

Graham Paint/ 773-585-9110

## *Wants and needs*

We've talked in the past about paint problems, how to recognize them and how to solve them. We are sure you've heard the phrase "an ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure" many times. The often-quoted phrase is certainly true about paint jobs. One important thing that we haven't talked about yet is that a good paint job really begins in the paint store when the materials needed for the job are purchased. Selecting the right materials for the job is the second most important part of any painting project. Color, of course, is usually the very first criteria.

As paint sales professionals, it is our responsibility to see that our customers get exactly what they **need** for their project. What they need for the project may not be exactly what they think they **want** for the project. It is our responsibility to make them understand the scope of their project so they too will understand what it is they need.

The choice of the materials for the project is the very cornerstone of the entire project. Without the proper materials, the job is likely to end in failure. The sales person has the initial responsibility for the success or failure of the job.

## *Visions and elbow grease*

The retail customer usually visualizes the way the job will look when complete. Most do not consider or understand the steps necessary to achieve a good job. Mrs. Jones can visualize how her patio furniture will look on the newly stained deck, but rarely understands the steps necessary to achieve a long lasting job. Mr. Jones can visualize his newly restored red roadster in his garage on the newly painted grey floor, but probably doesn't have clue how to achieve the look. We get several complaints a year where people, including professional painters, complain the two-part epoxy won't dry. Investigation shows they didn't mix the two parts and only applied the one part!

"Yea, that's all well and good, but when people come in and ask for a product by name, what am I supposed to do? My job is to sell paint." You might say.

Of course, all of us in the paint industry are here to sell paint and make a profit for our employers. **However, we should not consider a sale final until the product has been applied and the customer is happy with the results.** The satisfied customer will come back and will tell all the neighbors and friends about the good service they got from your store. Mouth to mouth advertising is absolutely the best kind of advertising there is.

When a customer comes and asks for products, ask some questions that will give you a good idea of what the project is and what products are required. Walk the customer through the process step by step from start to finish. This will not only enable you to figure out what paint products are needed, but will also highlight the sundry items that are needed. Most sales persons ask the customer if they need anything else when the customer has the paint and is checking out. Quite often, the customer is anxious to leave and doesn't think about what else they need. If there hasn't been a discussion of the various steps involved in the project, they might not know what else they need.

### *Use how-to articles*

If the projects work steps are discussed in detail, a list of sundry items can be made possibly while the paint is being shaken.

Many “how to” articles can be found on [www.grahampaint.com](http://www.grahampaint.com). You can download these and hand them out to our customers. However, don’t use the handouts as an excuse not to engage the customer in dialog regarding the project. Remember, your help in choosing the right products is the very cornerstone of the entire project.

Most people don’t like to paint and will be receptive to ideas that will reduce the frequency of the need to paint. They will pay \$50/gallon for paint that will last 10 years rather than pay \$30/gallon for paint that will last 6 years. People will pay \$50/gallon for an enamel that work wash well on their kitchen cabinets rather than \$30/gallon for an enamel that won’t wash or resist stains very well.

Let’s suppose Jennifer Smith walks in to your store and hands you a color chip.

### *Mrs. Smith goes to the paint store*

*The retail customer usually visualizes the way the job will look when complete. Most do not consider or understand the steps necessary to achieve a good job*

I’d like enough enamel of this color to do my kitchen cabinets.” Mrs. Jennifer smith said.

“Certainly, ma’am, Susie replied, “May I ask your name?”

“Sure, I’m Jennifer Smith, Mrs. Jennifer Smith.”

“Mrs. Smith, how big is your kitchen? How many cabinets do you have to redo?” Susie asked.

“Well, let’s see, the kitchen is about 9” X 12”. There must be about 25 cabinets in all.”

“Who’s doing the job?” Susie inquired, “Do you have a contractor?”

“No, my husband and my daughter are doing it.” Mrs. Smith responded.

“Have they had much experience painting?” Susie inquired.

“Yes, my husband has painted every room in our house and our daughter has painted her own room. She is 18.” Mrs. Smith said proudly.

“I’m pleased to hear that,” Susie replied, “painting kitchen cabinets is a little more involved than painting walls and ceilings. Let’s go over the steps required. Here, I’ll write down the steps as we go through them.”

Susie picked up pad and paper and wrote;

1. Empty cabinets
2. Vacuum
3. Remove doors and drawers

“Wait a minute,” Mrs. smith exclaimed, “why do we need to remove the drawers and doors.”

“It is much easier to prepare the surfaces and do the painting after the doors are removed. It is hard to get to all surfaces with them in place.” Susie explained as she continued to write.

4. Wash all surfaces with TSP or strong household cleaner.

*Aha! Susie thought to herself. TSP, our first sundry item.*

“Oh, I forgot to ask, what kind of cabinets are they?” Susie asked.

“They are wood, birch I think. They have a light honey-colored stain on them. My husband put them in about 15 years ago.”

*Good! Susie thought. If they were 60 years I'd, I'd have to worry about shellac. Acrylic isn't very compatible with old shellac.*

5. Sand all surfaces with 100-150 grit sandpaper.

“My husband always uses steel wool instead of sandpaper. I'm sure he has some.”

“Well, there can be problems using steel wool with water based products. Sometimes little pieces of the steel wool fibers break off and become embedded in the old finish. Then when the water based finish coat is applied, the water causes the steel wool fibers to rust creating little brown rust marks on the finish.” Susie explained.

“I'm glad to know that. Now I can tell my husband something he doesn't know!” Mrs. Smith exclaimed with a Cheshire-like grin on her face.

*OK, add sandpaper to the sundry list, Susie thought.*

6. Apply Graham Aqua Borne Ceramic® 320 Blockout/undercoat primer. Allow to dry and sand.

“The primer sands beautifully and you can cover scratches and dings, sand out brush and roller marks and achieve a perfectly smooth surface.” Enthused Susie.

“OK,” Mrs. Smith said, “better put some tack rags on your list.”

“Well, Mrs. Smith...” Susie began before Mrs. Smith cut her off.

“It's Jennie, Susie, please call me Jennie.”

“Sure, Jennie, I was saying that we don't recommend tack rags for use with latex coatings. The tack rags contain oil which smears on the surface and latex resin doesn't adhere to the oil and the paint may peel.” Susie explained. “Just use a damp rag to remove the sanding dust. Sometimes it helps to vacuum then use the damp rag”

*Well, let's see, brushes, maybe 2" straight and 2" angle, 4" rollers and frames, 9" rollers and frames for both the primer and topcoat, tray, tray liners, Drop cloths too.*

“Susie, are we ready to paint yet? It seems like we have spent a lot of time getting ready to paint. I want to see results pretty soon.” Jennie asked.

“We're almost ready to put on the first finish coat. If you want to get a good job that is going to look great and last along time, the preparation work is really important. There just is no shortcut to good preparatory work.” Susie said.

7. Apply a coat of Aqua Borne Ceramic® satin or Gloss enamel. Two coats will give a more permanent job.

“What should I use, the gloss or the satin?” Jennie asked.

“By far, the satin is the more popular. The gloss is too shiny for most people. However, the gloss works well in Italian-style and very modern kitchens.



## Graham Paint

4100 W 76th Street  
Unit G  
Chicago, IL 60652  
USA

Phone:  
773-585-9110

Fax:  
773-284-0989

E-Mail:  
harrytrue@comcast.net

***Absolutely the best  
paint you can buy!***

---

We're on the Web!

See us at:

[www.grahampaint.com](http://www.grahampaint.com)

---

“The color you have chose will hide in one coat. However, cabinets take a lot of wear, particularly around the corners where people open and close them with greasy finger. These areas are washed often. Two coats will give you much more protection.” Susie explained.

“That makes sense to me, particularly after going to all the trouble to do the prep work. Oh, I need some masking tape. We need to mask the walls next to the cabinets. Jennie said.

“Aren't you painting the walls? With a fresh coat of paint, the cabinets will really pop out.” Susie said.

“Well, I think I am going to get the cabinets done first before I tell my husband he has to paint the rest of the kitchen. You know, one thing at a time gets done, but a list of things just sits there and never gets done.” Jennie explained.

*Pretty nice sale, Susie thought, smiling to her self, after Jennie had left with her considerable purchases. I have a good feeling the job is going to go well and it won't be long before Jennie is back for paint for her kitchen. Jennie didn't bat an eye when I told her the price of the enamel. When she found out what was involved, she realized she should use the best paint possible. It sure is true, Graham Paint's slogan about their Aqua Borne Ceramic® paint, it truly is “**Absolutely the best paint you can buy!**”*

*Susie thought, wow! I really feel great! I love my job!*