

» Sell What It Does, Not What It Is



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AutoSuccess™

THE #1 SALES-IMPROVEMENT MAGAZINE FOR THE AUTOMOTIVE PROFESSIONAL



Hitting the Jackpot...

With Digital Ads!



Sean V. Bradley

Personal Success

Dealers and managers are fond of telling their employees that the car business is like owning your own business. Oh, really? What exactly does that mean? I remember my GM getting me all excited during our Saturday meetings telling me that I had my very own business; but minus all of the headaches and expenses. He used to tell us that the more we put into it the more we get out of it. Sound familiar? I am sure it does.

You may have heard the same speech or given that speech word for word. To a certain extent I agree. Selling cars is like owning your own business in that you get paid commissions based on the work you produce — that is, the cars sold. When you own your own business you generate revenue when someone buys your product or service.

I know several talented sales professionals making over \$200,000 a year selling cars on the showroom floor. But those individuals are a small percentage of the over 230,000+ automotive sales people at new car dealerships in the U.S. The problem is that most sales people, whether they work on the showroom floor or in the Internet or BDC area, don't know how to run their own businesses.

When you start and run your own business, you usually have some experience in the business you are starting or have a support network to guide you through the initial start-up phase. It really isn't fair to expect someone to be able to sell cars on the floor or in an Internet department just because you gave them a brochure and told them to take ups, or because you have a computer and are buying leads for them. I travel all over the country and overseas, training and consulting for dealerships and it still amazes me to see that **most dealerships** have very little — if any — training other than what the OEM mandates for product certification. When dealers do invest in training it usually trains their team on the basics: the road to the sale, and the six- or 10-step program that has been in existence for the last zillion years.

Most dealers pay lip service to the fact they say that their people are their most important resource. I think it is truly a shame that dealers don't invest in their own people. The average dealership spends approximately \$50,000 per month in advertising and the average dealership has about 10 sales consultants on the floor. That means that dealers are

spending \$5,000 per month or \$60,000 per year on sales consultants that are untrained or poorly trained. That makes no sense to me. Dealers should invest wisely on recruiting the RIGHT employees for their team. It is a huge red flag when your store spends more on balloons or some hokey advertising or give aways than on education and personal development of its most valuable assets, its people.

Dealership sales teams should be trained on:

- Product knowledge
- Standard Operating Procedure
- Objections & Rebuttals
- Psychology
- Strategy
- Communication
- Technology & the Internet
- Organization
- People Skills / Problem solving / Dealing with difficult people or situations
- Networking and the LOST ART of Prospecting

Your people should be motivated and compensated for proactive professional development. For example, some of our dealers reward their people for reading relevant business books like Stephen Covey's "The 7 Habits of Highly Effective People" or Seth Godin's "Purple Cow," or for reading articles in magazines like AutoSuccess or keeping up with the content in professional newsletters from companies like Dealix or Carsdirect. The point is you need to create a culture of education and professional development in your store. Instead of hand-me-down magazines from the Dealer or GM, make your staff order subscriptions from ALL of the magazines, and make them sign up for all of the blogs and newsletters (most are FREE).

Think about Tiger Woods who swings 1,000 practice strokes for EVERY live stroke in tournaments. What about a boxer? How many jabs or hooks do you think he throws in practice? Now, think about how many times your people are role playing, drilling trying new word tracks, objections and rebuttals? Throw away your checker boards in your dealership and start playing chess. Get your team to think strategically.

I am going to give you a simple but extremely powerful system for personal success. I invite you to try this exercise and I

want you to tell everyone in your dealership — your associates, managers, your owner, everyone. It's NOT just for your dealership or business success. It will be your roadmap and compass for your life, professional and business success.

Get a piece of paper and draw three boxes. Yes, a square, another square and one more. You should be looking at three side by side squares on your sheet.

Label Box 1 "Goal"

Box 1 is simple: It states the goal. Let's say for this example, your goal was to be the No. 1 Internet Sales Manager in the WORLD. That is exactly what you are going to put in Box 1 — No. 1 Internet Sales Manager in the world. Put your specific goal there.

In Box 2 we want to define the goal. This will take some more thought on your part. I hear all the time someone wants to be the best at this or that, but what does that really mean? You need to really understand what it is that you are trying to do in order to do it. An example of some elements in this box might state:

- Highest gross with online customers
- Fastest response time
- Highest CSI online
- Most volume online
- Most knowledge of Internet sales — third-party lead source provider sites, most knowledge of industry info sites like Edmunds.com, Kelly Blue Book, Carfax, etc.
- Most knowledge and utilization of dealership technology, such as the dealership Web site and ILM/CRM
- Highest customer retention with online customers
- Always cutting edge — setting trends not just following them. Staying one step ahead of competition.
- Highest ROI — least amount of money spent BUT MOST profit made online.
- Highest certification achieved — OEM, NADA / NCM / State associations, etc.
- Industry recognition — covers of magazines, awards, interviews, fame, etc.
- Create an amazing working environment.
- Happy at work and content where you are at.
- The ability to evolve — able to

measure and benchmark performance and constantly evolve to the next level of success.

- Able to make a ton of money for your dealership at the same time able to cut expenses and increase ROI.
- Create a network of strong Internet managers and BDC directors that you can rely on, such as an Internet 20 group.
- Have the best dealership Web site on the planet in look, feel, technology and highest conversions.
- Have the best ILM/CRM — set-up, content, processes, e-mail templates, phone scripts, objection/rebuttals, etc.
- Know what to do, when to do it, how to do it and WHY you are doing it.

Now on to Box 3, where the rubber really meets the road. I would like you to develop your personal action plan on how you are going to make everything in Box 2 happen and when. Go through the items in the previous box bullet point by bullet point.

For example: If one of my goals was to have the most knowledge of third-party providers or Internet Web sites that a prospect might search on, then I would need to research all of those sites. I would create a schedule for my week and during the week I would allocate ample time to research all of these sites. I might start by simply going to these sites that I know about, such as AutoTrader and Carsdirect.com, and go through the entire site like I was a prospect searching for my new vehicle. I might even mystery shop these sites and my competitors to see how other dealers respond and to see exactly what my prospects go through.

I wouldn't stop there. I would also call my local vendor sales reps up and have them come into the dealership and thoroughly explain their Web site and find out details and best practices directly from them. Specifically, I would ask them what their best dealers are doing to be the best. I would even ask them what their worst dealers are doing and why. You want to learn what the best are doing so you can emulate them and find out what the worst are doing so you can avoid their mistakes.

Another example: If your goal is to have the fastest response time, then you need to make sure that you call ALL of your prospects immediately. This can be accomplished two ways. First, you can just incorporate that into your standard operating procedure, that you will be constantly vigilant for fresh leads so you can respond immediately or close to immediately. Another way to ensure rapid response time is through utilization of technology. You can set up paging notification which notifies you instantly that there is a new prospect in your queue. You can take it

as far as you want to go with technology. You can set up your ILM/CRM so it can help your dealership realize its goal. Let's say you get a lead but are too busy to respond immediately. You can set up your ILM/CRM to forward the prospect to the next available Internet salesperson if you don't respond in a certain amount of time. This will ensure response time integrity. There are other solutions as well, like *call connect*. This allows the prospect to submit a lead and be directly connected with an available person instantly in real time.

This exercise can be very powerful to your personal success at work or at home. To

recap, the first box states the goal, second box defines that goal and the third box road maps how to get you there.

If you would like any assistance in creating your roadmap to personal success, feel free to e-mail me and it would be my pleasure to get you started on the road to success.

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More Ups = More Sales

Would You Like More Customers to Visit Your Showroom?

Would You Like to Increase Service Retention?

Would You Like More Referral business?

We've got one solution.

Discover How Travel Incentives Can Help You Grow Your Business - No Matter What Product or Service You Sell

What's the key to opening the door to new customers, bigger sales and more repeat sales? It's motivating prospects to come in, respond to your ads, your mailings and to contact you. The question is how? If you want to catch a fish you need good bait. If you want to attract prospects and keep them coming back, the same is true. You could offer them a coffee cup or a pen. All are nice, but nowhere near as compelling as offering someone a free vacation.

Challenge

"I run a membership club for discount dining at fine dining restaurants in the New Market, NH area. We were looking for a way to increase our membership."

Solution

"We purchased 100 of the Get Up & Go! certificates and used them as a thank you gift for current members that gave us 5 referrals that subsequently became members."

Result

"The response was overwhelming. We ran the promotion for three months and ran out of the certificates. We added 500 new members and netted close to \$15,000 in three months just by running this promotion! It was easily the most cost effective marketing tool I've ever used and I was very satisfied with the results. As memberships approach expiration I may consider using the certificates as a way of retaining members."

— **George Sloan**, Owner, Sea Coast Fine Dining, New Market, NH

Isn't Giving Away a Vacation Expensive?

When you give a prospect or a client a free 3-day vacation it's worth a lot to them but your costs are so low you'll find it hard to believe, typically only pennies relative to the actual value.

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Call us at **800.786.4382** or visit GetUpAndGo.com/autosuccess to get the details, and to receive your free copy of "4 Steps to Increasing Your Sales!"

**4 Steps to
Increasing
Your Sales**



By Mike Trowbridge
and Charlie Cook

