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**How to Avoid the 'oops' of Giving your Price too Soon**

**By Kendall Summerhawk**

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I'm willing to wager real money that you are asked, "How much do you charge?" early in a selling conversation. The problem is, if you answer it, you are sunk and if you avoid it, then any trust you've established flies out the window.

Here's why – when it comes to buying a service from a professional, most clients don't make their final purchase decision based on price. In fact, price is often near the end of their list of criteria. Haven't you ever bought something that was more expensive than you could comfortably afford but knew it was just what you needed or wanted?!

So why is it that even when price isn't our #1 concern for making a final decision, we still ask early on, "So what do you charge?" Chalk it up to human nature.

This means that until you have established exactly what your almost-client needs and is looking for, giving a price will only serve to curtail further discussion, questioning and investigation about whether your service is a match for their need. Obviously that is opposite to the response you want!

If you're feeling caught between a rock and a hard spot, in this case caught between being courteous and being savvy, don't worry. I am about to solve this dilemma for you with an easy, graceful answer that maintains rapport and gives you full permission to continue your discussion with your almost-client.

You simply answer the question by saying you can't give a price yet but can when you have more information. It might sound something like this:

"I'll be happy to answer that question for you. May I first find out a little bit about your situation?"

or another option is –

"I'll be happy to give you a quote once I know what you are looking for. Would it be ok if I ask a couple of questions?"

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Sounds easy enough, right? Well, almost. What happens if their response is to ask you just for a ballpark?

It's a trap – don't fall into it!

Giving a ballpark means giving a range, and giving a range means naming a number. How can you do that when you haven't yet heard what they are looking for?!

Stick to your guns. You can answer –

"I can't give a ballpark until I know the specifics of your situation. Would you mind if I asked a couple of questions to find out about your XYZ?"

Or

"Actually, I can tell you exactly what the fee will be for your project (or coaching or ... fill in the blanks with your service) once I understand exactly what the specifics are of your situation. May I ask a couple of questions to figure that out?"

Now, I know the grammar in these examples is not textbook perfect. It's not meant to be. Our written English is quite different from the way we speak, so I've written them as you would say them, not to win a grammar contest.

But let's get back to what happens if your almost-client is insistent you name a number they can hang their hat on.

Don't do it. Yes, I know this takes a bit of courage but here is what I believe: There is no way I can give an honest answer without first understanding the person's situation. And honesty is a critical value for me. I bet that honesty is a critical value for you too. So from a position of honesty, it becomes easy to stand your ground – firmly, calmly and with the utmost respect.

Here is a tip – match your words and your tone of voice to the person's level of insistence. I remember well how a woman who owned a Medical Billing company had a Physician's Office Manager insist she give her a quote right away. Her answer? In firm tones and with confidence she replied, "I can't give you an honest answer until I know how your office runs. Every office is unique, including yours. May I ask a couple of questions to find out how your office functions?"

Use this simple strategy and you'll never fall into the trap of giving away price information too soon again!

Now it's your turn!

## Oops... And How To Avoid It: Basic Miniature Painting Errors

By Ryan Ambrose

I had just bought my first box of plastic Dwarfs. I admired the expertly painted miniatures on the cover and thought: How hard could it be? I just need to do a good job. So with this in mind, I dove right in and painted my very first miniatures ever. As in right out of the box with absolutely no clue whatsoever.

The result looked something like a cross between a cheap plastic souvenir and a Kindergarten finger painting. I wasn't thrilled to say the least. But after some thought, I decided to keep the little guy and just keep trying, even though I had no clue as to what I had done wrong or how to get it right.

After a lot of practice, study, and good advice, I finally realized the things I did wrong, and if you remember to avoid them, you can bypass your own versions of the Finger-Painted Model and accelerate your journey to being an excellent painter.

Oops #1: Wrong brush for the job. Use the right brush for the job. My first miniature was done with a single, cheap general purpose brush, which is no good for things like eyes. If you are going to detail small things like eyes, use a detail brush. One size does not fit all in painting miniatures.

Oops #2: Paint was too thick This is where you get the Kindergarten look. While the miniatures come with detail, especially the Warhammer miniatures I paint, it will all disappear if your paint is too thick. Fuzzy Dwarf beards suddenly become amorphous facial bibs. Eyes become featureless blanks. Put a layer of paint on anything that's straight out of the tube, and the detail goes away.

This is also responsible for creating a gooey look to paint jobs. Unthinned paint leaves lines in thick streaks which will create a texture on flat surfaces. You can sand these flat surfaces to fix this, but for anything else you're stripping the miniatures and starting over. You can avoid this situation entirely by thinning the paint correctly and remembering that it comes in its tube, jar, or bottle far thicker than it should be applied.

Oops #3: Single layer of paint. One layer of paint is good for a basic, table grade miniature if you're painting wargaming units quickly. If you want more depth with a minimum of time and fuss you can:

1.) Put down a basecoat and drybrush. 2.) Put down a basecoat, wash with an ink, and then touch up with the same color. 3.) Put down a basecoat layer, a middle layer, and a highlight layer.

But just one layer of paint will make your miniature look flat.

Oops #4: Bottom details first. Another good way to avoid detail blunders is to paint the bottom details first. If you overpaint when painting an inner detail first, it makes no difference, because the upper surfaces have not yet been painted. Do this with eyes especially, since you can give them razor sharp lines simply by overpainting around them with an upper layer coat.

Oops #5: Shortage of patience. Painting requires a lot of time and patience. If you just throw on a coat of paint and move on because you want the model done now, you're going to get coverage shortages,

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and thus a blotchy effect. I've noticed that white, yellow, orange, and red are especially unpleasant in this regard, and tend to require multiple coats.

Again, there are techniques to get decent miniatures quickly, but if you want to paint a competition or display piece, expect to expend a lot of time and patience. There's just no way around it.

Oops #6: Do your homework. A concept in general that would have helped me avoid some hard knocks with my models. Whenever starting anything new, first do your homework. You won't become an expert without practice, but at least you'll know what to practice, and that will put you well on your way.

These are general things to avoid that will keep you from straying into problems. They will also help minimize mistakes that will leave you wondering why on Earth your subject turned out the way it did.

Ryan Ambrose is the web master of The Short and Fuzzy Gallery, a miniatures painting and modeling site.



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