

# **Additional Sales Concept Utilized in a Pharmacy**

Case company Kalvolan Apteekki



Bachelor's thesis

Valkeakoski campus, International Business

Autumn 2019

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#### TIIVISTELMÄ

Tämän opinnäytetyön tavoitteena oli tutkia lisämyynnin teoriaa, sekä kartoittaa kuinka hyödyntää tätä apteekissa tapahtuvassa myyntityössä. Opinnäytetyön teoria osuus painottuu myynnin teoriaan ja esittelee lisämyynnin, hyvän myyjän ominaisuuksien sekä myyntiprosessin teoriaa. Ensimmäiset kappaleet taustoittavat opinnäytetyön käytännön osuutta syventyen apteekkitoiminnan eettisiin ohjeisiin sekä Suomen lainsäädäntöön, joka ohjaa apteekkitoimintaa.

Lopputyö tehtiin yhteistyössä Kalvolan Apteekin kanssa. Lopputyön aihe sekä teorian pääpainotus päätettiin yhdessä heidän kanssaan. Aiheeseen päädyttiin, sillä apteekin henkilökuntaa kiinnosti selvittää, kuinka myyntiä olisi mahdollista parantaa ottaen huomioon, että kyseinen apteekin asiakaskunta on rajallinen myymälän sijainnin vuoksi.

Lopputyön empiirisessä osassa tutkittiin lisämyyntiä käytännön työssä sekä kuinka apteekin henkilökunta voi parhaiten toteuttaa metodia myynnin ohella kiinnittäen huomiota lakisäädöksiin sekä erityisesti eettisiin ohjeisiin. Tutkimuksen päämääränä oli selvittää, saadaanko apteekkihenkilökunnan myyntiprosessia parannettua ja täten edistettyä lisämyynnin mahdollisuuksia.

Lopputuloksista selviää, että tutkimuksella ei saavutettu näkyviä muutoksia lisämyynnin määrässä. Tuloksista voidaan kuitenkin huomata parannusta myyntiprosessissa sekä asiakkaan kanssa keskustelussa.

**Avainsanat** lisämyynti, tarvekartoitus, myyntiprosessi, farmasia

**Sivut** 39 sivua, joista liitteitä 7 sivua

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ABSTRACT

The objective of this thesis was to research the concept of additional sales and study how this can best be implemented in a pharmacy setting. The theory segment of this thesis is concentrated on sales theory, this segment studied additional sales as a concept, salesmanship, and sales process. The first chapters lay the groundwork for the reflection of the thesis; describing the ethical code and legislation concerning the selling of pharmaceuticals in Finland.

The commissioner of this thesis is Kalvolan Apteekki located in Iittala, Finland. The topic of the thesis as well as the theoretical focus was agreed upon with the commissioner. The topic was chosen because the pharmacy was interested in studying how they could increase sales while being located in a rather small town.

The empirical part of this thesis studies additional sales concept in practice and how pharmacies can implement it into their practices while following the legislation and the ethical code. The study aimed to improve the pharmacy staffs' sales process thus improving the opportunities for additional sales.

The end results of the research did not reach noticeable changes in the amount of the additional sales made by the pharmacists. However, there was an improvement concerning the sales process.

**Keywords** Additional sales, needs assessment, sales process, pharmaceuticals

**Pages** 39 pages including appendices 7 pages

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## 1 INTRODUCTION

The subject of this thesis is to research the possibilities and effects additional sales can contribute to a pharmacy and how these can be accomplished. The theory utilized in the thesis is consisting of sales and marketing theory involving additional sales, the steps in the sales process and the qualities of a good salesperson.

The research chapter of this thesis studies the opinions and effects of additional sales concept utilization in Kalvola pharmacy. The research method used in this thesis is qualitative research, this will be conducted through e-mail surveys sent to the pharmacy employees. The employees will undergo a compact education briefing, which will consist of theory and example situations concerning the sales process and furthermore, focusing on additional sales and needs assessment. After the pharmacy staff has studied the materials, they should implement the theory to their daily work. There will be two separate surveys, first before the trial period and second after it describing their thoughts and experiences concerning additional sales in a pharmacy.

With this trial the author aims to test if the pharmaceutical staff is able to improve their sales and the customer experience in their pharmacy, by undergoing additional educating and if education in sales would overall be a good addition to their professional education.

This thesis aims to answer the questions:

What is the concept of additional sales and how to utilize this in a pharmacy setting?

An additional sales concept describes the salesperson offering the customer additional products or services which they did not specifically come to purchase. Additional sales concept as a whole is rather broad and consist of other terms and concepts such as ad-on sales, cross-selling and up-selling. This thesis will briefly explain the differences in these terms, but will however refer to all of them as a whole by the term additional sales.

The objective of this thesis is to research what is the concept of additional sales, what it means, and is it profitable for both parties or forceful selling technique. The thesis also studies the sales process as a whole and its steps as well as the pharmacy staff's customer service skills and expertise, and furthermore, how they are able to take the customer into account and perform a needs assessment for each individual customer. Moreover, the thesis contemplates the ethics of active selling in a pharmacy and the opinions of the staff when it comes to additional sales as a concept and do they consider it to be ethical or beneficial for the customer?

Pharmaceutical services in Finland are a fundamental part of social welfare and health services. This consists of the responsibility of developing these services as well as overseeing the preparations concerning the legislation of pharmaceuticals. The overall objective of this is to guarantee and provide safe, effective, high quality and cost-effective pharmacotherapy for anyone who may need it. This is called rational pharmacotherapy; the availability and accessibility must be ensured in the distribution of pharmaceuticals. (Sosiaali- ja terveystieteiden ministeriö n.d.)

Pharmacy services are the most widely utilized health service in Finland. With over 60 million customer visits it radically bypasses the number of people visiting health centres. (Isoaho, 2016, 17.)

Not so long ago the job description for a pharmacist included the manufacturing of the pharmaceuticals and delivering them to customer. They were not there to explain any specific information about the products or to evaluate the customer's specific needs. The shift in the pharmacy operations began when the production of pharmaceuticals passed from the pharmacies to the pharmaceutical manufacturing industry. This led to a wide reformation of what the pharmacy staff's work assignments were. (Hakkarainen & Airaksinen 2001, 14)

A Pharmacist's job description is unlike any other seller's. A pharmacist's work is framed by ethics, instructions and legislations. The customer is dependent on the pharmacist's professionalism and knowledge. (Hakkarainen & Airaksinen 2001, 68)

The education pharmacists complete has traditionally focused very heavily on physics and understanding the chemical reactions on molecular and cellular levels. Pharmacists do indeed possess a great amount of technical knowledge yet the implementation of all this knowledge for day to day pharmaceutical counselling is not that simple. In said line of work it is crucial to also improve and study social interactions, too often pharmacists can unintentionally go into too much detail about the product in a conversation because of their knowledge of the subject lies in such a deep level. Pharmacists must change their focus from detailed pharmacology to treatment counselling-based interactions. (Hakkarainen & Airaksinen 2001, 17-18)

In Finland there has been a large-scale cooperation for improving pharmaceutical counseling in pharmacies since the early 1990's. The cooperation was launched by the World Health Organization's cooperative association EuroPharm Forum's campaign where the consumers were able to ask questions about the pharmaceuticals. Later in the year 2000 a larger and more coordinated four years long campaign took place, project TIPPA, where all the authorities, trade unions, and education units were involved. The project's objective was to impact the purposeful usage of medicines by

enhancing the pharmaceutical consultation in all pharmacies. (Hakkarainen & Airaksinen 2001, 27)

The commissioner for this thesis is Kalvolan Apteekki, which is a pharmacy located in Iittala, more specifically Kalvola. The pharmacy operates in a rather small town, which in turn means that marketing campaigns might not be the most effective way of growing business revenue. Kalvolan apteekki offers their customers versatile and comprehensive pharmacy services with strong expertise. (Kalvolan apteekki n.d.)

## 2 THEORY

### 2.1 Ethics and legislation in the sales of pharmaceuticals

The pharmacy operations in Finland are heavily monitored by the officials and there are many ethical and legal restrictions in the selling of pharmaceuticals.

#### 2.1.1 Ethical code

Pharmacy operations in Finland have a set of ethical guidelines compiled and approved by the Association of Finnish Pharmacies (AFP). These guidelines act as a base for what the Finnish pharmacy operations are built on and what they represent. The purpose of these commonly accepted guidelines is to provide guidance for pharmacy staff in decision making and daily ethical problem situations. These ethical guidelines are divided into ten paragraphs. (Apteekkariliitto n.d)

Ethical guidelines of Finnish pharmacy operations also give directions for additional sales through multiple mentions regarding aspects related to sales. The directions for this subject are that additional sales should be based on recommendations for the customer, since the guidelines emphasize good ethics as well as only selling for the customer's needs. (Apteekkariliitto n.d)

Ethical guidelines provided obligate pharmaceutical staff to work and act based on their knowledge and skills provided in their education as well as the experience gained and the customer's situation. The Pharmacy staff is required to act in the favor of the customer, placing the benefits of the customer ahead of their own. These directives must be followed even if they were not the most financially beneficial for the pharmacy. (Apteekkariliitto n.d)

The pharmaceutical professional must practice activities in their profession which are not in conflict with pharmacy's or other healthcare's commonly approved principles. The professional knowledge and skills are



the core of all pharmaceutical operations and the staff must act accordingly. The Pharmacy staff must never tempt or recommend customers to utilize drugs and other pharmaceuticals inappropriately. (Apteekkariliitto n.d)

The premise of the operations must always be the customer's needs which the pharmacy staff will aim to fill. The operations in pharmacies must be in line with other healthcare industries as well as be in favor of maintaining and promoting the professions integrity. (Apteekkariliitto n.d)

The Pharmacy staff is required to promote the proper and safe use of pharmaceuticals and prevent the intentional wrong use of them. Information provided about the pharmaceuticals by the pharmacy staff is required to be trustworthy, specific, comprehensible and sovereign. The staff is responsible for making sure that the customer comprehends the purpose of their medications as well as the risks, benefits and usage as well as possible, this furthermore ensures the continuing safe usage of the pharmaceuticals. The pharmaceutical staff are also forbidden to sell non-prescription medicines to those who are known to misuse them. (Apteekkariliitto n.d)

### 2.1.2 Medicines Act

The most significant law concerning pharmaceutical sales in Finland is the Finnish medicines act (395/1987). It is a part of Finnish legislation; the most prominent objective of this legislation act is to promote and uphold the safe and purposeful usage of the medicines sold in Finnish pharmacies as well as control the quality of these products. (Läkelaki 395/1987)

The most prominent law regarding pharmacy operations is the medicines act (395/1987). The purpose of this law is to maintain and promote the safety regarding pharmaceuticals and their expedient use and manufacturing in the country. This legislation act also covers the production of medicines and related products, their import to the country, and their retailing and other forms of distribution. (Läkelaki 395/1987)

The medicines act and its legislation concerning pharmacies largely effects the ethical codes mentioned before, the pharmacist is required to be in possession of a pharmacist's license. Other obligations for a pharmacy prescribed in the legislation is the responsibility to carry or obtain the medicines which their local consumers require. (Läkelaki 395/1987)

According to the Medicines act (395/1987) there must be a set number of employees in a pharmacy whom have graduated from a degree in pharmaceuticals. The law requires the pharmacist to mind that the pharmacy staff takes part in the required continued education. (Läkelaki 395/1987)

The Medicines act (395/1987) obligates the pharmaceutical staff to inform the customer about the pharmaceuticals. The pharmacy staff must make sure that the customer or the person to whom the medicine is for is fully aware of the correct and safe usage of the product to ensure a successful end result of the treatment. (Lääkelaki 395/1987)

The Medicines act (395/1987) permits the pharmacies the right to practice services for enhancing health and wellbeing as well as prevention of illnesses. The purpose of the practices must not be the unnecessary distribution of medicines. (Lääkelaki 395/1987)

## 2.2 Additional sales concept

Additional sales is a concept in which the vender sells an additional item to a buyer whom has purchased a main product or service. Additional sales can contribute a significant increase in profits and revenues to a company depending on the business. An additional sale is mainly initiated by the seller after the customer has decided on purchasing the main item. (Kenton 2018)

Targeting and performing additional sales to the existing customer-base is often the most efficient and cost-effective way of increasing profits. In its simplest form it is a standard sale accompanied by an additional product, however it has the potential to be much more. (Nortio 2016)

Actively driving for additional sales can often be what divides more successful companies from the rest. Nowadays the seller must more often be able to offer the customer products which fulfil their needs, the customers often appreciate the seller's recommendations in sales situations, especially when the customer is unsure or uneducated in the matter. (Kaakinen n.d.)

Majority of customers expects the seller to be educated and to have the expertise to grant the customer clear suggestions on which products would benefit them the most. This is when the seller must recognize the possibilities the situation holds for additional sales. Additional sales are largely based on the seller's ability to recognize and assess the customer's hidden needs and to fulfil them without the customer having to explicitly state them. (Kaakinen n.d.)

The idea of additional sales is often viewed as an unpleasant and forceful pushing of non-desired products, this is usually because of the poor execution. These unpleasant and poor sales experiences are most often because the additional sales item has nothing to do with the customer needs and can clearly be viewed as an attempt to up the sale even by a small amount. However, a well-performed additional sale situation can immensely affect the customer experience, potentially developing the

company's customer service and greatly impacting customer satisfaction. Furthermore, driving the sales situation on to additional sales can be the best possible way of customer service when done right, this procedure must be based on carefully listening to the customer and based on this leading to assessment of the needs which in turn lead to hidden needs the customer has. The sellers only job is not just selling but also acting as the customers advisor. (Kaakinen n.d.)

### 2.3 Additional sales in a pharmacy

Pharmacists are well-educated specialists in their field of business, they as sellers know that a great number of pharmaceuticals which they dispense can have the potential to cause a number of side-effects. These are often drug-induced nutritional deficiencies, in Finland many households and individuals already use nutrient supplements to combat health issues and already existing deficiencies. These are an efficient way of upselling, there are multiple supplements being sold at standard grocery stores nowadays where they tend to be easier to buy amongst other supplies. Here the pharmacy employees are able to convert the customer to buy the supplements at the pharmacy. (Pharmacyowners 2015)

Here the added value for the customer is the professional opinion provided by the pharmacy employee. When customers buy multiple supplements from other stores, they don't get to consult an expert on what to get and what they actually benefit from and tend to buy which ever supplement they are used to use or what is new on the market. Here the pharmacist will consult the customer on what they need because of drug-induced deficiency or other reasons, furthermore the supplements sold at pharmacies carry tend to be higher quality and more efficient products than the standards sold elsewhere. (Pharmacyowners 2015)

### 2.4 Salesmanship

In the line of sales work, the person has to approach and encounter many new people and they must put themselves in the line of rejection as well as judgement. For a stereotypically quiet and introverted Finnish person, this often means taking a leap out of their comfort zone. With the fast development is the sales industry, sales work no longer only includes the selling of products and services, but it additionally focuses on individuals own know-how. (Lupari, 2016)

So, what makes a person a good salesperson? When taking a look at many organizations and comparing their sales employees, it comes apparent that many sellers simply cannot sell. Many aspects effect this fact, and this can be quite costly for many organizations, being a good seller is not only

dependent on one's education or title, rather it goes much deeper than that into the individual's personality and psychology. (Mayer, Greenberg 2006)

According to Harvard Business Review's study, there are two basic qualities that a good salesman must possess; these are empathy and ego drive. Empathy is an important ability to recognize another individual's emotions and is a crucial tool in a sales process. Ego drive in the other hand is absolutely necessary for a good salesman for this is what makes them want and need to complete a sale. (Mayer, Greenberg 2006)

#### 2.4.1 Characteristics of a good pharmaceutical seller

The pharmaceutical industry is a massive business area, people need the products to combat various mental and physical health issues. This is why pharmaceutical sellers should possess the characteristics and knowledges of great sellers.

It would be a long list of features if one was to characterize an ideal salesperson; they should be efficient, effective, customer oriented, systematic and the list goes on. These are all extremely wanted traits in sellers, and many do possess them, nevertheless if the list were to continue with the characterization of the ideal salesperson, that would end up describing a person that probably does not exist. (Laine, 2008, 40)

Only few people ever reach the status of a supreme salesperson, and still it is something one must work and study hard to achieve. It is very difficult to directly copy the characteristics of an ideal salesperson; however, one can imitate and learn their practices. (Laine, 2008, 41)

#### 2.4.2 People skills

Good people skills are essential when it comes to daily interactions with strangers and convincing them to purchase your products. The better the salesperson can comprehend the customers personality and signals, the better they can approach the sale. (Rope, 2009, 20)

According to Timo Rope in his book (2019) the ground rule for selling is: Everything is sold through emotion; however, the purchase must be justified through reason.

With this it is crucial to separate and recognize the reasoning behind the purchase and the reason behind the purchase.

- Reasoning behind the purchase can for example consist of arguments such as it is good quality, good price, long-lasting.
- Reason behind the purchase is why the customer truly chose the product, this can be because of more emotional motives like they

liked the service they were getting, the brand of the product is well known, or it looks good.

An essential realization for the seller is to recognize that two people, in the same situation, may choose to purchase the same product for two completely different reasons. The first thing that may set these reasons apart is whether the customer is basing their decision making on their feelings or reason. People have been built to strive to reason-based decisions, however, this differs based on the persons attitude, beliefs and status. Furthermore, even though reason is the wanted basis for a decision and more highly thought of, feelings are always stronger than reason. A person never makes a 100% reason-based decision which they later get emotionally attached to, on the contrary, they often make a feeling-based decision which they later can justify by reason. Therefore, the seller should attempt to gain the emotional vantagepoint to their side in the sale situation. (Rope, 2009, 22-23)

### 2.4.3 Negotiation skills

A good salesperson or customer service representative is also a skillful negotiator, it is very common for a sales situation that the seller and the customer need to negotiate and bargain with each other in order to reach a common view and solution. a good negotiator can be characterized from three perspectives; what their character is like, what set of skills do they have, and how do they perform during negotiations. (Lehtonen, Pesonen & Toskala, 2002, 124-125)

A skilled negotiator knows their facts and can recognize which matters are relevant and which are not, and by this can effectively compromise with the irrelevant matters in order to reach best possible result with the most important and relevant point. Since negotiations are a process between two parties, both of whom wish to hold their grounds while still being willing to compromise to a certain point, this is why an unyielding sales negotiator who are not willing to meet the customer's demands in any way will not succeed in selling. (Lehtonen, Pesonen & Toskala, 2002, 124-125)

Ten characteristics of a good negotiator:

1. They are prepared to negotiate.
2. They have clear goal which they actively aim to reach.
3. They indicate through their actions their willingness to negotiate and compromise.
4. They are considerate, empathetic, and yielding
5. They actively listen and make observations about the other party's behavior.
6. They keep their focus on negotiating and solving problems instead of competing for authority.
7. They make concrete operating proposals in during their speech turns

8. They clearly present the benefits of the positive negotiation result and the drawbacks resulting for both parties if the deal will not be made.
9. They are willing to compromise in smaller less relevant matters in order to keep the negotiation going.
10. They indicate through their behavior and actions their determination and pursuit to reach a settlement which satisfies both parties.
11. (Lehtonen, Pesonen & Toskala, 2002, 125)

#### 2.4.4 Ability to adapt

For a good salesperson, it is important that they are able to adapt to different kinds of situations and customers.

Consumers purchasing behavior:

Although the purchasing behavior of consumers usually follows a rather standard process, there still exists a variety of purchasing situations. Selling as well as the role on the salesperson varies in these different situations, and it is very beneficial for the seller to recognize what type of purchasing situation they are facing so that they know the optimal way of approaching it. The ability to recognize and react to these kinds of different sales situations has a great impact on the end result and is a great characteristic of a successful salesperson. (Rope 2009, 92-94)

The following purchasing situations are based on Timo Rope's (2009) book and his chart on describing different purchasing scenarios and their effect on the sales approach:

- Intended purchase:

The customer's buying process is an intended occasion and the customer has possibly been planning the purchase for a longer time. This is usually a financially and functionally thought out purchase. The customer has already settled on a specific product and has probably done some research ahead of it. The salesperson's role in this situation is to be present and to be patient while going through the sales process with the customer.

- Routine purchase:

A routine purchase is usually a rather subconscious and quick process, since this is a purchase that the customer most likely makes often. In this situation it is in the best interest of both parties that the seller makes the purchasing as smooth and easy as possible.

- Sudden need:

The customer's buying process is rushed because of a sudden and surprising need for the product. In these situations, the seller should be

quickly available and adapt fast to the customers situation. It's important for the seller to be understanding and empathetic in these situations.

## 2.5 Sales process

In most businesses there are existing expectation for growth and success. The basis for the success in these is most commonly the products, the premises and well-coordinated advertisement. However, often the employees do not fully master the whole potential of the sales process. (Rubanovitsch & Aalto, 2012, 10)

A good salesperson acknowledges the in daily sales work, it is crucial that the seller goes through the whole sales process with every single customer, this ensures that no potential sales will be overlooked. The proper sales process should be consistently high quality and not depend on the customer or the salespersons current mood. Even if the customer comes in with a minor specific subject in mind or seems like an unlikely buyer, in the end the salesperson cannot know ahead of time what the end result of their interaction will be. It is highly possible that the unlikely customer turns out to be a very interested buyer once the seller opens up the conversation going through the sales process. (Rubanovitsch & Aalto, 2012, 33)

The sales process consists of important steps the salesperson goes through with the customer in order to move from preparations and planning to a closed sale and additional sales. The core purpose of this is guiding the customer towards the realization of the needs they have. (Plaksij 2019)

The sales process typically has 5-7 steps, the specifics of these steps vary depending on the case, however the core concept remains the same. This thesis will go through seven of the steps, which are; preparation, approach, needs assessment, presenting the benefits, handling the objections, closing, and finally additional sales. The prominent focus based on the case will be in the needs assessment and through this, additional sales.

## 2.6 Preparation and planning

A well-organized sales process requires careful preparation and planning. This step includes the seller educating themselves about the products they are meant to sell, knowing the products by heart has an immense effect on sellers confidence in their job as well as making the later steps of the process easier as they can discuss the benefits and drawbacks without having to search for the information. Another part of this step is getting to know your customer beforehand, this has major benefits if it is possible for

the seller to do, however in most common in-store sales situations this usually can't be done. (Rubanovitsch & Aalto, 2012, 42-43)

The route to becoming an excellent seller begins with knowledge, greatest sellers are educated and knowledgeable of the product they are selling down to every detail. The seller should be able to answer the customers questions right away, without the need to double check the information from another source. (Campbell 2017)

Product knowledge appears rather obvious one, however it can often be the undoing of the process. The salesperson must assess the right approach for the particular customer, it is extremely common for the salesperson to either not know enough of the product, which leads to problems in the sale and lack of trust from the customer. However, when the seller knows the product by heart, they may get too eager about their level of expertise. Especially when talking about a more complicated product which the customer may not be that educated about; such as pharmaceuticals or technical product. In these cases, it is easy for the seller to get caught up in a complicated monologue while making the customer feel confused and foolish, which is never a wanted outcome. (Steadysales n.d.)

The salespersons must educate themselves on the products they offer, but they must also work on their people-skills, and this is where the ability to empathize with the customer comes in as an important asset. The salesperson must evaluate and read the signals the customer is sending whilst actively including them in the conversation to learn where they stand with their knowledge of the subject at hand. (Steadysales n.d.)

A well-done advance preparation for the sales situation greatly enhances the seller's chances of creating a successful sale. The customer will notice if and when the seller is truly interested and dedicated to the subject at hand. A well-prepared seller here by gives out a professional image about themselves as well as from the company and is able to stand out from the competition. (Rubanovitsch & Aalto 2012, 42-43)

With the information gathering and the preparation the seller is able to form an idea of what the customers' needs are and how to approach them. Based on this information the salesperson is able to customize the best possible approach towards each customer and map out possible hindering's which may occur on the way. With all this foreknowledge it is much easier for the seller to approach the customer. (Rubanovitsch & Aalto 2012, 42-43)

## 2.7 The approach

The approach step is very crucial in the sales process, the first and last moments of the customer interaction are vital for the customer experience



and can have a big impact on whether or not the sale will be made and if the customer will return. First impressions are significant in this, the moment the customer steps in the store, they get a general image in their head about the place, factors impacting this are the cleanliness of the premises, the general atmosphere as well as the reaction coming from the employees. The customer will have an idea and feeling about the situation before any words have been exchanged, when it comes down to human interaction, the actual words only cover a part of the impact made, the rest is combined from tone, expression, body language and overall appearance of the person in question. (Rubanovitsch 2018)

Sales situation is an interaction between two people as much as any other conversation. However, because of the customer's knowledge of the fact that the other party has an ulterior motive; selling, the customer may shy away from the situation. This is why the first impression that the customer gets of the seller is extremely crucial for the interaction to continue. (Pekkarinen. U., Pekkarinen. E. & Vornanen 2006, 50)

Many Finnish people, when asked in a store if they need help, by reflex usually answer that they are just looking. However, with any product groups just looking will not get them any further in their buying process. In most stores for this to be possible the product presentation would have to be incredible and all the information would have to be clearly stated for each product for the customer to gain all the knowledge they need. Therefore, the seller should stay near the customer or be sharp and ask again in a moment. (Rubanovitsh ja Aalto 2012, 70-71)

Taking the first step of approaching the customer seems to be often difficult for many sellers. Welcoming the customer and making the first move should be self-evident, however, in Finland it seems to be a very possible for the customer to step into the store, browse the selection, and step out without exchanging a single word with anyone. (Rubanovitsh & Aalto 2012, 69)

If the customer's arrival and presence is overlooked, the sales process can easily drift off to a bad start from the very beginning. The way the customer is received has a great impact on the customer mood and motivation, if the seller does not properly welcome the customer but instead shows lack of motivation themselves, the customer may instantly get frustrated about the situation. They may also view this behavior as if they were not hoped to arrive and they are taken for granted. These kind of first impressions the customer gets are not only bad for the seller but for the company they represent. (Rubanovitsh & Aalto 2012, 69)

There are many ways of opening up the conversation with the customer, most often it is enough to say hello and ask if you may assist them with anything. It is most common for Finnish people to tell the store employees that they are just looking around and don't need help. In these situations,

it is smart for the seller to stay close to the customer, therefore creating a low threshold for the customer to make later contact and ask anything that pops in their mind. If the seller remains in the other side of the counter or the room, it takes much more mental effort for the customer to approach them. (Rubanovitch & Aalto 2012, 70-71)

The opening conversation should be rather light-hearted, se salesperson should approach the customer firstly with an open mind and without too many assumptions. From the seller's perspective, the objectives of the opening conversation are to:

- Get a read on the situation; the sellers should make observations about the customer's time status and how important does the customer think the subject is.
- Form an impression of the customer as an individual; meaning take note of the customers personality, are they quiet or talkative, do they respond better to a formal conversation or a relaxed one. The clearer the read the seller has on the customer as an individual, the better they can steer the conversation towards a wanted outcome.
- If there is a group of people, the seller should get a picture on what are the roles in the group; when mapping out the roles within the group the seller should form an idea of who in the customer group is the mental leader, who is the doubter, and who is the easy customer. This will make it easier to focus the right selling comments to the right person.
- Create a pleasant and positive atmosphere; this is always an important part of getting the conversation going, managing to create a feeling of ease and happiness for the customer will have a great impact on the outcome of the sale. (Rope, 2009, 165-166)

Opening up the conversation is a crucial step in which the parties form their first impressions about each other. The objective of the conversation opening is for the seller to sense the situation and at the same time figure out the personalities they are facing. the better the seller is able to determine the personalities of the customer and for example whether or not they want to be addressed royally or not, the better they are able to act in the most suitable and well received way possible. (Rope, 2009, 165)

The sales conversation is always goal-oriented for the seller and this is why the customer may easily tense up and back away from it if they find the sellers approach to be too aggressive. Beside the goal orientation of the situation, should the seller aim to keep the conversation interactive and open. The most important objective of this step is for the seller to gain the customers trust so that the customer feels willing to share as much of the useful information as possible and it will be smooth for the seller to begin working on the needs assessment. (pekkarinen 50)

## 2.8 The needs assessment

The needs assessment is the foundation on which one can start building up the sale. This is when one's people skills will be crucial; the seller must be able to direct the conversation as well as find hidden needs the customer doesn't realize they have. This is particularly important in the case of pharmaceutical sales. It is the salesperson's responsibility to keep the conversation going and to find out all the needed facts, this can be done with well-chosen questions for the customer such as:

- Who will be using the product?
- What aspects are most important for the customer?
- What is the product needed for?
- How familiar is the customer with the product?

Generally speaking, when it comes to human psychology, most people want to come up with a solution for their problem by themselves, this is because it is much easier for the person to get committed for their own idea and to be much more proud of it than they would be of someone else's idea. A person's own original idea is much closer and more meaningful for them than someone else's proposal and they will more strongly stand up for it and be it is harder to steer them in any other direction. The seller should keep this in mind and through well-formed questions and comments direct the customer to come to and suggest the idea which the seller wants them to settle on. (Laine, 2008, 114)

Depending on the sales scenario, the seller should indeed prepare by gathering information about the customer beforehand, however in most in-store sales situation this is not possible. This puts even more emphasis on the importance of the conversation between the parties and the needs assessment. (Rubanovitsch & Aalto, 2012, 42-43)

The customer does not always recognize their own needs if they are not familiar with the subject in hand or have not put much thought into their needs, this is why it is important for the seller to be able to ask the right questions so they can together form a conclusion on what it is the customer needs. (Rubanovitsch & Aalto, 2012, 78-79)

During the needs assessment stage, the seller should not focus their attention in directly selling; the objective and goal is to get to know the customer and to indicate that your interest lies in helping and serving them. A problem with selling is that it can easily get too direct and the customer may view it as pushy and forceful, this is why the seller must gently unravel the customers' needs based on their conversation. It is essential to note that during the needs assessment the seller should not yet be presenting a selected product or service, but to focus on gathering the essential information they need to firstly select the correct products

for the customers' needs and secondly how to best present the benefits of these to the customer. (Rubanovitsch & Aalto, 2012, 77)

### 2.8.1 Needs assessment in a pharmacy

The needs assessment stage has a crucial role in the sales process; however, this is especially the case in pharmacies. With the help of a well performed needs assessment the pharmacist is able to find the correct and most effective treatment, medicine, or in some cases recommend a visit to a doctor based on the customer's needs. (Hakkarainen & Airaksinen 2001, 173)

Needs assessment in a pharmacy has other important roles than simply gathering information. Through needs assessment the pharmacist is able to build a working discussion and connection with the customer. This in turn is a necessity for the pharmaceutical consultation to be successful. During the conversation and needs assessment the customer forms an opinion about the seller's trustworthiness and professional skills. (Hakkarainen & Airaksinen 2001, 173)

During the needs assessment the pharmacist should be very open and forward with the customer about why they ask certain questions and what is the objective of them. This way the pharmacist is able to ask the customer specific questions needed without them being offended or feeling uncomfortable. Furthermore, the pharmacist will get honest answers needed for the correct treatment. (Hakkarainen & Airaksinen 2001, 174-175)

In a pharmacy, the questions involved in the needs assessment must be asked not only with respect, but also with discretion so that other parties are not able to hear the conversation. The more intimate and possibly uncomfortable the subject the better the pharmacist should attempt to find a quieter placement for the conversation to take place without the customers privacy will not be disturbed. (Hakkarainen & Airaksinen 2001, 175-178)

When this step is taken care properly, the pharmacist is able to later on return to the topics for additional selling. When the additional selling is done heavily based in the needs assessment it is not only effective but also ethical while both parties benefit.

### 2.8.2 Questioning techniques for needs assessment

The way one forms their questions has a big influence on how the questions are answered. Questioning techniques are a very useful tool for pharmacists; with diverse questions the pharmacist can encourage the customer to describe their need and to actively speak more. Furthermore,

this gives the pharmacist a chance to form an idea of not only the issue at hand but also of the customer's possible hidden needs. At their best the questions will lead the customer to reflect on their situation, health, care, and to evaluate their choices. Asking many questions is not the purpose itself, the questions the seller ask the customer need to be relevant and purposeful. (Hakkarainen & Airaksinen 2001, 178)

There are three different categories of questions described in by Hakkarainen and Airaksinen (2001, 178), these are: open questions, closed questions, and leading questions.

Open questions ask about the subject in general; they allow the customer to answer in their own words and gets them to evaluate, explain, and interpret their current situation. This is why generally speaking; open questions are the most effective choice for pharmacists. It is beneficial for both parties in this situation that the customer actively evaluate their own wellbeing. An example of an open question would be: "What kinds of symptoms have you experienced?" (Hakkarainen & Airaksinen 2001, 178-180)

Closed questions are best used once the seller wants to specify some issue or they wish for the customer to answer shortly. Closed questions clarify the answers and limit the customers options of reply. Oftentimes these are yes or no questions. Examples of a closed questions a pharmacist might ask: "Is this product familiar to you?" or "What kind of problems have you had with this product?" (Hakkarainen & Airaksinen 2001, 180-183)

Leading questions direct the customer towards a certain direction and focus their attention to it. These can be either open or closed questions. Usually leading questions include a statement, to which the seller wants the customer to answer. An example of this in a pharmacy setting would be: "Many customers have found the application of these eye drops problematic. How have you managed with them?" (Hakkarainen & Airaksinen 2001, 183-184)

## 2.9 The presentation of benefits

In this step of the process the seller will present the product they believe best suit the customer needs. If the steps proceeding this one has been well executed, presenting the benefits of the product should be rather easy for the seller. (Rubanovitsch 2018)

When presenting the product, the seller must pay close attention to the customer and make sure they understand everything. This step should not be a seller's own monologue. The presentation of the product should provide answers as to why is this specific product best suited for the customer. This is when the needs assessment greatly helps the seller, based on it the seller is able to direct the focus into the right aspects. The

seller should focus on the aspects which are most important for the customer instead of going into detail about all the technicalities of the product. (Rubanovitsch & Aalto 2012, 110)

It is crucial that the seller, especially in the case of this thesis; the pharmacist, speaks and explains the product on the customer's level. If the seller gets too technical with their arguments, the customer often sees this behavior as arrogant. Making the customer feel lesser or stupid is not allowed to happen in this step. (Rubanovitsch & Aalto 2012, 108)

## **2.10 Handling objections**

More often than not, while the salesperson is presenting the many benefits of the product, the customer will counteract with doubts and objections. It is important for the seller to recognize that these objections are not a threat but an opportunity. This scenario can be used to enhance the trust and interaction between the seller and the customer. (Rubanovitsch & Aalto 2012, 117)

In this step the seller should be prepared for the counter arguments, however, they should not predict them. This way they are able to counteract them but will not steer the conversation based on them or bring them up themselves. (Rubanovitsch & Aalto 2012, 117)

This step has to be dealt with slightly differently in a pharmacy, since the pharmacists must explain the side-effects of the product to the customer. However, there are many cases when the customer is simply worried about the use or other aspects of the product, in which case the pharmacist can explain that the benefits outshine the negatives.

## **2.11 The closing**

Generally speaking, all the steps of the sales process should be properly followed, however, quite often the customer may show closing signals which the seller must catch up on instantly. In this step the seller will direct the customer to the conclusion of purchasing the product. The sale can be brought to a close in practically any point of the sales process. (Rubanovitsch & Aalto 2012, 11)

It is said that the difference between a presenter and a seller is the ability to bring the interaction to a closed sale. For example; it is said that a pharmaceutical consultant only has to create a pleasant atmosphere and positive attitude towards the product, however, a seller's duties include the closing of the sales in all fields of business. When closing a sale, essential points are; encouraging the customer to go through with the

purchasing, making sure that the doubts and objections have been dealt with, and making sure the price is settled on. (Rope 2009, 173)

## 2.12 Additional sales

The final step of the sales process is when the customer has made their mind about the sales, at this point they are usually positive and has trust for the seller, here is the opportunity for additional sales. Since the seller has done a thorough needs assessment earlier, they should be able to offer the customer products which the customer does not necessarily know they needed but would be interested of and benefit from. (Rubanovitsch & Aalto 2012)

Crucial that the pharmacist offers not only their knowledge about the product and its possible side effects but also actively promotes solutions to said problematic effects.

When it comes down to additional sales, Rubanovitsch (2018) explains that there are two categories of selling which are often mixed, these are ad-on sales and cross-selling:

Ad-on selling means the salesperson will be selling an additional product after making the main-sale, and this additional product belongs to the same product category as the main-product. (Rubanovitsch 2018)

In the case of pharmacy selling an example of this could be that the main product sold for the customer is ibuprofen, which is an anti-inflammatory drug, and the intended use might be to fight off fever caused by a flu. In which case the add-on sale item could be xylometazoline, which is a nasal spray used to improve symptoms of nasal congestion which is also a common symptom of a flu. Both of the mentioned products can be defined to be part of a same product group which is to treat flu symptoms.

The other form of additional sales is cross-selling. This means after selling the main product, the salesperson will market to the customer a product from an entirely different product group based on the information they earlier gathered from the need's assessment with the customer. This opportunity can sometimes be more challenging for the salesperson to recognize, since it involves further analysis of the customer if the customer has not explicitly mentioned or shown signs for another need. (Rubanivitsch 2018)

In a pharmacy an example situation of this would be that the customer may come with the intension of purchasing allergy medication and when

discussing with the pharmacist they might mention about that they need it because of the pollen which irritates them while they exercise outside. Here the pharmacist could ask what kind of exercise they do, and if they have thought about trying out some before- or after exercise supplements. In this form of additional selling the possibility of utilizing it greatly depends on the situation when it is needs assessment based and the customer's willingness to open up. Cross-selling also includes the separate mentioning of seasonal products. For example, asking during the summer, if the customer has purchased sunscreen, or during winter if they use common vitamins for that time.

### **3 RESEARCH**

The empirical research part conducted for this thesis was done by qualitative research method. The research was conducted in the Kalvola pharmacy and it was divided into three parts; two separate surveys and a trial period. The first survey aimed to find out the current opinions and level of knowledge the pharmacy staff has when it comes to additional sales and sales process.

This chapter of the thesis will look into the basic theory of research methods as well as work through the research conducted.

#### **3.1 Research methods**

There are two types of research methods, these are quantitative and qualitative. Quantitative research studies numerical measures were as qualitative research focuses on quality. These research methods can sometimes be hard to distinguish, furthermore it is not always necessary. The line between these two is not clear, rather the two can be mixed and can complete each other. (Hirsjärvi, Remes, Sajavaara 2014, 135-136)

A helpful question to ask before deciding the research method of a study is what kind of method best leads to a clear and useful outcome. A research always has an objective. This objective drives the research and its' strategies to a certain direction. (Hirsjärvi, Remes, Sajavaara 2014, 137)

This thesis and the research conducted for it, focuses on qualitative research method. In qualitative research the materials and research strategies are comprehensive, and the data is gathered in a genuine way based on real situations. Moreover, qualitative research prefers people as a research instrument instead of numbers. Here the researcher trusts more on their own observations and interactions with the focus group rather than information gathered by measuring tools. The basis for this is



the idea that people are flexible enough to adapt in to changing environments. (Hirsjärvi, Remes, Sajavaara 2014, 164)

The reasoning for choosing qualitative research method for this study is that the authors' objective was to see the results from the pharmacy staffs' point of view. People are generally good at adapting to new situations and obtaining new ways of working. However, in order to see real results and changes in quantitative methods, the research would have required more time for the pharmacy staff to really implement the change as a constant strategy.

### 3.2 Surveys

The information gathering for this thesis was done by two separate surveys. Survey is a form of standardized research, in this the same set of questions are asked from everyone in the focus group. The surveys were conducted as informed surveys, this form of survey is one where the researcher themselves distributes the questions to the members of the focus group. Furthermore, the researcher explains the objective of the survey for those involved as well as answers any questions about it which may arise. Those surveyed will answer the questions in their own time and will then return then to the sender. (Hirsjärvi, Remes, Sajavaara 2014, 195-197)

Before the surveys and the research, the focus group was provided with an introduction and explanation sent by e-mail describing the research the author was going to conduct with them. The information given in this consisted of an abridged description of the authors situation and reasons for conducting such research. Furthermore, the narration covered the most prominent themes and theories which would be utilized in this thesis; marketing and sales theory, as well as the ethical code and legislation of pharmacy practices. The focus group was also informed via this introduction about the future surveys and education period. An important aspect of this was to ensure the pharmacy staff that the surveys and research are done completely anonymously. (Appendix 1)

The surveys consisted of open-ended questions. This style of questions was chosen because the focus group is rather small, therefore, open-ended questions would provide more in-depth answers as well as give broader data.

### 3.3 First survey

In the first survey the pharmaceutical staff of Kalvolan apteekki were asked about their current opinions as well as general knowledge about the sales

process and additional sales as a concept. The aim was to get them to consider their behavior at work and interactions with their customers.

The original surveys were done in Finnish for the convenience of the commissioner pharmacy (Appendix 2).

The survey questions:

1. How long have you been working as a pharmacist?
2. Are the additional sales concept and sales process familiar to you?
3. What are your opinions on additional selling?
4. Do you think active forms of selling belong to a pharmacy?
5. Did your pharmaceutical education prepare you for sales work or do you consider it to be more focused on product knowledge?
6. In a sales situation, do you find needs assessment to be an easy step or do you find it challenging? Why?
7. Do you find it easy to approach and open up a conversation with the customer?
8. Do you believe that pharmacists could benefit in their profession of some level of sales training?

The general feedback gotten was really positive and the staff is open minded towards further education.

### 3.4 Materials and study

The study and implementation period were held in the pharmacy to educate the staff about the theories relevant to this study and to see how they would be able to implement these into their daily work. The education of the staff was accomplished by assigning them a written educational material which they would familiarize individually at a suitable time. After this they would pay attention to their daily customer interactions and utilize the help and guidelines from the materials. The analysis part of this thesis goes more in depth about the structure and contents of the materials. The materials were constructed in Finnish (Appendix 3).

### 3.5 Second survey

The second survey was conducted after the pharmacy staff had familiarized themselves with the material provided. Moreover, the employees had managed to implement the information they had attained to their daily work.

The survey questions:

1. Did you learn something new about the sales process or additional sales?

2. Did you benefit from the educational material with approaching the customer?
3. Do you find that the material/this study has made you pay more attention to your personal sales, customer approach, or additional sales opportunities?
4. Did the material help you with the needs assessment and customer interaction?
5. Do you find that the materials helped you better direct the needs assessment conversation to a desired direction, possibly leading to additional sales?
6. Did you manage to make additional sales in your opinion?
7. Would you wish that pharmacists were offered more possibilities to maintain their sales education?

## 4 ANALYSIS

This chapter of the thesis will analyze the results that were gained from this study. The analysis will look into each question of the survey and the answers received for it. Moreover, the analysis will also look into the material that were assigned to the pharmacy staff, explaining the reasoning of and emphasis of the information chosen to the segments.

The study conducted for this thesis was done as a qualitative research, this effects the way that the results are analyzed.

In a qualitative study, where the results are often gathered in multiple separate stages, the analysis is not only conducted in the very end of the research but is done throughout the different stages. These stages often influencing and concurring each other. The analysis and the gathering of the data hence overlapping with each other. (Hirsjärvi, Remes, Sajavaara 2014, 223)

The data gathered through qualitative research can be analyzed in many different ways, the objective is to find an analyzing method which best leads to a helpful outcome. The most commonly used analyzing methods are theme, type, content breakdown, discourse analysis, and conversational analysis. (Hirsjärvi, Remes, Sajavaara 2014, 224)

The analysis of this thesis does not directly follow a specific analyzing method, yet it takes influence from the analyzing of theme and type, focusing on the similarities and differences of the answers received. Additionally, following the answers received to each question and analyzing the prominent opinions that were noticeable, this was found to be an effective way of analysis since the different stages of the study influenced each other based on the analysis.

## 4.1 Surveys and the trial period

The surveys were composed of open-ended questions, the objective of which was to gain information of each individual's own opinions and experiences. The trial period lasted for approximately three weeks, during which the pharmacy staff would read and familiarize the educational material and implement the information and guidelines into their daily work.

### 4.1.1 First survey

The first survey focused largely on studying the current situation within the pharmacy. The questions were formed so the pharmacy staff could freely express their opinions about the matter.

The first question of the survey asked how long the person had been working in the field, this was to map out the possible changes in the education as well as to study if the opinions and feelings concerning additional selling varied based on when they had begun to work in the industry. The results show that the employees have all been working in pharmacies for a longer time, their answers varying from 17 to 25 years.

The following question aimed to find out are additional sales and sales process familiar concepts to the employees. The answers received showed that the concepts were mainly unfamiliar, while most recognized the terms and had some base knowledge of them.

Following up the previous question; the third question's objective was to see the personal feelings and opinions concerning the additional sales concept. The answers to this were highly positive. All the employees agreed that it is a good method of improving sales. The answers also went more into personal feelings towards it. They felt that effective additional sales require rather much from the personnel, such as courage and social skills. Furthermore, this revealed a concern of standardized customer service:

"Additional sales is a good method if it is implemented according to the situation, not as forced performance with each customer. In the other hand, everyone should get the same level of customer service and be assisted based on the same values; why do I bring out the current deals to one customer and not to the other?"

The general opinion with this was that situational awareness is crucial in these situations.

The fourth question contemplated whether or not active additional sales belongs in a pharmacy? Answers to this question were positive, yet many acknowledged the ethical restrictions with this. The answers agreed that additional sales belong in a pharmacy when it is done respectfully and in order to attend to the customers overall health and wellbeing.

In the fifth question the objective was to learn how well the pharmaceutical education prepared the staff to sales work. The answers show that the education focuses on pharmacology and anatomy, however, the education the focus group has gone through did not prepare them for sales or marketing.

The next question focused once again in the individuals own feelings; asking how the person perceives the needs assessment in a sales situation, is it easy or difficult? The answers given showed that the pharmacy staff does overall find the needs assessment to be rather simple in most cases, however, it is very effected by the customers' willingness to discuss their situation further.

One of the answers stated: "Some customers just are not approachable and are unwilling to discuss their health situation, this may be because they are in a hurry or are unsocial."

Related to the previous question, the seventh question simply reviewed if the pharmacy staff found it effortless and easy to open up the conversation with the customer. When analyzing the answers given by the staff, there was much wider differentiation. Their opinions about their own capability of approaching the customer varied from it being very straight forward to it being their biggest hindrance. The main issue based on the answers is not finding the right words and questions to present to the customer. Moreover, the concern with the questions was the difficulty of finding the right balance of the question being forthcoming enough to start up a genuine conversation and yet not being too intrusive and making the customer uncomfortable. Additionally, the answers showed again that the individual customer has a large effect on how effortless the pharmacy staff finds the initial approach.

The last question asked if the pharmacy staff believed that they, and pharmacists in general, would benefit from some form of sales training. All of those whom answered agreed that additional training about the subject would truly help their daily work.

#### 4.1.2 Trial period

The educational material was constructed based on the theory used in this thesis. Furthermore, the material was highly influenced by the results gathered from the first survey. The material was aimed to help with the basic sales training as well as go more into detail about the issues the pharmacy staff found to be the most challenging in the interaction with a customer.

The material (Appendix 2.) formed a general base answering what is the sales process? It described how profitable sales results are gained from a well-established sales process. Moreover, how a familiarized sales process

also eases the seller's job by making it more effortless to approach the customer and open up a conversation once the seller confidently knows what they are doing. Following this introduction, the material follows through the seven steps in the sales process explaining the theory in each one based and translated from the theory part of this thesis. Additionally, the material provided practical examples of the steps presenting example situation.

The first step: preparation and planning, explained the benefits of preparing for the customers' arrival. This step emphasizes how a well-done preparation eases the pressure of the actual interaction. Preparation step largely involves the sellers' own attitude and knowledge, both of these greatly affect the interaction from the sellers as well as the customers point of view.

The second step: the approach. In addition to the theory of this step, the material went more into detail about how to approach different types of customers. This was constructed based on the answers from the first survey:

Once the customer has entered the pharmacy, the seller should pay attention to their signals. If the customer seems determined, possibly by walking to a specific aisle in the pharmacy, it may be a sign of them being in a hurry or them having already made the purchasing choice. In this scenario it is most helpful to directly ask the customer what they are looking for; this establishes contact and opens up the conversation. This often satisfies the customer, because it saves them time in finding the product. After this even a busy customer may likely continue the conversation because they are pleased with the fast and appropriate service. The other example is an unsure and wandering customer; in this situation open-ended and broader questions are more appropriate such as a simple "can I help you with something?". This provides the customer with the courage to speak freely of their situation.

The third step: needs assessment. In this segment the material offered aid in finding the right questions in order to achieve the relevant information. The employees were educated on the basics of the questioning techniques: to a pharmacist open-ended question are useful as a base on which to start building the needs assessment and lead to broader picture of their situation. On the contrary, closed questions are most beneficial when they want to clarify an already risen topic or when they want a straight answer. When questioning the customer, the pharmacist must remember to present their questions respectfully and it is beneficial to explain to the customer why certain questions are asked, this further improves the trust between both parties.

The fourth step: presentation of benefits. When presenting the benefits of a chosen product, the pharmacist should focus on the aspects of the

product that are most relevant for the customer. These important aspects can be effectively found through the needs assessment.

The fifth step: handling the objections. Listening and handling objections in pharmacy work is very important, here the pharmacist has a chance to clarify the opinions and worries the customer may have concerning the treatment they are purchasing.

The sixth step: closing. Suggesting the closing of a sale is often an uncomfortable idea to a seller. It is important to realize that the customer may send closing signals at any point of the sales process, the seller should be able to detect these and close when the customer is ready.

The seventh step: additional sales. In this final step the material went into more detail about the general theory of additional sales. The material described the different types of additional sales: cross selling and add-on sales. In this segment the pharmacists were given examples of both and explained how they can utilize them. An important focus on this is the needs assessment based additional sales, as is apparent from this thesis, needs assessment provides an ethical base from which to do additional sales. The emphasis of this segment was again very influenced by the data from the survey.

#### 4.1.3 Second survey

The second survey was assigned to the pharmacy staff after they had had the time to familiarize and utilize the training material. This survey most focused on finding out if there had been a change in the groups attitude and understanding of additional sales and the sales process as a whole.

The answers received were positive, overall the pharmacists found the study and the materials helpful to their daily work.

The first question asked in general if the pharmacy staff had learned something new about additional sales or the sales process from the materials. The answers showed that the material did not involve any entirely new information, however the answers did point out that rehearsing and reviewing the did bring more encouragement to their work and reminded of the importance of it.

The following question inquired whether or not the materials helped the pharmacist with approaching the customer. The feedback on this was very positive and the pharmacists had really benefited from it. The answers stated that now their attention focuses on each customer that comes into the pharmacy and they are able to approach them more confidently. They also found the advice on observing the customer first rather helpful and try to monitor the customer before making contact, letting them first browse the premises rather than diving in immediately.

The third question asked if through this study the staff had begun to pay more attention to their personal sales, approaching the customer and to the opportunities of additional sales. This again showed the improvement in the approaching of the customers and how the confidence in this interaction had grown. The results also mentioned that they recognize the opportunities for additional sales more and how the current flu-season is a good time to practice this.

The fourth question was directed to find out if the pharmacists found aid from the material toward conducting the needs assessment and overall conversation with the customer. The answers received were varying; one stated that they received a lot of help and especially gained a reminder of the importance of the needs assessment. However, another answer told they did not find a direct assistance from the materials concerning this issue.

Related to the previous question, the fifth one sought to find insights on whether or not the pharmacists were better able to direct the conversations with customers towards a wanted course. The answers to this revealed it to be one of the most challenging aspects of the needs assessment to the pharmacy staff. Moreover, because of its difficulty, there were no noticeable improvements, however the respondents do show a desire to improve themselves further with this issue.

The sixth question openly asked if the pharmacy staff in their opinion managed to make additional sales utilizing the help from the materials. The answers for this expressed that there was no significant change in the amount of additional sales. However, again there is an inspiration to develop further in this matter.

The last question asked for opinions on whether or not the pharmacy staff would still be interested if there were to be more opportunities to learn more about selling and maintain their education on this. This had positive answers which showed that the staff is willing and inspired to learn more about the field of selling in order to improve not only sales but the customer experience.

## 4.2 Outcomes

The outcomes of this study did not show a visible increase in the volume of additional sales. However, the general feedback and data gained showed an increasingly positive attitude regarding additional sales and the sales process.

The pharmacy staff did however notice benefits from the study beyond just additional sales. The improvements were perceived in the confidence



in their customer interactions. The answers stated that while during the first survey the pharmacists expressed a big issue to be the difficulty of approaching the customer as well as opening up the conversations not knowing how the customer may react, there were very positive improvements that could be noticed from the second survey. The pharmacists found the advice on observing the customer before contact and different ways of approach to be helpful.

Another benefit that could be perceived was the inspiration to improve in this aspect of their daily work. The staffs' motivation throughout the study shows that they are willing to learn and even a limited training on the subject increases their desire to improve.

Overall this study was very well received, and all involved in it were highly motivated to find out the results. Even though the results did not precisely lead to the wanted outcome, the benefits were apparent.

## 5 RECOMMENDATIONS

Additional sales is a rather newly implemented concept in the pharmacies in Finland. Even though the concept has not been utilized for too long it has been widely accepted in the daily pharmacy services. There is very noticeable potential on further developing the concept in the pharmacies while still conducting it following the ethical codes and the legislation of the pharmaceutical operations. These provide a good framework inside which to develop a working method of increasing additional sales, the crucial aspect is to always base it on the needs assessment.

Additional sales as a concept has overall a rather bad image in Finland and is often identified with unpleasant and forceful selling of undesired or irrelevant products only to gain more sales. However, as explored in this thesis; when the additional selling is done correctly, ethically and based on individual needs, it can truly improve the customer experience and benefit both parties greatly.

Improving sales in pharmacies is a very relevant topic, this is because of the increased amount of what are usually considered pharmaceutical products are continuously being moved into regular grocery stores. This cuts a large amount of sales away from the pharmacies, since it is more effortless for the customer to purchase the products during other errands.

The pharmaceutical staff must be able to convince the customer that it is more beneficial for them to purchase even the daily pharmaceuticals, such as vitamins and other supplements, from a pharmacy rather than a department store. When the customer chooses pharmacy, they do not

only take their business there for the product but also for the professional assistance. The pharmacists are able to offer more for the price of the product by advising the customer on the alternatives and recommending added treatments. Again, returning to the importance on well-established needs assessment.

Even if the department stores had cheaper products, the quality of products and customer service is something they cannot compete in with the pharmacies. When purchasing pharmaceuticals elsewhere than a pharmacy, the customer may end up with a wrong or unnecessary product. The pharmacies must convince the customers on this matter in order to remain profitable and competitive.

## 6 CONCLUSION

The objective of this thesis was to study and research what is additional sales as a concept and how to implement it in the daily work in a pharmacy. The theory segment of this thesis focused on sales theory. The chapters study the additional sales, salesmanship and sales process. These theories gave a theoretical base on which to reflect in an actual customer service and sales situation.

Another important aspect of the theory part was learning about the ethical code concerning the pharmacy operations in Finland. These ethical guidelines are monitored and composed by the Association of Finnish pharmacies (AFP). When considering the sales process utilization in a pharmacy, it is essential to keep these guidelines in mind. The other regulator in Finnish pharmacy operations is the law concerning pharmaceutical sales in Finland; Finnish medicines act (395/1987). The legislation concerning pharmacies and their operations aims to ensure the safe and purposeful utilization of pharmaceuticals in Finland.

The empirical part of this thesis focused on utilization of additional sales in practice. The objective was to study the current situation and the staffs' familiarity on the subject. The insights into this field of selling was an interesting study, since the process and motives of selling are rather different in the field of pharmaceuticals.

Analyzing the data gathered with the surveys, the results show there was no noticeable change in the amount of additional sales itself. However, the pharmacy staff did gain more confidence in their sales process as well as their customer interactions. It is very possible that there could have been more visible results if the trial period would have been longer and the education more comprehensive. A more effective strategy for the study

would have been a long trial period with several milestones with and education of one topic at the time.

Overall the results from the study showed a very positive attitude towards the theories incorporated in this thesis. Additionally, the pharmacy staff did concur that they all found some benefit from this study. Most noticeable improvements based on the answers were increased confidence in their work as well as a helpful reminder to put more effort in to needs assessment and customer interaction rather than stick with the same routine they have been doing for years.

The structure of the research would have demanded an earlier beginning to the study. Balancing an intensive and informative trial with longer period for implementation and utilization of the topics learned is challenging to do. If the trial period were longer, the result may have been increased, however, the intensive and shorter time ensures that the focus group pays constant attention to the study at hand and does not fall back to their routines.

Although the study did not reach the wanted results concerning the increase of additional sales, it certainly did create an inspiration for improvement and the pharmacists may notice the results of it later on.

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## Appendix 1

Information sent before the research

International Business

Thesis, 2019

Anni Penttilä

Lisämyynnin merkitys ja mahdollisuudet apteekille / What is the concept of add-on sales and how can the pharmaceutical staff utilize it?

Olen lopputyötäni kirjoittava kansainvälisen liiketalouden opiskelija ja kuten olette kuulleet, tulen suorittamaan lopputyöni tutkimuksen apteekissanne. Opinnäytetyöni tavoitteena tulee olemaan selvittää mitä lisämyynti on käsitteenä sekä miten farmasia henkilökunta voi toiminnallaan ja osaamisellaan vaikuttaa siihen.

Tulen lopputyössäni käymään läpi ainakin Farmasialiiton laatimat apteekkitoiminnan eettiset ohjeet, sekä Suomen lääkelain pohjustakseni kyseessä olevaa alaa ja sen eroavaisuutta muuhun myyntityöhön. Tämän jälkeen tulen käymään läpi markkinointi- ja myyntiteoriaa kuten myyjän ominaisuuksia, myyntiprosessia sekä lisämyyntiä.

Tulen suorittamaan tutkimuksen aiheesta apteekissanne ja tarvitsen tähän teidän apuanne, teen kaksi avointa kyselyä, yhden alussa ja toisen lopussa. Suoritan kyselyt sähköpostitse, ja vakuutan, että nimiänne ei tule näkymään kenellekään muulle kuin minulle, eikä niitä julkisteta lopputyössäni. Toivon, että tämän myötä annatte rehellisiä vastauksia, sillä ne ovat minulle kaikkein arvokkaimpia.

Ensimmäisen kyselyn jälkeen minun olisi tarkoitus käydä kanssanne läpi myyntiin liittyviä konsepteja, ja keskustella kuinka saatte näitä parhaiten hyödynnettyä päivittäisessä myyntityössä. Tämän jälkeen on koeaika, jolloin pyrimme hyödyntämään aktiivisesti näitä lisämyyntiin liittyviä käsitteitä ja toimintatapoja, jonka jälkeen toisessa kyselyssä pyydän mielipiteitänne ja kokemuksianne kokeilusta ja kuinka koitte sen vaikuttaneen myynnin lisäämiseen.

Tämä ei vielä edellytä teiltä mitään toimenpiteitä tai valmistautumista. Tulen informoimaan teitä myöhemmin yksityiskohdista, kunhan saan ne itse selvitettyä ohjaajani kanssa ja häneltä palautetta tämänhetkisestä suunnitelmastani. Tutkimuksen ajankohta tulee näillä näkymin olemaan toukokuussa, tosin ensimmäinen haastattelu on luultavasti jo huhtikuussa. Kiitän kovasti yhteistyöstänne ja toivottavasti saamme yhdessä selville hyödyllisiä tuloksia, joista on teille tulevaisuudessakin käytännöllistä apua.

## The material provided for the pharmacy

### Myynti prosessi

Myyntiprosessilla tarkoitetaan sitä menetelmää, jolla asiakaspalvelija kuljettaa asiakkaan kohti kaupan päättämistä. Tuottava myynti perustuu hyväksi todetun myyntiprosessin noudattamiseen. Hyvin sisäistetty myyntiprosessi helpottaa myös myyjän henkilökohtaista suhtautumista myyntiin, kun hän on sisäistänyt myyntiprosessin vaiheet ja tavoitteet, tulee asiakkaan lähestymisestä ja keskustelun avaamisesta huomattavasti helpompaa.

#### 1. Ennakko valmistautuminen

Onnistunut ja tehokas myyntiprosessi edellyttää hyvää ennakko valmistautumista. Huolellinen valmistautuminen parantaa suuresti myyjän mahdollisuuksia saada kauppa tehtyä. Tämä parantaa myös huomattavasti asiakas kokemusta sillä asiakas huomaa, että myyjä on perehtynyt hänen tilanteeseensa ja saa asiakkaan tuntemaan olonsa tärkeäksi. Ennakkoon valmistautunut myyjä antaa sekä itsestään, että yrityksestä erittäin ammattimaisen kuvan.

Perusteelliseen ennakko valmistautumiseen kuuluu ennen kaikkea tuotetuntemus. Tuntemalla liikkeen valikoiman perusteellisesti myyjä osaa heti ohjata asiakkaan oikeaan suuntaan ja suositella valikoimasta tälle oikeaa vaihtoehtoa. Myyjä pystyy myös paremmin vakuuttamaan asiakkaan tuotteesta, kun hän tietää tuotteen oleelliset hyödyt ja toimenpiteet sen sijaan, että vain listaisi kyseisen tuotteen kaikki ominaisuudet. Myyntitilanteet usein pyörivät tietyn tuotteen ympärillä ja tästä syystä helposti unohdetaan kaikki muu ja keskitytään vain kyseiseen asiaan. Tähän ongelmaan, varsinkin lisämyynnin harjoittelun alussa, on hyvänä apuna valmiit lisämyyntituotteet. Myyjä voi valmiiksi miettiä mitkä tuotteet liittyvät toisiinsa, näin tuotteita on helpompi muistella ja alustaa lisämyyntiä myös itse myyntitilanteessa.

Mikäli mahdollista, ennakkovalmistautumisessa kannattaa saada valmiiksi selville kaikki tieto asiakkaasta ennen kuin tämä saapuu liikkeeseen. Mikäli asiakas on esimerkiksi soittanut etukäteen tiedustellen tietyn tuotteen perään, on myyjän hyvä valmistautua tämän pohjalta mahdollisiin lisäkysymyksiin ja asiakkaan tilanteeseen ennen tämän saapumista. Tästä on hyötyä molemmille osapuolille erityisesti siksi, että se säästää molempien aikaa tapaamisessa. Kun myyjä on selvittänyt asiakkaasta tarvittavat perustiedot etukäteen, asiakaskohtaamiselle varattu aika voidaan paremmin hyödyntää itse myyntityöhön sekä luottamuksen rakentamiseen.

Ennakko valmistautumisen kuuluu oleellisesti myös omasta asenteesta ja olemuksesta huolehtiminen. Huoliteltu olemus ja positiivinen asenne on jotain mihin kaikki voivat itse vaikuttaa. Myyjän tyyli ja asennoituminen viestii asiakkaalle hänen varmuudestaan ja kunnioituksesta asiakasta kohtaan. Asiakas lukee jo liikkeeseen astuessaan sanattomia viestejä ja

tekee myyjän ulkoisen olemuksen perusteella päätelmiä hänen persoonallisuudestaan, edustamistaan tuotteista, sekä liikkeestä.

## 2. Asiakkaan lähestyminen

Kun asiakas saapuu liikkeeseen, tulee myyjän huomion kiinnittyä häneen heti ja tämän tervehtiä saapunutta asiakasta. Asiakkaan mielikuvaan ja tyytyväisyyteen vaikuttavat suuresti asiakaskohtaamisen ensimmäiset ja viimeiset hetket.

Usein asiakkaan saapuessa liikkeeseen, tällä ei ole selkeää ostotavoitetta. Myyjien on hyvä tarkkailla asiakasta hetki tämän saapuessa, jotta he voivat tehdä päätelmiä hänen tilanteestaan ja tarpeistansa. Asiakkaan määrätietoinen kävely tietylle osastolle voi viestiä kiireestä tai hyvin tietoisesta ostopäätöksestä, kun taas harhaileva katse saattaa olla merkki asiakkaan epävarmuudesta ja harkinnasta. Molemmissa tapauksissa myyjän on tämän lyhyen ensivaikutelman perusteella tehtävä päätös, kuinka lähestyä asiakasta. Joskus asiakas tekee itse aloitteen lähestymällä myyjään, mutta useammin etenkin suomalaisille on tyyppillistä yrittää löytää ensin ratkaisu itse ilman myyjän tai muiden apua.

Määrätietoiselta ja kiireiseltä vaikuttavalta asiakkaalta voi olla parasta kysyä suoraan, oliko hänellä jokin tietty tuote etsinnässä. Tällä asiakkaaseen saadaan otettua kontaktia, ja mahdollisesti säästettyä hänen aikaansa. Kiireinenkin asiakas voi usein jäädä tämän päätuotteen nopean löytymisen jälkeen keskustelemaan ja kysymään lisää, sillä hän on tyytyväinen tuotteen nopeasta löytymisestä ja palvelun sopivuudesta hänen tilanteeseensa.

Harhailevaa ja epävarmaa asiakasta taasen on paras lähestyä laajemmilla kysymyksillä kuten "Olisiko teitä voinut autella?". Näinkin yksinkertainen ja usein itsestään selvältä tuntuva avausfraasi saa usein asiakkaan puheliaalle tuulelle ja on hyvä pohjustus asiakkaan tarvekartoitukseen.

Ensimmäisillä sanoilla, joilla myyjä lähestyy asiakasta, on suuri merkitys. Moni asiakas rohkaistuu jo näiden pohjalta kertomaan mitä he etsivät, toiset taas vastaavat automaattisesti kieltävästi avun tarjoamiseen, vaikka tosiasiassa tarvitsisivatkin apua. Myyntitilanne on vuorovaikutustilanne kahden ihmisen välillä siinä missä muutkin keskustelut, mutta koska kyseisessä tilanteessa toisella osapuolella on tavoite; myynti, voi asiakas vetäytyä keskustelusta. Myyjän haastavin tehtävä onkin saavuttaa asiakkaan luottamus jo ensimmäisen tapaamisen aikana, jotta hän kykenee etenemään myyntiprosessissa kaupan päättämiseen asti ongelmitta.

## 3. Tarvekartoitus

Viimevuosina myyntityön luonne on muuttunut; joskus riitti, että myyjältä löytyy tuotteet ja tietämys niistä. Nykyisin myyjien työ on kuitenkin paljon aktiivisempaa markkinoiden kilpailun ja asiakkaiden odotusten vuoksi. Oleellinen osa nykyajan myyntiä on perusteellinen tarvekartoitus.



Erinomainen tapa edistää asiakkaan kanssa käytävää keskustelua ja opastaa tätä on tarvekartoitukseen liittyvien kysymysten esittäminen. Kysymykset ylläpitävä myyjän ja asiakkaan välistä vuorovaikutusta ja auttavat oikeiden ratkaisujen löytämistä. Aktiivinen kyselijä luo kiinnostavan ja miellyttävän ilmapiirin, kunhan kysymykset ovat asianmukaisia.

Myyjän tulee kuunnella asiakkaan vastauksia perusteellisesti, sillä hänen on hyvä perustaa seuraavat kysymyksensä näihin. Monen myyjän kohdalla oikeiden kysymysten esittely tarvekartoituksessa tehostaa myyntiä huomattavasti ja luo paljon mahdollisuuksia lisämyyntiin. Huolellisella tarvekartoituksella voi varmistaa lisämyyntituotteiden todellisen tarpeen. Tällä tavoin lisämyynti on eettistä ja sillä saavutetaan liiketaloudellisesti hyvä tulos asiakkaan etua ajatellen.

#### KYSYMYS TEKNIikka

Kysymystekniikka on oleellinen osa tarvekartoitusta, tästä on erityisesti hyötyä farmaseuteille. Monipuolisella kysymysten käytöllä saat houkutelua asiakkaan kertomaan tilanteestaan ja tarpeistaan omin sanoin ja rohkaiset häntä osallistumaan keskusteluun aktiivisesti. Kysymällä teet keskustelusta henkilökohtaista ja yksilöllistä, samalla viestität asiakkaalle, että olet vilpittömästi kiinnostunut hänen tilanteestaan. Parhaimmillaan oikein muotoillut kysymykset ohjaavat asiakkaan pohtimaan omaa tilannettaan, terveyttään, hoitoaan sekä arvioimaan oikeita ratkaisuja.

Suuren kysymysmäärän esittäminen ei ole tämän tilanteen tarkoitus, kysymysten tulee johtaa johonkin, sinun tulee itse pohtia, miksi haluat tiettyä tietoa asiakkaalta ja millaisilla kysymyksillä saat tarvitsemasi vastaukset. Kysymyksen muoto ja esitystyyli ovat työvälineitäsi, kysymyksen sisältö ja tarkoitus perustuu aina ammattimaisen osaamiseesi sekä asiakkaan yksilölliseen tilanteeseen.

Voit hyödyntää työssäsi sekä avoimia, että suljettuja kysymyksiä:

Avoimet kysymykset kysyvät aiheesta yleisesti ja mahdollistavat asiakkaan selittämään laajasti tilanteensa omin sanoin. Apteekkityössä avoimet kysymykset ovat yleensä hyvä pohja, jolta aloittaa tarvekartoitus. Kun asiakas itse kertoo sinulle asiansa ja hän saa vapauden kuvailla tilannettaan omalla tavallaan, sinun ei tarvitse arvailla tai olettaa asiakkaan olosuhteita. Tällaisten kysymysten johtamana asiakas kertoo usein vastauksissaan asioita, joita et itse välttämättä tulisi kysyneeksi. Näitä asioita ovat usein pelot, huolet ja tietämättömyys.

Esimerkkejä avoimista kysymyksistä ovat:

”Milloin nämä oireet alkoivat?”

”Millaisia oireita olette kokeneet?”

”Miten tuote on vaikuttanut teillä?”

Avoimissa kysymyksissä farmaseutti voi myös rohkaista asiakasta pohtimaan tilannettaan vielä tarkemmin:

”Onko sinulla itsellä ajatusta mistä nämä oireet saattaisivat johtua?”

”Mitä luulet, riittävätkö nämä ohjeet hoidon aloittamiseen kotona?”  
Avoimet kysymykset ovat välttämättömiä lääkeneuvonnan pohjustuksena.

Suljetut kysymykset toimivat parhaiten, kun haluat tarkentaa jo puheeksi tullutta asiaa tai kun haluat lyhyen suoran vastauksen. Ne täsmentävät ja täydentävät vastauksia rajaamalla asiakkaan vastaus vaihtoehtoja.

”Onko tämä lääke teille tuttu?”

”Kertoiko lääkäri teille tästä lääkkeestä?”

”Millaisia haittoja lääkkeestä on tullut?”

Suljetut kysymykset ovat farmaseuteille hyvä työväline, kun asiakkaan huomio halutaan ohjata tiettyyn asiaan. Kysymystekniikka ei kuitenkaan saa rakentua kokonaan suljettuihin kysymyksiin, jottei asiakas vieraannu keskustelusta.

Apteekissa tapahtuvan tarvekartoituksen aikana asiakkaalle kannattaa kertoa, mihin kysymysten esittämisellä pyritään. Tällöin asiakkaalta voidaan huoletta kysyä oleelliset asiat loukkaamatta tai hämmentämättä tätä. Apteekkarin työhön kuuluu myös kiusallisten kysymysten esittäminen, joten on tärkeää, että asiakas kokee tilanteen ammattimaisena. Kysymykset tulee esittää paitsi hienovaraisesti myös yksityisyydensuoja oikeuksia kunnioittaen. Mitä intiimimmästä asiasta on kyse, sitä paremmin apteekkarin tulisi ohjata asiakas liikkeessä rauhallisempaan paikkaan, jossa asiasta voidaan keskustella asiakkaan kanssa tämän yksityisyyden suojan kärsimättä.

#### 4. Hyötyjen esittely

Kun myyntiprosessin aiemmat vaiheet on hoidettu huolella, on tuotteen esittely myyjän osalta helppoa. Huolellisen ennakkovalmistautumisen ansiosta myyjä tuntee tuotteensa sekä niiden edut. Tarvekartoituksen avulla hän on saanut jo selville asiakkaan tarpeet, joten jäljelle jää enää oikean tuotteen löytäminen sekä esittely.

Tuotteen hyötyjä esitellessä täytyy huomioida se, ettei tilanne vaikutta myyjän yksinpuhelulta tai tuotteen pakkotyrykyttämiseltä asiakkaalle. Tuotteen hyötyjen esittelyn päätarkoituksena on antaa asiakkaalle sopiva vastaus kysymykseen, miksi tuote kannattaa ostaa ja miksi se on hänelle oikea ratkaisu. Hyvä myyjä selvittää tarvekartoituksen avulla asiakkaan tarpeet sekä mitä asioita asiakas eniten arvostaa, jotta hän osaa tuote-esittelyn aikana pohjustaa myyntiargumenttinsa juuri näihin seikkoihin, jotka kyseiselle asiakkaalle ovat tärkeitä. Hyötyjen esittelyssä kannattaakin kiinnittää suuresti huomiota asiakkaaseen yksilönä ja mistä seikoista hän on kiinnostunut; kaksi asiakasta voivat päätyä samaan tuotteeseen täysin eri syistä.

#### 5. Vastaväitteiden käsittely

Myyntikeskusteluissa syntyy yleensä vastaväitteitä asiakkaan puolelta. Tätä ei tule säikähtää vaan se on myyjälle jopa hyvä merkki, usein vastaväitteitä miettiessään asiakas on silloin kiinnostunut tuotteesta ja

pohtii sen hankkimista. Vastaväitteiden käsittely on myös hyväksi; kun asiakas itse esittää väittämiä, myyjä voi korjata asiakkaan huolenaiheet selittämällä tälle tuotteen niistä puolista, jotka epäilyttävät asiakasta. Kohdatessasi vastaväitteitä sinulla on oiva hetki osoittaa pätevyytesi ja parantaa asiakkaan luottamusta.

Vastaväitteiden käsittely on pääasiassa kysymyksiin vastaamista; asiakas toteaa jonkin syyn miksi ei ole vakuuttunut tuotteesta, johon taas myyjä pääsee vastaamaan ja yrittämään muuttaa negatiivisen asenteen positiiviseksi. Vastaväitteet kannattaa hyväksyä osaksi jokapäiväistä myyntityötä. Hyväksyminen ei kuitenkaan tarkoita sitä, ettei niihin tulisi valmistautua. Varautumalla etukäteen osaa käsitellä asiaa paremmin itse tilanteessa. Hyvän myyjän tulee pysyä rauhallisena ja esittää perusteluissaan uusia näkökulmia asiakkaalle. Hyvän ilmapiirin säilyttäminen ja asiakkaan mielipiteiden arvostaminen vie parhaaseen lopputulokseen, tällä saadaan asiakkaan luottamus paremmaksi ja hänen mahdolliset huolensa vakuutetuiksi.

#### 6. Kaupan päättäminen

Kaikki myyntiprosessin osat on hyödyllistä käydä läpi huolellisesti oikeassa järjestyksessä. Kaupan päättäminen on kuitenkin eräänlainen poikkeuksen tähän sääntöön. Myyjän tulee olla tarkkaavainen tulkitessaan asiakkaan mahdollisia ostosignaaleja. Mikäli asiakas vaikuttaa valmiilta ostamaan, tulee myyjän ehdottaa kaupan päättämistä heti.

Usein myyjät pitävät kaupan päättämisen ehdottamista kiusallisena ja voivat kavahtaa kieltävää vastausta. Kauppaa ei aina synny, mutta se kuuluu myyntityöhön. Kielteinen vastaus kannattaa ottaa mahdollisuutena oppia uutta, myöhemmin on hyödyllistä pohtia, mikä meni pieleen. Vastauksen perusteella voi huomata hyviä parannusehdotuksia niin oman myyntityön kuin tuotteenkin osalta.

#### 7. Lisämyynti

Ammattitaitoinen myyjä osaa ehdottaa asiakkaalle sellaisiakin tuotteita tai palveluita, joita hän ei varta vasten tullut hakemaan. Tarkoituksena ei kuitenkaan saa olla asiakkaalle väkisin tuotteiden tuputtaminen. Lisätuotteita suosittelemalla ja perustelemalla asiakasta voi muistuttaa tärkeistä häneltä mahdollisesti unohtuneista tuotteista, jotka auttaisivat häntä ja täydentäisivät hänen tarpeitaan. Hyvin hoidetulla lisämyynnillä voidaan säästää asiakkaalta uusi kauppareissu, koska hän saa yhdellä käynnillä kaiken mitä todella tarvitsee. Täten saadaan myös parannettua asiakas tyytyväisyyttä. Asiakkaalle on kannattavaa saada asiantuntijalta ostoehdotuksia, joista hän kokee saavansa hyötyä.

Asiantuntijoilla on vaihtelevia mielipiteitä siitä, milloin on oikea aika lisämyynnille. Kaikki ovat kuitenkin yksimielisiä siitä, että tarvekartoitus on hyvä viedä loppuun ennen tuotteiden esittelyä. Tarvekartoituksen avulla tuotetta on helpompaa suositella asiakkaalle, sekä jatkaa sen pohjalta lisämyyntituotteiden esittelyä.

Tarvekartoitukseen perustuva lisämyynti on myös eettisempää, sillä silloin myyt lisää tuotteita asiakkaan yksilöllisiin tarpeisiin perustuen. Näkemämme lisämyynti on usein kaupan tiskillä tapahtuvaa turhanomaista tuotteiden mainostusta, esimerkiksi:

”huomasitkos, että meillä on nyt patterit tarjouksessa, kannattaisi ostaa nyt.”

Tällainen lisämyynti antaa konseptista huonon kuvan, sillä se ei perustu miltään osin asiakkaan tarpeisiin tai asianomaiseen myyntityöhön. Lisämyynti on positiivinen asia sekä myyjälle, että asiakkaalle, sillä sen avulla asiakas saa tarpeensa täytettyä ja myyjä saa yritykselle voittoa.

Lisämyynnin kategoriat

Lisämyyntiin liittyy kaksi eri tyyppiä:

”Lisämyynti” = myyt lisänä tuotetta, joka liittyy samaan tuoteperheeseen asiakkaan päätuotteen kanssa. Esimerkki tästä apteekki myynnissä voisi olla; asiakas ostaa Buranaa flunssan oireisiin, ja apteekkari tarvekartoituksen myötä osaa myös tarjota asiakkaalle Nasolin - nenäsumutetta tulevaan tai päällä olevaan tukkoisuuteen.

”Ristiin myynti” = myyt jotain toista tuotekategoriaa kuin asiakkaan päätuote. Esimerkkinä tarvekartoituksen aikana huomioitu toissijainen tarve kuten; asiakas ostaa silmätippoja siitepölyallergiasta johtuvaan ärtymykseen, ja tarvekartoituksessa mainitsee lenkkeilevänsä mökkiteillä koiransa kanssa. Tässä kohtaa voisi mainita/muistuttaa onko koiralle tullut hankittua matolääkettä tai punkkisuojava. Ristiin myynti -tapaukset ovat hyvin yksilöllisiä ja asiakkaasta riippuvia, mutta kannattaa siksi keksittyä kaikkiin asiakkaan kommentteihin tarvekartoituksessa.

Muista, että kun asiakas on tyytyväisellä tuulella oikean tuotteen löytämisestä, hän on usein halukas tekemään muitakin hankintoja samalla reissulla, kun kerta on jo paikan päällä. Tästä jää hyvä ja aikaansaanut tunne asiakkaalle ja johtaa siten parempaan asiakaskokemukseen.

Myyntiprosessin vaiheita on hyvä kertailla mielessään. Usein erialojen myyjät pysyttäytyvät omassa rutiinissaan ja omalla mukavuusalueellaan. Myynti on kuitenkin kehittyvä ala, asiakkaiden odotuksen myyjistä ja heidän tehtävistään muuttuvat. On aina suotuisaa kaikille osapuolille, että myyjät kokeilevat uutta ja ylläpitävät osaamistaan sekä koulutustaan.