

People buy from people they like. This is why one of the most important parts of my job is building good, solid, concrete -- pardon the pun -- relationships.

Close your eyes and imagine your best customer. A customer who is 100% loyal, and who appreciates you as much as you appreciate them. Someone you would consider a friend outside the business circle. How did you build such a solid relationship with this customer? What do you do to continue to keep this account?

Perhaps there are lots of lunches involved, maybe some golf, or even a football game on a Sunday with the spouses included. So, do you have the picture in your mind now of your best customer?

Now imagine this customer in a dress?

What if your best customer was a female? Would you sell to this customer the same? That is the challenge women in this industry face every day. How do women wine and dine and build a relationship with the opposite sex.

One of my favorite things in my office is a framed photo of three gentlemen. I have no idea who they are. I cut the picture out of a magazine several years ago, because my customers seem to fall into one of the three categories these men represent.

The first man in the photo has a mischievous grin on his face and his eyebrows are raised. This is the customer that pictures me naked as I walk on his job site.

The second man is elderly and has a scowl on his face. He's the customer who looks at me because I am a

Hello... Women at Work!



PEOPLE BUY FROM PEOPLE THEY LIKE

female in what he feels is a man's industry and wonders, "What in the world?!"

The third man has a big smile and seems genuinely nice. Luckily, most of my customers fall into this category.

"Shut up and listen!"

My mom taught me this years ago, and it still holds true today.

Let your customer talk. People love to talk. People love to talk about themselves. The trick is to get people to talk

Whether they like the Bengals (Let me gloat a little, they are finally good this year!), NASCAR, gardening, hunting, grandkids, motorcycles, tattoos, scuba diving, or basket weaving, let them talk about it and remember to ask them about it again in the future.

And remember names. Kids, pets, spouses, ex-girlfriends and especially your customers. They say one of the sweetest sounds to a person is hearing their own name.

Write it all down in their file. Remember important dates, events, pets, hobbies, etc. Mention it again and watch their amazed reaction

that you actually remembered

It may take a little time, but if you get someone talking they will usually talk highly about you in the end. Sincerely sell yourself and your customer will sell your product.

Like I said, my customers seem to fit into one of the three categories I mentioned. I have loyal and solid relationships from all three categories -- even the boys made of, "Snips and snails and puppy dog tails."

After all, you need a little sugar AND spice. That's what little girls are made of.

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.

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