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INTERNET SALES 20 GROUP X

Most dealerships have a six-, eight- or even 10-step “Road to the Sale” process in their dealership. That’s great, but let me share a secret with you: You don’t need that many steps to sell a car — or to sell anything, for that matter. You *only* need three things to happen:

1. First, you need an **opportunity to do business**. Meaning, you need an audience — someone who is in the market to buy what you are trying to sell. In a dealership, we call these people *ups, leads or prospects*; these are your potential customers.
2. You need to get that person to **like, trust and believe you**.
3. If you can accomplish the first two steps then the third is inevitable. If they are truly in the market, they will buy from you *or* they will at least come in for an appointment. (This last part applies if you are working in the Internet Department or BDC).

The fourth habit in Stephen Covey’s *7 Habits of Highly Effective People* is “Think Win-Win.” **This is so important.** Most salespeople in the dealership are never taught this strategy. Unfortunately, when it comes to handling customers, sales team members are often taught to “Crack ’em like a baby seal” or insert whatever local term you use to slam the customer into a sale.

If you observe the most successful sales professionals in the industry, they are not the people that try to obliterate their prospects and never see them again. The most successful sales professionals have a powerful book of business, retain relationships with their customers and get lots of referrals. Please take note of these statistics:

- Average closing ratio for OEM Internet leads within 30 days = six percent
- Average closing ratio for third-party leads within 30 days = eight percent
- Average closing ratio for leads generated by your dealership’s Web site within 30 days = 16 percent
- Average closing ratio for showroom traffic (a fresh “UP”) = 18-20 percent
- Average closing ratio for referral = 50 percent PLUS a \$800 higher gross profit

- Average closing ratio for prior customer = 65 percent PLUS a \$800 higher gross profit

The No. 1 reason why someone doesn’t buy a car is that they are landed on the wrong vehicle. That means the sales person did *not* qualify the prospect the right way and identify their wants, wishes and expectations. Any sales professional’s goal should be to *exceed* a prospect’s expectation, but the fact is you can’t do this unless you first identify their wants, wishes and expectations. Only when that is done can you attempt to exceed those expectations.

Your goal as a professional salesperson is to identify those things that are important to the prospect. Price is part of the discussion and we will address it here, but customers have other priorities too. Here are some aspects of the transaction that customers find important:

- **Convenience** — They might work several jobs and not have a lot of time. Or they have kids and it’s difficult to get to the dealership. Or they just don’t want to waste their time. *You can offer to either bring the vehicle to the prospect with no obligation on their part, or you can offer FREE delivery to their home or office.* You could even mention that you have weekend hours and late hours to accommodate them.
- **Availability** — Sometimes sales people try to *shove* someone in a car that really doesn’t suit them. I do understand we all want to maximize gross profit and sell a car but there are people that take it too far and lose sight of what is good for the customer. They try to *crush* someone into the wrong car and then run around the dealership high-fiving everyone saying “I just made a \$4,000 deal.” I am all for making a great gross profit, but make sure that you have properly identified the prospects wants and needs and have met them.

Remember, we are supposed to be the professionals here. Some people have absolutely *no* clue as to what they are buying, what they need to buy or what they can afford. They come in looking for advice, guidance and someone they can

trust to watch out for them. We should try to give it to them. Qualify them properly: Find out who is going to be the primary users of the vehicle and how it is going to be used. What kind of vehicle meets their needs: car, truck, SUV or minivan? What features are important to them? Do they have a color preference? Try to provide to the best of your ability exactly what the prospect is looking for. Remember that, after buying a house, this is the second largest purchase your prospects will probably ever make. For many, a vehicle might be the most expensive item your customer *ever* purchases. Spend time with them and make sure it is a great experience.

- **Price** — When they bring up price, you need to provide value. Explain your unique value package proposition (why you are different and better than everyone else). You need to differentiate your dealership from the competition and clearly show that you are the best dealership to buy from in the market.
- **Being Comfortable with You and Your Dealership** — Show your prospects that you are a dealership they can trust. Start collecting video testimonials of your happy customers and upload them to YouTube. You also need to start collecting letters, quotes, references from your happy customers and proactively offer your new prospects references, video testimonials, contact info (with permission) of your current and past clients just so they can get a real live pulse of the type of sales professional you are and the type of dealership you are.

The bottom line here is that you want to think “Win-Win.” You want to create an environment so that the prospect likes you, trusts you and believes you. If you can get that to happen you will sell more cars, more often and more profitably.

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