



I play golf in the low 80's. I took up the sport shortly after I got into this business. As a sales rep, it is important to build a good

relationship with your customers. Getting to know them outside of their office helps to build a friendship. Once you have a friend in business, it's very hard for the competition to take them away.

As a female in this industry, it is more challenging to meet with a customer outside the office for a long length of time. Usually, I will have to involve a significant other. Sometimes this backfires, and I get stuck talking to the wife rather than my customer.

Golf is a wonderful opportunity to spend at least four hours with a client. That's 240 minutes -- or 14,400 seconds -- a customer is literally forced to be with you.

Of course, you don't want to talk business the entire time. I would suggest saving any business for the back nine holes. Customers want to have fun. Towards the end of the day, your foursome is fairly comfortable, which allows a good opportunity to slide in some business.

I like to start the day off by giving everyone in my group a sleeve of our company logo golf balls. Everyone loves a free gift. I then make sure the cooler is stocked with a few of their favorite beverages. Sometimes I will contact their assistant, and surprise them by having their favorite on hand.

When we start the round, I make sure I go to the men's tee to watch the action. A friend of mine is in

Women In The Mix

By Lisa Weaver



18 HOLES FORE MORE SALES

the cement industry. When she got into sales, she challenged herself to become good enough to hit from the back tees. Blanche, you are my heroine!

I, however, "sell" the fact that my customers are so lucky to have a female allowed to use the women's tees, so we can avoid the water on certain holes. And I always make a side bet that the first one who drives past my tee box by accident owes me \$100 -- or a future sale.

Try to use humor whenever you can. Customers love to laugh.

Speaking of funny, once I decided I wanted to have an all female foursome. I found three women who work in heavy highway as estimator or in project manager roles. Great idea, except I was the "A" player. It was also the first year I took up golf. Needless to say, we were 18-over in a scramble -- and cheated to keep our score that low. However, outing sponsors were so impressed with their first all female group, that we got a standing ovation and a box of balls. It was a day my customers and I have never forgotten.

Golf is an excellent opportunity to learn more about your customer.

Try your best to listen, and get them to talk. The more you know, the closer you get to become their friend.

I've learned that there are a lot more bad golfers than good golfers. That's why scrambles were invented. Just make sure you have a ringer.

Make it a point to take a course on golf. Anyone can do it. Your body can look like Tiger Woods or John Daly. You can be short or tall, big or small. I took a class in the winter at a community college. It was only one credit hour, so it was extremely affordable. The benefit you get from the game in business is worth it.

Like I said before, I play golf in the low 80's. Anything hotter than that -- I just don't play.

About the Author

Lisa Weaver is a sales representative for Ernst Concrete in Dayton, OH. She has been in the industry since 1997. Lisa is currently on the board of directors for American Concrete Institute/Greater Miami Valley Chapter; Ohio Ready Mixed Concrete Association's (ORMCA) Concrete Futures and ORMCA's L.E.A.R.N. (Ladies Educational and Ready Mix Network) in which she is a founder. She is certified in ACI Field Testing and as an ACI Flatwork Technician. She is also a certified Concrete Technician and Sales Certified through ORMCA. Lisa can be reached at lweaver@ernstconcrete.com