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## 2011 Top Products

By **FRAN O'HAGAN - PRESIDENT, PIED PIPER MANAGEMENT CO.**

JANUARY 26TH, 2011



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### How to avoid, 'No thanks, I'm just looking'



Salesperson asks, "Can I help you?" Shopper answers, "No thanks, I'm just looking." Ten minutes later the shopper walks out the door. The shopper was interested in motorcycles. You are interested in selling them a motorcycle. What was the problem?

You heard what the shopper said, but this is what the shopper was thinking, "I'm psyched to be looking at these motorcycles, and if you were my friend, I would tell you all about what I like and don't like about these motorcycles. But I don't know you. You're just a salesperson, not my friend."

Most of the very best salespeople (in any industry by the way) don't succeed from superior product knowledge. Top salespeople succeed from being able to take a "stranger" and very quickly make the customer feel comfortable with the them. They know how to build rapport. Building rapport is deliberately finding shared interests, likes, dislikes and situations in common with the other person. Successfully building rapport creates a person-to-person relationship instead of a salesperson-to-customer relationship.

When it comes to building rapport, the first impression a salesperson makes with a customer is critical, and it's far too important to just "wing it." A wonderful stand-up comic makes it seem as if his act is spontaneous and nothing has been rehearsed, but we know better. Practice makes perfect.

What topics? Talk about the dually pickup the shopper is driving, their kids, their personalized clothing, the traffic as they were driving over, or anything else not related to your dealership. Make your opening lines fun, but also sincere and memorable. Only after it is just two friends talking should you ask, "What brings you into our dealership today?"

