

Retail Expert Doug Fleener Tells Retail Employees How to Overcome Holiday Challenges

BOSTON, Mass., Nov. 20 (SEND2PRESS NEWSWIRE) – This holiday shopping season is going to be a challenging one for the almost 1 in 10 Americans employed in the retail sector. With specialty retailers facing the weakest holiday growth since 2002 and deep discounting by mass merchants and online retailers, the retail staff is more vital than ever to the specialty retailer's success. In his annual holiday letter to specialty retail employees, retail and customer experience expert Doug Fleener discusses these challenges and opportunities and shares five tips that will enable stores to succeed in current economic conditions.



“The difference this year for specialty retailers will come down to the people in the store. It’s the staff that will have a huge impact on the winners and losers this year,” Fleener says.

The letter appears in Fleener’s newsletters and on his retail blog, *The Retail Contrarian*.

Dear Retail Employee,

With one week left before the “official” launch of the holiday season, let’s discuss the challenges and opportunities facing specialty retailers.

The good news is that there should be some growth this holiday. The bad news for most readers is that most growth will probably happen at the discounters and online. No one can deny that it is going to be a challenging year for specialty retailers.

But with every challenge comes opportunity. For every store that struggles there will be another that succeeds. For every store that fails before the doors open another will succeed out of sheer determination. For every staff that throws in the towel another will grind it out.

The difference this year is going to be you. I’m convinced that the difference this year for specialty retailers will come down to the people in the store. It’s the staff that will have a huge impact on the winners and losers this year.

Here are some tips for you and your colleagues to make sure you're one of those winning stores:

1. Stay positive. Attitude could be the biggest difference between the winning and losing stores this year. Every employee needs to do his or her part in keeping a positive outlook.
2. Succeed one day at a time. If you have a bad day – shake it off. If you have a good day – do it again. You make your holiday by making your month. You make your month by making your week. You make your week by making your day.
3. Maximize every customer opportunity. Don't let your guard down and miss even one sale, because that one sale could be the difference in success or falling short.
4. Don't pre-judge what a customer is going to spend. Customers aren't a survey in the newspaper. Customers aren't a sales projection in some pundit's article. Customers are unique individuals who offer us a unique opportunity. Give them a unique experience and you're sure to be rewarded.
5. Be a better salesperson every single day. Push yourself out of your comfort zone. Keep showing products until the customer says they're done. Focus on increasing your average sales and unit-per-transaction.

It doesn't matter if you work for the owner of an independent store, a regional or national corporation; I believe you can make the difference this holiday.

Do you?

About Doug Fleener

Doug Fleener is president and managing partner for Dynamic Experiences Group LLC (dynamicexperiencesgroup.com), a Lexington, Massachusetts retail and customer experience training and consulting firm. He is the former director of retailer for Bose Corporation with over 25 years of hands-on retail experience. He has also owned and operated his own specialty stores.

Fleener is the author of "The Profitable Retailer: 56 surprisingly simple and effective lessons to boost your sales and profits" (ISBN-13: 978-1933631264, paperback, 228 pp, Acanthus Publishing). He publishes the retail industry's only daily subscription newsletter, The Daily Retail Experience, which specializes in the growth and development of specialty retail stores and staff.

Fleener is available throughout the holidays to discuss the issues facing specialty retailers this holiday season.

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