

COMMODITY THINKING IS SMALL THINKING

Commodity thinking is small thinking. Buyers who view the products they purchase as commodities have a low opinion of their needs, too. Fundamentally, buyers that buy commodities are tacitly admitting that they are not special, and it is reflected in their buying behavior. “I buy nothing special because I am nothing special.” They may not come right out and say it, but that is what I hear when they denigrate the value of a solution.

This is called value-stripping in negotiating terms. The buyer thinks, “If I can diminish the importance of the solution that my supplier offers, that salesperson will lack the confidence and esteem to hold fast to their prices during the negotiation.” How wrong can a buyer be! They are special. You are special.

Do not fall victim to this tactic. Do not view the customer’s situation as “nothing special.” Do not become a willing accomplice in the de-valuing of your solution. When a buyer attempts to convince you that all you sell is a commodity, you can respond this way: “Mr. Buyer, I am sorry to hear you say this because what you are really saying is that there is nothing special about your needs, and I respectfully disagree. We view each of our customers as special, regardless of the similarities of their needs. For me to accept that our solution is not special is tantamount to my saying that your needs are not special. Some vendors may tell you that, but we won’t!”

Your solution is as special as you are. Do not diminish the importance of what you do. Embrace what makes you special and share that enthusiasm with your customers.

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