



CHUCK CUMMING

THE PROFIT PRO SHOP

LOOK, LISTEN, THEN BUY

The most exciting time of the fall golf season is when the different golf companies introduce their lines for the coming year.

Golf manufacturers have spent the last year or more designing, styling and manufacturing their ideas into what they believe are the finest golf clubs, bags, balls and apparel. Thousands of dollars and man hours have gone into preparing for sales meetings. Salesmen have traveled to these meetings in different parts of the country to listen to the presentations and gain first-hand knowledge of each and every line.

Now, Mr. Golf Professional, it's your turn to become excited over every company's new line.

When a salesman calls on you to introduce his new line, he is doing so with pride. He is proud of his company, of his merchandise and he wants you to be equally as proud of them.

What are some of the things you should look for when viewing a new line with a salesman?

If you have done business with the company before, you know the company's policies and most of the merchandise. So, you are looking mainly for something new—something that will fit into your pro shop and will make money for you. To do justice to each salesman and his line, you should average at least an hour for each. An hour may seem like a lot of time to spend viewing new merchandise. But how else are you going to find the items you need? How else are you going to learn about the new features? Remember, the salesman is interested in selling his merchandise; but he is more interested in selling you potential money-making items.

Make sure you fully understand each company's credit policy. Our economy is based on credit, and with all of the dating and discounts offered to golf professionals, it's to your advantage to understand them.

Dating and discount policies help you make money. As you know, most companies want to deliver their merchandise to your shop as early as they can and to extend your payments over many months. In most cases, by accepting the goods as early as possible, you can sell it before your bill is due. This arrangement allows you to pay the full bill and to take the discount. You have then established credit. If your credit remains good, the company will continue to do business with you.

Quality is paramount to you and your members. There are different grades of quality. For example, a golf bag that sells for \$25 obviously cannot duplicate the quality or the features of a \$100 golf bag. But you have to decide if the \$25 bag has \$25 worth of quality and if it can be sold for \$25. How does it compare to other \$25 bags you've examined? Check the bottom, check the stitching, check the sides and anything else that is important to you. Test the quality of every item you buy.

SERVICE

You probably will have the option to buy clubs, bags, clothing and accessories from several different companies. What's the extra plus that makes them different: Service. Can the company deliver when and what they promise. A reliable company can be your salvation. It's money in the bank when you have in your inventory the merchandise the customer wants,

when he wants it. Deal with companies that give the golf professional service.

DEFECTIVE MERCHANDISE

Every company, no matter how tight their quality control is, will come up occasionally with faulty merchandise. From past experience, you know if a company will guarantee replacement or credit on an at-once-basis. This is the kind of company with which you should be dealing.

In selecting a new company, you should follow this checklist:

1. Does the salesman know his line;
2. How often will the salesman call on you;
3. Do you know the company, at least by reputation;
4. Are the credit terms right for you;
5. What are the delivery dates;
6. What is the quality of the merchandise;
7. What is the company's advertising program.

I am sure there are other checks that you may want to make; these, I think, are the important ones.

I urge every golf professional to allow the salesman an opportunity to show his merchandise.

Remember, he wants your business and not just for his commission. The sooner he has your order in hand, the better service you will receive. Don't force him to make a return call; he may not be able to return because of the expense and because his travel itinerary is made weeks in advance.

Have your "Open to Buy" when the salesman calls. I am sure that the fall selling trip of every salesman will be a refreshing and exciting experience for every golf professional. □