

UNIT I

PERSONAL SELLING

Personal selling is a means of implementing marketing programs. It is concerned with 'persuasive communication'. A salesperson in personal selling tries to persuade the prospect so that he can take a decision to buy a product. It is a major factor in creating sales volume. It is a direct presentation of a product to a prospective customer by a salesman. It takes place face to face or over the telephone. It may be directed to a middleman or a final consumer. Personal selling is a tool for building up buyer's preference, conviction and action.

DEFINITION

1. **According to William Stanton and Walker**, "Personal selling is the personal communication of information to persuade somebody to buy something."
2. **According to Mahoney and Slone**, "Personal selling is the personal communication between a salesperson and a potential customer or group of customers."

NATURE/OBJECTIVE/FUNCTIONS OF PERSONAL SELLING

(Although Nature, objectives, functions are different things, these points can be explained with regard to all three. Students are required to use their intelligence in order to explain the points)

1. **It is a Part of promotion mix:** personal selling is part of promotion mix, or the communication mix in the company's marketing program. Other elements being sales promotion, advertising, public relations etc.
2. **It is a Two-Way Communication:** It is the best tool for two-way communication. Salesman can provide necessary information to customer about company's offer, and also can collect information from customer. The ultimate aim is to persuade the customer.
3. **It involves presentation and Persuasion:** the salesman through his knowledge tries to present his product to the prospective buyer and tries to persuade the prospective buyer with the help of various skills and techniques.
4. **It is a Flexible tool:** Personal selling is more flexible than other promotional tools. Salespersons can see their customer's reaction to a particular sales approach and make adjustment according to the situation.

5. **It's a creative tool:** personal selling is creative in nature. The salesperson tries to create needs. Make the customer aware of those needs and try to persuade him to buy the product. The salesman does not sell but he creates in the other man the urge to buy.
6. **Development of long-term Relationship:** Personal selling results in the development of personal relationship between the sales person and the possible buyer. Such a relationship has an important place in sales.
7. **Receipt of Additional Information:** Normally, before introducing its product, a company is aware of the preferences of the probable buyers. Nevertheless, during the course of personal selling, when the sales person is in direct contact with the buyers he/she gathers additional information regarding their tastes and likings.
8. **Quick solution of Queries:** The prospective buyer can make inquiries regarding the product. Salesman answers these queries quickly and removes any doubts in the mind of the buyer.
9. **Customer Confidence:** By systematic sales talk and presentation, a capable salesman can remove all doubts, queries, objections and misunderstandings, and can win customer's confidence. It increases customers' faith in company and its offers.
10. **Improves company's goodwill/ Image:** Note that salesmanship can remove bad image or misunderstanding by highlighting company's achievements and offers. The detailed explanation about company and its products removes all doubts and misunderstandings. It helps in restoring company image and reputation in market.
11. **Service Element:** Personal selling is not getting rid of a thing or cheating the customers for short term goal. Rather it is necessarily an act of assisting the customers to buy wisely. Today, it has become a symbol for honesty and dependability. A product is tangible component when attached to intangible component of service adds value and helps in personal selling.

IMPORTANCE/ADVANTAGES OF PERSONAL SELLING

1. IMPORTANCE TO BUSINESSMEN/COMPANY:

- (a) **Effective Promotional Tool:** Personal selling is an effective promotional tool in the hands of businessman for increasing sales. Salesman provides information about the various features and advantages of his product as well as about market developments.
- (b) **Flexible Tool:** Personal selling is the most flexible tool of promotion. Sales presentation is adjusted according to the requirements of the customer.
- (c) **Minimizes Wastage of Efforts:** Personal selling involves minimum wastage of efforts as compared to other tools of promotion.
- (d) **Customer Attention:** The level of customer attention and interest can easily be assessed under personal selling. Thereafter, the presentation can be modified appropriately.
- (e) **Lasting Relationship:** Personal selling aims at developing good and long lasting relationship between salesperson and the customer to increase sales in line with WIN-WIN philosophy.
- (f) **Personal Relationship:** Competitive strength of a business organisation increases with the development of personal rapport between its salespersons and prospective customers.
- (g) **Role in Introduction Stage:** By describing the merits of a product and persuading the customer to purchase it, salesperson helps in introducing a new product in the market.

2. IMPORTANCE TO CUSTOMERS:

- (a) **Helps in Identifying Needs:** It helps in identifying the needs & wants of the customers, so that they can be satisfied by getting best products.
- (b) **Latest Market Information:** Under personal selling, customers are provided with information regarding availability or shortage of product, introduction of new product etc.
- (c) **Detailed Demonstration:** Personal selling is the only technique through which detail demonstration of product takes place, which generates sales.
- (d) **Expert Advice:** Expert advice and guidance can be provided to the customers while purchasing various goods and services.

- (e) **Induces Customers:** Personal selling induces customers to buy new product in order to satisfy their needs in a better way.

3. IMPORTANCE TO SOCIETY:

- (a) **Removes ignorance:** Salesmanship removes ignorance and educates people regarding different types of products and their utilities.
- (b) **Assist the society:** Salesman is one of the help to increase aggregate sales and production in the country thereby increasing employment opportunities. They help to maintain equilibrium between demand and supply
- (c) **Employment Opportunities:** It provides opportunity to unemployed people to work as salespersons for earning income.
- (d) **Mobility of Sales People:** Travel and tourism in the country get promoted by the mobility of the people from one place to another.

- 4. IMPORTANCE TO THE GOVERNMENT:** The Government also receives maximum utility out of salesmanship. Salesmanship helps the producers to produce and sell more of goods and services. As production and sale in country increases, the Government is able to get more revenue by way of various taxes, duties and levies like sales tax, income tax, excise duty, freight and transportation charges. It contributes to GDP growth of the country.

CHARACTERISTICS OF A GOOD SALESMAN

A salesperson should have following qualities

1. PHYSICAL QUALITIES:

- (a) **Sound Health:** Just like a normal human being, a salesperson must also be of sound health. A salesperson would be mentally and physically fit only if he has a good health. For a sound health, a salesperson must eat well, sleep well and exercise regularly.
- (b) **Good Appearance:** Good Appearance always attracts people. A salesperson must not be too fat or thin. He must carry his body well.
- (c) **Cheerful Disposition:** A scholar has rightly said that smile is like plague. If the salesperson is cheerful and happy he can make his customer cheerful and happy, which directly helps to have a good conversation and chances of sales increases.

- (d) **Agile:** A good salesperson should always be agile. A lazy and boredom salesman can never attract customers.
- (e) **Postures:** the gestures and postures of a salesman are also crucial in influencing customers. Unnecessary hand-eye movements, shoulder movements etc. creates wrong impression in the mind of prospective buyers.
- (f) **Cleanliness:** No person likes to sit around and listen to a dirty fellow. A good salesman must have a good hair style, must be well shaved, must have clear nails etc.
- (g) **Clothing:** A well-dressed salesman often attracts customers very easily. He should wear a formal suit with tie. Dressing sense of a salesperson often increases his confidence and likability by the customers.

2. **SPEAKING QUALITIES**

- (a) **Clear Pronunciation:** A salesperson should have clear pronunciation. Otherwise prospects may misinterpret things. A person without good pronunciation can never become a good salesman.
- (b) **Proper Vocabulary:** while giving presentations, proper choice of word is very important. A salesman must have a good vocabulary to create lasting impression with words. A salesman must use those words which are easy to understand and easy to pronounce. Technical jargons must be avoided.
- (c) **Effective delivery:** many times, 'how we speak' is more important than 'what we speak'. if the delivery style is not good, a salesperson may not be able to persuade the customer with good pronunciation and vocabulary.

3. **MENTAL QUALITIES:**

- (a) **Resourcefulness:** A resourceful person is one, who understands and behaves according to the changing circumstances. A good salesperson changes his behavior according to different customers and situations.
- (b) **Intelligence:** A salesperson must be intelligent. A good salesperson could handle objections carefully and easily with his intelligence.
- (c) **Sharp Memory:** To be successful, a salesperson must have sharp memory. He must be able to remember previous meetings with customers, likes and dislikes of the customers along with various offers being provided by the company.

- (d) **Maturity:** A salesperson must be mature enough to understand his duties and obligations. He must have sense of what he is talking about and how it will affect the sales of the company.
- (e) **Self-confidence:** Self-confidence is a thing which could help a person to tackle any kind of situation. A good salesman should confident be confident on his presentations skills and objection handling techniques.
- (f) **Ability to Observe and Judge:** The success of a salesperson depends highly on his ability to observe the conditions around him and his ability to take prompt decisions.

4. **SOCIAL QUALITIES:**

- (a) **Sociable:** a good salesperson must be sociable. He must treat everyone equally and meet with them frequently. He must have contacts with everyone whether rich, poor, middle class people etc.
- (b) **Courtesy:** it is said that courtesy has no cost but has high impact. Salesperson must deal everyone with courtesy.
- (c) **Co-operative:** A salesman himself needs cooperation from various people. So, he must be cooperative with other members of the salesforce, sales managers, customers etc.
- (d) **Convincing Conversationalist:** salesman must be a good conversationalist. He must have the ability to speak complicated things in a clear and concise manner. He must be able to influence other with his communication skills.
- (e) **Patience:** A salesman has to meet with various kinds of people. some people deliberately tries to annoy the salesperson. Many times sales presentations do not result in effective sales. In such a situation a salesman must remain patient and do not lose his calm.

5. **MORAL OR ETHICAL QUALITIES**

- (a) **Honesty:** it is said that “honesty is the best policy”. A salesperson should not lie to his customers and deliver according to his promises. A dishonest salesperson can never become successful in the long run.
- (b) **Loyalty:** To be successful, a salesperson must be loyal towards his company, sales manager, fellow salespersons and customers.

6. PROFESSIONAL QUALITIES:

- (a) **Educated and trained:** well-educated and trained salesman could increase sales turnover of the company by his ability to engage with customers. Training helps a salesman to tackle different situations with proper care.
- (b) **Knowledge about the institution:** A salesman must know each and every minute details about the company for which he is working. Past and present performances, types of product being offered, the credit policies of the company Etc. must be known to the salesperson.
- (c) **Knowledge of product:** Ernest and Da Vall has rightly said that ‘nothing is important to the salesman than knowing his product’ salesman must know all the features and ingredients of the product he is offering. He must also know about the different varieties of the same products.
- (d) **Communication Skills:** it is said that personal selling involves a two-way communication between salesman and customer. It is the communication skill of salesman which helps in persuading the customer to buy the product. Good communication skill enables a salesperson to communicate well with seniors, peers and customers.
- (e) **Knowledge of Customers:** A good salesman must have information’s about demographics, buying motives, likes and dislikes etc. of the customers.

DIFFERENCE BETWEEN PERSONAL SELLING, SALESMANSHIP AND SALES MANAGEMENT

PERSONAL SELLING: Personal selling is an important component of promotional mix. It is a means for implementing marketing programs. Personal selling facilitates interaction a salesman and a buyer so that the need of the buyer could be understood well and salesman could serve the buyer according to his need. We can say that personal selling is a broader concept than salesmanship

SALESMANSHIP: Salesmanship on the other hand, is just an art of selling. It is an art of successfully persuading prospects or customers to buy products from which they can derive suitable benefits. Salesmanship is all about skills required by the salesman to understand the need

and emotions of the prospect and offering him various information, options and benefit to satisfy their need. Thus, we can say that personal selling includes salesmanship.

SALES MANAGEMENT: It is all about managing all activities related with the sales of the business. It involves marketing, advertising, pricing etc. Through sales management only, a company keeps track record of target sales and actual sales. it involves management of sales operations, formulation of sales strategies and preparing sales analysis. Sales managers in the sales department is the responsible authority for sales management. The sales manager has to look after marketing strategies, has to manage the salesforce and has to organize personal selling efforts. Thus, sales management is ultimately responsible for planning, organizing, directing and controlling of personal selling efforts also for recruitment, selection, training, supervision and motivation of the personal sales force.

	BASIS	PERSONAL SELLING	SALESMANSHIP	SALES MANAGEMENT
1.	Meaning	Personal selling is an act of engaging with customers to persuade them to buy the product.	It is an act of being employed as sales person. Salesmanship is an art and skill of initiating selling efforts.	Sales management is an act of planning, controlling, directing and coordinating the sales process.
2.	Flexibility	It is most flexible as the messages could be changed according to the customer's needs.	It is comparatively less flexible than personal selling.	It is least flexible as the rules and policies are formed and followed strictly.
3.	Reach	Only one or two customers can be dealt in one time.	Only limited number of persons can be contacted.	It reaches to masses in the form of advertising and other marketing communications.
4.	Cost per person	Cost per person is high as limited persons can be reached at a given time.	Cost is comparatively lower than personal selling.	Cost per person is very less.
5.	Coverage	It takes long time to cover the market.	It takes comparatively less time to cover the market.	It takes medium time to cover the market.
6.	Media	It does not make use of mass media.	Makes comparatively less use of mass media.	Makes use of mass media.
7.	Feedback	Direct feedback can be collected from customers.	Indirect feedback can be collected.	Feedback is not possible because customers are not involved.
8.	Useful for	More useful for industrial and customized product.	More useful for technical product.	Useful for all kinds of product.
9.	Scope	Personal selling is a part of sales management and the scope of personal selling is narrower than sales management.	Salesmanship is included under personal selling.	Sales management has a broader scope as it guides both personal selling and salesmanship efforts.

TYPES OF SELLING SITUATIONS

1. **Service Selling Situation:** This situation is related with obtaining sales from existing customers whose habits and patterns of thoughts are already known to the seller. Comparatively less effort is required to satisfy these type of customers. Inside order takers, delivery salesperson, merchandisers, technical salesperson etc. helps in service selling situations.
2. **Developmental selling Situation:** In this type of situation a salesman tries to convert prospects into customers. It requires creativity by the salesperson to persuade the customer. It includes creative salesperson of tangibles and creative salesperson of intangibles. Like a salesperson selling vacuums cleaner (tangible) to a new customer and a salesperson selling insurance(intangible) to a new customer.
3. **Retail Selling situation:** It is a totally different scenario when goods are sold through retailers. An individual retailer is the last person in the distribution channel to make products available to the buyer. Advertisement and promotions attracts people but the ultimate sale depends on the salesman at the counter. The salesman inside the retail store is the key person in retail selling situation. They do not negotiate with customer but they only make sales.
4. **Wholesale selling situation:** The Wholesalers salesman calls on retailers, dealers at regular interval on behalf of the wholesaler and helps retailers and dealers in selection of goods and services and advices them on various matters. These salespeople help a wholesaler in dealing with many retailers and dealers in day to day business which would be otherwise very difficult for wholesaler alone.
5. **Product oriented selling situation:** Selling situation also changes with the nature of the product. products at different stages of life cycle, with different value and with different technical nature requires customized efforts in sales. a salesman according to product situation could change the selling tactic.
6. **Competition Oriented Selling situation:** There is a cut throat competition in the market. Every company wants to grab more and more market share. Also, there is a competition between the salespeople within the company's salesforce. The salespeople tend to convince the customer at any cost in order to stay ahead of other salesperson.

7. **Consumer behavior Oriented selling situation:** Selling situation also differs according to the type of buyer. Different buyers have different income level, social status, occupation, personality, perception, belief, brand choice, payment options etc. all these factors affect the buying behavior of a person. A salesman must understand the consumer buying behavior and must offer products according to the buying behavior of the person.

TYPES OF SALESPERSON

1. Order Takers

Order takers do not have the responsibility to persuade customers to buy products and increase the sales. Rather, they are only supposed to book customers' orders and pass on the information to the company for delivery arrangements. Order takers should be accurate and should provide accurate information to the company and customer about booking of orders and date of delivery.

- A. **Inside order-takers:** They are retail sales assistants (like sales assistants in Vishal Megamart) customer has full freedom to choose products without the presence of a salesperson. The sales assistant's task is purely transactional – receiving payment and passing over the goods. Another form of inside order-taker is the telemarketing sales team who support field sales by taking customers' orders over the telephone.
- B. **Outside order-takers:** They travel to customers. Use laptop computers to improve tracking of inventory and orders etc. These salespeople visit customers, but their primary function is to respond to customer requests rather than actively seek to persuade.
- C. **Delivery salespeople:** The salesperson's task is primarily concerned with delivering the product. In the India, milk, newspapers and magazines are delivered to the door. There is little attempt to persuade the household to increase the milk order or number of newspapers taken: changes in order size are customer-driven. Winning and losing orders is dependent on reliability of delivery and the personality of the salesperson.

2. Order-Creators/Missionary Salespeople

Order creators are the salespeople who help in pulling the customer toward product. Missionary salespeople are best order creator's Missionary salespeople do not take purchase orders. Rather, they are involved in dissemination of information about the product. They help in increasing goodwill of the company and educate customers about the product. They do not call the ultimate buyers but approach to those who make advices to the buyer about the product. for example, A salesperson from a book publisher calls a professor urging them to use certain books, but the actual buyers are the students who buy and use the books. Similarly, medical

representatives approach to the doctors, the doctor does not use the drugs but advises patients to buy the drugs.

3. Order-Getters/Front-Line Salespeople

Order-getters consists of those salespersons whose major objective is to persuade customers to make a direct purchase. They are required to acquire new businesses for the company and negotiate with new prospects. These are the front-line salespeople and should have several skills like ability to identify new prospects, persuading and negotiating, and ultimately building new and profitable business. They generate customer leads, provide information, persuading customers and closes the sale. The job of order getters is most challenging than any other type of salespersons.

4. Support Salespeople

- A. **Technical support salespeople:** This type of salesperson provide sales support to front-line salespeople. When a product is highly technical and negotiations are complex, a salesperson may be supported by product and financial specialists who can provide the detailed technical information required by customers.
- B. **Merchandisers:** These people provide sales support in retail and wholesale selling situations. Orders may be negotiated nationally at head office, but sales to individual outlets are supported by merchandisers who give advice on display, implement sales promotions, check stock levels and maintain contact with store managers.
- C. **Trade Salespeople:** Spend much time helping customers, especially in retail stores, Restock the shelves, set up displays.
- D. **Service Salespeople:** interacts with customers after sale is complete.

LIMITATIONS OF PERSONAL SELLING

1. **Lack of knowledgeable and skilled salesman:** Salesman having the necessary training and aptitude are rare. Salesman who have adequate knowledge and necessary skill are found wanting in many concerns at the counter and elsewhere, they are unable to do full justice to their work.
2. **Bad employers:** Many employers engaging the services of salesmen are unscrupulous. They violate or circumvent laws and try to exploit their salesmen.

As good work is not appreciated and payment is very less, many intelligent and enterprising salesmen feel discouraged and disgusted. They lose interest to work honestly and efficiently.

3. **Little respect:** Salesmanship as a profession commands little respect in many countries including India. Moreover, salesmen are not recruited either on the basis of examination results or according to any strict rule. As an entry into the profession is easy, many incompetent people become salesman only to bring discredit to it.
4. **Practices of fraud:** The practices of fraud and dishonesty is another drawback of salesmanship. Malpractices of various types and misrepresentation do great harm to the cause of salesmanship.
5. **Difficult job:** Salesmanship is not an easy job for those, who are introverts not desirous or mixing freely with others. Salesmanship requires frequent travelling and this may prove to be harmful to the health of the salesman besides being inconvenient to him and his family. Rude and rough behavior of customers or retailers, and step motherly treatment given by the employers are likely to make salesmanship a thankless, disgusting and miserable task.

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