

The YEBDC Small Business Information Column

by Sue Gingerich, Business Advisor

"Have You Ever Lied to A Customer?"

Have you ever tried to pull the wool over the customer's eyes? You did it for a very good reason, right? You didn't want to disappoint the customer, so you told him you could do what he asked, even though you were not really sure you could. So what happens when you can't make good on your promise? Another "little" lie? Examples of this are: Saying you will get back to a customer tomorrow, and then you don't, stalling or avoiding customers, when you don't really know the answer to something, promising to deliver on a product or service that you can't supply, etc.

The unfortunate thing that most business owners and salespeople don't realize is, that most of the time the customer sees right through these tactics. So why do they let you get away with it? Because sometimes when a customer wants something bad enough, he or she is willing to overlook those little white lies. But then, those customers, will walk away and bad mouth your business. And rightly so! So if you want to increase sales don't do it by lying to the customer. You may sell to that customer, who would have bought from you, no matter what you did to him, but your company's reputation will be damaged by it. Customers love to spread the word about unpleasant situations they have experienced, so be honest with them and increase sales from positive word of mouth. (Customers, if you suspect someone you are dealing with is being a little less than honest, tell him or her to their face!)

We don't intend to lie to our customers. We just don't want to let a customer down, so we lead the customer on. Telling a customer only what he wants to hear and not the truth can back fire on you. If you take the time to find out the answer for him, your customer will appreciate how much farther you have gone for him. Be honest, keep your promises with your customers and you will enjoy increased sales due to a very positive public image.

If you have a small business and have a question or problem that you think The YEBDC could help you with please call or write to: The Yellowhead East Business Development Corporation, Box 249, Sangudo, Alberta, T0E 2A0
1-800-556-0328 or 1-780-785-2900, e mail: yebdc@yebdc.ab.ca, or access our Website at: www.yebdc.ab.ca

"Takin' Care of Business... Takin' Care of You!"