

for the wholesale house to sell to him, and vice versa. In fact, a trunk and branch relationship exists between a wholesale house and the retailers whom it supplies, and the policy of the wholesale salesman should be to cement more and more closely that relationship, and strengthen the ties of confidence and friendship between the two, always having in view the interests of the buyer as well as those of his own house.

It is essential that the wholesale salesman should be thoroughly posted respecting the financial standing of his customer. Upon this point depends to a great extent his success in the art of selling goods. It requires little tact or ability to sell goods to a customer who is bent only on getting all he can on credit, without due consideration of the matter of making payment when due. It may, however, require considerable tact to properly treat a customer whose intentions are honourable, but whose resources, ability or experience are limited. If a buyer is known or suspected to be dishonest, sell to him for cash only. If necessary, tell him frankly that you do not know him to be a man whom you can afford to carry, and that your rule is to extend credit to those only whom you can depend upon. If your customer is worthy of credit up to a limit which, however, you do not wish to pass, avoid what, to a good salesman, is second nature, pushing goods upon him. Endeavour to furnish him with what he really needs, and to satisfy him, without going beyond the limit fixed for his credit. But should it be necessary, tell him plainly, but in a frank and friendly way, that at present you do not wish to carry him for more than a given amount. If he is a sensible man, he will take no offence, and if he is not a sensible man, it is unsafe for you to carry him on your books.

Selling goods by travelling salesmen with samples is expensive, but long experience has shown it to be the best method for wholesale dealers in many lines. The sample trunk, if properly prepared and packed, is the wholesale establishment in miniature. By its aid the country dealer is conducted through the big store in the city, from the basement to the highest story, and is able to make selections as intelligently as if he had paid his fare to the city and was personally present in the establishment he is dealing with. The salesman should see that his sample trunk is complete, neatly and systematically arranged and that samples correctly represent the stock. He should acquire facility in displaying them, in describing grades, qualities, etc., and in giving prices. The stationary or travelling wholesale salesman should keep complete price books, and post them as often as the prices vary. The memory should not be depended upon without their aid.

THE RETAIL SALESMAN.

Much of the foregoing applies to the retail salesman, especially in regard to familiarity with stock and prices and the giving of credit. He should be perfectly familiar with the goods he handles and with the prices at which they should be sold. If his employer deems it best to give him the "cost mark," as will generally be the case if he proves a good hand, so much the better. He should know exactly where to find any article called for. Time is money to buyer and seller alike, and the time lost by both while a clerk is hunting for some article for which a customer is waiting often amounts to a heavy percentage of its value. It is thus necessary for a retail clerk to be orderly and methodical to a strict degree in handling his stock. He must at once return to their places on

shelves or in drawers, etc., the goods he has been showing a customer, and he must do this in such a manner as to preserve the stock in perfect order. A failure to keep the stock in order and the goods in their places and neatly arranged is possibly the most common fault of the retail salesmen. To avoid it he must put in the spare moments between customers in arranging shelves, drawers, showcases, etc., and in so displaying the goods as to cause them to appear new, fresh, varied and attractive. A retail salesman who can and will keep the goods arranged and displayed to the best advantage will command a high salary and will be a favourite with customers.

QUALITIES NECESSARY IN ALL SALESMEN.

Be industrious; exert yourselves actively to show goods to customers and to find what will suit them.

Be patient; preserve perfect equanimity, even though your customer appears trifling, fastidious, or exacting. Sincere efforts on your part to please him will win in the long run.

Be polite; under no circumstances speak to or treat a customer with impoliteness. To do so is to make a mistake inexcusable in a salesman. Your politeness to customers is money to your employer, and is one of the considerations for which you are paid a salary.

Be considerate of poverty; do not try to sell a poor person a more expensive article than he can afford to buy. By so doing you may wound his feelings, and cause him to avoid you in future. Rather try to suit him with an article within his means. If you succeed he will try you again.

Be attentive to small purchasers; if a lady wishes only a spool of silk, and you politely furnish her with the shade desired, she will come to you when she has a larger purchase to make.

Be truthful; never resort to deception in representing the quality of the goods you sell. Truthfulness is in a salesman a virtue which will soon begin to tell in a pecuniary as well as a moral way, for people will flock to the clerk whose word they know they can depend upon respecting the value they are getting for their money.

Be honest; not merely because honesty is the best policy, but because without it life is a failure, though wealth flow in to the amount of millions, and the world lavish its honours and applause. The most hopeless and contemptible of bankrupts is the man who has lost his honesty, and the most useless to all employers the one who is most expensive while least worthy of a salary, who is most to be avoided by customers and abhorred by merchants—the dishonest salesman.

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