

DEPARTMENT OF BUSINESS MANAGEMENT

Conducted by Paul C. Olsen.*

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ADVERTISING AND SELLING PROBLEMS OF DRUG STORES.

PERSONAL SALESMANSHIP IN DRUG STORES.

BY PAUL C. OLSEN.

Sales in drug stores are of three general types, depending upon whether or not choice is involved in the purchase, and upon suggestion. An example of a purchase in which choice is infrequently involved is a tooth paste. In such cases, the customer usually has decided before ever she enters the store that she needs tooth paste and is going to buy it. Most druggists have observed, too, that she has decided on the brand which she will buy.

Sometimes it is said that in such purchases that the salesperson is little more than a cashier whose function is to receive the money, make change and wrap and deliver the package to the waiting customer.

Even in such cases, however, there is opportunity for the salesperson to employ skilfully many of the characteristics of successful personal salesmanship. The objective is, of course, to make the customer so pleased with the reception and service she has received that she will continue to make purchases in the future at that particular store.

This is of the greatest importance in all drug stores because, even in the so-called transient stores, the bulk of the business comes from a relatively small number of people to whom that store is more accessible and more convenient than any other drug store. This is true to even a greater degree, of course, in city neighborhood drug stores and in drug stores in communities of small population.

An example of a sale involving choice is a stationery purchase. The customer says, for instance, he would like some correspondence cards or he would like a notebook or other stationery for a special purpose. A selection must be made by the customer with the skilful assistance of the salesman. Other types of merchandise in which choice is frequently involved are cameras, bristle goods, rubber goods and perfumes.

A type of sale often employed in some drug stores is that in which suggestion is involved. This is the so-called companion sale. A customer makes a purchase upon which she has decided before she enters the store. Then the salesperson suggests to her additional purchases which appear logical in view of her original purchase. The tooth paste purchaser, for example, is asked to buy a tooth brush

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