

SALES TECHNIQUES CASE STUDY

The Peller Approach to Sales

Peller Estates Winery in Canada's Niagara region is a modern, progressive cellar door and restaurant facility. Its facilities are state-of-the-art and no expense has been spared in infrastructure, wine production and staff training. Training is undertaken at every level and a great deal of investment is made in management training to ensure they are skilled in recruitment.



The philosophy is to hire “*wine lovers who are passionate about what they like*” and sales result from a desire to convert others to their passion.

A full time wine educator ensures that product knowledge is always high. A Reward and Recognition Program, known as the “Gold Bottle Award” program involves three staff members being chosen each month to receive a gold pin (in the shape of a bottle) and an invitation to lunch with management. Staff are chosen through a combination of recommendations from management, other staff and customers. The success of the program and the general working environment are testament to the extremely low staff turnover rates – a rarity in the hospitality industry generally.

One of their keys to success lies in their sales approach. The cellar door has been thoughtfully divided into sections featuring wine and merchandise, all displayed professionally. The wine has been categorised into different price points around the room, reminiscent of a fine wine store. And staff have been trained to recognise the non-verbal cues that customers give as part of their sales strategy.

For example: a customer who picks up a bottle of wine in the \$70 price category and spends some time reading the labels might be quietly approached by a member of staff and invited to participate in a private tasting of that and similar wine in the Reserve tasting room upstairs.

At this point, if the customer is not really serious about that type of wine, they will decline the offer because their level of involvement (and knowledge) isn't high enough. Most of the time, however, the customer is keen and the resultant sales have exceeded all expectations.

The strategy is simple enough: Identify the “Mid to High Involvement” consumer and show you care enough about them and respect their level of knowledge by offering an experience that meets their expectations. During the experience, connect with their values and treat them as someone special and they'll want to consolidate the occasion by making a purchase.