

What does it take to be a professional underwriting salesperson?

There are some basic characteristics that help make up your personality as a professional underwriting salesperson. Whether you're meeting with an ad agency media planner or buyer, the marketing director, president or CEO of a company, your personality – your personal “brand” – is what will help open the relationship and turn it into a long-standing, mutually beneficial one.

Make sure you have these basic bases covered:

1. **Appearance** – Your personal dress and grooming, your car (don't forget you'll be taking clients to lunch) and sales materials must be presentable. They tell a lot about you and your station.
2. **Pride and Passion** – in yourself, your company, your product or service and, your profession. It comes through loudly and clearly, speaks volumes about you... and it's contagious. It won't take long before your client will show his or her pride in being an underwriter on your station.
3. **Confidence** – in yourself, your company, and your product or service – makes you more credible in the eyes of your prospect.
4. **Warmth** – sincerity cannot be faked. Be real, it's what makes for a solid relationship.
5. **The “More is Better” motto** – Give your customers more in value than you receive from them in cash. Under promise and over deliver. You'll be a hero.
6. **Desire to Achieve** – If you don't have desire, you won't succeed. Your drive to help others get what they want will get you what you want.
7. **Integrity** – Make your word your bond. Your values will be recognized, welcomed and appreciated.
8. **Know your station's programming** – nothing aggravates people more than dealing with a sales person who doesn't know their product. Our station and it's programming, along with our audience, is our product.

9. Do what is best for the client - offer them suggestions, know their product/service, offer them research on the market and other media options. Let them utilize you as a resource and create a strong professional relationship that will be long term.
10. Know the client's expectations - make sure they are. If the client cannot afford to do an effective schedule, tell them not to have high expectations, so they won't be disappointed. It is better to walk away than have a client who won't work with you in the future.
11. Listen before you speak. This is very important because the product or service must be able to meet the client's needs. This may not fall into the personality characteristic list, but integrity, listening skills, and willingness to educate the client are very important.
12. Perseverance – desire and willingness to 'stay with it' in pursuit of that ultimate goal of contracting your potential client. There will always be 'highs' and 'lows' on the road to success.
13. Diplomatic/Professional Attitude – there will always be that very generous but rather 'difficult' client/underwriter who is hard to satisfy at the beginning. However, putting oneself 'in his shoes,' so to speak, will give you the insight and intelligence to meet his/her needs and end up with a happy client.
14. "Think Big" – Every client is important, no matter their size. Treat every underwriter with the same service, respect, and dignity. You never know when (or from whom) the next 'big contract' will come!

These traits will underscore your underwriting sales professionalism – an integral part of the landscape that is public radio. It will help open the doors and keep them open, leading you on a successful career path as a professional underwriting salesperson.