

Are You a Commodity?

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Do you find yourself competing on price? Do you often talk to a prospect, you think you have them, and then they decide to shop around and buy based on price?

If this sounds familiar, then you're probably being perceived as a commodity by potential clients. They think the service you're offering is much the same as the service offered by LOTS of other people. So it makes sense for them to shop around and buy the cheapest. Wouldn't you?

I know you think your service is unique, and potential clients should be able to understand that and should be able to see your value. But if you're competing on price, this is a red flag that your potential clients don't see your unique value. Instead, they perceive you as a commodity. In this case, you need to do something about it -- and fast.

The question is what do you need to do so you are not perceived as commodity?

The solution "seems" obvious: make yourself unique. This will take "shopping for the cheapest" out of the equation and instead, potential buyers must make a decision based on the value of what you're offering. So how can you make yourself unique?

Here are three steps to ensure your clients see you as unique and therefore make decisions based on your value and not your price.

Step One: Determine the unique value (results) of your service

Get really clear on the results you achieve for your clients. Then look at those results as a potential client would. Don't cut corners doing this exercise, it's crucial. Dig deep to find the answers. If you're not clear on your own value, how can you expect your potential clients to be?

Once you've done that, figure out what it is you offer that no one else does. I would suggest asking some of your clients these questions. Their answers may surprise and enlighten you.

Step Two: Determine the unique value of you

What unique skills and strengths do you bring to what you do? What is unique about your approach and your interaction with clients? Again, I would suggest asking some of your clients these questions.

Step Three: Communicate your unique value

It's imperative that you communicate your distinct value in all of your conversations and marketing materials. It's not enough that you know your unique value; you have to be able to clearly convey it to potential clients. This is the key. Don't leave it up to people to guess. If they have to, you've already lost them. The "how" of doing this is where most people struggle but it is a skill that can be learned as part of the sales conversation process.

If you follow these three steps, your unique value will be clear to potential clients. You will start having conversations with clients about the unique value you offer, and they will make a decision based on whether they want that value or not. Remember, if they want your unique value, they can't shop around.

A funny thing will happen when you clearly articulate your unique value. You will find more and more people will be naturally attracted to you and they will be prepared to pay your price. You'll also get a lot more referrals as your "unique value" message spreads. Chances are too that you can increase your price and potential clients will pay it.

If you go through the three steps and you still find yourself competing on price or getting price objections, then simply go back and repeat the process. It's also a good idea to ask the person you're talking to for their input as they could shine the light on your value gap.

Spend some quality time thinking about your unique value and how you can convey it. You will then start turning your sales conversations into higher paying clients.

Tessa Stowe teaches small business owners and recovering salespeople 10 simple steps to turn conversations into clients without being sales-y or pushy. Her FREE monthly Sales Conversation newsletter is full of tips on how to sell your services by just being yourself. Sign up now at www.salesconversation.com.