



IS UPSELLING ON YOUR CHRISTMAS LIST?



Perhaps you should add upgrading, as well, says NEIL OSBORNE, and explains how replacing an upsell with upgrade works wonders.

Most people would never add an 'upsell' to their Christmas list, but every clinic and salon owner (especially this year), should be making it a must-have for every client. So how do you remove the 'icky' factor from upselling – so that clients easily say 'Yes' and feel good about themselves?

Sometimes it's the simplest things that make a huge difference. In this case, it's the way something is framed and the words used to do that, which have a huge impact on the reactions of clients, the way your team feel about offering an upsell and the results you get.

First, let's clarify what an upsell is – it's a technique used to encourage clients to purchase additional associated goods or services, thereby making the primary purchase more expensive. The classic example is when you're ordering coffee and you're asked, "Would you like a large or grande?"

Whether you have limited clients through the doors, or you're rushed off your feet, up-selling is a simple way to increase your daily turnover. The positive impact can be quite significant. In many clinics it can add from 10-25 per cent to their average client transaction. That's incremental income with little additional costs, so most of it travels straight to the profit line. So, if you're struggling with profit, upselling is one skill you can focus on to turn your results around.

However, upselling requires your team to be skilled at taking your clients from what they want to what they really need, because in that gap is where your hidden profit lies. Many team members, I've found, are uncomfortable with the whole concept. That's mainly because they associate it with sleazy salespeople who try to upsell everyone and anyone – regardless of whether it's needed or not. Instead, if you focus on your client's overall service experience and goals, upselling tremendously benefits both you and your client.

THE WORDS YOU USE

The first step is to change you and your team's feelings about what you're doing. That's achieved with a simple word change. It works because the way you frame your suggestion, has a direct impact on how clients react. Whenever possible, frame things in a positive light so that they can see a clear gain.

This small change in you and your team's internal language, will result in you seeing the skill of upselling in a different light. So, from today try using a different word, a word that's more attractive – upgrade.

We introduced the word 'upgrade' into our training about four years ago and noticed a clear and measurable change in the attitude and success rate of therapists. Suddenly, upgrading a client became far

more comfortable for both the clinic team and client. After all, who doesn't want to be upgraded?

WHY IT WORKS

The word 'upgrade' works because of 'The Must-Have Effect' – inherently suggesting prestige, specialness and a can't-do-without factor. That automatically raises your suggestion to a higher standard, one that improves what they'd previously agreed on, by adding-on or replacing aspects to make it bigger, better, or more desirable.

The Upgrade skill is just one of the five pillars of client conversations. In principle, it describes the action of suggesting to a client that they add further treatments to today's visit. In some clinics, it's called 'add-ons'. Ideally the Upgrade is an additional treatment within the same or a very strongly associated treatment category, that's added to the client's current treatment booked.

WHAT'S A CROSS-SELL?

The terms 'up-sell' and 'cross-sell' are frequently confused because they're closely aligned. The distinction lies in what you're recommending. Cross-selling is when you move from one treatment category to another – an example is when you offer a hair removal client, an injectables consult. It's the second of the five pillars of client conversation skills and often the most challenging for therapists to master. (Space won't allow me to dive into our 3-step Cross-Sell formula – and yes, you guessed it, there's another new word to use, too.)

WHERE AND WHEN TO UPGRADE

While upgrades can be used in many areas of your business, the most common area is the in-room consultation. When offering one, keep your language short, succinct, and uncomplicated. That conveys confidence in your offer and implies that other clients frequently buy the same combination. An example is asking a client to extend their booked treatment, of hair removal – if they've booked a LHR ½ leg, you suggest a full leg. Most therapists find the upgrade the easiest of the five client conversations skills, with the most popular being the addition of underarms to a Brazilian LHR.

The beauty of upgrades lies in two things: one word change and the use of the same room and equipment, to deliver an extra treatment, at greater profitability. Are you going to upgrade your Christmas? *Neil Osborne has worked exclusively in the salon, clinic and aesthetic markets for over three decades. He teaches businesses and brands, how to be profitable and commercially clever. THESALESCATALYST.COM.AU*