**How Great Selling Techs**

**Turn Communication Into Sales**

Hi, everybody. Welcome back. I’m Kenny Chapman, the Blue Collar Coach, your contractor coach and sales trainer.

This week I want to talk about something that we have discussed in the past, but we’re going to come from a little bit of a different angle.

I want you to stay with me here this week because what we’re going to talk about is absolutely going to position you to better improve your skills with your customers. **It will help you to improve your sales, better improve your education process, and ultimately improve your overall process**. Hopefully it will also improve your life because if you make more money, you have more fun, and you better connect with people, then isn’t that part of why we’re doing all of what we do anyway, my friends?

So today we’re talking about how great-selling technicians *turn communication into profits*, and as I record this here this week, earlier this week I did a similar topic on a teleseminar nationally about how leaders can turn communication into profits.

Well, today I want to talk about how we (as technicians) can really use this idea of communication. To me it’s almost like the management deal back in the 1980s. I might be dating myself a little bit now when I talk about the ‘80s, but it used to be that “Management is the next big thing.”

There was a statistic that recently said in the ‘80s the “up and coming” job was to become a data entry person because in the ‘80s they were saying those were going to be the next big jobs. Now, anybody with one of our smartphones is a data entry person, right?

So things have really changed, and the reason that I bring up the ‘80s thing is because too often I hear people talk about communication in terms of simply, “Oh, it’s so vitally important.” Sometimes it’s: “Ladies and gentlemen, you have to get out there and communicate better with our customers, and our CSRs have to do a better job of call taking, and our dispatchers have to do a better job of staying in contact with the customer and advising them of the situation and what’s coming up.” The topic of communication can be presented in a variety of ways.

Then, pretty soon it’s just *communication, communication, communication*.

But where does the rubber really meet the road?

What does that mean to me as a selling technician?

How can I take this whole communication concept that maybe I’m talking about, maybe your management team is talking about, whatever the case might be?

**How does that translate into dollars for you?** My whole goal, the whole reason I’m in front of you today on this camera is *because I want you to improve your sales.*

If you want to improve your sales, **you need to improve your education style and your education technique.** To better educate you must better communicate, my friends.

So that is what today is really all about, and we must start foundationally, and what I mean by that is communication is really foundational. *It’s the basis of all relationships.*

**Communication is the Basis of All Relationships**

I’ve told you in the past that I’m not one of these hard, pushy, in-your-face kind of sales guys. I’m a communication guy. I’m an education expert. I’m about relationship building and consultative selling.

I want you to be an **assistant buyer**, not just an in-your-face salesperson giving features, benefits, features, benefits.

Yes, we need to talk about those things, but this isn’t a contest with your customer. This is an opportunity for a human relation and a human reaction and that *provides great customer service.*

You’re not just wearing that uniform today so you can go out there and sell a bunch of stuff to a bunch of strangers.

You are wearing that uniform today so you can go out and find out what’s going on in your customers’ lives and your potentials clients’ lives. Then, you can **uncover their entire list of needs, wants, and desires to find out how your products, services, solutions, and company can meet those needs for them.** You are looking to better improve their lives, and enhance their situation based on the things that you do while building good relationships based on trust, authority, and understanding to better position them to improve their lives.

See, if you can improve a customer’s life, you’re going to win, period, no matter what.

So the first thing we need to realize is that, yeah, we talk about how relationship is key and it’s so important, but what drives that? What benefits that?

Relationship does, my friends.

When we think about how important communication is, I want you to really get that. Allow that to just soak into your mind today that **communication is the basis of all relationships** and we have an opportunity today to go out and get in front of people that we can create quality relationships with.

We can find out what’s going on for them, offer products, solutions, and options for them to make quality choices to enhance their lives, and really good things happen throughout.

**Turning Communication Into Profit**

Communication is truly that important, and **great selling technicians turn communication into profit.** That’s what we’re here to do this week.

So, there are a couple things that I can’t talk about communication without mentioning.

**The Importance of Listening**

We’ve recorded entire videos on this topic. I’ve got one called *Active Listening*. Every time we talk about sales, customer service, the sales process, the 12 steps of the ultimate service call, all the things that we teach, train, and do; *listening is paramount.*

**Listening is a pinnacle piece of effective communication** and really getting to understand a client’s needs and wants.

There are not too many times that I’m on site and doing ride-alongs that I don’t run across some listening issues. I go and do a ride-along with a technician and say, “Hey, you did a really good thing there. I really liked how you phrased that, and showed that empathy, and you went in and there’s this big picture windows and you said, ‘Man, what a great view out there.’ You did a really great job. Did you pay attention to what the customer said as you were going down the stairs about what they did this weekend?”

Usually, the reply is, “Hmm…no, I don’t remember that, Kenny. Sorry. I don’t remember that.”

Now, again, remember, it’s easier for me as the third-party observer on ride-alongs with you and when we do ride-alongs in our own company, it’s easy for me to see because I’m not engaged with the customer.

I’m just kind of observing, and that’s why I’m there to help you and observe. Then I take all these types of opportunities (whether it’s teleseminars, group coaching calls, individual coaching calls, or doing video training for you like we are today), to share that information to help you improve.

I’m here to tell you, I know that as technicians, you’re doing the best you can. You don’t want to intentionally ignore your customer. You’re not going, “Hey, watch this, Kenny. I’m going to show you how I don’t remember what a customer said on my last service call.”

I know that’s not what it’s about. You’ve got a lot going on. You’ve got personal stuff. You’ve got family stuff. You’ve got work stuff. You’ve got all the process that you have to follow and then, guess what, by the end of all that, that’s right, you’ve still got to remember how to fix this stuff.

So, I understand as we’re walking down the stairs you might be already thinking in your head, “We thought we were on a boiler call but now it turns into the fact that it’s actually a water heater call.”

So you’re processing. What I’m asking you to do is just compartmentalize that processing as much as you can, to where you can **focus on your customer and listen to them**.

We’re not there to diagnose the boiler or the water heater, or whatever it is. **We’re there to** **build rapport and relationship with a customer first and foremost** through great communication, great questioning, great education, and a great relationship.

The reality is, first and foremost, we’ve got to get better at listening, and the way that I want this to play and I want you to think about this in your head is in terms of quality questions.

Listen.

Quality question.

Listen.

Quality question.

Listen.

Pay attention.

Listen.

Quality question.

Pay attention.

Listen.

That’s what it’s about. However, sometimes I’ll see technicians get into this phase of peppering the customer with back-to-back questions, without much listening. (I’m all about questioning and there are times when it’s okay to ask back to back, but don’t just sit there and ask nonstop questions.)

“How old’s the home? How long have you lived here? How many people live in the house? When’s the last time you had somebody service your equipment? When did you last run out of hot water or when did you notice this problem? When it was working did it okay? Did you –?” It’s like, whoa, slow down!

Every one of those are phenomenal questions that I want you to ask. I need this information to provide a quality option sheet and make a good presentation to my customer, but my gosh.

Hang on a second. Let me breathe.

“Let me ask you a couple questions, Ms. Jones. First of all, how old is this home? Man, this is a great area and nice neighborhood. How old is this home? Okay, it’s x amount of years old. Great, and out of all those years, how many have you lived here? Okay, and how long do you plan to stay here? Do you plan on being here for a little bit? Okay. You’re going to be here quite some time now. While you’re here and as you continue to enjoy your life in this home, do you plan to do any enhancements, upgrades, or any remodels?”

Just **allow these things to come out** throughout the call.

Quality question.

Listen.

Quality question.

Listen.

Pay attention.

Quality question.

Listen.

This is very important. Listening is pinnacle.

Another thing that I see that we have a big opportunity with when it comes to communication turning into profits is explaining the “why” behind things.

**Explaining the “Why”**

I recorded an entire video called *The Power of Because* because it’s so important to share the why behind what we’re offering.

So, if I do a great discovery process throughout the service call to find all of the wants, needs, and desires for a customer, then when I sit down to go over the options they need to be able to connect the dots as to **why I’m offering a product.**

We’ve got good rapport built. The customer understands a little bit about why we need to do certain things, but then the technician just says, “I’m offering this quarter-turn ball valve to replace the gate valve there. You know that old one that I pointed out and showed you it’s an old one? Here’s the new one.”

“Hang on. Wait a minute. Why? Why do I need the new one? Help me understand the differences between the old style and the new style. What makes it better, different? *How will this improve my life*?”

And we’re talking about *a ball valve*, really? I just ran a call a few weeks ago with a company I was consulting with, when an old gate valve didn’t completely shut off going out to the sprinkler system. I was in Colorado on this particular ride-along and it’s been a cold winter over the course of this particular year, and guess what?

They had had all this stuff done to the sprinkler system the previous year. The husband had forgotten to shut it off that year. It froze and broke so they had to do all this stuff. Now, this year he remembered and did shut off the gate valve, but guess what? The gate valve didn’t shut all the way off. Some water leaked through. It froze and broke again.

Now, if I can help educate my customer to understand that’s *why* we need this quarter-turn ball valve, I’m in a far better place.

So, I’ve got to listen (first and foremost) and then I’ve got the *why* in this communication process.

As I encourage you to explain the why, I also want to encourage you to not go too deep too soon. **Don’t explain the why in the discovery process** when we’re looking at the ball valve and seeing what’s taking place. You can talk a little bit about it, but don’t sell it yet. Don’t get into all the benefits *yet.*

Just say, “This is an older style, and as you can see here Ms. Jones, it’s not shutting all the way down. What that means is it’s never going to completely shut off the water flow, and this water’s going to continue to seep through. Then, if you ever have an emergency on the main water side, you’ll need to shut off everything to the entire home. Or earlier when we were upstairs and we were looking at replacing those emergency shutoffs under the kitchen sink there, I’ll need to completely shut the water off and this valve won’t do that right now in today’s repair. I’ll go over a couple options though. I’ll put this on my sheet for you then we’ll get back together and cover everything that needs to be addressed in the home. Okay? Sound good? Great.”

They’re fine with that. You don’t need to go into everything and how much it costs and how long it’s going to take.

You can do that, but just get back to that presentation table, okay?

Regarding communication, I don’t want it to be a buzzword. I want it to be a *way* of your service call. There are three things that I know will help you improve your service call with better communication.

**Three Ways That Communication Helps a Sales Call**

**#1: Communication Improves Information Management**

Through better communication, you can better manage the information you are given, which means it’s going to *lead you to better sales.*

As I’m communicating, asking questions, listening, getting good information, jotting it down on my option sheet as I’m thinking through these things, I can better manage the information with quality communication.

I can keep my call better organized, meaning **that I can follow my step-by-step process**. My gosh, ladies and gentlemen, we’re playing the same game every day. We have the opportunity to go out and practice while we play and ask 90 percent of the same questions *every single call* in the same way.

Sure, customers change the game. I get it. I’m in the field a lot. I see that they don’t always play to our rules and our scope, but that’s okay.

You just need to go along with the way that things go, but the better positioned you are to communicate and have your process down, **the better this communication keeps your call organized**.

I see technicians lose it quickly as soon as they feel like they lose control of the call or the call’s not organized in the little way they want it to go.

Earlier this week, John (our training manager, general manager, sales manager, jack-of-all-trades kind of guy at my company) ran a technician training meeting about the recovery process. By this, I mean that maybe a customer gets you off track. How do you recover? How do you bounce back?

I’m not beating you up here; I’m saying that we get off track. One of our top guys forgot to offer a service agreement at a time in the call when he normally does. Now the recovery process, he’s been out to the truck. He’s done his stuff. Now he’s coming back in to find that the customer doesn’t know the script, ladies and gentlemen.

So, **the better you communicate the better it helps you keep your script and your call organized**.

The better you communicate with your customers; ask quality questions; listen; pay attention; digest; ask quality questions; listen; pay attention; digest. The more we do these things, the better relationship you’re going to have.

When’s the last time this person was really listened to? When was the last time that (especially) a home service professional showed them the time of day and they didn’t just come in and say, “What’s broken? I’m the plumber, or the HVAC, the electrical guy, or the carpet cleaner, or the garage door repairperson. I’m just here to fix it. Show me where it’s at and I’ll get it done.”

*Really?!* It’s about a bigger game than this now, and effective communication plays a major part in this.

When you communicate effectively with people, my friends, you can literally, as a selling technician, promote motivation for people.

**#2: Communication Influences Behavior and Motivation**

An informed person operates differently than an uninformed person.

You can absolutely help motivate somebody to make some choices and changes in buying decisions *based on how well you communicate with them.* As a good communicator, the second thing you can do is **influence individual behavior**. That’s right. As I said, informed people act differently than uninformed people and guess what? If you don’t inform them, if you don’t have a quality communication session with them for this service call – maybe that’s what I’ll do.

Maybe I’ll change it from service calls to communication sessions, right? That’s really what we’re trying to do here is communicate and educate. **An informed person is always going to make better decisions than an uninformed person**. So we’re trying to inform them through great communication, and lastly and certainly not least, communication fosters good process.

**#3: Communication Fosters Good Process**

Let’s say I’m explaining to a customer and they are asking, “How much is it going to be? You said I need this ball valve. How much? How long? What’s the process? What’s it going to take?”

Stick to the process: “We’re going to get to all of that, Ms. Jones. Just give me a couple minutes. Let me finish my diagnosis. I’ll put everything together on an option sheet for you and we’ll just cover one at a time, okay? We’ll cover that. It won’t take long. Just give me a few minutes here to finish my diagnosis.”

*Now she understands*. She’s not going to keep on hammering you, but if you don’t address it, the next thing you know you’re being forced into your price book and you’re trying to give a price on something that you’re not ready to give yet (because you might be bundling, etc.)

You might be packaging. You might be doing something different based on all the things you come up with in your discovery process.

Good communication promotes motivation**. It can help alter attitudes and improve behavior**, and it can definitely help you foster your process, my friends.

Communication is pinnacle when it comes to the service and sales process.

Again, this week, there are four things I consistently promote and want you to stay focused on and continue to do. No matter how much I train, no matter how much I ride along, I know these are things we need to continue to catch ourselves with and slow down, be more aware, ask better questions, listen fully, and offer all those options. That’s what it’s about.

Great selling technicians **turn communication into profit.**

That’s what I want for you this week. I’m Kenny Chapman, the Blue Collar Coach, your contractor sales and communication coach. Until we talk next time, have a better than fantastic week!