

Shawn Hill 0:02

Welcome to another episode of The Nice Job Podcast. I'm your host, Sean Hill. I'm sure as you downloaded this episode, you saw the length and you can expect a lot of information packed into this one. But first, let's figure out who our guest is today.

Curt Kempton 0:18

Hi, I'm Curt Kempton.

Shawn 0:20

Kurt Kempton, one of my favorite friends from responsibility to Kurt, I know you can share a lot of information. But what do you want to get into in this episode?

Curt 0:29

Today, I want to talk to you about the sales outline for non sleazy salesman.

Shawn 0:34

Whoa, whoa, whoa, whoa, oh, that is going to be extra helpful. Stick around at the end of the conversation for some key takeaways and a special offer on a nice job. Without further ado, here's my conversation with Kirk Kempton. If you're listening for the very first time, guess what, you're in the right spot, this is where you want to be. And a common phrase we have here on the nice job podcast is notepad episodes, ones where you're going to have the pen and paper. I know some of you listen, while driving something Listen, while work. This is we're going to loop back around and get that notepad active because I have a feeling this one in particular is going to be a signature notepad episode. And it's because the expert that we have joining us today I can go out and say it, I think is almost universally known as a good guy in very, very a lot of different circumstances, right? You know, the way he handles business, who he is, as a person, things like that. It's always a pleasure to talk to him. And I feel like I brought him up enough. Please welcome the founder and CEO of responsive in its Mr. Kurt, Captain Kurt, always a pleasure to get a chance to talk with you.

Curt 1:37

Thank you, Shawn. It's always awesome to be with you too.

Shawn 1:41

And here on the podcast, we like to explore a lot of different topics, trying to get people at different stages of their business and things like that. And we're gonna talk about today is sales. I know sometimes when you say that, there's a reaction across the board, it could be good, bad or indifferent, we want to kind of explore through there. But before we officially dive into the water, so right now we're just kind of tiptoeing the diving board here. I want to ask them a little bit of I don't see your background, I want to go all the way back to you know, kind of the very beginning. What I really want to like to focus in on if you have this, you know, at the top of your head here is, was there a moment during your business career, where you felt kind of comfortable? Of like, I think, to almost, I have some conclusions, I hesitate to say, I know, because you're always evolving, always learning. But was there a point where you kind of felt

that your confidence may be outweighed your anxiety? Is there a moment in time or a part of your career that you can identify when, when that switch happened?

Curt 2:40

Well, it's such a business, such a spectrum I can think of, I can think of like three aha moments, okay, for aha moments that just came to my mind that we're all sort of spaced out, where I'm like, in this moment for this thing. I'm doing it, it's working. I, like I've got to keep working on this plan. Okay, fine, I just thought of another one. The thing is, is that like, I'll tell you, the first aha moment that I really had, was when my customers like very early on, had called and responded to one of my flyers, this is like, like four or five days, and I'd put out flier after flier after flier. And someone called on my flier, this number that I had just bought specifically for this window cleaning business. And they like, asked to buy our services. And I remember they're talking to me, like I was a business. And that never happened before. And I remember thinking, Oh, my gosh, keep putting those flyers out this works. And then, of course, probably hundreds of times after that. There's those little moments where you're like, I thought I was doing the right thing. And I actually was there. I had moments of confidence. They're like the rocket fuel that makes up for all those moments of like, Well, that didn't work.

Shawn 4:04

And as you gone on, you said you had a couple of moments and I know more probably springing to your mind now we got up to five but one in particular that I've heard you speak on a couple of times is almost the relationship with sales and I use those words kind of strategically because as I mentioned top of the show sometimes when you bring up that topic you bring up that you know that tool that that tactic things like that, is there's almost always a polarizing sort of reaction, or the very least is that some people feel they're very concrete and what their feelings are and then sometimes when you talk to them they've never actually explored why. What was your first introduction to sales so to speak, right, like well, what when did you kind of look into it and I guess formed that first opinion?

Curt 4:51

Well, first I was sold to, you know, for years as a kid and as a young adult. I was sold to so many times by people who are good salesmen, but I was sold to a few times by people who were bad salesmen. And at the huge convention, I shared an experience about the Kirby vacuum cleaner coming into my house and almost tearing my marriage apart. We could go into that if we want. But that was what always stood out to me as Don't be that guy. Don't be that salesperson. And in trying to be true to that, I ended up really having some colossal failures, by not sorting my customer, well, not sorting my business. Well, that's sort of my family. Well, I did, I did a lot of very bad things. Now I have recovered from that. And the moment that I can say, I'm looking back on the first time I ever gave packages to someone, I had always tried to undersell people because I didn't want to come across as manipulative or anything like that. So I put together good, better and best. And the first time I ever put a package in front of someone, which is sort of a rarity that this would happen. But it just happened that the first person chose the Premium Package. And I remember thinking, Why didn't I tell him to buy that I didn't manipulate him into that. He literally wanted to buy my window cleaning with the house washed with the tracks and

the screens. And the walkways pressure washed. And I remember thinking, when I put that on there, it was almost like I didn't think it would ever actually buy it. So that moment for me was a very growing moment when I realized that there are people who want to be served way higher than I'm giving them credit for.

Shawn 6:35

So you talked about serving your customers, because there's the adage that you shouldn't be selling, you should be giving options to buy, so to speak, right, that you're not trying to make something that doesn't fit, you're trying to make sure that it's very clear that there's probably an option for this particular buyer. And I think a lot of people that are hesitant to or don't like calling themselves a salesman or any you know, that sort of narrative it comes down to is they never want to feel like they're pushing, but they understand that their KPIs. And some of those things are really judged on how much they are closing in booking new things. So that kind of internal push and pull. But one of the things you started to identify is sorry, go ahead. If I cut you off there.

Curt 7:19

I don't mean to cut you off, but not even KPIs isn't your business, your business's ability to serve your customer is judged based on what you can sell? I mean, if a business has the cure to cancer, and is unsuccessful in selling to even one person, wouldn't you call that business a failure? Right. Like?

Shawn 7:42

Yeah, I mean, I think if they didn't end up getting the product out, then yes, right. But I feel like they did it at a loss. And there's a greater good than their success.

Curt 7:51

Okay. Okay, that's fair enough. That's fair enough. I mean, the business owners we deal with need to make a profit because they're, their kids keep trying to eat meals every day. But for our situation, no matter how good your services and how, how much heart you have in it. If you mean, I would challenge anybody listening to this podcast, can you see a scenario where your sales are zero, and you're serving your customer? And I think that universally the answer to that question is, is that no, you didn't serve your customer. And of course, you didn't serve your business either. So the word salesman has a stigma, I, I invented responsive, and because of that stigma, to be honest, I needed it. Because I have so much emotional baggage attached to the word salesman, that I needed the system to do the selling, and not me. I've grown a lot since then. And that's, that's great. But you know, when I do still love, and I cherish the fact that we've created a system that allows people and this is what I'm hoping to talk about today is sort of how to get people out of their shell by just doing the right thing a few times, and realizing that, oh, my gosh, the more I do the right thing, the more I realize that sales is actually my key to be able to reach the world in a meaningful way. It's the way your message gets out there. And some people might say that's marketing. That's true, but sales and marketing combined. Those are that's the microphone and the speakers,

Shawn 9:23

You know, yeah. And I'm actually a big proponent of your sales team in your marketing teams actually running a bit differently. I feel like kind of combining them into one entity. You end up getting bad marketers and ineffective salesmen. You can get results from it. There's plenty of companies that get results from it. But if you really want to stoke creativity, and you really want to have you know, like a passion you know, base at serving your clients is you really got to judge marketing and sales on two different tracks. That's a whole different episode. Maybe later in season three, we'll dive into that whole thing. Or if you ever see me as a guest on a podcast, that's usually an avenue I end up going down. But you talk about kind of, you know, overcoming that stigma and kind of realizing it. And he talked about, like getting someone out of their shell and in that case, you're talking about yourself and your team. Correct? Not that, not the customer.

Curt 10:11

Oh, right. Absolutely. In fact, the more I've gotten older, and the more I have become more of a D personality, if you if you know about the DISC profile, a D personality is someone who just wants to get it done. Like, let's get in this, let's talk about it. Let's not talk about it for forever. But let's just get to the meat and potatoes and get this done. The more I've sort of fallen into that sort of personality, which wasn't always the case. The more I've realized that there is a whole group of people out there who want you to sell to them, stop talking pitter patter around and stop doing, you know, saying things that make you feel better. Just sell me what I'm trying to buy from you. And, and that would have been a relevant. If you told me that 10 years ago that there are people like that, that would have been a complete revelation to me.

Shawn 11:00

So someone, someone carrying that statement might think of like, okay, well, then I need to target those people that want to be sold. But that's not exactly what you're saying, correct?

Curt 11:08

No, I would say that you need to be confident enough in your sales, that you understand that this person called and reached out to me to be sold, you need to lean into that. And you need to understand that there's a process. In fact, I would, I would say the six things that you need to do to make that process work fluidly to build yourself a system filled with integrity, filled with the honor that comes with what you're trying to put into the world and allow the person who wants to chit chat, push you back a little bit. But to be leaning into the fact that people are trying to buy from you stop trying to make it so hard for them, the whole like shut up and take my money situation. That is a very real thing. We talk ourselves out of sales, I would venture to say happens more often than not. But if you want to go through that list of six things, I'm more than happy to share with him a bullet point thing. And we can get a cut into any of them as you like.

Shawn 12:06

Yeah, we have some questions as we go through all kinds of jumps in, but I'd love for you to run through those bullet points. And it'll also give you an opportunity. Like I said, this is gonna be a

notepad episode. So this is the pen clicking time. So yeah, it's six, six steps or six points, how would you label it?

Curt 12:20

I would say that it's six chronological steps in the journey for your customer that need to be engineered and thought out.

Shawn 12:27

Okay, I like to start with one.

Curt 12:30

Let's just start with number one. Number one is the feeling that your cut your company conveys. The example I give people is that your words and your actions and the gut feeling in a customer, they may not be in alignment at all. Just give you an example. You go to a used car dealership and a guy walks out there. It's got this swagger and a gold chain swinging, right? And he's like, he's like, Hey, man, welcome to the Carlyle, what do you what are you looking for today? And you say I'm looking for a truck and he points out a car. That's rusty. He says, this is the peach you want to buy right here. She's a real sweet when you're gonna love it. Like, did he hear a word I said, and he said, That's a great car, I can clearly see there's rust on it. The words coming out of the mouth is I care about you, I'm going to help you get in the car, what do you want, and the gut feeling that the customer has does not follow it. So the feeling is going to happen no matter what if you don't engineer feelings about your company, a way your customer should feel they will still feel a certain way when they deal with you. Now, sometimes, you will get lucky and everything will fall into line and it'll work. But unless you take a little bit of time to figure out how I want my customer to feel when I am working with them. It will engineer itself. One other quick example is the answering machine, the answer machine that says, Your call is very important to us. We're sorry we missed you. Please leave a voicemail and we'll get back to you as soon as possible. The voicemail box at the bar you've called is now full, you know like you're saying Your call is important yet you didn't even answer the phone, then you say we'll call you right back and the mailbox is full I can clearly see you don't call back. That's a very common thing in the service business. The second thing

Shawn 14:16

I obviously make sense for that to be at the top chronologically because really the process can't even begin if you don't have a feeling identified right so it's almost,

Curt 14:25

the website introduces it the voicemail on your phone introduces it the way your technicians are seen when the customer is watching the technicians work at the other house the signage on your van or your cut trucks all of that stuff is creating a feeling and

Shawn 14:42

and I think even more so or not more so but like along those same lines is that there might be a high level of feeling but the exact thing so a lot of us a lot of the listeners of this podcast are

home service professionals. It might be the same, they might want the same result but there definitely is a different feeling between my windows being filthy and my Windows could use a little sprucing up, right? Like, we just moved in this house and this has like grime on it versus like the in-laws are coming. And I just want one less thing for them to complain about. That's two different feelings, even though they're looking for the same service, in a sense.

Curt 15:15

Now, to be clear to the customer, the way they fill in their gut, they get to mix their life's experience into it. So the feeling that someone has when they see your vehicle, on the road with no experience with you, you don't get to pick what was already, you know, like mother in law's coming to town and all that stuff. But if you're engineering your company to be like a feeling of relief, when someone sees my business, wow, that's a business that can take my pain away.

Shawn 15:45

And sometimes that can even begin with reviews that you may have. Other people are saying, yeah, that business took my pain away. And if you're looking for more reviews, obviously Nice job can help you out, get two to three times more reviews. And you also see the topics from a new topic Insights tool. So you can see exactly what your reviews are saying. But once you gather all the knowledge from reviews, and you really start putting Reputation Marketing to work, you start to see some benefits. And if you haven't used Nice job, you gotta get that nice job.com/podcast offer, sign up for a free trial there and get the free page widget and really start getting your reputation marketing started. But you're, you're saying pretty much that you have an ability to really construct or add to that feeling that they'll have

Curt 16:30

you have input on that feeling. And the way you engineer it is that you understand I want my customers to feel relief, oh, I finally found you. When you engineer that in, that's going to affect your phone scripts, it's going to affect the way that your vans are designed, it's gonna affect the way that you talk to your customer. If you know, that's what you want them to feel ahead of time, it's gonna change everything. But if you want them to feel like, wow, this is a very high end company, you're going to engineer things probably a little different than that. If you want them to feel like, wow, this is a great value. This is a value company. You know, you're gonna engineer it differently, even yet. So that's all like, step one is really, how do you want your customer to feel when they interact with your company, you won't be able to get it every time because there's going to be the influence from whatever their gut is. But you can only input what you can input into that. And you have a lot more control than you think you do. But if you don't know where you're starting from, you're never going to end there.

Shawn 17:36

And that's what it's all about. That time will almost eliminate you before you get there. Anyone that would have that feeling of oh, I feel like I'm pushing someone in there that you write from the top is hey, this is who we are. This is the feeling that we're pushing out. And some people right off the bat might establish right? That's not exactly I'm looking for, you know, and before it even gets too far. So the second point on the list here.

Curt 17:53

Yeah. So the second point would be basically understanding what your promise is to the customer. What am I promising, and keep in mind, that sleazy snake oil salespeople, they also can engineer a feeling. And they also can engineer a promise. But these are the two things that are like, we'll call it the bait on the hook. Whatever you promise your customer, it can be much more powerful than you think it is. Many people out there said I promise to house wash your house, I promise to steam clean your carpets. Well, the problem with that promise is that everybody in your industry is also promising that there's no way to stand out. And there is no way to get a higher price because you're a commodity. So I encourage people to think about what is your promise that is special? And what is the promise that your competitors dare not make? Because the better your promises. And the easier it is to keep the more than likely it is that your competitors will want to keep it or make that promise to

Shawn 19:03

you and you're just setting yourself up for further success that way of you know, it kind of almost you're making a promise. But it's also kind of packing, paving the pathway for the goal as well. Yep,

Curt 19:12

We promise that we are the friendliest company you will ever have the service in your home. Now, if you make that promise that you're the friendliest company. That's cool. That's actually a real that's a real that's a way to stand out for sure. But now the question is, can you just do it with a smile? Because there's a lot of companies that aren't the friendliest that come and smile. You have to engineer that now too. So there's a feeling you want them to feel so that you don't want them to feel cheerful? You might want them to understand that the promise is that we are the friendliest. Now, the friendliest cleaner that ever showed up the house will probably have cookies, or they will probably have some sort of uniform that just looks friendly and warm and inviting, they probably won't be like the, the, you know, real formal looking uniforms that sometimes you see with these, like, like high end like Butler type companies. Yeah. But if you've engineered into the scripts and into the ever understanding of the promises, now you get to have this really fun part where you color in all the lines, and you get to engineer what that looks like. So the promise needs to probably go along the same lines as the feeling that would make sense that they should be coherent. But just like the feeling, if you don't make a special promise, then you're just blending into the noise of all the other companies that are just a commodity, we will clean your carpets the best. And honestly, for me to step out and get excited about being a salesperson, I need to be able to tell you about something that makes me different from everyone else. Because if I'm just going to talk, I mean, I can only talk about clean carpets for so long. You know, and it's only gonna go so far with the customer.

Shawn 21:07

And it's funny how all these things end up aligning, because the two sides of a second is part of the reason in Nice job, we've made the shift from reputation management to Reputation Marketing and evolving and going forward with it was kind of those first two points like feeling

and promise. And it's not so much to collect that back. But using that feedback actually instills in what you're doing. Because that last point you mentioned of, you know, your your team that's out there, you know, doing the sales part of the process and is trying to, you know, close jobs, and you know, book tickets, all those things, the more that they kind of can believe and the more they can feel they're kind of a part of it and having an impact on it. And that they're kind of backing it up just by their presence. You know, that's when you really start to see that success sort of hum. And that's something you don't want to keep your finger on the pulse of as well. Yeah. So yeah, so we're on a three, right, we're halfway through this far. Yeah.

Curt 21:58

So the next part is sort of how you lock in your integrity and separate yourself now, from the slimy sales guy, the one that gave you the bad feelings, the one that has basically ruined your whole sales life. It's called integrity. I'm going to use the word accountability interchangeably here. So what I mean by that is, is that I promised you I was gonna be the friendliest cleaning company you ever had in your house. And if I'm not, then this, this is how I hold myself accountable. See, the thing about honesty is that everyone says that they're honest. Most people think that they're honest. But they allow the cloudiness of just trust me, I'm honest. Right. And they allow things to be left open to interpretation. Now, this is where your marketing and your sales will both have to sing the same song. This is where if you want to be able to walk in with the confidence of a salesperson, who is really truly an honest salesperson, your accountability is what you're telling people, the honesty's what is proven, you don't have to tell someone you're honest. You tell them that you're accountable. So when you go in and you have all these, like negative feelings about salespeople, that all goes away, when you say, I will be doing this or else you will be getting your cleaning for free. Or, another one for free, too. It's the war on time or you don't pay a dime. I know you've probably heard that slogan from various companies throughout the years. It's a very common slogan only if you're willing to do it. But it's a common slogan amongst the biggest and most market share holding companies. And the reason is because competitors are always afraid to make that promise. But the ones you want to stand out that are bold, they'll engineer their accountability and as well. So we've engineered a feeling. We've engineered a promise. And then we engineer in accountability. And when we're doing our sales pitch, the sales pitch isn't about, we're so great. We're the best we've been in business this long. We have these special uniforms, we have these special trucks, you should see our deionized facility. Our water is so pure and clean. And the thing is the customer is going Oui oui, oui, oui, oui, you know, like this is this is very, very much about you, isn't it? Where accountability is about them. It's about saying this business only exists because we can prove to you that we're different. Or else we care about your experience. And we engineered your parachute cord into this whole experience. If you don't like this or that about the experience. Here's how you'll do it. I had one company walk in there. There are painters. They walked in and the sales guy came in. He handed me an envelope and it was addressed to the BBB, the Better Business Bureau, that kind of the new mafia after the government got rid of the Better Business Bureau and other people capitalized on it. But he had a tweet he said It's already stamped and is already addressed. Let's get started. And I remember thinking, Whoa, wow, that was bold. And it was awesome. He knew that from the moment we started that he's like this, this is not my company, but they will tell me, you can tell me to them. You can tell them good things, you don't



say bad things. But first, you need to have this in your hands. And now we can get started. And that to me said, this is going to be a good experience. He engineered this experience to bring in my opinion that he can't stop anymore. So anyway, yeah,

Shawn 25:39

yeah. And we talked, we talked about a lot of, you know, having that kind of built in, we call a little bit of confidence. But obviously, we talk about, you know, kind of the feedback loop and you know, what you want to build from the reputation standpoint. But I would assume someone as that is going to be, you know, selling your service, your product, things like that, knowing that that's a fundamental principle of the company, again, it's probably a little more confident and start to really break down, that it feels like there's a push or a pull, because again, you're just kind of putting the option out there, you know, we're, we're going to be on time, or if not, like, as you put it out there, you know, you're gonna get it all back. And so I like that, especially because it's not, at no point, can you promise something or pitch something that you can't deliver, because, you know, you have to call a shot, you know, you can't be can't be the guy that only hits base hits, and then point so you're gonna hit a home run, right? Like, you got to kind of know it within yourself as well, well, carnivores gonna you're gonna sports reference,

Curt 26:40

a sports guy, and I can, I can follow to a certain degree. One thing I want to point out too, is that when you hold yourself accountable, you stand apart from the slime, Enos and sleaziness of people who are in it for the transaction. Here's the thing that's really important to point out the difference between a good and honest salesperson, the difference between a salesperson who is using their opportunity to make a megaphone of who they are out into the world, that is for good. And the one who is just trying to make a buck is that one cares about the transaction. And the other one cares about the relationship, when you care about the transaction, or the commission payout or getting the deal done right now, so that I can go on and move to the next person, that person is they are creating a feeling they are projecting out into the world, the difference is, is that it comes from the wrong place. And therefore it's not going to build the business that they want. In the long term. It's not going to attract the customer base they're looking for. And most importantly, it's going to make it so that the people who are having an experience with you are now they now think salespeople are bad. And that's exactly the category I fell into.

Shawn 27:48

Yeah, when I used to write scripts, this is the moment where you put parenthesis hold for applause. So I'm going to hold for a moment let people get their claps out, get their underline, as we transition on to, to the fourth point here on the list.

Curt 27:59

So the fourth point is contrast. So a classy person does not talk about other people, they talk about themselves. They talk about ideas, a classy person is not going to go into a sales pitch, contrasting themselves against the competition in a way that's like, you know, you don't want to deal with so and so they're not that good at this such a such, you know, go with me because I'm

so great. Again, that's a tactic of a snake oil salesman, that's an attack of somebody who cares about the transaction, not the relationship. Contrast, as people who use responsibility, probably have heard a million times, I'm sorry, this is an important part to me. But this is where you provide solutions to your customer in a way that you can bring up the competition in a nice and classy way. But you're still talking about yourself. And by that I mean, you know, hey, Mr. Hill, I'm so glad you had me over to give you a proposal today, you asked me to clean your carpets and I've gone around I've given you a quote, I put a quote together, you should know that there's three different packages that we offer. One package is the ability for you to just get your carpet steam cleaned, we'll vacuum everything first, and then steam cleaning. It's great, you're gonna love it. This is basically what our competition does. And you'll notice that our prices are pretty close to the competition at \$400 to clean your whole house. Now we do have a package that we really like here at responsive bid or you know, Acme carpet cleaning. And that is the deluxe package. People love this one because we actually go through and we clean off all your baseboards as we're going after we're done with the extraction we go through and we rake and stand everything up and we apply a carpet protectant on it. So you'll end up with clean baseboards, your carpets won't accept stains the same way. It's an absolutely amazing feature that we do. Now, the last thing we do is it's our premium. This one is where we go all out. Basically, we have a three year spot return guarantee. We'll take a picture of everything when we're done. We actually do this special spot removal. And it's going to be really important for you Mr. Hill, because, you know, you have that dog that went in that room and went in this room and left these marks. Well, most carpet cleaning companies, when they come through, they just do what I showed you in the basic package. And those spots, they tend to return. But when you use our service, we can guarantee that those spots will never ever, ever come back. And as a result, our customers with pets really love our premium package. So I would highly recommend that. But it comes with everything in the deluxe package, plus the spot free guarantee. Now when I'm done talking about that, I was able to bring up my competition, I was able to bring up what makes me special, and I was able to bring up your needs and allow you to have enough things to research and understand that you're now free to make a decision. Because the thing is, is that when a customer calls you and you give them an ultimatum, Mr. Hill, it'll be \$500 to do business with me, yes or no? What do you choose? I'd like to know, what do you want to do? What do you want? Yes, no, yes. No, no. See, the problem with that is that you choke a customer out. And you basically give them one data point on a graph, and you go, now tell me what to do. And what are they supposed to do with that? So when I give some contrast, and I say, you can get me this much and be this happy, you can pay me this much, it'd be that happy, which is what most people do. Or you can give me a ton of money. And I can make you happy. And when the customer hears that and they're attaching the value to the price. They go from being in research mode, which is plotting dots on the graph to figure out how happy they'll be and how much it'll cost. They move into a whole new mode, which is to say, well, that's the one that spoke to me, I have that much money in the bank. I think I would like to be that happy. And I would like to give you that much money, I wouldn't put me out. And there's nothing slimy about it. Because the customer is the one closing themselves. They're the one that's moved flipped from, I wonder how much it would cost to I'm ready to go forward. Now. I call that a self closing job. But a customer might not close right at the last moment. But from this point forward, Shawn, when I talk to you as a customer, if I'm going to follow up with you, which is my next point. When

I follow up now we have something to talk about on a value scale, not a price scale. It's you know, hey, I know you were looking at that deluxe package. And I know that you're really interested in baseboards, we have something to talk about. Not yes, no, this yes, no stuff doesn't work.

Shawn 32:25

So I would love to have one element within there. Because when I hear that kind of break down, it makes total sense. And I do feel a little bit kind of the comfort and assurance kind of relaxing going through, though I do think of what tends to happen in some interesting stuff like that is perhaps a client coming in with almost like misinformation. Right? So they're coming in with kind of the wrong opinion, like, oh, well, I heard using that sort of thing doesn't actually do anything. How do you kind of still remain? You know, within that contrast, you're still able to do that, without kind of getting sucked into something? I guess I'm kind of getting lost in the question of it here. But it's, I kind of wonder how you deal with misinformation at this? Yeah, yeah, well,

Curt 33:12

Actually, the best part about contrast is that when you come in, the person heard that one room is \$10 for carpet cleaning. And this could be the \$9 House wash, or it could be the \$10 Mo and blow you know, I mean, every industry has it. They're all they're all wrong. They're all misinformation. But the thing about offering someone three different packages, which is not too many, and not too few, it's kind of that sweet spot. What happens is that if someone comes in thinking that it should be \$10 per room, as soon as I share my premium package with you, which is what I should be leading with, the customer is going to have a bit of a reset. First of all, they were never interested in the Premium Package. But if you shared your basic package with them right away, they would have been interested in that either when they realized that, you know, I could get my whole house done for \$50 and you're trying to sell me one for 400 You know, so they were gonna say no to 400. So if you share the 601st and you start coming down, there's something called price anchoring and that helps bring the customer into the reality of how it's really going to be. Now let's go back for a second because remember I told you these are in the right order. These are in the order which you need to build them. If my promise and my honesty are congruent, which they should be. Then when I go to share my contrast, if someone is telling me well I heard that spot free guarantees don't work. I already have accountability built in along with my promise. So if my promise is that we are the stain free carpet cleaning company, we are the greatest stain removers in the whole. You know, I live in Arizona, where the greatest stain remover in the world is, you know, whatever it may be when that customer challenges me. I've already engineered it. Well, I'll tell you what, you don't think it's possible. This is an organic pet stain, I can remove it. If it was anger and death, then you're right. I probably couldn't. Here's my challenge to you, hire us to come out. Let us prove it to you just like we earned it. Everyone else did. Remember when I told you about how we're gonna hold ourselves accountable. Here's your ripcord pull the ripcord challenge me on this. And the cool part about that is that you're not attacking them, you're putting yourself on the podium, which is what any good salesperson would do.

Shawn 35:36

Yeah, that's, that's spectacular. And so you kind of allude to a follow up coming next.

Curt 35:41

So follow up is what a responsible, genuine and reputable company or person would do. Here's what I mean, when I used to give quotes, I would, I was so nervous that they'd feel pressure from me that I would hand them a quote, they were as they're looking at it, I would run back to my truck and leave. Like, I'd be like, Alright, let me read anything by and I would, I would run off. And I was doing it because I thought it was serving the customer to not feel pressure, because I felt that before. And I knew what it was like, and I knew I hated it. So I was shielding my customer from that pressure. Well, as a result, I looked like a fly by night company, I looked like someone that they couldn't count on something they couldn't ever if I never talked to them again, man, when they're trying to earn my business, they don't talk to me what's going to happen if we have a problem, that they're not gonna return phone call, they're not going to ever get back to me, I have, I'm dead in the water. So the follow up game is to say, we are so reputable, that we will not leave you alone until you're getting the experience you want. So that experience they want may unfortunately be another company. Let's use that as an example. Let's say I come in to give you the greatest sales pitch. They really wanted it, they got a quote from the \$99 guy, what do they call it the bucket Bob or the chuck in a truck or whatever you call them? And, they bought hook line and sinker, I'm gonna go with the guy that's 1/5 of your price. And you say to them? Well, you know, maybe you followed up with him a couple times. And then they finally say, you know, Shawn, I'm sorry, I'm just I'm not gonna go with you. Because I just in all good contests. I can't have you help wash my house for \$400. When I've got a guy for \$99, he's going to do it. And he says, you know, ma'am, you look like you know, I'm sure you're making a great decision, I would have loved to serve you. We have not figured out how to match that price. Otherwise I would. But I'll tell you this, if you ever need anything, I'm here for you. People said all the time, we should hang out sometime, and then they never follow up. So as a person who is a genuine person, when I say we should know if you ever need anything, let me know. Here's the one that people tell me is magic. This is magical. You reach out two weeks later. And you say hello, Mr. So and so this is Shawn. I'm just reaching out because as you remember, a couple of weeks ago, I gave you a quote. And I know you went in another direction. But I just want to reach out and I was thinking about you wanting to make sure everything went well. If there's anything I can do to help, please let me know. Well, what do we know about the \$99 guy, we know that the \$99 guy has more work than he can handle, he doesn't have enough profit to grow his business. So as a result, he's walking around with a big anchor around his neck. So as this is his business owner who's not operating profitably can't grow their business can't scale and get people to do the work but has more work than they can handle. A few things are gonna happen. Number one, they are going to do shoddy work, because they've got to get from place to place. Number two, they won't make it to every single place, they will stop coming. Number three, they will not answer their phone. So when they don't show up and you call them and text them. They aren't their phone is blowing up, they can't handle it. And so what happens, the customer has a negative experience, maybe in workmanship, maybe in where they showed up or not. Maybe it's just that when they did show up, they did a fine job, except for the fact that ruined all their plants. When you reach out. You're sending a very razor sharp message that cannot be misunderstood. You're saying to them, I

didn't on your business, and I still communicated with you. Wow, I couldn't get this other guy to communicate. Number two, I'm so confident in my work that I'm standing right here. Even though You embarrassed me when you said that I was too expensive. I still came here. I still showed up to let you know that. Even though I know you said that I was too expensive. I'm still here if you need me. Well now the embarrassment of them having to reach out to have you come out and fix the workmanship or show up when the guy that did said he's gonna do it for cheaper didn't show up. Now all of a sudden you're in the driver's seat. Now the customer is saying, Shawn, thank you so much for reaching out. I love this guy. He's stood me up three different times. He never came out. I think you're right, we probably should undo this with you. You now have one more loyal customer. This is someone who already said no, by the way, this is someone you thought you'd never see again. And by the way, had you not reached out, it is too embarrassing to reach back out. All of us humans are just trying to make it through life without looking dumb. And this person does not want to call and say, Hey, Shawn, remember when I told you you're super expensive? Well, I'm ready to eat crow now. Now, they're much more likely to go to Google and find someone else and try and start over. It's just it saves face, people want to save face. So follow up can mean a lot of different things throughout the customer journey. I just gave you one example of a declined customer. And I tell you, that is a magical one. But we're also so busy that none of us follow up. But we're sending a message to our customer, we should hang out sometime and then we walk away.

Shawn 40:51

And I appreciate using the example almost as a declining customer because one thing that does kind of address directly the people that you know might feel it salesy come naggy or you know, kind of overbearing, but then also solidifies even more of that chronological order. Right, because of the following comms, we've already established 1234. You know, you've talked about the feeling of total promise, you have your accountability, you've shown how you're separate and maybe now they're dealing with the separate, they heard the contrast, and they heard all that. But now they're seeing it and they realize like that, oh no. And then just lifting that, you know, responsibility from them to follow up and just be present. And again, not not in a pushy barge back to the front of the line. It's just you know, it's like when you're at the school dance, and you go dance with one person is a little bit too aggressive. And you see the guy over the corner, you're like, oh, maybe that person like that's, that's what I pictured in my mind when you talk about falling up. The declining thing is that they're in a situation now and all you're providing is maybe even just that lifeline. But now it gives you an opportunity to prove yourself and maybe go from a lifeline to a lifetime. Oh, yeah. So I was inspired by the way they were late, you know, paid whatever I forgot already. 61 currently it's bringing on?

Curt 42:04

Well, let me just say the last thing about follow up that you just really hit on is that you can now talk in your follow up about contrast, you can talk about your integrity and your accountability, you can talk about your promise, you can reiterate the feeling. The reason they're in this specific order is because some people will learn by hearing you. Other people will learn through other experiences. And you're there for all of it. So that is that as follow up in a nutshell is allowing the person to come to your promise that speaks to them when it's on their timetable and not and not

losing an entire thanksgiving meal of crumbs that have fallen to the floor over the years. You own all that. That's all yours to take. You just have to be there for it. So anyway, last thing number six is gratification. How is your customer going to feel gratified along the way? Now, in this world, when we talk about gratification, we're usually talking about instant gratification. I'll give you an example. Someone goes to your website, and they do a Google search for we've been using carpet cleaning a lot. Let's do a different one. Let's just say lawn care. I'm looking for someone to do lawn care for me. So they pull up a thing, website, Google search, and there's six lawn care companies right there to select from. And they click on the first one. And they go in and they read the website. And it talks about how many years they've been in business and has a really snazzy logo. And it talks about what areas of the state they serve, and it talks about all these things that are not helpful for my research. Do you do this type of lawn care? Do you? How much would it cost me? You know, the questions that someone actually has. Now again, at eight o'clock at night, they see a phone number there, but they're not calling it eight o'clock at night because they know you're not going to answer. So they go back to the Google Search that's called bouncing. So they bounce from your website. And they go on to the next one. And surprise, surprise, the next one does the same exact thing. And then they go back and they look at the next one. And they bounce and they keep bouncing back and forth. Until finally they find the Google search from thumbtack or home advisor that says get an instant quote now. Right? And that and they go to thumbtack, they go to HomeAdvisor. And it promises them what they actually want. Fill this short form out and you'll have an instant quote in your hands within 60 seconds or whatever, you know, whatever their promises, immediately. So now the customers like oh cool, someone gets me. Now all seven people whose websites have been visited already. Now they get to pay to give the customer the information that they were looking for that they could have just given for free just moments ago. That's sort of the first part I tell people if you're not going to participate in the research mode, you don't get to participate in Decision mode. So thumb tech is what sort of provides you the opportunity to participate in this portion of the research mode. But gratification can be different from instant gratification. Instant gratification is it's eight o'clock at night. I want to get it right now. And as all responsibility is listening, go, Hey, I know what he's talking about. He's talking about responses. Actually, what I'm talking about is the customer journey. And I want to make sure that no one misunderstands that just because the response was guy was talking about instant quotes, I want you to make sure you understand what I'm talking about is saying, as I engineered my feeling, my promise, the honesty, slash accountability, as I talked about the contrast, as I am speaking in my follow ups, at what points Am I giving the customer these moments of when these moments when they go, I was looking for this, and I got it, I was looking for that, and I got it, well, I didn't even know I was looking for that. And I got it. Those little gratifying moments are sort of the breadcrumbs that get you from point A to point B, which is, point A is I don't know who you are. And point B is the customer saying I would never use another lawn care company other than this one. Now, that doesn't mean that you're not going to make mistakes along the way, and that you might have customers' moments of dissatisfaction. However, if you've properly thought about your feelings all the way from point A to point B, and how you're engineering it, you will be putting in all these little moments of like, it's almost like saving your game. Remember, when I used to play video games, when I was a kid, there was a little Nintendo Yetta blowing like the cartridges. And you'd be playing Mike Tyson's Punch Out, and you get so far in the game. And then you

would die. And you would start back at the beginning. And then you will be playing like Excitebike, or any of the I remember, there's all these other games that used to play back in the day on the Nintendo. And if you saved your game,

Shawn 47:00

clarify my Texas punch out, you just get knocked out you don't die. Yeah, just see, you just recovered you a little woozy.

Curt 47:07

Oh, Shawn, that is so true. But it's been a long time. But if you don't save your game, then when you're regenerated, you start at the beginning, these moments of gratification are like these little saves all along the way, we can come back to here, we can at least start back here. And what I would encourage you to do is to make these little milestones that allow your customer I remember when I was watching our I was reading the book, the E Myth that talks about gamifying your business and how all your employees should feel like they're in the middle of a game that never ends. But they always have a scoreboard to watch and have fun. And I remember getting the end of that section and thinking what a stupid, stupid chapter I got to the end of it. And they never told me how to make a game like that. I don't think that doesn't make sense to me. What am I supposed to do with that? And I felt like I got to the end. And I was robbed. Because I could tell it was important. They were talking about a hotel that had engineered this game. But I still couldn't identify what that game would look like in my business. Well, I'm here to tell you right now, that these moments of gratification are the same feeling as scoring a point. It's the same feeling as hitting a three pointer, right, Shawn? In the basket. Yeah, there you go. It's these moments where the customer goes, I just won, I can't go to another company and start over again. Because I'm not going to have this win, these points aren't going to count with other companies. And those wins might look like these moments of the customer getting something that they didn't even know they wanted, and might be a moment where they feel like oh, they threw something in for free that I wasn't expecting, because we got this far into the journey. It may be the fact that when you come and you come to clean the thing, you promise that you're going to do something that was really important to them. And then you did it. And you still exceeded their expectations. This stuff does not happen by accident, that does not have my accent at all. All of these things that I've talked about all six of these items are things that you build in. And the coolest part of our business is that each and every one of these steps are things that you are going to be able to design and no one can copy it because you invented it. And if it's really good, it will speak to your customer. And it will make your competitors scared.

Shawn 49:35

If you can do that last year, go ahead. Sorry, go ahead. No, that's it. I'll say on that last point of gratification or as you're describing it, because we talk a lot about you know, that moment of peak happiness obviously when that will start you know, kind of when you're going to get the reference or something like that. And I always thought of those moments talking about as almost like the base camps along the way to that moment of peak happiness, right. And so if you're climbing a mountain, you get to base camps, you might look at another mountain but

you're very rarely if you're to base camp stop, you're looking at other mountain and like, oh, we should have did that one, you're either gonna, you're gonna maybe evaluate where you are, but you're gonna be looking towards that ultimate goal. And if you're able to give enough base camps along the way, then majority, if not, everybody's gonna make it to that moment of peak happiness. And that's, you know, the ultimate, the pinnacle. So I really love the imagery that you brought that whole thing of, you know, there's certain ways you can get those key moments. But the big impactful journeys are going to kind of get you that big win at the end. But ultimately, it's going to kind of keep people involved and invested. And that's what you're, you're making loyal customers. And that's when you're really getting no true integrity and accountability. And you really are describing your you know, your contract, you live up to your promises. And ultimately, they're getting that feeling that made it in the beginning but they kind of want it at the end. Kurt, that was absolutely spectacular. There's so much. We talked a little bit to start recording and a couple other avenues that I would love to explore. But there's been so much in this one, I almost don't want to overload so might have to, you would like to schedule this for part two a bit later. I did, though, want to ask you the question that I'm asking everyone here in season three, kind of a question for all guests. So we kind of can compare and contrast answers, things like that. And feel free to answer this either on the personal side or the business side, take it anywhere you want to go. But our question for season three is, what do you embrace more challenges or opportunities?

Curt 51:28

Well, let me run a couple examples. In my mind, real quick challenges would be an example of an employee that you're counting on leaving and you gotta figure out how to fill that role. opportunities as maybe meeting somebody that could open up a bunch of doors for me. Yeah, I gotta be honest, I wish I was the kind of person that embraces the challenges more. I see a challenge is something that starts negative and can turn positive. But man, I like things just going straight to positive. If I'm, if I'm being completely honest, I'll just be in the camp of I worship the people not don't worship anybody. But I wish I was the kind of person that could embrace the challenges as much as I embrace the opportunities.

Shawn 52:16

Yeah, I love that answer. And again, it's, it's the cause of there's almost not a wrong answer. But, you know, I also appreciate you kind of breaking it down in your head and stuff like that, because part of the reason I want to ask this question throughout the seasons, we have so many experts coming from different backgrounds, different experiences, almost different, you know, emotional bravado, from time to time in diving into that question. Because I don't think there's anyone that's like, well, I fear challenges, or like, I get nervous opportunities, but I feel like there's always deep down, you know, there's one you might embrace more, while still feeling confident enough to take on either. So I appreciate that honest response.

Curt 52:48

Yeah, I think that you're 100%, right, like a challenge. I've seen it so many times, there's no way I could even come up with a count on it. Challenges almost always end up being better once you've gotten through it. Where opportunities don't always pan out, you know, like, oh, I met



someone who could really open a bunch of doors for me, oh, they're just blowing smoke. It didn't happen, you know. So. So actually, as I'm thinking more about battle, like maybe I am that cool guy that embraces challenges more, because they say that necessity is the mother of invention. And I think that that's what challenges do, they crop up, they make your life a little bit miserable for a moment, you have to sit down and calculate what I'm going to do next. And you're basically guaranteed to conquer and be at the top of the mountain, where an opportunity could be pie in the sky, that maybe won't turn into anything. But you know, very rarely I don't think you have to get many opportunities I've ever lost.

Shawn 53:49

Blessing, you get into love, risk reward as well. Right? So you know, someone's with challenges, there might be a higher reward, but the risk is there. And so the reason I like to phrase the question I thought about how specifically phrase is embrace more is that there's some people that, you know, let's just go from the personality standpoint out of business, that love extreme sports or love, you know, bungee jumping skydiving, because they want that risk reward, right? They're not just happy with a fantastic steak dinner, they need just a little bit more with it. And so they're probably embracing more of the challenges they went to the next level because other people embrace opportunities, which can come with challenges. So like, hey, you know, an opportunity to be my own boss. That's why I started my own business full of challenges, right, like, definitely a hard thing to do. But you know, the opportunity at the end, you know, they're embracing the fact that they're gonna get this, this and this at the bare minimum. And then the challenge is, can they get, you know, the rest of the alphabet there? So yeah, I appreciate that. That response is current and everything that you kind of shared today. If someone's listening to this podcast, wants to, you know, connect with you and learn more about you, anything like that, where should we direct them towards?

Curt 54:53

Probably the easiest way would be to just go to [responsibly.com](https://responsibly.com). There's a chat feature there. If you want to connect with me there. If I can tell you my email address it's Curt with a C aeronwy spelled with a K. But it's C U R T at synthesize, which is basically an impossible word to spell. SYMPHOSIZ e.com. That's the company that makes responsive bids. Viola is like what is synthesized? Well, it's a terrible word. But anyway, feel free to email me or you can just go to [responsive.id.com](https://responsive.id.com) send a chat and if you have a question, my team and I monitor that chat and you know, we can bump up against each other there and get in touch. But yeah, I love this industry. I love it. And any way I can serve, I'm always excited to do it.

Shawn 55:42

Awesome. Well, thank you for doing a little bit of service here today. Joining us on the Nice Job Podcast and all the information Curt shared, we'll have that down in the video description or if you're listening on the podcast you'll see in the episode, notes and description as well. But Curt, always a pleasure. I truly mean from the bottom of my heart, I always enjoy the conversation to have with you every single time I end up learning something new. So my sincere thanks and appreciative of your time today on the podcast.

Shawn 56:07

Absolutely. Thank you, Shawn.

Curt 56:09

I hope your notebook is as full as mine was after that conversation so much so I don't even know I could do a key takeaway that is a top three. I just want to relist the six points that Kurt brought up feeling promise integrity and accountability on interest follow up gratification. So much packed into this episode. And it just wouldn't feel right for me to try to to re sum all of it. But at the highest level, you know, you shouldn't have a bad feeling about selling if you're doing it the way Kirk kind of laid out and you're doing it in a way that is going to actually have it be a tool that benefits both sides of the relationship. You'll get rid of that sleazy stigma pretty quickly.

Shawn 56:59

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