



Drivers



Analyticals



Amiables



Expressives

No Wonder They Can/Can't Sell – Using Personality Styles to Get More from Your Employees

By: Bob Phibbs

Retailers have tried everything it seems to get employees to sell more. Sometimes training helps, sometimes it doesn't and so many try to hire the natural born salesperson.

That doesn't really work either because generally they are few and far between, but if you leverage their personality styles, you can leverage their innate abilities and help them sell more.

Everyone can sell. In fact, each of us is selling every day – even if we never call it that.

Once you understand the four personality styles, you can train your employees to cut out the fluff and connect with customers quickly by understanding everyone has a dominant personality style.

There's the *Driver*, like a Gordon Ramsay, where it is all about them being the best, smartest and known as a decision maker. The downside is they can be seen as inflexible and always trying to close. Any villain you see in a movie is usually a Driver.

There's the *Analytical*, like Spock on Star Trek, who is logical and has a detailed system to process information. Their Achilles' heel is that they can come off cold and uncaring. Surgeons, CPAs and most craftspeople are usually an Analytical personality.

The *Expressive* is like the character Jack in the movie Titanic who tries a lot of things, is easily bored and has unbridled enthusiasm. They are also the least likely to be found in retail these days. Why? Because on a beautiful day they'll probably call in sick.

The *Amiable* is by far the most common personality you'll find in stores. Amiables possess a strong desire to be liked and learn about others without sharing many details of their own lives. The downside is that they don't stand out or make demands, and it takes a lot to make them visibly upset so you never know when they are considering quitting.

Those salespeople who master personality styles are able to have meaningful conversations that value both the customer and the salesperson. And that leads to higher sales. But first you need to leverage their innate abilities to get them all to sell.

If your employee is predominantly a Driver, their number one goal is to get something finished. You need to help them round off those gruff edges and reduce the chance they can come off as arrogant.

If your employee is predominantly an Analytical, you need to train with a clear system of A to B to C so engaging a customer isn't scary and makes sense. Be prepared to answer each of their many questions.

If your employee is predominantly an Expressive, you want to harness their fun. You would not want to try to train them like an Analytical and rain on their parade. Use their easily distracted interests and enthusiasm for new items as a sparkplug for the rest of your crew.

If your employee is predominantly an Amiable, they'll want to get along with no conflict. Teaching them how the other three personalities operate can show them how to avoid frustration and conflict. Understand that they are the least likely to be natural born salespeople and most afraid of engaging strangers—so be patient.

Here are the dos and don'ts of training your employees by personality style:

Drivers

- Do use their innate ability to meet and greet customers in your store.
- Do use their natural fearlessness to juggle more than one customer.



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- Do encourage them to lead customers to new choices they may not think they can afford.
- Don't talk over them.
- Don't teach them 1960's closing techniques to try to make a customer buy. They hate phoniness. Encourage them to be real.

Analyticals

- Do encourage their natural problem-solving ability.
- Do encourage their technical knowledge of your products to highlight the little things most salespeople ignore.
- Do encourage their patient nature to stick with customers who may not know what they are looking for.
- Don't let them overwhelm customers with their knowledge. The old saying, "Don't tell a customer how to build a watch when they just want to know the time" applies to Analyticals.
- Don't allow them to deride a customer's choice just because they don't know as much as your employee does.
- Don't allow them to show customers a cheaper place to buy something you carry – because they will. It's logical.

Expressives

- Do use their energy and creativity to help customers see things in a new light.
- Do use their enthusiasm to sell new products.
- Do use their ability to mix and match to show customers how they can personalize a purchase.
- Don't let them overstate facts just to make a sale.
- Don't allow them to present too many options to a customer or they may overwhelm them with choice.
- Don't let them be so eager to meet people that they smother them with enthusiasm. Teach them how to modify their energy based on the customer's personality style.

Amiables

- Do use their caring nature to understand what their customer is trying to solve.
- Do use their patient nature to help customers feel appreciated and valued.
- Do use their ability to listen to really hear how the salesperson can help.
- Don't let their fear of risk keep them from approaching a customer or pitching the most expensive product.
- Don't allow them to wait for customers to come get them; get them out from behind the counter.
- Don't allow them to be content to just show customers what they ask for. Encourage the Amiables to offer your products, today, at full price.

In Sum

There are no good or bad personality types—we all have elements of each. And while the Driver and Expressive have the highest risk tolerance, it does not mean that they are the only ones who can sell. That's because personality types feel comfortable with people who can talk to them the way they like to be talked to.

So an Amiable selling to an Amiable, with proper training can sell just as much as a Driver – sometimes more.

The varying personality types that comprise your staff need to be handled in a very specific, tailored manner. By understanding the unique motivators of Drivers, Analyticals, Expressives and Amiables, you can begin to better manage your retail sales and customer service employees.

Not sure what your own personality style is? Take a free personality quiz here: <http://www.retaildoc.com/take-the-personality-quiz>

ABOUT THE AUTHOR:

Bob Phibbs is the CEO of The Retail Doctor, a New York consultancy. As a speaker, sales consultant and author of The Retail Doctor's Guide to Growing Your Business, Bob has helped thousands of businesses since 1994. With over thirty years' experience beginning in the trenches of retail and extending to senior management positions, his presentations are designed to provide practical information in a fun and memorable format. For more information on Bob, please visit www.RetailDoc.com