

## CONTROLLING FITTING ROOM LOSSES

Because your customers are largely unmonitored while trying on clothes, fitting rooms can be one of the most difficult areas in your store to control shoplifting and other forms of customer fraud. As a result, retail companies have had to implement stringent fitting room procedures, and also ensure that their staff are adequately trained to deal with this problem. In this month's issue of the *Solutions Insider*, we will examine a few simple techniques you can use to reduce the amount of losses that occur in your store's fitting rooms.

First and foremost, fitting room attendants need to be on constant vigil while in charge of their store's fitting room area. Quite simply, this means that you need to know exactly who's in your fitting rooms at all times, and you must also understand what merchandise each of your customers has in their possession. Knowing the number of items that your customers have is vital to ensuring that items aren't being removed while they're in the

fitting rooms! In order to guarantee that thefts aren't occurring; before a customer enters a fitting room and right after they exit, make certain that you check each fitting room for EAS sensors, price tags and hangars.

After a customer has exited the fitting rooms, be certain to check back with them; it's just good customer service and it also lets them know that you're on top of things. Furthermore, if customers already have the maximum number of clothing items your company allows but they leave the fitting rooms to select additional clothing items, be certain to politely ask them for the items they do not wish to purchase. If your customers wish to buy all of their items, simply explain that you can hold the ones they've selected at the cash wrap area.

One of the most difficult and tricky situations can occur with customers who are carrying bags from other retail organizations. If it is your company policy, politely ask your customers

to leave their bags at the cash wrap. If not, the same goal can be accomplished by counting the number of items your customers are taking in. Keep in mind that this should never be done rudely, but rather in a friendly and courteous manner.

Lastly, what happens if you suspect a customer has shoplifted an item? It's simple, treat it like any other shoplift incident and provide superior customer service. For example, politely explain to your guest that you'd be happy to return their unwanted items to the rack, but it appears that one item might be mislaid somewhere. Remember to never accuse a customer of wrongdoing. Your approach will largely determine how your customers will react, so always be polite and friendly. Be certain to check with your loss prevention representative or store manager if you have any questions about your fitting rooms.



### TIPS FOR CONTROLLING FITTING ROOM LOSSES:

- While watching your fitting rooms or sales floor, do not wander too far, and always be alert as to who's in your fitting rooms.
- Before and after each use, make certain that you check the fitting rooms for EAS sensors, tickets and hangars.
- Be certain to count each your customers' items prior to them entering the fitting rooms.
- Be certain that you enforce your company's policy regarding the maximum number of items in the fitting rooms.
- Be sure to enforce your company's policies regarding fitting rooms.
- Provide excellent customer service, and never accuse a customer of theft.