**ON SELLING – FROM AN EXPERT**

Kevin Brown

Help us be more effective communicators

Huge challenge in not being able to close sale on the floor

**Buying Experience**

I bought vs I was sold (latter has an aspect of buyer’s remorse)

Raving fan – working to create these

Expert advice – leverage this

Remember back to my first days in homeschooling and my confusion

Must take the point of view of person I am speaking with

Parenting … Absolute tribal wisdom

 There is no definitive single source to do it right

 Have unique opportunity to share advice with those in the booth

 Don’t negate someone else’s advice, but add the reasons behind what I say

Caveat Emptor (Buyer Beware)

 Buyer has lack of experience and information source

Caveat Venditor (Seller Beware)

 Buyer now has wider info source (Google, Blogs, Facebook)

 We need to know their source to be able to speak with them

Attunement – the art of connecting

To cause a person to have a better understanding of what is needed or wanted by a particular person or group

Empathy – relating, understanding, approach from beside them (avoid pity)

Intention – remember what it was like to start homeschooling, open discussion on everyone’s experience

Purpose – to better connect with someone to understand their point of view

To connect …

Tactics

 Use your head as much as your heart (honesty)

 Match volume and pace of speech, body language … mimic subtly, not in mocking way

 Watch how they approach and present themselves

 Wait a little longer than natural inclination to start mimicking, use similar language

 Use terms “children” or “kids” as they do

 Maybe open with inquiring where they are from (because of vocal accent)

Uncommon commonalities exercise

 Group activity – find 4 things that the group has in common

 One of the traps we fall into is feeling we have to keep the conversation on homeschooling, but we can connect in other ways – find other commonalities to take the conversation deeper

 Our prospects with have curriculum conversation with many others

 Find other ways to connect with them in a more personal way as part of conversation

 “Hey, we’ve talked about homeschooling, but I don’t know much about you …”

 Puts us in position of ally with that person – develop relationship

Quality of my engagements will drive the orders down the road

If overloaded in volume in the booth – have assistants take names and phone # for SCC to call later

 Set a time to followup with a call – “what do you have going on at \_\_\_ on \_\_\_\_?”

 Have assistant get their info so that I can contact the prospect a few days later

 Opportunity to shepherd the purchase in an environment with no Nexus

 Have an Advisor or other CR staff complete the contact based on the info that I pass on

 Offramp conversation – opportunity to followup and extend the convention contact

Starting the Conversation:

Are you familiar with Sonlight?

What are you looking for today?

Is this your first time at convention?

Outside of coming to convention, what do you do?

What have you found most interesting today?

How many kids do you have? Ages?

Are you overwhelmed? Would you like to sit and rest a bit?

Approach stroller and comment on beautiful child

Speak to the child – how old are you?

Are you currently homeschooling?

Are you looking for something in particular?

Would you like to sign up for our drawing?

Is it still morning?

Speaking to husband – comment about his experience

Do you have a Sonlight catalog yet? If yes, have you entered our drawing?

**Preparing our Assistants**

Do some role play – practice starting the conversation, practice engaging

 Congratulate them on successes

Clarity

Finding the right problems to solve ….

 What is their experience?

 What are their needs/wants?

 What are their concerns? (not the first thing you address)

The main reason they don’t buy. Embrace the concerns & talk

 What are their resources? What do they already have / tailor product offering

 What is their timeline? When do they need this info

 How do you record this info?

What info needed to make recommendations?

# children

Age

What are parents’ goals – philosophy of education

What type of learners are the kids?

Financial possibilities

Closed questions – “yes” or “no” response

Focus on Open questions – but choose carefully to control time factor

 As you need to begin to wrap up conversation, shift to closed questions

 If you suggest answers as part of the question, you will control the time factor as well

Don’t try to begin solving the problem until I have a full picture of their needs

Connect with person and confirm understanding of them

“You told me that you have two children, ages 4 and 6 …”

Use the word YOU frequently

Careful on open-ended questions when attendance is high

Be aware of the time you have spent, consider where the next question needs to go

Use the word YOU

Make recommendation and then confirm with them why Sonlight is a great choice

Aim for a 5-word (short) pitch – short sound bite that can be caught and retained

 Don’t want customer to know my story better than they know Sonlight

What is Sonlight? Why is Sonlight different?

Empowering families to change the world.

Complete curriculum company for everyone.

Homeschooling for homeschoolers

Sonlight is the original faith-based homeschool curriculum. We empower parents, engage students, and create exceptional outcomes.

Pixar Pitch

 Once upon a time there was a family that homeschooled

 Every day, their children struggled with dry textbook reading, worksheets that mom had to

 grade (school was a chore)

 One day, they saw a family enjoying a book together

 Because of that, they tried reading a book together

 Because of that, they began to learn through real books and mom didn’t have to schedule

 Until finally, they became lifelong learners

SCC/Assistant job is telling the story in a way that prospect can take it away and share it with others

What do we want prospective homeschooling parents to know?

 Fun way to learn

 Scheduling done for you

 It works

 All ages, all subjects

 Can start at any time

 Family library

 Worth the investment

What do we want them to feel?

 Confident

 Eager to start the day

 Not overwhelmed

 Comfortable

 Calm

 Supported / not alone

What do we want them to do?

 Buy SL

 Share the love with their friends

 Feel successful

Why is Sonlight different?

 Learning together as a family – builds family bonds

 Love to learn

 Quality education

 Positive moral character

 Best guarantee by far

 Teach critical thinking – not afraid of new ideas

 Open the whole world to our children

 Wider perspective offered / not afraid of hard questions

 Engages the student rather than dictate what to believe

When asked about SL vs MFW

 First thing you will see is that SL is more expensive – give them the reason

 You are investing in your children’s education, you are making a decision for future

 If price was the exact same, you would want to go to SL because of ….

 Friends have shared that MFW requires to go to library frequently

We don’t have to wait for prospect to ask the questions

We can consciously present the key comparisons

such as price (why is SL better investment) DON’T BE ASHAMED OF PRICE

**“Hey before you go let me touch on a couple of items”**

Talk about price, resources available, parental time involvement (building relationship)

Each profession requires its tools – carpenter isn’t going to borrow tools from another

Value of mom’s time (not a commodity, most valuable in world)

Did you know that families with home libraries are 20% more likely to complete college

We need to own it up front to be able to join the conversation

 Don’t apologize, talk about the experience you get

 You are looking at a lot of different flavors, we were the first and the best

Presenting …

 Listening more than talking

 NOT “BUT” - “Yes, and ….”

Working with the Naysayer

 Not everyone wants to buy

 The disinterested spouse

 Don’t ignore them or close out of conversation

 Find out where they are coming from, work to tweak their understanding

 Address them head on – use their first name, soften your voice, slow down your pace

 Softer voice causes them to have to lean in to join conversations

 State my goals or SL’s goals in conversation

 Go for the “no” – you don’t seem to feel that this is a fit for you, why is that?

 You may actually need to say “this may not be the best choice for you”

 “Do you have this option?” phrasing as you make suggestions

The Offramp (close the conversation with expected next steps)

 What happens next – give them a process, an expectation (paint the picture)

 Ask assistants how many contact cards they have collected during the process of the day

 Present the expectation that SL will followup with them

 For the people I engage in conversation with, “here’s what’s going to happen next”

After covering a lot of info – acknowledge that you have been fed a firehose, then offer them the opp to ask questions (anything confusing?), encourage them to come back to the booth the next day (or suggest that you call them in the following week; “you have my contact information and are welcome to contact me, or if I don’t hear from you by Wednesday, I will reach out to you.”

Review workshop

Listen to recording – catch key phrasing

Go for walk and play both sides of the conversation in your head, then evaluate what you said

During conversation, don’t be afraid of taking deep breath and pause before answering