

How to Close Wedding Sales, Tiger Lily Style

In the March issue of Floral Management, Growth columnist Manny Gonzales, of Tiger Lily Florist in Charleston, South Carolina, shared tips from his top wedding sales team member, Gayla Harvey, on how to close a wedding sale:

“Gayla creates the proposal during the consultation. Part of her process is to ask [the budget question.] Most folks won’t say [how much they’re prepared to spend], which doesn’t help either party, but that’s the way it is. Near the end of the consultation, Gayla will leave the room to pull the proposal off the printer. She’ll wait a few minutes to let the family discuss the one question on everybody’s mind: ‘How much is this going to cost?’ When Gayla returns, she says: ‘OK, I have the proposal complete. Let me ask you, what do you think the total price will be?’ The people will guess, like it’s a game as to who can guess closest. Then Gayla puts the proposal down and announces the price.

If the price is lower than expected, Gayla is a hero. There are no obstacles, and they sign.

If the price is higher, Gayla will say, ‘Well, it’s higher than that, but I have some ideas on how to get you to budget.’ She will then sit with the family and reduce or remove some items. She’s not lowering the prices, she’s removing or downsizing items. If she can hit the magic number without sacrificing quality, they’ll book. She’ll also hold her ground and say, ‘You definitely need this, or don’t go smaller with this piece, it’s important.’ The family might find more money to fit their needs, or leave to think about it. Worst case, we’re still in the mix. **We don’t book everyone**, but we’re confident we’re offering good value and making a fair profit. It works for us, and a good example of an effective sales process. Again, if they book someone else just on price, then we were just too expensive or we didn’t do a job of building the value of a Tiger Lily wedding.”