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How Selling is About Sharing for VR Customers

One of the most common challenges for Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) Customers who are working to become productively self-employed is in making the sale. Like most of us, they see this process as putting themselves at risk of rejection. Instead, making the sale is more about sharing than selling. Sharing is about helping someone to understand why purchasing what you have to offer will help them out or represent some other value add.

For example, a home inspection service is about helping home owners to learn about and comply with home safety standards. Dog walking is about helping pet owners to keep their pets active and healthy. Photographers are about helping people to capture and preserve wonderful memories. Crafts people and artisans are about helping to enhance people's lives with things of beauty or improved functionality. Once you help the VR Customer to understand how what they do helps someone, the next step is to role play the "sharing" exchange through the following four steps:

1. **Define the Ideal Customer** | Invite the VR Customer to describe their ideal prospect. This is someone they think will truly benefit from purchasing what they have to offer.
2. **Role Playing** | Pretend that you are that ideal person and invite the VR Customer to *share* with you:
 - What they offer
 - Why you would benefit from purchasing it
 - How much it cost
 - What to expect when you buy
 - And any other value received as a result of doing business with them
3. **Close the Sale** | Invite the VR Customer to walk through the process of closing the sale with you. This may involve your filling out an order form, signing a contract, making a deposit, booking a date/time for service and other details. Write down each of the different elements involved.
4. **After the Sale** | Invite the VR Customer to describe what happens after the sale is made. For example, how might they sell to you again or encourage you to make a referral to someone else? Again, write down everything you both can think of. This might include setting up a customer database to track and develop repeat sales, sending a newsletter via email to stay in touch and announce special offerings, or creating a customer loyalty program.

Once you and the VR Customer feel as though you have captured sufficient details about what's involved in making and repeating a sale, and the Customer has an opportunity to develop some of the support materials that may be required (order form, pricing, etc.) encourage them to go out and actually sell someone as a first test phase of operation. The actual customer could be a friend, relative or total stranger. Be sure to have the VR Customer make note of everything that goes on so that you both can discuss what works well and what can be refined to improve the exchange the next time.

With a focus on sharing versus selling, the above activities go a long way to helping a VR Customer prove to themselves that they can close a customer as well as "refine and repeat" the process over time to attain their vocational, income and quality of life objectives.

For more information, visit: <http://www.buzvr.org/>

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