



No. 1

This is the first in a 10-part series aimed at empowering Floral Management readers to build a foundation month by month, sale by sale, for higher sales, more confident employees and happier customers.

LET YOUR CUSTOMERS SPEND MORE!

> Nearly every florist I've ever worked with has heard this complaint: "I was so disappointed. The arrangement wasn't at all what I thought it would be. If I had just been told that I needed to spend more, I would have!"

That feedback cuts me like a knife, because the customer is saying the flowers were pretty, fresh, fragrant and well-designed, and that they arrived on time and lasted, but the customer is also saying that the florist didn't meet their expectations on size. (Subtext from the customer: "I was undersold.")

Ironically, customers do want to spend more — we just don't let them! (The one call I've never heard of is the customer who says, "This arrangement is TOO big and TOO beautiful. Please come and pick it up!")

Why are we SO afraid to offer customers the chance to spend? We hate talking money. We're afraid to hear "no." But selling is our business. "Sales" is NOT a dirty word.

To survive, we have to do better. If you really want to improve sales, you can't start with the final transaction. You need to break bad habits that are ingrained in every department — sales, design, delivery and management — throughout the year.

That's where this column and its online complement at floralstrategies.com/SAF come in. This year, I want to challenge you and your staff to do a better job selling and to let customers spend at 2018, not 1998, levels! Each month, I'll present a topic in this space, but there will also be more — lots more — online to augment and expand the topic, giving you tools, coaching, inspiration and Tim-style tough love!

First up: Let's talk staff meetings.

WHAT'S HAPPENING: When I ask most owners about how often they hold store meetings, I get a glazed, fuzzy stare, or they tell me about an impromptu session they organized right before Valentine's Day. No agenda. Five minutes max. Certainly no follow-through.

WHAT SHOULD HAPPEN: By my definition, a quick pep talk two weeks before a holiday

doesn't qualify as a productive meeting.

Floral industry owners and managers are often reluctant to hold meetings. They worry that the meetings will turn into a complaint-fest or that staff won't participate, and the meetings will be a waste of time. But let's leave those worries in the past. Conducting regularly scheduled, productive meetings is relatively easy with a little advance planning and some strategy. Here are some tips:

Timing. Choose your dates now for the rest of the year and post them on a shared calendar. You may meet once a month or on any schedule you like; however, I suggest four quarterly dates as the bare minimum. After hours is the optimal time to hold your meetings so you're not interrupted by customers or vendors. (Yes, you have to pay your staff for their time, and make sure they know it!) I recommend aiming for an hour. You can always let them go early.

Topics. Tell your team ahead of time why you have all-staff meetings: to gather as a group and discuss running the store more efficiently, covering everything from sales and service to upcoming holidays, customer feedback, new designs and trends, and more. Explain that you want, need and look forward to their feedback and participation.

Follow Up. The day after the meeting, provide written minutes (a bullet-point recap is fine) so there is accountability and an action plan for topics covered.

STILL SKEPTICAL? That first meeting will run more smoothly and be more fruitful than you think, I promise. If not, call me, and I will set up a webinar session and hold the next store meeting with your staff myself! 🌱

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You're Not Done Reading!

Head online to floralstrategies.com/SAF for downloadable tools, including handouts for staff. This month, you'll discover additional information on meeting topics and ensuring staff attendance, along with a sample meeting agenda. Plus, visit safnow.org/moreonline for a video primer on this topic.