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Personal Selling

26.1 Introduction

You are well aware that marketing does not mean only offering the goods and services produced to the consumers for price and distributing them. Consumer satisfaction is the core of marketing. Goods and services are produced after studying the requirements of the consumers. Once these are produced, the consumers are informed and convinced that the products in question can satisfy their needs. Advertisement serves the purpose of keeping the customers informed about the products available in the market. Besides this, consumers also need to be informed about the new products likely to be introduced. Consumers are to be convinced about the quality of the products and the benefits thereof. They need to be persuaded to buy the products. This can best be done by personally contacting the prospective buyers. It is called personal selling. In this lesson you will be learning about personal selling.

25.6 Objectives

After studying this lesson, you will be able to -

- explain the meaning of personal selling;
 - explain the significance of personal selling as an element of marketing.
 - identify the relationship of personal selling with advertisement;
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- bring out distinction between personal selling and advertisement;
- identify and explain the qualities of a good salesman.

26.3 Meaning

Personal selling or Salesmanship is one of the most important methods to contact the prospective buyer personally and to persuade him or her to buy the products. The objective is not only to sell the product to a buyer but to make him or her a permanent customer. This can be achieved by putting the things to the prospective buyer in such a way that he or she is convinced that the products being presented for sale can well satisfy his or her needs. This art and skill of presentation, of goods and convincingly and persuasion to buy the products is called personal selling or salesmanship. For example, a company wants to sell a washing machine. It sends its salesman to a house lady. The salesman talks to the lady and explains to her how badly she needs a washing machine; then he tells her about his own product; he explains to her how it functions and how it is better than other brands; he also tells her about the price and the guarantee period. Applying all his skills he is able to persuade her to buy and then books the order. This is salesmanship.

26.4 Significance of Salesmanship/Personal Selling

The ultimate objective of producing goods and services is to sell them to the consumers. Sales are the major source of revenues to a business. A salesman introduces the goods to the customers, arouses their interest and persuades them to purchase the goods and finalises the deal. He plays a very significant role in selling the products. Indeed, salesmanship is the major factor underlying the success of most business houses.

Following benefits of personal selling show its significance.

1. Benefits from the Consumers point of view

- (i) A Salesman explains to his customers how well the product he is selling can satisfy their needs. He gives them opportunity to make more enquiries about his product. This helps them to match their needs and the product.
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- (ii) He informs them of new products and explains to them how best they can use these products. He may also give a demonstration of use and also explains to them the precautions they should take while using the products.
- (iii) He educates the consumers and guides them so that they can make informed choice of the products which will best satisfy their needs. He provides their after-sales service also.

2. Benefits to businessmen

- (i) A salesman increases the sales and expand, the market by identifying new customers and persuading them to buy the products.
- (ii) Where the product is for selected buyers, like mixer or vacuum cleaner, the salesman identifies the potential customers. He will explain to them using literature the composition of the product, how it is operated and so on. Here person to person contact will help in selling the product and not advertising.
- (iii) He creates more and more regular demand thus makes planned and regular mass production possible.
- (iv) He understands the needs, tastes and preferences of the consumers as well as the nature of products that will match the market demand.
- (v) A salesman finalises the deal. He settles terms and conditions such as payment, delivery etc.

Intext Questions 26.1

Fill in the blanks with suitable words in the following :

- (i) Personal selling is an art and _____ of presentation of goods to the prospective buyer and persuading him to buy it.
 - (ii) A salesman helps the consumers to match their needs with the _____.
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- (iii) Salesman explains to the customers by giving a _____ of how to use it.
 - (iv) Salesman passes on the _____ regarding the needs & taste of the consumers to the manufacturers.
 - (v) Salesman creates more and _____ which makes planned and regular mass production possible.
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26.5 Difference between Personal Selling and Advertising

Advertising and personal selling are two most important methods of creating and increasing demand for goods and services. These are widely used throughout the world to introduce the products to the prospective buyers and pushing the sales. But the two are different from each other in many ways. The points of difference between the two are as follows:

1. Personal selling involves direct interaction of salesmen with individuals. Advertising is nonpersonal and is addressed to the customers in general.
2. Personal selling is confined to a particular area; advertisement is generally found to cover a larger number of people.
3. In personal selling there is a two way communication. The salesman explains his viewpoint to the potential buyer and knows about his/her reaction. In advertisement there is one way communication; the targeted persons' reactions cannot be known immediately.
4. In Personal selling there is only one channel of transmission of messages i.e., personal talk of the salesman with the potential buyers; advertisement offers a wide choice of channels, visual, audio such as radio and audiovisual such as television.

26.6 Inter-relationship between Salesmanship and Advertisement:

Salesmanship and advertisement are two important methods to increase the sales. Both are used to introduce a new product or an existing product in the new market. You have learnt about the difference between the two.

But then the two are very closely related to each other.

Advertisement facilitates the work of salesmen. If the potential buyers are aware of the products because of advertisement, salesmen can easily persuade them to buy the products. If a salesman, all of a sudden contacts the potential buyer and introduces his product about which the buyer does not know, he may totally ignore the plea of the salesman. Moreover why should he stop using the product of some other company all of a sudden. Advertisement gives exposure of the products to the potential buyers. It explains to them the uses and advantages of the product. Salesmen then do not face the resistance of the consumer.

On the other hand, salesman picks up from where advertisement leaves. Advertisement creates demand and salesmanship converts the potential demand created by advertisement into sales. Take the example of a computer or a washing machine or a refrigerator. Advertisement in newspapers on television and so on just make these known to the consumer about the existence of these products and create a desire to have them. But still the consumer is in a stage of indecisiveness. Salesman explains to him how it can satisfy his needs. He will list out the advantages of buying the given product. He may even give demonstration of the same and finally will be successful in selling it.

Personal selling and advertisement are closely related to each other. While Personal selling is called oral advertisement, advertisement is called salesmanship in print.

Intext Questions 26.2

Following statements either give the distinction between personal selling and advertisement or relationship between the two. Write which ones give 'distinction' and which ones explain the 'relationship'.

1. In personal selling there is only one channel of transmission; advertisement offers a wide choice of channels.
 2. If potential buyers are aware of the products because of advertisement; salesmen can easily persuade them to buy them.
 3. Advertisement creates desire to buy the products; salesmanship
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converts the potential demand created by advertisement into actual sale.

4. Personal selling is confined to a particular area; while advertisement is generally found to cover a larger number of people.
5. Personal selling always aims at effecting sales of existing products; advertisement may also aim at enhancing the goodwill of the advertiser who may not be selling the goods and services immediately.
6. Personal selling is used only for promotion and sale of products; advertisement may be used for various other purpose also, such as advertising vacancies, seeking suitable jobs, offering services or advertising for office accommodation on rent, etc.
7. In personal selling, the salesmen are paid salary or commission or both; advertisement is a one time expenditure and varies with time, space and nature of media.
8. The effectiveness of personal selling depends upon the quality of salesman such as ability to convince, knowledge of the product etc., whereas the effectiveness of advertisement depends upon the design of advertisement and the media used for the purpose.

26.7 Qualities of a good Salesman

There are some qualities which make a salesman more effective. The essential qualities are explained below:

1. **Impressive personality** : A salesman should have a good appearance. He should have good build and be well dressed. As soon as a salesman comes into contact with a potential customers, the latter will be impressed by the salesman's pleasing personality.
 2. **Sound health** : A salesman has to work hard. He is to travel a lot. He should possess sound health.
 3. **Knowledge of the product and the company** : A salesman should have full knowledge of the product and the company he is representing. He should be able to explain each and every aspect
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of the product i.e. its qualities, how to use it, what precautions to be taken, etc. He should be able to explain the business and service record of the company. He should also have knowledge of products of rival companies. So that he can put across the superiority of his own products.

4. **Mental qualities** : A good salesman should possess certain mental qualities like imagination, initiative, self-confidence, sharp memory, alertness etc. He should be able to understand the needs and preference of customer.
5. **Integrity of character** : A good salesman should possess the qualities of honesty and integrity. He is to gain the confidence of the customers. He should be able to understand their needs and guide them as how to satisfy those needs. His employer too should have faith in him. A salesman should be loyal both to the employer and to the consumer.
6. **Good behaviour**: A salesman should be co-operative and courteous. Good behaviour enables one to win the confidence of the customers. He should not feel irritated if the buyer puts up many questions even if the questions are irrelevant. It is also not necessary that the person he is trying to convince buys the products. A salesman has to remain courteous in every case.
7. **Ability to persuade** : A salesman should be good in conversation so that he can engage the person he is attending in conversation. He should be able to convince him and create the desire in his mind to possess the commodity.
8. **Flexibility of approach** : He should interact with customers with a flexible approach i.e., try to persuade different types of customers with different reasons.

Intext Questions 26.3

State whether the following statements are 'true' or 'false'

- (i) Knowledge of product is not necessary to make one a good salesman.
 - (ii) A good salesman should have imagination, initiative, alertness etc.
 - (iii) Honesty and integrity need not be there in a salesman.
 - (iv) A salesman becomes good if he has the ability to persuade the customers to buy the products.
 - (v) To become a good salesman one need not be courteous and cooperative.
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26.8 What you have learnt :

Art and skill of presentation of goods and convincing and persuading potential customers to buy the products is called personal selling or salesmanship.

Benefits of personal selling can be noted (a) from the **consumer's** point of view, and (b) from the **businessman's** point of view.

Salesmen help consumers to match their needs and the products and thus making informed choice. The consumers also come to know about new products through salesmen. For businessmen, the salesman increass sales and expands the market. Person to person contact can help selling products to selected buyer. Salesmen create regular demand, understand the needs and preferences of customers for businessmen to match the products to market demand.

Difference between salesmanship and advertisement are :

Salesmanship	Advertisement
(i) Personal	Non-personal
(ii) Confined to particular area.	Generally covers larger number of people
(iii) Two way communication.	One way communication.
(iv) Only one channel of transmission	Wide choice of channels.

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| (v) | Used only for promotion and sale of products. | Used for various other purposes, such as seeking jobs, offering services. |
| (vi) | Aims at selling existing products. | Aims at enhancing goodwill. |
| (vii) | Salesmen get salary or commission or both. | It involves a one time of expenditure. |
| (viii) | Effectiveness depends upon qualities of salesman | Effectiveness depend upon design of advertisement. |

Salesmanship and advertisement are interdependent and are complementary to each other.

Qualities of a good salesman are : (i) Impressive personality (ii) Sound health (iii) Knowledge of the product and the company (iv) Mental qualities such as imagination, initiative etc. (v) Integrity of character (vi) Good behaviour (vii) Ability to persuade and (viii) Flexibility in approach.

26.9 Terminal Exercise

1. State the meaning of personal selling
2. Differentiate between personal selling and advertisement on the basis of (a) area of coverage and (b) number of channels of communication.
3. Enumerate any four mental qualities in a good salesman.
4. Explain the benefits of personal selling (a) from the customers point of view and (b) from the businessman point of view.
5. “Personal selling and advertisement are inter-dependent and complementary to each other”. Discuss the statement bringing out the relationship between personal selling and advertisement.
6. Enumerate the various qualities of a good salesman.

26.10 Answers to Intext Questions :

26.1 (i) science (ii) products (iii) demonstration
(iv) information (v) demand

26.2 1. Distinction 2. Relationship 3. Relationship
4. Distinction 5. Distinction. 6. Distinction
7. Distinction 8. Distinction.

26.3 (i) false (ii) true (iii) false (iv) true (v) false
