

14 Tiny Details

That Matter at Retail

When you're selling a mattress, the small things add up. Paying attention to those tiny details can lead to big sales for your team.

In honor of NanoCoil®, the tiny coil with big potential, we've outlined 14 off-the-radar ideas that can take your store and your selling game to the next level. Dig into the details and start winning big. Be sure to print and post this in your break room and hand out to your entire team.



1 Your ability to ask good questions is a secret super power

Asking questions reveals your intelligence. Through a good line of questions, you will uncover information that will allow you to lead customers to the best mattress for their needs. Also, good questions allow people to be heard and understood. When the other person is talking, they will walk away from the interaction with a positive feeling. If you do most of the talking, that person will have a less favorable impression of the interaction. Remember, you need to get them talking and you'll be more likely to close a sale.

Here's how you get them talking and keep them talking until they talk themselves into purchasing a mattress from you. Good questions are mostly open-ended. Do not ask questions that can be answered with yes, no, or single words. For example, do not ask, "What size mattress are you needing?" Instead, say, "Tell me about your sleep space." This question is less direct than asking them to describe their bedroom and it will help you understand if the shopper sleeps with a partner, has children, and allows pets in bed. If they fail to mention the bed size, make a good guess and use these exact words: "So you're sleeping on a king-size mattress?" People love correcting others. Sherlock Holmes would use this type of question-asking because he knew most people have an overwhelming desire for information to be correct. If you ask seemingly dumb questions, or offer incorrect assumptions, the shopper will correct you. Use this technique sparingly and only when appropriate. For example, if the shopper tells you she has a Boxer puppy, you want to remember that information and show her that you're listening. It's of no value to you to say, "So your Doberman puppy sleeps with you?" That would look bad. However, if you say, "So your Boxer puppy sleeps with you?" and she confirms, you have a reason to explain the need for a king-size mattress because that little dog is going to get big and she'll have much less sleep space.

Once you know more about their sleep space, you can begin identifying some solutions. One tiny detail you need to know is that your questions are creating a time investment. The shopper is spending time in your store. The longer someone is exposed to a stranger, the more they trust that person. The longer someone invests time in a process, the more likely they are to stick with that activity and see it through to the end. It's called the principle of time invested. If they spend two hours in your store, they are more likely to buy something because they don't want to suffer the pain of starting over somewhere else.



2 Clean windows

A friend who owns 30 mattress stores once told me they set themselves apart by making sure their shops weren't "dirty window stores." Make sure your windows are clean and take that mentality a step further. Take extreme control over your environment. Make a decision right now that no store will have higher standards and every detail will be monitored and thought through. No more yellowing blocks of foam samples stuffed under the \$299 queen sets. No more messy desk. No more dust bunnies gathering in the bathroom. Own your environment. Make it clean and welcoming. When you decide to invest in extreme ownership of your space, you'll find joy in making sure it's impeccable and your customers will notice.



3 Sleep-focused greetings

When someone walks in the store, you can set yourself apart by focusing on the life-changing benefits of good sleep. Drop the shtick. Be real. Exchange a greeting. Introduce yourself, ask the person's name, and then say, "Hey Brad, if you don't mind, let's start with something simple – tell me how you slept last night." It's an open-ended request-style question that will get them to divulge information about their sleep health. Once you understand a person's sleep experience, you can guide them to great products.



4 Smell matters

Eat lunch in the back. Showrooms that smell like Chipotle are not relaxing. If an "up" walks in while you're plowing down Chick-fil-A and your space smells like french fries, it can be a big turn-off.



5 Dress like a winner

If you look good you feel good, if you feel good you do good. I shouldn't have to say this, but I see many RSAs with a massive wardrobe problem. It's unfortunate. If your clothes look like junk, fix it. Look in the mirror. Be self-aware enough to know the shirt with your store's logo looks old. The collar is fraying and the color is fading. Get a new shirt and put on some nice pants. For those interested in current fashion, most pleated pants are out of style and pants with cuffs at the bottom are only good for holding crumbs from your Chick-fil-A fries. Pleated and cuffed pants can look nice, but I'm just pointing out they are not the current style. Here's my advice: buy five or six outfits that fit and wear the same outfit each day of the week. It'll be your uniform. Once you purchase your clothes, take your pants to the tailor and get them hemmed. Don't walk around in khakis that belong on a '90s rapper. Your tailor will show you how long the britches should be and you'll feel like a million bucks once they're hemmed. Yes, this is an investment, but remember how much a first impression matters. Discerning customers might think, "If this guy doesn't care about how he looks, how can he care about me and my needs?" Clothes and your general cleanliness create a first impression. Make it count. Take care of the details. By the way, I'm mostly speaking to men because I don't see many female RSAs suffering from wardrobe woes. Well done, ladies.



6 Toss the yellowing foam samples

I can't believe how many stores have crusty and yellowing foam samples lying around. When you're trying to build value in a component, make sure the hand sample isn't junk. It does you no favors to show a pressure-relieving material that looks like it went through the dryer after a dog peed on it. Foam samples are susceptible to discoloration and becoming dried out. Get rid of those blocks and replace them with a fresh cut of foam.



7 Have customers choose a pillow first

Get each person to use their favorite pillow on all the beds they try. This technique does a few things. First, by introducing the pillow in the beginning, you don't have to treat it as an upsell at the end. Also, when they select a pillow, they've taken ownership of the process. Humans are often more likely to follow through on an idea when it's their own than when it's somebody else's.



8 Don't explain how your store is laid out

I've seen RSAs mouth-dump their store layout on people. When that happens, the customer looks confused almost every time. They don't know what you just said. Some RSAs explain the store layout with good intentions; they want to give the customer a roadmap and get out of their way so the shopper doesn't feel like the salesperson is hovering. I get it, but instead of rattling off the layout, point out two beds you really recommend they try, then get out of the way. In a Stanford study on decision-making, people who were given two choices had no trouble making a decision, but when that same group was offered three options, most participants were nearly crippled with indecision. That's why I recommended giving them two beds to try. Here's the main point – you are suffering the curse of knowledge. You know everything by heart and it's easy for you to spout off, but often that information isn't clear to the customer.



9 Zoom out to 30,000 feet

The details can be daunting. At some point during the sales process, the customer is going to feel like they're drinking from a fire hose. They're trying to absorb all this new information and it's impossible. Say, "Let's hit the reset button for a minute." At that point, highlight up to three main points that recap what you've heard. Something like, "So far we know you need some more space, your husband has back issues, and you want a bed with a good edge. This really narrows us down to two really good options, both of which you have tried. How do you feel about going back to each of these mattresses and giving them another try?" Keep it simple and find ways to reset.



10 Simplify the main ingredients

Friends and family often ask me what to look for in a mattress. They know I work in the industry and they want to know what really makes a good mattress. Over the years, I have distilled my answer into a simple paragraph. *You want to make sure it's comfortable and offers proper spinal alignment. The feel is the deal. Make sure you're buying high-density foams or micro coils and a fabric-encased coil system with tempered steel wire.* When you're working with customers who prefer you to be a consultant, have a simple way to summarize the main points.



11 Rethink your overhead lighting

I know you can't always help this, but those fluorescent bulbs are harsh and do not emit a soothing effect. If at all possible, get control over your store's lighting. Use lamps with dimmers to create a more soothing experience. I know you want to show how pretty your mattresses are, but the customer experience is key. You can help shoppers imagine having your mattresses in their home by creating an environment that more closely mirrors their personal space. Nobody I've ever met had fluorescent lights over their bed.



12 Give courtesy blankets to ladies in shorts or skirts

When women in skirts or shorty shorts (or men in kilts) are trying beds, they might feel self-conscious and avoid fully relaxing and trying the mattress. Courtesy blankets are an easy way to offer an extra layer of comfort and relaxation so your customers don't feel awkward due to a wardrobe malfunction.



13 How to end the sale

I've talked about this technique before. It's a pro move worth adopting. After the sale is complete, take the customer back to the bed to show them which mattress they purchased. You wouldn't believe the number of people who aren't sure. Next, walk them to the door, hand them their receipt, and remind them about the delivery date. Smile. Wave. Go make another sale.



14 Bring doctor booties and sleep essentials

Your delivery drivers are the final touchpoint of the sale. A great experience can fall apart if Tim and Ricky track mud onto Mrs. Morgan's carpet. Have your team pack those blue doctor booties and place them over their feet before walking into a home. Also, you should have them keep carpet cleaner in the truck and train them on how to properly remove a stain in the event something happens. Finally, make sure they keep new sheet sets and mattress protectors and offer them to customers for sale. Many people forget to buy sheets and actually need a new set for that night. This is your chance to add value and increase sales.

At retail, the tiny details add up to create a big impact. When you're evaluating your store, sales process, and customer experience, make sure to consider the small things because they make a big difference.

While you're evaluating the tiny parts of your business, take a peek at Leggett & Platt's NanoCoil comfort layer technology. Comfortable, cooling, dynamic, and durable, it's the tiny coil with big selling stories. Add NanoCoil to your stores today. Ask your mattress manufacturers to build products with Leggett & Platt's NanoCoil – the tiny coil with big potential.

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