



Everything I Learned About Methodical Decision Makers, I Learned From My Mom

Whatever you're selling, you must reach out to a decision maker. All kinds of selling techniques are used, but the bottom line is decision makers are people. They have identifiable needs, preferences, and even motivations for what they buy. They have goals, dreams and hopes.

That couldn't be truer when I recently took my mom out to look for a dress. Let me start by saying that my mother has impeccable taste. She puts great thought into her buying decisions. This particular dress had to be the perfect dress. Why? It is for her very first granddaughter's wedding in August.

When we started off on this adventure, I knew it would take several days. Why? My mom is a methodical decision maker who toils a great deal about her decisions. She studies the most microscopic details before she buys and asks many people for their advice. She will need to try on many dresses and see many options. I, on the other hand, did not get that gene from my mother (that is, if the shopping gene comes from the mother's side). I must admit that I'm probably one of few women in the world who doesn't like to shop. When I do need to shop, I have an idea of what I'm looking for, I go in, get what I need, make a decision, purchase, and leave. But I know my mom, and she likes to go in, look at every rack, explore all of her options, try on those options, and think about it for some time. And then, and only then, after much deliberation, she will make a decision.

So when she asked if she could come for a visit and if I would go shopping with her for a dress, I knew that it would not be a one-day adventure. For those of you who know me, you know that I have over 20 years of experience with various behavior-based assessments. So I took my years of experience, and applied it here realizing that I needed to get out of the way of my mom's decision making process so she could make her decision. I'm well aware that my quick-style decision making can put undue pressure on my mom who is a methodical decision maker.

I was bound and determined to give my mom all the space she needed to make her decision. So I took her to one of the finest stores in the area figuring that would be the best strategic move in securing a decision. We went into one of the finer stores and would you believe, there it was: the most perfect two piece dress. As she put on this violet colored top and then the chiffon flowing floor-length skirt, it fit her well and the color was perfect on her. While a two-piece dress (top and skirt) was not originally what my mom had in mind, the sales person assured her the skirt could be cut down with simple alterations at the store. Additionally, she could return it for a full refund if she found something else. In typical methodical decision-making fashion, my mom studied that dress and tried it on several times. I noticed that she was really studying the tags, but my mom tends to do that from her many years as a checker for a major department store.

I could tell something was still bothering her so we continued to look. I'm convinced that each store conspires to purchase the same dresses no matter where you go because two major malls, 10 stores,



and 51 dresses later, there was a whole lot of overlap from store to store. However, there was no other dress like the one she put on at the first store.

After two days of shopping, we went back home. She needed reassurance from my father and my husband, so she tried on the dress and got the reassurance she needed from them.

When my mother and father left to return home, I wanted to make sure that I didn't put pressure on her to make that buying decision because I noticed she didn't seem really excited about it. My mom gets really excited, almost giddy, when she makes a good buying decision. I called her up a few days later and asked her if I put pressure on her to make that decision. She said, "No, why do you ask?" I let her know that I noticed she didn't seem really excited about the dress. I asked her if there was something wrong with it. She said, "Well, now that you mention it, I noticed that the tags had two different colors on them. The top said Violet and the bottom had another color." Visually the colors matched, but it likely had two different colors on the tags because the fabric was different so the dye lots would have to be different.

Methodical decision makers have a natural tendency to look for discrepancies and try to remove risk by stockpiling all of the details. One out-of-place detail can turn a "yes" into a "no". They are very thorough and think things through. This is an asset because they look at every possible scenario. They view this thoroughness as being efficient so they don't have to do any rework later. Like all decision processes, it must be managed. When applied to a business scenario, this level of detail could also slow down a process and result in missed opportunities or delays.

Ultimately, my mom acknowledged that it made sense that the tag colors were different; but there's still time between now and August to see if she changes her mind. After all of these years, I still learn a lot from my mom. I couldn't have asked for a sweeter, more generous mom and spending time with her is priceless. Thanks, Mom, for being such a great teacher.