"; they want professional assistance to make a purchase or information about a service needed. Likewise, don't say, "Good morning, welcome to Smith Jewelers." That gets old, fast. What if they come in three or four times a year and hear you say the same thing? Keep your greetings creative and make sure they're welcoming. Your greeting should be professional and make your client feel glad they came into your place of business.

Be present for the start of the sale, and keep it professional. Starting strong allows you to make it to the end (and hopefully close the sale). By doing so, you'll keep your client from wanting to go to the Internet — after all, we do want to talk to real people, especially when it comes to jewelry.

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DUMB CRIMINALS
BLOODY
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ONE CRIMINAL USED a toilet tank cover to smash through triple-pane safety glass and finally made a small hole in the glass to clamber through. He stole a few inexpensive watches, but he cut himself all up, and when the police arrived, they just followed the blood drops to a bunch of shrubs he was hiding in. **Note: "Dumb Criminals" tales were provided anonymously to our 2017 Big Survey.**