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THE MEETING BETWEEN SALESMAN AND CUSTOMER IN LUXURY GOODS: A NEW VIEW.

Abstract

This paper will outline how the successful result of the negotiation between a potential customer and a salesman depends on their different level of enthusiasm and the consequent empathy and how practically it is possible to modify the gap between the enthusiasm level of the parties involved in order to maximize the sales opportunities when the potential customer and the salesman meet at the point of sale. Very often there are not only two actors, i.e. the potential customer and the salesman, but other key actors can affect the overall negotiation and can determine the success or not of the meeting.

It is the case of the potential customer's wife; in the research it will be considered also the involvement of the wife and her possible different behaviours at the point of sales. Consequently it will be clarified how to treat her too.

Key words: human relations, negotiation, customer journey map, salesman training, luxury goods customers, luxury goods salesman, behavioural approach, nautical sector.

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1. Introduction

The original inspiration for this research, came from the curiosity and observation of the human being behavior in relationships; more specifically, in the love relationship between a man and a woman.

Certain important actions and decisions about their future together appear to be strictly related to the different level of enthusiasm of both the involved persons in the moment in which a certain action take place from one of the parties.

After having observed and analysed this phenomenon, the *ratio* behind was particularly applicable to the purchase behavior of a customer, especially for luxury and expensive products/services.

2. Conceptual Framework

Why do we focus on customers and salesmen attitudes and state of mind? Why is this topic so important? The high interest on these themes comes from the observation of customers' change and on the consequent evolution of the interaction between salesman and potential customers. From traditional salesman to "business partners" who can solve problems and consult customers.

A deep revision of the role of "salesman" has been taking place and leading companies have been revising and redesigning their salesmen trainings.

The most affected products and services are the ones of high value, where more than one contact is necessary with the salesman and where further discussions and considerations go on when the salesman is not present.

Most high value sales involve an ongoing relationship with the customer, partly because they often require after sales support, which means that customer and salesman must meet one or more times after the sale.

This ends up with affecting the customer decision psychology, because they demand and expect a different selling style.

One interesting result is also that they become more cautious as the decision importance grows up,, in fact in the case of a low value purchase, customers can afford to take more risks since the consequence of mistakes is relatively small.

In this paper the focus is on analysing the behaviours of customers and salesmen before, during and after the sales negotiation, in order to improve and maximise all possible phases identified as determining in the positive conclusion of the negotiation.

3. Literature Review

The topic of the "customer behaviour" has long been of interest among the sociologists, psychologists and marketing researchers.

One of the first to take care of this issue was John Howard (Marketing Management: analysis and planning. Irwin, New York, 1963). Several others followed, such as Holbrook with the "consumer research" (1987) and Belk (1986).

In the phase of the evolution of the studies on the customer behavior, three different approaches can be identified: the "cognitive" one, the "behavioural" one and the "experiential" one.

Together with the studies on the customer behavior, it was born also the "NLP", Neuro-Linguistic Programming, introduced by Richard Bandler and John Grinder.

The Theory of the Enthusiasm Curves can be placed within the discipline of the "neuro sales", based on the analysis of the functioning of the human brain and its consequent reactions and elaborations of different stimuli, in this case applied to reach a positive outcome in the sales negotiation.

The so called "sales techniques" based on the "benefits" and on the "intrinsic features" of the products/services, seem to be outdated so far or, better, in this article, we will see they will be helpful only in the case

of a specific type of customer.

One technique that belongs to the neuro sales is the “mirroring”. The Mirroring is explained during the courses of the Neuro Sales to offer to the salesmen some useful tools to reach the “Empathy” with the potential customer.

If there is “Empathy”, in fact, within the salesman and the potential customer, the last one will be more likely to lower his suspicion barriers and make the purchase.

Whilst, what we want to deep with the theory of the Enthusiasm Curves is what happens BEFORE the visit of the potential customer to the show room, so before that the salesman tries to use more or less spontaneous techniques to generate empathy.

In the history of Marketing, a lot of studies have been made about what happens before the purchase, i.e. the “Decisional purchase process of the Customer”, that means the different phases that here below we can find in a time sequence:



Moreover, the different phases can require bigger or smaller efforts depending on the kind and complexity of the product to be purchased.

4. *Research Model*

However, the object of our analysis is not the correlation between the traditional phases of the purchasing process and the different nature of the goods or services to be purchased, but an aspect that normally is not taken into account, i.e. the STATE OF MIND and the EMOTIONAL INVOLVEMENT of the potential customer and its variation depending on the different phases or “Emotional Moments” that he has been experiencing in getting closer to the good/service of his interest.

4.a *The “Customer Journey Map” and the “touch points”.*

For this research, we have decided at the first attempt to work for defining a qualitative method through the usage of interviews, targeted to draw the “Customer Journey Map” and at the same time the “state of mind” of the salesman by recording his key moments both at work and with the family.

The Objective is to trace the Customer Journey Map through the “touch points” or contacts points and assign a level of Enthusiasm for each touch point. Moreover the same process must be done for the salesman in the same period of time.

Before proceeding, it appears useful to clarify what is meant for “touch point”.

The “Journey Model” or trip model takes its origin in the work of the “service blueprinting” and of the mapping of the services by Shostack (1984), Kingman-Brundage (1992) and Bitner (1993).

Several companies have been developing a method to map the routes of customers as the “Moment Mapping” (Shaw and Ivens, 2002) and the “Wheel of the touchpoint of the Brand” (Davis e Dunn, 2002).

The customer Journey takes place within a certain period, shorter or longer before and after the purchase and it has made up of several “touchpoints” between him/her and the company.

These touchpoints are different kind of interactions with the Brand. Every touch point has the potential of surprising the customer thus getting him closer to the Brand or it can either generate the opposite effect. Having stated that, let’s analyse in a chronological order which are the possible “moments” that our potential customer will live BEFORE arriving at the shop, in order to supply useful tools to the salesman.

4.b *The application of the research*

It is possible to apply the theory of the Enthusiasm Curves mainly to Luxury goods/services, where the purchase process needs a different pondering from the large retail goods, where the purchase is very often impulsive. In particular this research focuses on the Nautical sector, by observing the purchase of a rib powered by an outboard.

4.c *The Panel*

In order to pursue the objective of this research, a statistically non representative sample has

been considered, since we were more interested in basic psychological processes rather than generalisations.

Features of the panel:

- 1) The salesman: expert in nautical business, 45 years old, he has been working in this field for 20 years and in the same dealership for 15 years; the owner trusts him a lot. He participates regularly to the sector meetings with suppliers, partners, training sessions and shows. He is quite representative of the average salesman of the nautical sector.
- 2) Customers: 20 potential customers have been observed in the period before the training session and 20 right afterwards.

5. *The Method*

A salesman daily job has been traced for a period of 4 months, and the behavior of 40 potential customers in the same period.

Actions on the Salesman: his level of emotional involvement and motivation at work has been measured by either interviewing his boss and him directly, in order to draw the salesman enthusiasm curve.

Reference period: February-March 2016

Actions on the potential customers: an interview has been done after the visit in showroom.

These data have been matched with the touchpoints known by the company, in order to build the enthusiasm curves of the potential customers.

The two curves have been overlapped on one graph and compared at the moment of the visit in showroom to verify the gap in the enthusiasm level.

A webcam was also installed to observe the attitude and customer approach of the salesman for four months, i.e. for the total period of the experiment.

After two months the salesman has been invited to join a neuro sales training course and at the same time some changes in the showroom took place.

After these changes, the salesman and other potential customers have been observed and “traced” again and their enthusiasm curves have been checked again.

The research, in the end of these observations, seeks to demonstrate a “correlation” between the sale and the reduction of the difference in the enthusiasm gaps level of the parties, the less is the difference between the curves and the more there will be empathy, empathy that is considered as key of success for the sale.

5.a The measurement of enthusiasm and the process of getting closer to the showroom.

In order to measure the level of enthusiasm it has been assumed to use a scale from 0 to 10. Hereafter the important phases of the research.

5.b The Customer and his Journey Map

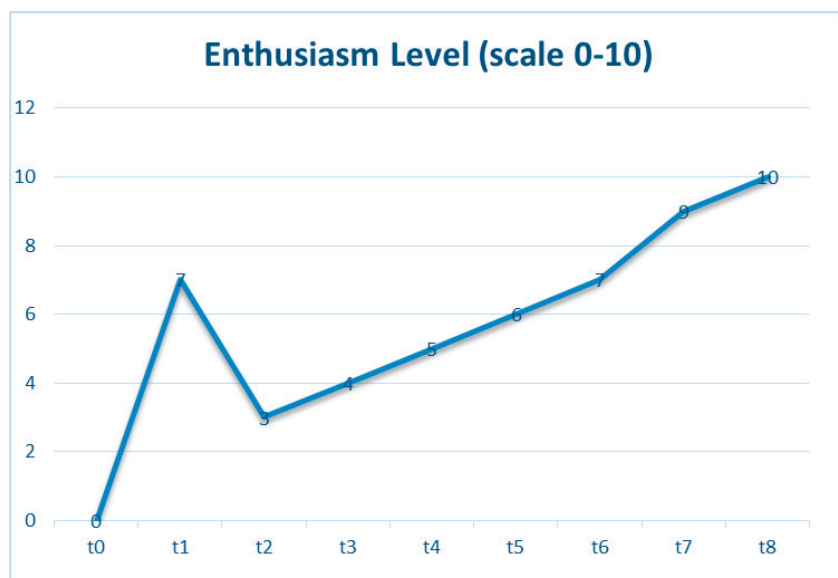
It appears useful to retrace the initiatives and the consequent “emotional moments” of the potential customer BEFORE visiting the Dealership.

Table 1. Customer Journey Map

Time	Enthusiasm Level (scale 0-10)	Potential customer moments
t0	0	He doesn't know the product, neither he had never in mind the idea of getting it
t1	7	One friend invites him to a rib trip during the summer holidays in Sardinia. The day is exciting, over the expectations. Baths in very hidden coves, reachable only by sea and very quiet even in August! Sun, wind and Sardinian sea experienced as VIP! A dream he had never thought about but that his friend had already realised since ages!
t2	3	Back home, by looking t the pictures, he starts thinking that he could have a rib with a 40 hp engine too considering also the fact the nautical license is not necessary!
t3	4	He search on the web,looking for information. He finds out the "Gommonauti" website (people fond of and owners of ribs) and he reads the experineces of these ribs passionates.
t4	5	He purchases the magazine "Il Gommone" ("The Rib") and it enjoys articles and pictures.. He discovers the character "Giovanni Bracco" , well known "Raider", that makes long trips alone around the Mediterranean sea and not only there, with his rib.
t5	6	He starts following Giovanni Bracco on social media, and also the rib passioante website and the brand of ribs he could like..
t6	7	His friend tells him there is the Genova Boat Show and invites him to go with him. They will be also Suzuki Italia guests because his friend is already a rib owner aith a suzuki engine and he has received the invitation to visit Genova Show.
t7	9	Visit at the Genova Boat Show, clear blue sky, fresh typical pasta with pesto and above all a wide variety of Boatd and ribs. thanks to the invitation, the potential customer makes also a test drive on the rib he likes, powered by a 40 hp. The test drive out in the sea is exciting, the engine pushes hard despite it's only 40 hp and moreover the technician explains that one day with that rib can cost around 20 euro of fuel! The potential customer speaks also with a staff of the Rib manufacturer but the dealer of his area is not there, however he receives the contacts and leaves his data.
t8	10	Saturday morning, after having browsed the catalogues for the last time, he passes to the action, by going to the nearest Dealer.

The potential customer Enthusiasm Curve will be then the following:

Table 2. *The Customer Enthusiasm curve*



It is clear that from the moment “t0” to the moment “t1”, the potential customer visualises suddenly a dream he has never evaluated before.

Right after the incoming idea, the enthusiasm curve, that accompanies the customer process of getting closer to a purchase, presents a peek at the time t1, that is the moment of the “intuition” of an idea that has never come across before.

This peek will be defined the peek “ON/OFF”, that is when the idea starts to be in the mind of the potential customer. The moment “ON/OFF” is pure emotion.

From the time “t2” onwards, the potential customer will look for information and other data in order to consolidate the idea by building up a mental process of confirmations; this phase will be defined “consolidation”.

From “t2” the idea consolidation will take place through emotional involvement factors (for ex. Following the adventures of the raider Bracco, etc..) but especially by looking for rational confirmations that will ensure himself and the others (like the wife) about the goodness of the purchase, for example through the analysis of the low consumption, or that it is not necessary to have the driving license, the advantages of not being on the beach with other hundreds of people, etc...

The main tool through which the “consolidation” takes place is the web. The potential customer addresses all his queries to the web, in an independent way, at any time, in order to look for information and to find replies to his questions and doubts.

Regarding this matter, it is interesting to refer to a research run by Aol, media technology company, that has identified eight universal motivations called “Content Moment” that lead people to interact with different digital contents.



“Content Moments”, from the Research by Aol – Media Technology Company, conducted on 55.000 interactions at world level.

What do users look for on the web?

From the research it appears that the motivations that draw users to look for digital contents are the following :

the 24% inspiration (Inspire), the 21% replies or suggestions (Find), the 20% a touching content to relax or improve his/her mood (Feel Good), the 12% information to be updated (Update Socially), the 11% an evasion moment or a break (Entertain), the 5% interesting point of views and updates (Be in the know), the 4% learn something new and be a part of a community (Connect), the 3% help or deepening (Comfort).

Going back to our case, the potential customer of a rib, during his phase of consolidation, will be brought from several motivations to the act of the content research, from looking for replies and suggestions to inquiries related to his new possible purchase (“Find”), to emotional contents, to live again the real experience of being on a rib (“Feel Good”), taking a break (“Entertain”), to subscribe to a forum to ask directly About experiences and share point of views with the rib passionate (“Connect”).

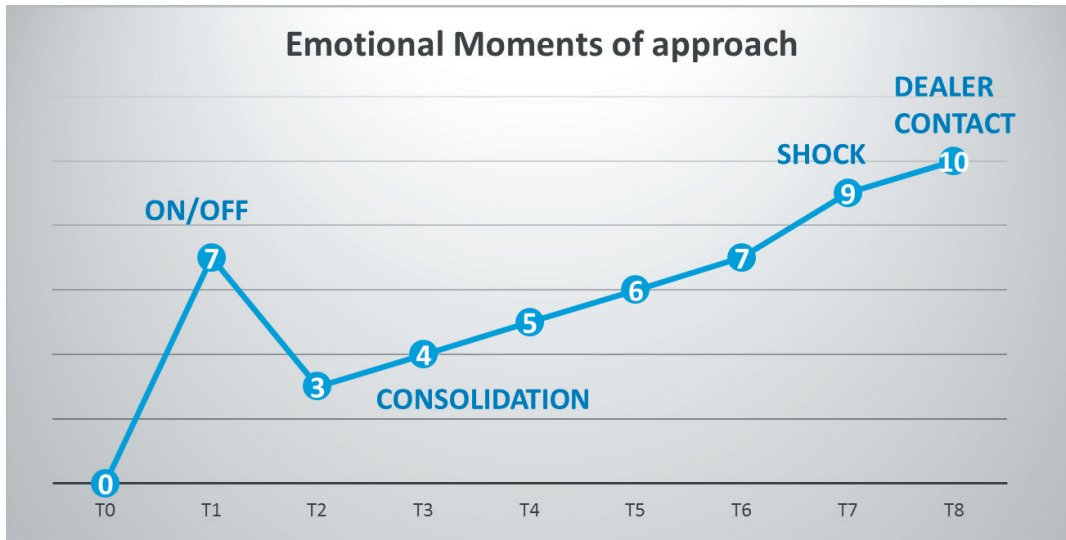
In this phase, a company that has intercepted the potential customer in the moment of “ON/OFF”, can evaluate which information and further stimuli suggest in order to support him in his process of approaching and elaborating the purchase, keeping into consideration his behavior on the web, due to the factors identified by the research.

By knowing his motivations to use the web, in this phase of “consolidation”, the company will have to act consequently, in order to supply useful replies and adequate contents, in line with the objective of leading the potential customer to the end of his consolidation phase, to reach the Dealership.

In this phase it is very important to be able to supply to the potential user a further emotional “thrill”, to avoid that the process of consolidation will stop.

In this case the trip on the rib at the Genova Show is a further thrill that will probably bring the potential customer to go to the Dealership.

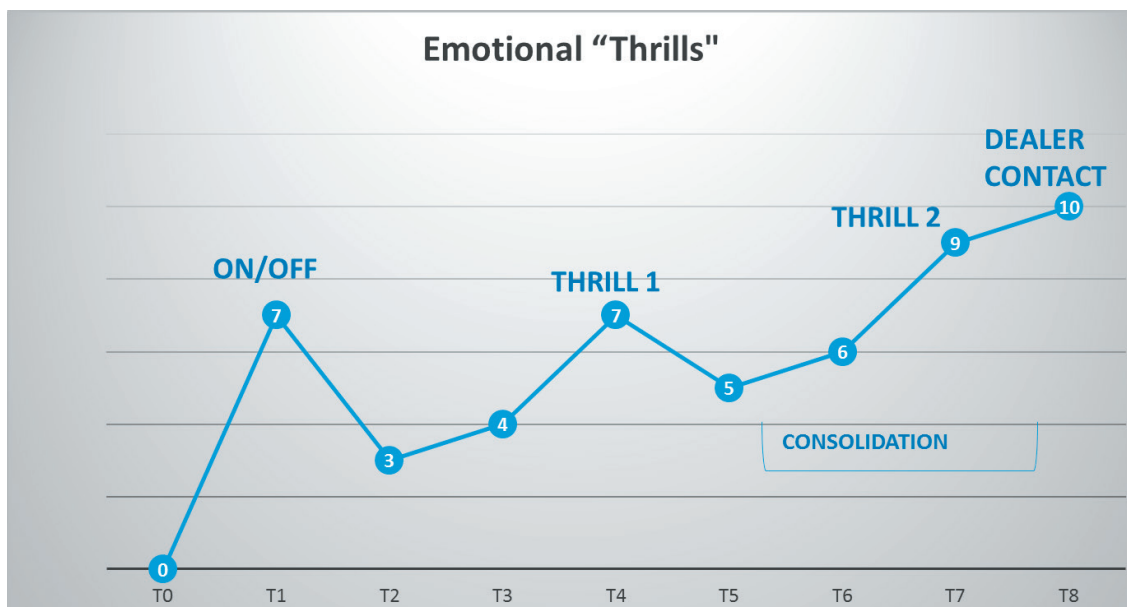
Tabella 3. *Emotional moments of approach*



5.c The “thrills” plan.

An effective activity of “Customer Journey Map” should allow the company to intercept the possible behaviours of the potential customer in order to provide further “thrills”, or touch points, to accelerate the process of approach, thus ensuring not to lose the customer in the delicate phase of “consolidation” in which rational element can occur to constitute a reason of abandoning the idea or to postpone the purchase.

Table 4. *The Emotional Thrills*



5.d The Salesman state of mind.

It appears interesting now to run through the state of mind of the salesman of the dealership. He has been going to work for 10 years in the same dealership of Suzuki Outboard engines, boats and ribs.

His enthusiasm curve starts from the average of his last year and follows the same period of the Customer’s, it means also that the Genova Show week is included.

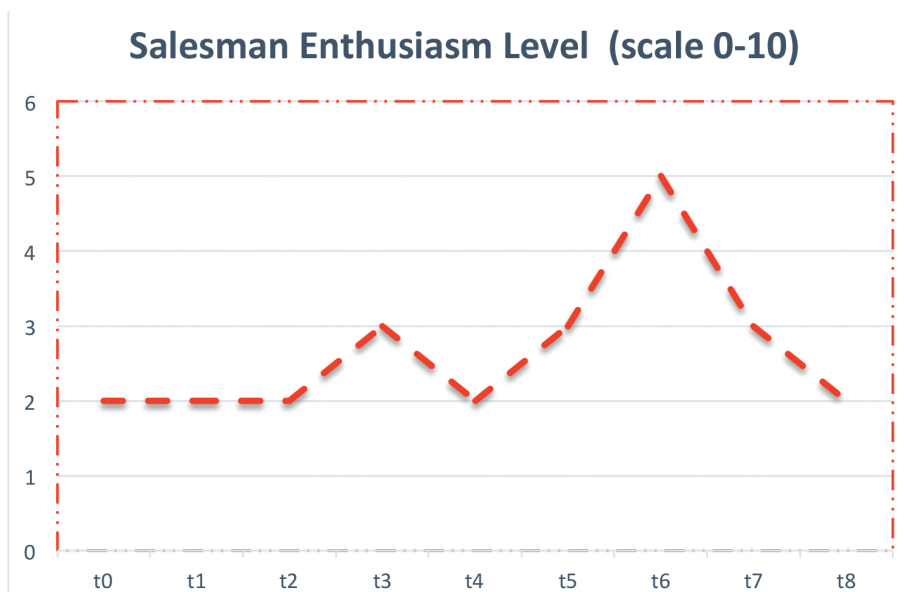
Hereafter the salesman “moments”:

Table 5. The Emotional steps of the salesman

Time	Enthusiasm Level (scale 0-10)	Salesman Moments
t0	2	Last year average
t1	2	Average day
t2	2	Day without particular news. As usual...
t3	3	thanked the salesman for updating the website
t4	2	Average day
t5	3	Preparation to go to Genova Boat Show
t6	5	Genova Boat Show: collection of several interesting contacts and the salesman saw also dream boats.. Moreover by talking with colleauges the salesman grasped some good hints to develop the chartering activity.
t7	3	Average day and some emails to start working on the charter project.
t8	2	Average day

The Salesman Enthusiasm Curve will then be the following:

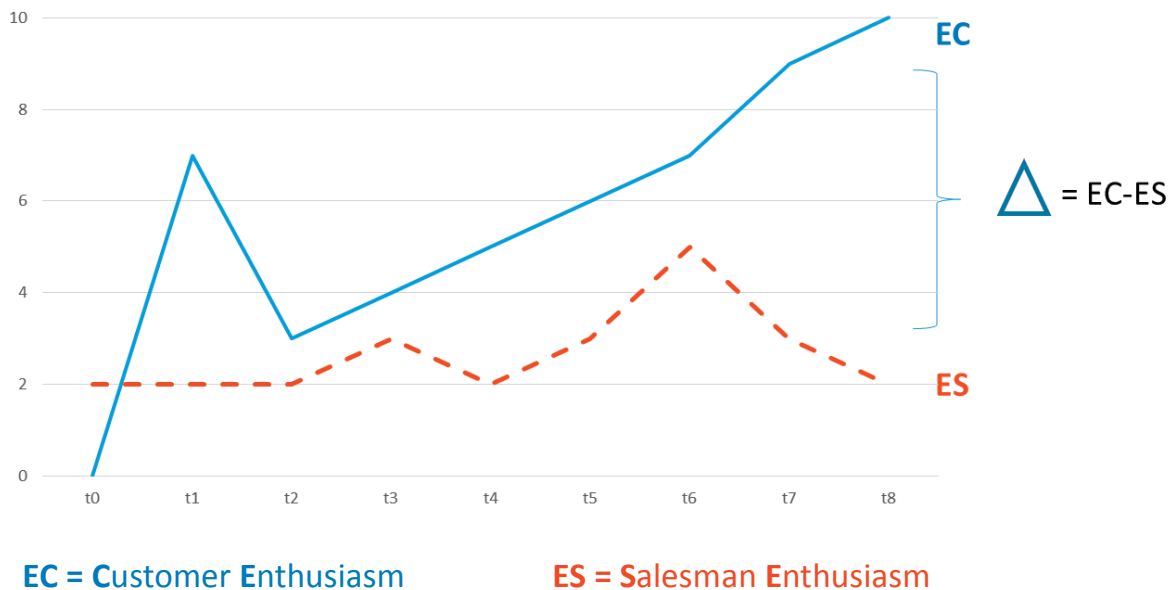
Tabella 5. Salesman Enthusiasm Level



The meeting between Salesman and customer will happen at the time “t8”, very different emotional moment one from the other.

As consequence the curves of Enthusiasm of both of them are compared by showing them on the same graph:

Table 6. Le curve d’Entusiasmo di potenziale cliente e venditore ed il loro gap



The less it will be limited the gap between the level of enthusiasm of the salesman and potential customer, the more the final result of the meeting between them will be successful.

Going back to the concept of “mirroring” that neurosciences teach by speaking of “customer approach”, in order to make the technique of “mirroring” working, we cannot miss the states of mind of the “Actors” of the negotiation: the Customer, particularly motivated, excited by the idea of taking care of his new dream, he has been thinking about for weeks, and the salesman, at the place of work, with worries and rather passive attitude, due to the unavoidable effect of the routine that finishes to affect every kind of job; even plane pilots that work on the route Milano – Maldive and are obliged to make one week off before leaving are often complaining because they get bored...!

However, in the meeting between salesman and potential customer, there is also the possibility that other “Actors” will take part and imply further interactions.

5.e Other actors of the decision process

The potential customer goes to the dealership together with his wife.

The wife is a determining factor in the decisional process of some expensive goods.

It is possible to expect two main possible reactions of the wife, two different approaches to take into account:

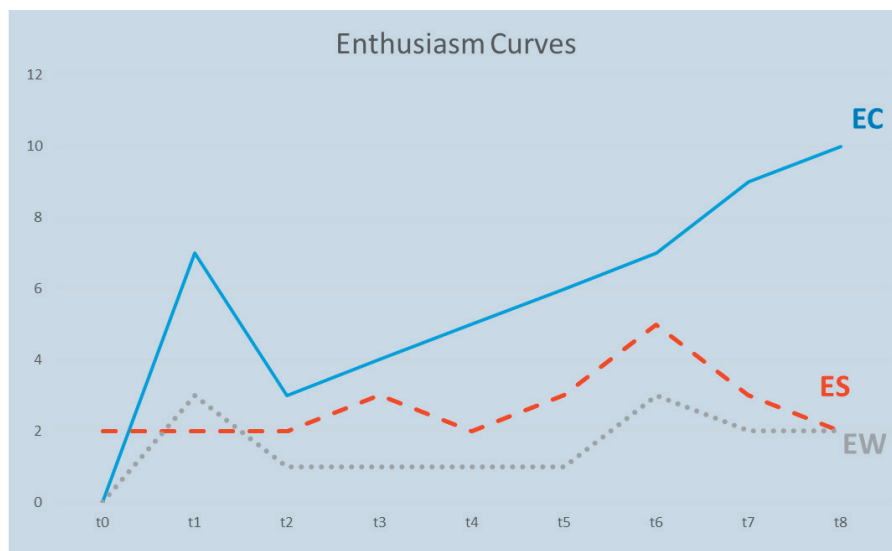
Cooperative Approach: The couple doesn't have economical problems at all and the purchase does not affect the family balance sheet in any case.

The wife knows that the rib is the umpteenth toy that the husband will purchase and that he will not pay particular attention on it later on.

- Hostile approach and/or fake indifference

In this case the wife shows herself not enthusiast, the perception is clear in the face movements and in the not participation to the discussion. Her main thoughts, not expressed loudly, are addressed to purchases that she reckons more important for the house, such as renewing the kitchen for example, or nice holidays far away but the eventual purchase of the rib might cause the failure of her projects, clearly not fully shared with her husband.

Table 8. Different Enthusiasm curves to be compared



EC = Customer Enthusiasm **ES = Salesman Enthusiasm** **EW = Customer's Wife Enthusiasm**

The graph takes into consideration a rather hostile wife, whose attitude is not particularly enthusiast, except during the day dedicated to the Genova Show, after the test drive...

The Salesman will have then two different situations to face:

- α) The particularly enthusiast potential customer, with whom trying to establish empathy to make the "mirroring" and make the potential customer feel understood, at ease and motivated to buy a rib,
- β) Whilst the wife that, both from the body language and from the face expressions, will provide opposite messages to the involving atmosphere and the passion for the rib that the salesman should share with the potential customer.

The salesman will focus on the potential customer, but he will not forget the wife, he will have to keep an eye on her.

The salesman will try to touch the most suitable topics with the customer in order to establish a connection thus gaining his trust by leading the discussion accordingly.

When the salesman will have the perception that the potential customer is satisfied of the information received and of the overall talk, and/or he will have the feeling that the wife is going to be more and more intolerant thus affecting also the husband, the salesman will try to play some “cards” in order to stimulate the wife’s interest, by mentioning the wide space of the seats, for example, or of the lockers where to place clothes and towels and he will ask if the couple has got sons, mainly to turn the discussion on the safety on board, fundamental especially in case of a family.

Based on the kind of interaction of the wife and how much the potential customer will take her opinion into account in the discussion, the salesman will quickly try to understand which other topic to mention...

As anticipated, after four months of observation, the salesman will participate to a training course where all aspects mentioned up to here will be taken into account and he will “train” about “mirroring” and paying attention to the several stimuli and hints offered by the potential customer and by whom will come with him.

In the meantime, some modifications will be done to the showroom (layout and thematic areas...) and an individual “coaching” will be run for the owner.

8. Managerial Implications

Clarified the different level of Enthusiasm between the potential customer and the salesman, here after some suggestions to minimise this “gap”, to make the salesman be ready to deal with the potential customer.

1.1 *Individual preparation of the salesman*

Motivational Music → before arriving at work, the salesman should make the effort not think about problems, deadlines and personal and family matters, but he should concentrate on a more positive attitude, also through a selection of songs that make him feel more motivated and successful.

It does not exist a common list, suitable for everyone, but it must be a personal research.

The trip from home to the place of work can be the right moment to dedicate.

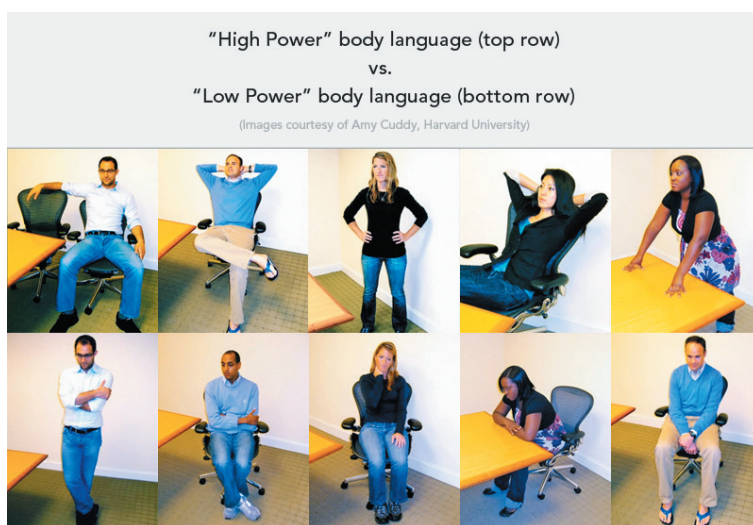
“Power poses” → the psychologist Amy Cuddy, lecturer at Harvard, introduced the theory of the “Power Poses”, i.e. that some “power” positions of the body, can influence positively the approach and then the final result of the interactions among several people.

The assumption is that if our body language is able to be “read” and influences then

who is around us and interacts with us, why cannot these poses have an effect on us too?

Amy Cuddy made researches in this direction in order to prove it.

In the case of our salesman then, some exercises of “Power poses” can be useful to start the day and face the potential customers.



The owner → The beginning of the working day should be articulated in some moments that could influence sharply the motivation and performance of the salesman. From the greetings to the micro and macro objectives of the day...

A greeting with a different positive and energetic tone, would surely conquer the people around.

Beside the greetings, the owner will have to start the day by saying what has to be done, by distinguishing between simple jobs and longer term projects, more challenging.

Working place → (postazione di lavoro). Besides the activities and jobs that the salesman will have to do in the dealership and/or workshop, the salesman will have his own place (desk and pc) where at one point he will come bring the customer.

A pleasant working place, lightened with sun light and with some possibilities of personalising the space by the salesman, it will allow him to be more positive.

In literature there is a shared agreement on reckoning that the “wellbeing of an organization comes from a group of elements, among which the organization atmosphere has got an important role. It means the mood, the level of morale and the intensity of the sentiment of belonging, affection and goodwill among employees. (Mullins, 2005)

As first priority, working in an adequately tidy and positive place is helpful in generating the right atmosphere.

The confusion, poor hygiene, the artificial light, the not adequate heating system, will end with affecting negatively the mood, motivation and then performance of the workers.

So, as starting point, from the owner point of view, it will be important to study how to make the working place comfortable and pleasant for the workers.

Path to purchase → As second point, but equally important, it appears to prepare the showroom to welcome the customer.

Look at the showroom not as the place where daily several kind of activities take place, from the administration, to the spare parts warehouse, etc.. but be in the shoes of the external visitor that will not have a second opportunity to record a first impression of the show room.

The objective is then to imagine the purchase experience of the potential customer and forecast what could help the potential customer to feel empathic and reassured about the possible purchase he will make.

A well studied showroom layout, will help also the salesman to bring the customer “hand in hand” to a certain path and establish in this way the empathy that suggests the “mirroring”.

To go back to a practical example, let's go back to the salesman of the Outboard engine and boats Dealership.

The showroom will have to help the potential customer to recall the sensations that have led him to deepen the information he needs to buy a boat or a rib.

His initiative surely comes from a suggestion, from a stimulus that can certainly be connected to a particular event where the so-called “ON / OFF” occurred.

For this reason, recreating some suggestions can help the salesman to more easily establish a relationship with the potential customer.

A solution that we would like to adopt in some showrooms to be considered as a “pilot project” is for example the use of fragrances diffusers to stimulate the olfactory memory of salt and natural light to have the feeling of being “ outside and not closed in a shed

A big videowall with pictures of boat trips, sea, sunshine, water slides, splashes, smiles, ... Hanging images of boat life scenes, where you can show the Dealer and his staff ... so the potential customer also realises through the PoS material that the people of the Dealership share his passion and they are prepared on the subject he is interested in ...

All what has been mentioned above, can help the potential customer to feel at ease with the environment, even WITHOUT the involvement of the Salesman.

Instead, we step now to the point where the salesman greets and enters the stage.

By placing some questions, the salesman will try to understand the type of customer and his expectations and needs. After doing so, he can move to the shop area where he knows he can “convince” the customer to be in the right place.

For this reason, within the “ideal” layout we should also identify some areas.

8.2 The show room

Emotional area: it is the area where people are welcomed. This area must represent the Dealer, it is his business card; it must be emotional and remarkable ... the potential customer must remain positively surprised and by looking around he should record subliminally feelings, impressions and elements ... It's a mechanism we all do when we're in contact with new environments and / or people trying to capture elements even before collecting some fundamental ones, such as a dialogue with a person, etc.

Fishing Area: If the Customer mentions the fishing, the Salesman will move to an area dedicated to Fishing, or showing a real fishing boat, or, in case of absence of the latter, there will be images and, above all, technical equipment that will remind the customer to the idea of being in the right place to receive answers to his questions.

Technical Area: if the Salesman has identified a customer who likes to show his technical skills, from how the engine works, to different devices, then the Salesman can lead the potential customer to this area where the Salesman's skills will be further supported by a “cut engine” that visually explains the engine functioning, rather than a dashboard with various devices available to meet even the most pretentious engineers ...

Refreshment Area:

When the discussion is already good and there is apparently enough empathy, the Salesman, pretending to make an offhand, not premeditated decision, but brought by the pleasure of doing it, proposes to the potential customer to move to a different

area where to uncork a good prosecco together ... or another drink, according to the time of the day.

The gesture of offering something to drink is surely unexpected for this kind of customer, however if the purchase will be successful, why do not invest in a prosecco and surprise the customer then?

This kind of customer care is common in Brands such as Louis or Tiffany; the level of expenditure justifies these considerations, and should be even more likely to be for those who are about to buy a boat or a rib to be paid thousands of Euros.

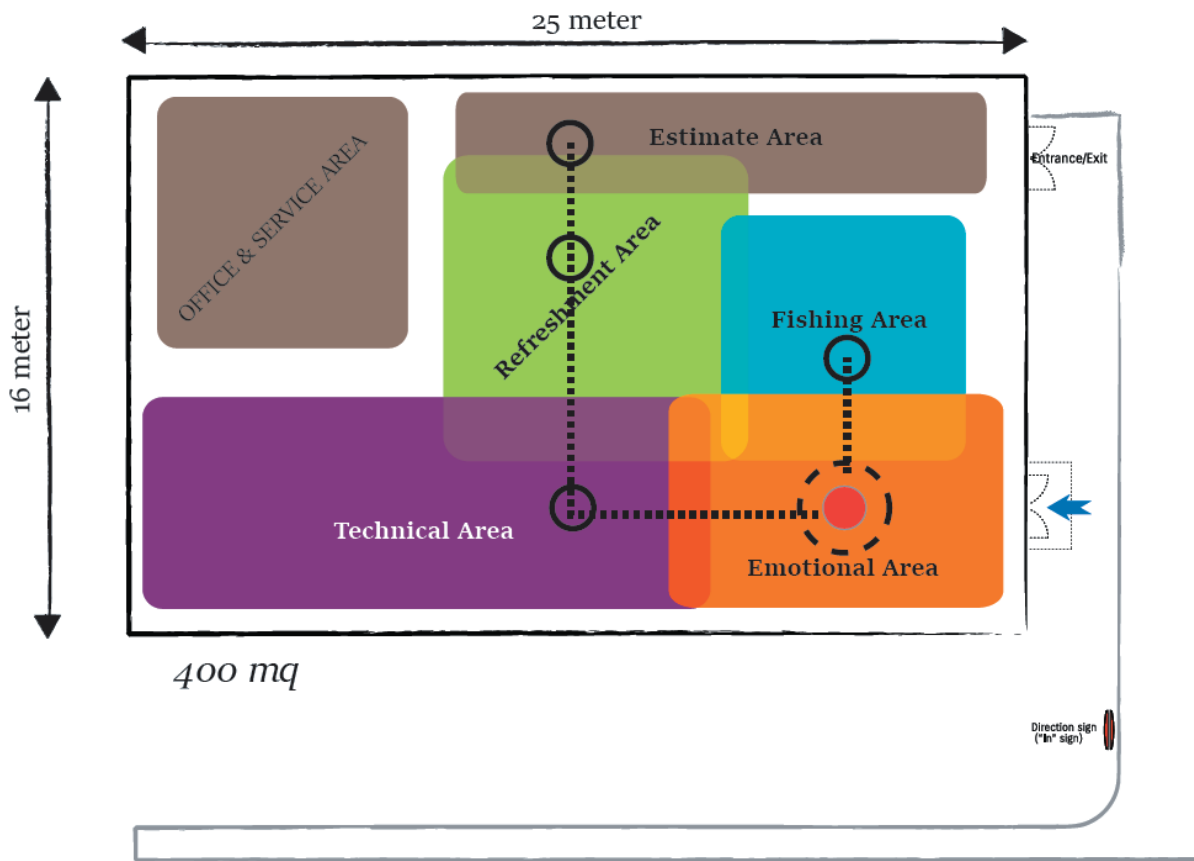
This area will be located not far from the desk where the salesman will be able to make a quotation.

Quotation Area: after having drunk a glass of prosecco and maybe had two appetizers, the Salesman proposes to sit at the desk in order to deliver the catalogue and possibly leave some more information on the price and accessories of interest of the potential customer.

Salesman and potential customer will sit then at the desk, thus the final phase of the negotiation will come to the end with a quotation that will be given to the potential customer and if possible, the Dealer will propose a further appointment to test the boat in the water, not necessarily in a place close to the Dealership...

The occasion of the boat test drive will constitute a further “thrill” on the potential customer if the salesman will understand that there are good possibilities that the meeting will become a sale.

Table 9. New layout of the showroom



However, going back to the salesman day:

Employer Closing Message → even before closing the dealership in the evening, the Employer greets the salesman by making a small report of how the day went and, if possible, pointing out the positive points of the day. The Employer will finally greet the staff with a smile.

End of the day:

Chill out music As in the morning we suggest the motivational music, at the end of the day, before going home, we recommend relaxing music that helps to separate the several thoughts of the working day and focus on family at home.

9. Findings

After having observed and interviewed twenty customers in the first period, than made the salesman training and showroom modification, other twenty customers have been observed and interviewed.

Although statistically the number is not particularly relevant, however the experiment

aims to make an investigation about the behavioural effects of the changes rather than looking for a quantitative standardisation, that can be a further step of the research. The results are showing that the enthusiasm and expectations of the customers “before” the actions have increased for a total of eight people out of twenty, whilst “after” the actions, the result has improved for eleven potential customers out of twenty.

Another interesting data is the average level of satisfaction and enthusiasm that was 6,8 (from 1 to 10) before entering the show room and 6,75 “after” the shoe room visit. The results of the “before” and “after” the visits are significantly better, in fact they pass from 6,55 before entering the show room and 7,1 after visiting it.

Table. 10. Potential customers enthusiasm evaluation before and after the actions.

Enthusiasm Level 0-10

Potential customer	Before Actions			After actions		
	Before visiting	After visiting	%	before visiting	After visiting	%
customer 1	6	7	+16,7	6	6	+0,0
Customer 2	7	6	-14,3	9	8	-11,1
customer 3	5	6	+20,0	6	6	+0,0
customer 4	6	7	+16,7	7	8	+14,3
customer 5	5	6	+20,0	7	7	+0,0
customer 6	8	7	-12,5	6	7	+16,7
customer 7	7	8	+14,3	5	6	+20,0
customer 8	6	6	+0,0	8	8	+0,0
customer 9	6	7	+16,7	7	8	+14,3
customer 10	7	7	+0,0	4	6	+50,0
customer 11	5	6	+20,0	7	7	+0,0
customer 12	8	6	-25,0	6	6	+0,0
customer 13	9	8	-11,1	5	6	+20,0
customer 14	6	6	+0,0	8	8	+0,0
customer 15	6	7	+16,7	8	9	+12,5
customer 16	7	6	-14,3	6	7	+16,7
customer 17	7	7	+0,0	5	6	+20,0
customer 18	8	7	-12,5	7	8	+14,3
customer 19	8	8	+0,0	8	8	+0,0
customer 20	9	7	-22,2	6	7	+16,7
Average	6,8	6,75		6,55	7,1	
N. of improved data			8			11

10. Conclusions

These results bring us to the conclusions that the attempts to make certain changes and exercises can have an impact on the final result of the negotiation or at least on the

impression that a salesman can give to a potential customer.

These suggestions are important for the sales force and should be consolidated in corporate culture, however, it was possible to verify that even the description of the approach of a potential customer, as illustrated above, has led to make further considerations by salesmen and more attention to look at themselves by outside in order to interpret their role more in line with the expectations of the potential customer. This kind of results can be achieved through training, but also by employer initiatives in stimulating the observation of the situations that take place in the store and that could have had a different conclusion, because the show room is the place where everything happens every day, it is the trench, the best place where to gather continuous case histories and where, thanks to our continuous efforts we want to turn Case histories in Best practices.

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