



RV Selling Skills Course



Salesperson,**inc**
for Recreational Vehicles

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WANTED: SERVICE, MAYBE EVEN WITH A SMILE
by
Matt Roush

Service quality is a message that American business is taking to heart, right? Baloney, according to my experience.

Not long ago, I was shopping for presents for two birthdays in the family — a cordless phone for my mom and a small shortwave radio for my brother. I got home from work at 5:30. Dinner was at 6, and so I figured I'd use that half hour to check out prices at half a dozen stores.

I called up a department store. The first try, the phone rang 10 times. No answer. Well, maybe I dialed wrong, so I tried again. This time it rang eight times before an exasperated-sounding operator came on, giving the store's name as if it were a curse. I asked to be transferred to electronics. I got almost 10 minutes of bad music, so I hung up and tried the main number again. I explained to the operator what had happened, but before I could finish, she brusquely said, "One moment, sir" and put me back on hold.

Well, maybe the third time's a charm, I thought after another eight minutes, and called again and explained again to a different operator that I had been on hold for, oh, weeks. She demanded: "Could you tell me what you want?"

Oh, nothing much, I thought. Maybe a little respect as a potential customer, let alone as a human being.

At least this time I got an electronics sales clerk. I explained what I wanted and got put on hold again for another six minutes. Just as I was about to hang up, the clerk came on the line and informed me that "the assistant store manager is trying to answer your question."

What question? All I wanted was a couple of prices on cordless phones, plus a little explanation on features. The sales clerks can't do that? Then I got more hold music.

My dinner growing cold, I hung up and tried another store. Another surly operator put me on hold for five minutes, then explained that "there's only one clerk in that department now, and he's got several customers."

Over dinner, my wife — who's managed retail ranging from shoe stores to a card and gift shop to a women's clothing store — offered her analysis: "Remember you're dealing with part-time sales clerks. If they're on minimum wage, they don't give a (barnyard epithet); if they're on commission, they don't want to help customers over the phone if there are any customers on the floor."

After dinner, I decided the only thing to do was shop in person. Over the next 2½ hours, I visited nine stores in Dearborn Heights, Westland and south Livonia. I paid special attention to the service. and you know what? I spent more than I had to on both items.

At the store that had me on hold for half an hour, the personal service matched the phone service. It had the cheapest prices on good name-brand cordless phones, but the sales clerk could not be torn away from a discussion at the cash register with a couple of friends about store management, no matter how long I stared at her.

Instead I went down the street and paid \$10 more to a sales clerk who worked three sets of customers as expertly as a really good waiter in a busy restaurant. You know what, he sold all three of us.

As for the shortwave radio, I wound up at a specialty store where the salesman actually knew what a shortwave radio was. he intelligently discussed the merits of digital vs analog tuning and tossed in free batteries and a booklet offering frequencies of major national shortwave broadcasts to boot. It wasn't the cheapest, but it sure was the best.

Price is important, but not everything. Retail chains that offer deep markdowns but continue to see mediocre sales ought to pass this column around. All we customers want is a little respect, and maybe even a little initiative on the part of the salesperson. Even if it's a minor purchase this time, it may not be next time — if we're treated right.

What is the point of this story?

NOTES:



What is Selling?

Most successful salespeople have realized that selling is not just getting your prospect to buy your RV. It has become a conscientious effort to make this prospect a customer for life. The way you perform as a professional salesperson is directly related to whether they will, first of all, allow you to make the sale, and secondly, to return some day to purchase again.

What is your definition of selling?

What does it take to sell a prospect in today's market?

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Professionalism

Though there are many reasons for the tremendous turnover rate we have in our industry, one of main reasons is that salespeople do not strive to do everything possible to succeed. Because of fear, laziness, lack of leadership, or poor training, salespeople simply rely on the luck of the sale instead of on the skill necessary for maximizing their success on each and every customer.

Major objectives of the automobile salesperson:

- To sell RVs and make money.
- To build a clientele.
- To represent the company in a professional manner.
- To continue learning your trade.

List all of the qualities of a professional RV salesperson:

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List 5 strengths you have as a salesperson:

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____

List 5 weaknesses you have as a salesperson:

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____

NOTES:



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Getting Started

When you're starting any new career, it's very normal for a person to be a little apprehensive about moving forward. After all, you don't know a great deal about the business that you're in, and no matter how old you are, you're always the new kid on the block.

This is the time for you to become pro-active, and take the time to become organized. The more you can initially know about the responsibilities you're about to undertake, the more confidence you'll have in taking that first step towards a wonderful career in automobile sales.

"Be not afraid of growing slowly,
be only of standing still."

Chinese Proverb

Here are some things you can do to get started:

- Talk to customers even if you feel insecure.
- Become more familiar with the entire dealership.
 - Service — Parts
 - Office — Body Shop
- Introduce yourself to the other employees and managers.
- Get everyone to take a demo ride with Class A & C vehicles.
- Study your product knowledge.
- Practice your presentation.
- Be friendly.
- Work closely with your managers.
- Use the "Orphan Files."

NOTES:



Greeting

Have you ever encountered sales clerks who were unpleasant or who ignored customers? I know I have. Each time this has happened to me, I've wondered why such individuals were hired into jobs that require courteous treatment of customers. By retaining such personnel, the store will surely lose money. Therefore, greeting the customer correctly should be the single most important point to learn.

A customer not only wants, but deserves to feel special. Just remember, you need customers more than they need you. They are going to determine whether or not you get paid for your time.

During the greeting process, the actual greeting begins before you even approach the customer. It begins the moment you lay eyes on him. How you respond the instant you come in contact with this prospect will determine the outcome of your relationship with him. It's at this time when you and the customer will either form a like or a dislike for one another.

Here are some ways to enhance your greeting:

- Smile and be friendly.
 - give the customer a reason to listen to you.
- Show a lot of enthusiasm.
 - show appreciation for the customer coming into your dealership.
- Build rapport and make friends with the customer.
- Hand out your business card.
 - remember the customer's name.
- Make the customer feel important.
 - they will determine whether you get paid for your efforts.

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Qualifying Questions

"Qualifying" - If ever there is a word that constantly gets salespeople into trouble, this is the one. In other words, Qualifying does not mean looking a person over to determine whether or not he can afford to buy one of your RVs.

On the contrary, qualifying is defined as the interviewing process for gathering all pertinent information to aid in planning a successful sale and simultaneously guiding the prospect into the right vehicle.

A salesperson should use the responses gathered from this qualifying process to create a selling presentation, as compared to a telling presentation. By utilizing this type of questioning, the salesperson can gather all the information necessary to give himself a better than average chance to sell the RV. This valuable information will then allow the salesperson to skillfully sell an RV instead of just letting the sale happen by luck.

These questions should be planned in advance so that the process doesn't just happen haphazardly. Responses from qualifying questions will then allow the salesperson to Trial-Close throughout the presentation, placing more emphasis on the areas that are important to the customer. And this is the operative phrase - Important To The Customer! Many times a salesperson will simply recite facts about the vehicle that are important to him but not necessarily important to the customer.

Questions to ask regarding the RV being sold:

- How will the RV be used for?
- What accessories are you interested in?
- What monthly payments will fit into your budget?
- If your conditions are met, when would you be able to take delivery?
- What's important to you about buying this RV?
- What's important to you about the whole buying process?

Questions to ask regarding the trade-in:

- Did you purchase this RV new or used?
- What do you like about it?
- What do you dislike about it?
- Did you pay cash or finance?
- Is there any money owing on it?
- How did you purchase the RV before this one?

NOTES:



Trial Closes

A "**Trial-Close**" is a form of questioning the salesperson uses in order to get the prospect to commit to the RV before the negotiation process begins. With a trial-close, you can:

1. Sell the prospect on a feature that was important to him.
2. Give the prospect a feeling of ownership.
3. Try to increase the number of "yes" responses from the prospect.

The more "yes" answers you can get from the prospect throughout the presentation, the easier it will be to close the prospect during the negotiation process.

Scenario:

During the "Qualifying" part of your presentation, your customer stated that the four most important things he wanted in his next RV was:

- a slide-out
- an engine with sufficient power
- a towing package

Example of a Trial-Close:

"**Mr. Customer, remember when you said** that one of the things you wanted in your next RV was a powerful engine? **Can you see** how the engine in our RV will get you on and off of expressways and in and out of traffic quickly, which is actually a safety feature?"

Example of a Psychological Tie-Down:

"Now Mr. Customer, **let me ask you a question. In your opinion**, do you feel that this is the type of powerful engine you're looking for in your next RV?"

Steps to performing a successful Trial-Close:

- Ask the customer, "What's **important** to you?" during Qualifying.
- During the presentation, remind the customer what he said.
- Ask the customer the closing question — can only be answered "yes."
- Psychological tie the customer into your vehicle.

☉ Exercise:

In the space provided on the notes page, choose one of the other important issues in the scenario above, and write a successful Trial-Close. **Remember, a successful trial close can only be answered with a "yes."**

NOTES:

