

Common Sales Techniques

Advertisers use sales techniques to get you to buy a product or service once you have been tempted by the advertising messages.

COME-ONS

- Sales — Are they bargains or are they seconds and left-overs?
- Coupons — If you have to buy the coupon books, are they REALLY a bargain?
- Rebates — Will you remember to send in the rebate coupon?
- Package Deals — Do you need EVERYTHING in the package or are you paying for some items you wouldn't normally buy?
- Loss-Leaders — Are you lured into the store by a 15-cent discount and find yourself buying other items that you hadn't intended to buy?
- Premiums — Get a free "_____" with every purchase of \$50 or more.
- Contests — What is your real chance of winning? Is it worth the time it takes you to enter or the cost of entry? Do you really need it? Could you get it for the same price by shopping smart?

PUFFING

- The ad or sales person claims the product is "the best" and exaggerates the value of the product. The sales person may appear to be excited, but he/she is really just a cheering section for the advertiser — not for you.

HIGH PRESSURE

- Repetitions — It's you! It's you! It's really you!
- Deadlines — One day only! Once in a lifetime! From 6 a.m. to 9 p.m. only!
- Limited Offers — While supplies last!
- Inside Groups and Clubs — Only a select few are invited.

PRODUCT ENHANCEMENT

- Guarantees — Abundant use of statements such as "lifetime guarantee" and "satisfaction guaranteed or your money back."
- Beautiful People or Celebrities — I want to be just like him or her!
- Having Fun — You will have fun if you use this product.
- Editing out the Failures — 6 out of 10 got better ... what about the other 4?

EMOTIONAL APPEAL

- Fear — Are you REALLY safe without it? Are you more protected if you buy it? What is your real risk?
- Pride — Yes! That is who I want to be!
- Guilt — Your mother would want you to buy this.
- Grief — Then you see a plain wooden casket...
- Sex Appeal — Everyone will envy the new you.
- Anger — Are you tired of being ripped off?
- Confusion — Don't confuse me with facts!

APPEAL TO CHILDREN

- Things the children want for themselves. Examples: toys, clothes, sporting goods, food, games, books and tapes, and all Name Brands!
- Getting the kids to influence the family. Examples: what to eat and where to eat. These usually feature a playground, hero mugs, and toys.

TRAVEL FRAUD

- Offers are accompanied by certificates for “free” or very low-cost travel.
- Offers only vaguely describe the services and/or accommodations.

DECEPTION

- Pros and Cons — All Pro, No Cons.
- Little White Lies — Statements which aren’t quite true.
- Selling Air — Have you ever noticed how little cereal there really is in those big boxes?
- Sunny Side Up — The lean meat shows on the top of the roast, the fat is on the bottom.
- Down Sizes — Ever notice that a “one pound can” of coffee really only contains twelve ounces?
- The Fine Print — Have you ever read the words on the bottom of the ad or contract?
- Add-Ons — Oops! It comes as a package and you also have to purchase these other items.
- Plus Tax, Shipping, and Handling — It was a mail order bargain until you added all these.
- Batteries Not Included — You may have bought it on sale but how much does it really cost after you add on the cost of the extras needed to make it work.
- Unproven Scientific Claims — “Nine out of ten” may sound good, but many such claims cannot be proven.
- Free or “Premiums” — Nothing is ever entirely free.
- “Zero Percent Interest” — Repeat, nothing is free, especially purchases paid out over time.
- Bait And Switch — “We’re out of that item we advertised right now, but we DO have this more expensive product ready now.”
- Incomplete Products — Where’s the power cord? Printer cable?
- Misrepresentation — Uses a name similar to a nationally-recognized brand.

NEGATIVE OPTION

- Merchandise arrives automatically unless the consumer takes steps to stop shipment and billing. Often used by book, video, and record clubs.

HEALTH FRAUD

- Promises of overnight medical cures and treatments. Products “are developed after years of research” and “proven to provide immediate positive results.”
- Testimonials are provided by “medical experts” and “satisfied customers.”

SWINDLES

- The Hook — Plays on your greed to get more.
- A Huge Savings — Ask yourself HOW can they sell it so cheap?
- Huge Return On Investment — A useful rule of thumb is the greater the gain, the higher the risk... always!
- Emergencies — Price gouging in a crisis. For example, out of town contractors flock into town after a hurricane and do poor, slipshod work because they don’t intend to stay after the job is done.