

Laura Meyer 00:00

A lot of the clients that I work with don't compete on price, but they compete on quality. And I love this market position. I think when you compete on quality, when you compete on being the best in your industry or category, when you really strive to do the very best you can be best in class, then it's so much of an easier business model, you can raise your prices, you can become more profitable. And you tend to serve the best clients because the best clients want the best service. And in this world that we live in, where people often will compete on price as an overall strategy, for example, Walmart's strategy is to be the lowest priced option possible. And that's their overall market position. That's how they have built their business. But most boutique business owners, whether it's fitness or it's wellness, or it's coaching, they really want to compete on service, and again, being that best product available. So, when you're taking that premium market position, people buy differently, they just do they tend to be more educated buyers, they tend to be buyers who are really interested in making a connection, they tend to be very interested in a relationship. Like think about it, if you go into Walmart, and you're looking for the cheapest thing possible, you're not really interested in the connection or relationship. But when you go out and you make a high-ticket purchase, you're very interested in how much that person that brand cares about you has a connection with you makes you feel seen and valued. And I'm going to propose that when you're selling that way, it's all about having a collaborative sales process having an educated, collaborative, connected, empathetic sales process. So in today's video podcast episode, I'm going to be talking about the secret to collaborative close.

Laura Meyer 02:04

Welcome to the AI driven marketing podcast. This is a place where we deliver quick and insightful weekly tips about 10 minutes or less on what's new and groundbreaking in the world of marketing AI. I'm your host, Laura Meyer, a 20 plus year entrepreneur and marketing expert. If you are excited about staying ahead of the curb and harnessing the potential of AI in your marketing strategies, you're in the right place. Let's go.

Laura Meyer 02:30

As I mentioned in the intro, being collaborative in your sales process is all about that connection, and really keeping people from feeling sold to. And it's funny, I would say that I'm somebody who loves sales, I really enjoy it. I am passionate about it. When I have a sales call on my calendar, I get excited, because I'm curious, I'm curious about that person's business, whether or not we can help them whether or not maybe referral to another resource or service would help them better. And coming from that place of service is the key to collaborative sales. And I'm going to share with you just some trends that I'm seeing in the marketplace right now. So one thing that I'm seeing as a trend is this idea of feminine versus masculine selling. And if you've heard of this, let me know in the comments, if you're watching the podcast, send me a message. I've been really wondering about this idea of feminine versus masculine selling, I

hear people talking about it. And I've become curious about it. And I've started to explore. And I'll say that I have been trained in all of the masculine sales processes. So I've been an entrepreneur for 20 years, I had my own brick and mortar chain for 15 years, I purchased sales tools and trainings for my staff, I went through them myself very classic traditional sales processes. And in retrospect, I'll say that they are very masculine in nature. It's all about withholding information until certain times and some a little bit of organizational psychology and trickery and getting people to that point of Yes, through really strong persuasion. And persuasion might even be like in a kind of a nice term might be a gentle term for sometimes what can be a very aggressive sales process, but it does work. Like we've all made those purchases where we got into a conversation with somebody who was just so persuasive and so aggressive. We were on the market for it anyways. And we're kind of like, well, okay, I might as well just say yes, so just be done with this decision and move on with my day. Right? But if you're if you notice when you make decisions that way you don't feel good about them, right? Like if you ever made a car decision that way maybe you went home and you were like I don't know if I really liked this car, I don't know if it's for me and you start questioning that decision.

Laura Meyer 04:59

You might even be wondering whether or not you could go and get a refund or an exchange because you weren't feeling great about the decision to begin with. And what we want to do is we want to avoid that right with our customers. Because it's not just about making the sale, it's about continuing on with that client or that customer for a really long time and having them referred having them be happy in the purchase and extend the lifetime customer value of that interaction or of that transaction. Because ultimately, that's what grows a business is long standing happy customers that are happy to pay a premium, right. And we think about that difference between masculine versus feminine sales. And if you Google search it, you'll see a lot of different philosophies and conversations around it. But I'll just share mine right now, is that masculine sales process, again, is very traditional, it works. I was trained in it, a lot of my team members as I've gone along the path of entrepreneurship or have been trained in it. And it can be really, really effective, but it tends to be more one sided, it tends to be, let me tell you, what's best for you. Because you obviously don't know what's best for yourself, right? And I'm just summarizing it, but I think that's where the intention comes from. And then to be on the receiving end of it. That's honestly how it feels like, if you ever heard the term mansplaining. And guys, you know, I love you, if you're listening, I love working with you, I love my male clients. This is no knock at the, the male gender by any means. But just in terms of its inherent definition, you know, male or masculine selling tends to be like what again, they call mansplaining. In my house where I have two young boys in grade school, I call it little mansplaining tell me something that I literally already know. And they use a tone of voice.

Laura Meyer 06:57

That's let's just say condescending, a little mansplaining. And, you know, again, be on the receiving end of that you're like, come on, I know, okay, let's just get through this, right. Whereas feminine selling tends to be more empathetic tends to be more organic, and tends to be more nurturing tends to be more conversational. And so again, when we lead more into that side of feminine selling, we can tap into the natural aspect of the feminine. And I think men can do this too, where you get more into that softer side of selling, you get more into that place of wanting it to be a two way exchange. And you stay further away from that outcome focused heavily logical, you know, of course, this makes sense. Why wouldn't you do it? And less dominating and more into that collaborative, two way conversation? And if you're listening, and you're like, oh, no, Laura, I mean, come on feminine versus masculine selling, is this something we really need to be worried about? Here's a statistic for you. Did you know that 85% of household purchases are made by women, the decisions are made by women. And so if we think about all of the things that you sell, whether you're in wellness, you are in health, you are in fitness, you are in coaching, nonprofit, whatever you sell, a lot of those decisions are household decisions. And 85% of household decisions are made by women. So it may be time to start thinking about sales differently if you're selling to households in any capacity.

Laura Meyer 08:46

And I also want to share with you some signs that your sales process might not be collaborative enough, it might be a little too masculine. So maybe the when you're talking to prospects, they're kind of looking past you, right? Like they're looking over their shoulder, their body language, maybe they're crossing their arms. They're kind of standoffish, and when this happens, I'll share a little bit more in this podcast episode. But I really see that as a sign to check in and make sure that I'm not pushing myself too much on the person. Are they delaying the decision? A lot of times when selling to women, they'll say, oh, I need to check with my husband, which, you know, you often don't hear going the other way, which I think is so interesting, and it's usually women just being polite and trying to get out of the conversation to be totally honest. Unless it's just something that they've already decided that they're going to decide together. And they really do need to check and get back to you.

Laura Meyer 09:47

Are they shutting down during the conversation or just feeling like kind of taken aback by your approach? A lot of times this is a sign that your sales process is too masculine, too dominant. And again, they're just trying to figure out how to get out of there. It's not that they're not interested, they're just not interested in having the conversation with you. It might be a harsh truth, but those are signs that it could be happening. So a feminine sales conversation really feels two way it feels very organic, it feels very natural. And it originates from the desire to provide value. So here are some steps that you can use to just check in with yourself or your team. If you have a sales team, you might want to forward this podcast or this video to them if you're watching on YouTube, because it could be really helpful to them in thinking through their

approach with their sales process. So the first step isn't just an energetic check in, I really recommend avoiding what I call dollar signs in the eyes. And because people can sense it, again, especially premium buyers, premium buyers tend to be educated, they tend to be experienced in buying because they have purchasing power. And if they sense from you that you have commission breath or dollar signs in your eyes, you really just have to compartmentalize that, like I get sales goals, and I get that part of your if you're listening and you're part of a sales team, I get that your compensation is tied to your results. And if you have to put food on the table, there is pressure there. And that's important to recognize and process within yourself and, and not try to pretend it's not there. But then also learn how to compartmentalize it because people can tell, and it will get in the way of you being effective at sales. And then what you want to do is check in with that excitement. With that curiosity. Curiosity is a really interesting emotion. If you notice, you can't be curious and mad at the same time or curious and angry at the same time. Like curiosity is sort of the emotion that exists within itself that tends to isolate all other emotions. So if you can be curious, you can find that curiosity. That is a great place to originate from. So for example, I'm forever curious. I'm just a curious person. I think many of us are right. And I'm always wondering like, oh, what kind of business do they have? I wonder how it's going? What type of geography are they in? And how is that impacting their success? Or what types of products do they offer? What types of services do they offer? I wonder who would really love those kinds of services? Like I'm just, I'm a curious person. And I think that marketers by nature are very curious. And so that gets me excited, because I wonder what I don't know. And that is a very much motivating for me.

Laura Meyer 12:46

So I think it's important for you to think about what's motivating for you, what do you really want to know about the person that you're talking to? And also making sure that you have passion around the product, making sure that you are really excited about the product or service that you've provided and that you believe in it? Because if you believe in it, and you're like, Okay, so if you're saying no, like, obviously you didn't hear me, because this is awesome. And if you're not coming from that place, I really invite you to spend some time falling in love with your product and really selling products that you love and that you believe in. So I have a really interesting example. From just last week, I was at TJ Maxx. I love my local TJ Maxx, shout out to Kennett square, Pennsylvania, if anybody works there is listening right now. They are such great staff. It's like a local TJ Maxx with lots of local team members that look out for each other and are just part of our community. And so I know and recognize a lot of the people there because it's well on my way to where I usually play tennis. And sometimes when I have free time, I stopped by and look for things for myself and my family. And you know, there's always the generic required, do you want a credit card at the end of every transaction when I'm checking out. But last week, the woman was so enthusiastic. And listen, we always get pitched credit cards, right? It's just almost part of the background noise of making a transaction at this point, right? Like we almost never pay attention to it. And I get the sense that the person

making the offer rarely as well. But this woman was like, did you know like you could have saved \$20. She's like, Oh my gosh, I got rid of all my other credit cards, like everything I said she had an objection. She had a way of handling that objection. But it was funny because it wasn't scripted. It came from this passion for the TJ Maxx credit card. Because I was like, Oh, I use Amex. I really liked my Amex points. And she was like, Oh my gosh, she's like, how do you know how much cash you're getting back? And I was like, No, she's like, I guarantee you it's not as much as this card.

Laura Meyer 14:55

And I was like, I probably need to check with my husband which was like my way of being polite close like ever really don't want another credit card. And she's like, well, you tell your husband that my husband got rid of all the other credit cards because this credit card, like I buy everything here, I get dog food here, I get rugs here, she's like, I get everything here. She's like, I just got \$160 in the mail. Like she just was like, so excited about this credit card, because it has done so many great things for her that she is like spilling out of her. I mean, I'm really kind of anti-filling out those credit cards, because it just I don't want it on my credit. And I don't want the credit checks there if I decide not to activate it. But I was thinking to myself, Oh my gosh, this woman like I'm a tough sell. And this woman like has me sold. I ended up not filling out the credit card application. But I can guarantee you that she gets way more than everybody else, because it came from that place of genuinely thinking that the TJ Maxx credit card is better than every other credit card out there. And if you aren't getting one, it just you haven't, you don't understand, understand how good it is. And I loved her hustle, I respected it so much.

Laura Meyer 16:05

So the second step is future pacing. And this is a really, really important step because it helps people buy from a place of positive intent. And this is just a small piece of this podcast, this idea of positive intent. But it is one of the most powerful concepts in marketing and sales. And the reason is, is because when people buy on fear or scarcity or not enough Ness or not good enough nests are not fit enough or not in shape enough or not healthy enough, when they buy from that place, you may have convinced them. But they're not going to stick around. Because it was a decision based in scarcity. I'm going to say that, again, it was a decision based in scarcity. And decisions based in scarcity do not last long, because then they start becoming resentful of the fact that you sold them on scarcity. But decisions based on positive intent, positive future value, are decisions that stick. And when we can paint a picture of the future of how you'd feel like if you feel a little bit better from this trial or this demonstration. Imagine how you'd feel if you had this weakly, like that ache or pain that you had described to me previously, he would likely be gone. And I've seen it before with people who have the same thing you have. And then all of a sudden, you know, they're kind of struggling in the moment.

But then a month later, they feel totally different. They're bouncing out of bed. Or imagine how you'd feel if this was the kind of outcome you experienced all the time.

Laura Meyer 17:59

And it comes from that excitement for the person. Right. And when we get into this energy and we start future phasing we know that we're coming from such a place of positivity, that whatever decision that they make is in their best interest. And I think in sales, that's our primary role. So when people come to us in our marketing consultancy right now, or they're interested in using catalyst, which is our software, I get really excited for that, because I know our product is awesome. And I know how hard it is to struggle in marketing and sales. So I'm like, Oh my gosh, this is going to be so great for you. I'm so excited. And so I'm going to what the more they're struggling or the more that they've come from a tough place. Maybe they have marketing that isn't working right now that's very expensive, the more excited I get for them, because I know that we offer such a great value for what you get. And then I start kind of saying okay, well imagine if this or imagine if that you could you know if our system handled all of the bookings for you, can you imagine what it would be like to all only need to worry about in person sales, just when people come into your location because everything else is handled.

Laura Meyer 19:09

That is such an excitement because I know how hard it is to run a brick and mortar. I did it for so long, that I get excited for them that they can have this level of help. So when I had a brick and mortar, we were a photography studio chain. And one thing that we did with future pacing was magical. And it wasn't something that every brand could emulate but I want you to think about it and think about what the equivalent would be in your company. So as a photography studio chain, we specialized in wall art. We had our own signature line of wall art products that I personally designed and vendors that were exclusive to us so really cool products that people could put in their home, utilizing family photography as wall art. And we were able to get a hold of a software that if you put up a photo of the room, we could show you by a to scale, what artwork would look like in that room with that finish with that exact frame. And it took some coding and it took a lot of work. But when we got there, it was incredible. Because first of all, we always knew that we would sell about 50% more to anybody that brought in a photo of their room.

Laura Meyer 20:21

But even more importantly, they were super happy with the purchase, they were making a couple \$1,000 purchase, which is a big decision. But they left thrilled, we also included hanging service in the home. And so they didn't have to worry about hanging the art, they could make this really great investment. And most importantly, they were confident that they were going to love it, which was so great. Because when you're making that kind of purchase, you want to be sure, especially with something as custom as photography, and that future

pricing that future visualization was so incredibly powerful. Again, not only did we sell about 50% more when people utilize that service, but they were so happy as a customer because they could envision what their future would be like before making the purchase. So I want you to think about what's that equivalent in your company, where you can future pace, or demonstrate or show or provide an example or provide testimonials or anything like that of what people would expect in the future by doing business with you.

Laura Meyer 21:31

And finally, the third step to a collaborative close is permission based closing. And this is something that I really enjoy doing. Because after getting into a good place of curiosity, and then future pacing and sharing more about what we do, I really enjoy finding out wherever they are, you know what they're thinking in the sales process. So I like to first of all ask for consent by respecting boundaries, and saying, Do you mind if I share more about our packages and our pricing, and just see if it could be a good fit for you, or it might align with some of the goals that you shared with me, just asking that makes the sales process so collaborative, and I just I enjoy that as a transition, because again, I get to find out where they are with their purchasing decision.

Laura Meyer 22:19

And finally, one of my favorite ways to close is what would you like to do from here? A lot of times, I'll just allow for a little bit of silence, and I'm not afraid of leaving some space for them to think sometimes people will say, and if you end up in a sales call with me, you'll find out that this is exactly how it happens. Sometimes people will say like, you know what, like, I know this will help me, I've made my decision. Let's schedule my onboarding. Sooner they schedule the onboarding sooner, they'll get a result. So it makes sense. Some people might say, You know what, I just need a few days to think about it and think about maybe how to reallocate my marketing budget. And at that point, I'll say, Sure, do you mind if we put a quick call on the calendar a few days from now? Because I want to continue that conversation. You know, I always say yes, is good, no, is good, maybe stinks. In a sales process. I don't want maybes hanging out there. I need to know for the sake of my team, whether or not we're onboarding five people, or 10 people next week. So I like to make sure that we've got another time scheduled, so that I can follow up and just get a sense of where they are. And rarely does somebody say no, because we qualify people going into the sales process, but somebody might look at you and just say, You know what, this is just not for me. I'm not interested. Totally okay. Totally okay. If you've been in marketing and sales or business ownership for any period of time, you know that a majority of people will say no, and you can still have an incredibly profitable business, incredibly successful business, even if they say no.

Laura Meyer 23:57

I want to spend just a few minutes in this podcast episode talking about how to handle objections from a collaborative standpoint. And this actually originated with Apple. So, when Apple first started rolling out their retail locations, they would train every single team member to start the answer to every single question with yes. Somebody walks in with their iPod, their brand-new iPod and they say, my I accidentally ran over my iPad with the car with my iPod at the time with my car. Can you help? It's always yes. It's never known that will cost you or no, we don't offer replacements for running over your iPod. It's always a yes, yes. And did you? Did you end up purchasing our Apple Care Plan? Or yes, and we have some new iPods. That would even be a better one than what you already have. It's always yes. And this is just a really fun little tip that you can use in any situation with any objection, because the yes and makes your problem, your objection, your concern, our problem, our concern that we are going to handle together.

Laura Meyer 25:17

And when people put up objections, that's a good thing. It's better than them shutting down, it means that you have a rapport and a relationship. And they're just wondering how you're going to handle it, because they're struggling with that in their mind. And they trust you enough to share it. So, when people are sharing objections, I always think this is great. It's a great sign. It's not a no, they just need more information about how this purchase would help them given that concern. So always see objections as a good thing and start with yes, it does this software do this particular thing? Yes. And here are the limitations or Yes, and you're still going to need staff in your location that can upgrade people to a membership. That's it really important that you're honest about what the limitations are of what you're selling. But it's always a yes, and, and that again, little trick can really help you, especially if you need a few minutes to think about it, at least you get a few seconds while you're saying yes.

Laura Meyer 26:17

And so here's the thing, that age of aggressive, dominant, what I'll call masculine sales, it's really going away. As the market evolves, people become more educated, sales processes need to become more transparent. And this is why they need to become more collaborative, more genuine and more feminine. And it's really, it's not about gender. I know I talked about masculine selling versus feminine selling in this podcast. It's not about gender, it's really harnessing those qualities that tend to be more feminine in nature. So intuition, empathy, collaboration. And what you'll find is utilizing this type of sales process will build trust, it will build that longtime customer value and expand your customer base of raving fans, simply because of the way that the sales started out to begin with. So ultimately, this is one of the keys to sustainable business growth, which is collaborative selling. And if you're wondering, okay, Laura, like, what is it that you're doing in your company, you mentioned your software, you mentioned, you're consulting, and curious to learn more. A lot of what we do is with AI, and when AI works incredibly well, a lot of our clients are getting into more and more sales

conversations, which is where what I just shared with you comes into play. But if you're wondering how to actually get more sales conversations, you can go to getmoresaleswithai.com. That's getmoresaleswithai.com. You'll see it in the show notes as well as the description below this video. I want to thank you so much for joining me, I'd love to hear any thoughts that you have on the keys to a collaborative sales process.

Laura 28:18

Thank you for tuning in to the AI driven marketing podcast. Before we wrap up, I just want to remind you that you can learn more about how to make more sales with AI by going to [makemoresaleswith ai.com](https://makemoresaleswithai.com). This is where I dive deeper into the AI revolution in marketing with our free training. And if you've enjoyed today's episode, please share it with others who might find it valuable. And if you can also just take a moment to leave us a review. I would greatly appreciate it. Your support helps us continue to bring you the top insights in the field of AI driven marketing. Until next time, remember AI is here and it's transforming the marketing landscape. Stay Ahead, stay informed, and most importantly, stay excited. I'll see you soon!