

ACCEPTING THE SALES CHALLENGE:

**A CAREER GUIDE FOR THE
ADVANCING PROFESSIONAL**

**BY
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This book is dedicated to

Don W. Tanner

Who first hired me as a Salesman,
And who offered me the opportunity
And encouraged me to become a
Professional Salesman and Manager.

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I would like to acknowledge some of the many people who over the years, have influenced and expanded my thinking, excited my business senses, and encouraged me. Many of them, I have stumbled across in my travels, although now I believe that they were destined to cross my path.

Some of them I have never met in person and yet their influence on my thinking came to life in me through their writing or their spoken words on tape. Many of these people, I have worked side by side with and benefitted from a closer relationship. Some have even influenced me in a very positive way by being what I would sometimes call a negative influence. Since I believe everything happens for a reason, they too taught me. All of them have given me a great deal and for that, I am very thankful.

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Many of these people have influenced me dramatically and I am grateful for each and every one of them touching my life and values. Some of them have passed on, and in recent years at least, I've tried to let them know that they have had a positive affect on my life. The others I try to appreciate fully on an ongoing basis, for I think that we all touch each other and affect each other more than we think during our daily business pursuits. It's good to take a moment from time to time and add up the score, reflect on the moments and give thanks. If I've missed telling anyone recently, thank you. I appreciate all of you.

Last (and probably should be first on the list), I want to thank Nancy for putting up the time and energy away from her that it has taken to complete this work. I love you.

PREFACE

What had I done? Who told me I could sell? Why did I get involved with sales? I'm not a SALESMAN! A salesman conjures up all sorts of negative connotations to most people. Slick tongues, aggressive tactics, pushy, over-bearing personalities, suede shoes, ill-fitting hairpieces, striped suits, all come to mind. But, I did it anyway and it has made all the difference, just like the Robert Frost poem, only this road is heavily travelled. Maybe I should say trampled...

What I've learned since that decision, some eighteen years ago has had a major influence on all aspects of my life. I can no longer imagine making any other choice, but initially, it seemed like I could have made a better one.

Sales is a strange profession. They say it is the oldest profession. You may think something else was, but it all starts with sales, they say.

The field of sales is strewn with success and failure, and depending on your individual definition of these two divergent results, undoubtedly more failure than success. One must endure a lifetime of hearing "NO!". Wow! How powerful that word can be. Yet, when you hear someone say "YES!", one forgets most of the "no's" you heard leading up to that most magical of words to a salesman.

In a nutshell, having someone say "yes" to your product, idea or proposition is what sales is all about. That is the ultimate objective. It's the reason for all your hard work. Without it, life is empty indeed. Thousands of books, records, tapes, seminars, lectures, films and training meetings all direct the salesman toward this end. And this is yet another one.

One never knows when the next person's interpretation may be the one that all of a sudden turns on the light inside you and gets you fired up. I've read so many books on the subject of sales, and a few of them really helped me to understand sales better. So, I'm offering my own interpretation from the accumulation of my learning and struggles and perhaps this may help others to understand sales differently and gain benefit from the effort.

At some point in my career, I've heard more than one person tell me that sales is easy. It's the easy way. Easy money, requiring little skill and no formal education.

Anyone can learn it. I think that is why a lot of people get into sales to start with--to make some good money in a short time. And this is a true statement about sales in the short run, but somehow I felt there was more to it than that and so started on a path of learning to do better and learn what sales could be--to become a professional.

I found that to be good at sales is a challenge and accepting this challenge required more than at first meets the eye. It became easier as it progressed and yet offered additional challenges as well, but that helps make life more interesting and rewarding. It's been far from boring. Matter of fact, it has given me a good deal of excitement while causing me to think in different ways. And I've learned much.

I also found that sales can be a real struggle and I've felt that pain. I've seen so many that don't get beyond this stage and that's too bad, since there are many rewards for a little study and extra effort at learning to view sales in a more professional manner by looking upon it as a career and as a profession that has much value in this world.

Learning to become a professional requires effort and determination. Doctors don't become Doctors in two to six weeks, it takes years and more than reasonable tenacity. The same will hold true with treating sales as a profession. It's not something that is learned in a few weeks. It is worthy of more than that, yet I've found that very few are willing to spend much time or energy in learning sales as a profession. And, there is such need for this. Just as the world cries for really good Doctors, it cries also for really good salesmen.

I don't profess to know it all. Far from that, I'm one who has struggled with it all and fought from behind and I continue to do so. Perhaps someone can relate to this struggle and save themselves a few steps along the way. The thoughts I present here were hard-won and I continue to learn more as I travel.

To be a professional requires an attitude of practicing a career (a long journey), rather than working at a job (a short journey). In light of this, I will focus on much philosophical content and less on the mechanical aspects of sales. In my experience as a salesman and a sales manager, the difference in those who are professionals is their philosophy. According to Webster's, philosophy is "...a study of the processes governing thought and conduct; theory or investigation of the principles or laws that regulate the universe and underlie all knowledge and reality; included in the study are aesthetics, ethics, logic, metaphysics, etc..."

and, "...the general principles or laws of a field of knowledge, activity, etc...", and finally, "...the mental balance believed to result from this; calmness; composure".

Being a professional means that you go beyond the basics and that you develop a philosophy of what you do. Then you apply that philosophy to your daily business life and in so doing, achieve a "balance believed to result from this; calmness; composure".

I feel that I've reached a certain balance from having developed and accumulated my own philosophies that guide my business career. It is my hope that this accumulation and the struggles to overcome my fears and apprehension about doing something so bold as a sales career, will assist you in at least a small way in your own travels.

"They" said I was making a mistake getting involved in the field of sales. "They" said I should get a real job with real benefits, a regular paycheck to count on, and a pension to retire on. Perhaps "they" are saying things like this to you too. They may be right. They may be wrong. You will be the only judge of that. I thought they were wrong and so went ahead with getting into sales. I've enjoyed proving them wrong and what I've learned along the way in doing that has been worth any and all effort.

I hope that you accept the sales challenge of treating sales as a career and profession and learning to be good at it. I think that the personal rewards, in addition to the financial rewards, will be worth all of your efforts and commitments.

I would also like to clarify the use of the words, salesman, salesmen and he throughout this book. The use of these words is meant to be uni-sexual; that is, without sex. Though the word salesperson is a more accurate description, for my purposes I prefer the word salesman.

Terry R. Minion
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P A R T O N E

CHAPTER ONE
THE BEGINNING

Who are "they" anyway? "They" always have something to say, and it is almost always a negative comment of sorts. They said I shouldn't sell for a living--it's too risky, too up and down. That's all it takes sometimes, is for someone to say "you can't", or "it can't be done". I love that kind of talk sometimes, because I accept it as a challenge. And I found out that sales was indeed a challenge.

Just before getting into sales, I was an auto mechanic. Before that, I worked at a landscaping company, digging out people's lawns and putting down colored rock, loading and driving dump trucks, maintaining the equipment, and anything else that needed to be done. It entailed an awful lot of shoveling and digging. It was very hard work and dirty, dusty and greasy. I hated it.

I worked in gas stations, pumping gas and doing lube-jobs on cars and minor repairs. At one point, I worked in two gas stations at the same time. It was okay, but there was still grease everywhere you looked, and I didn't care too much for grease.

While I was in junior college, I applied for work at a large oil refinery. I thought that I should get a "real" job with real benefits and lots of potential for advancement. I passed the 6-hour test with flying colors and was called in for an interview. One question they asked me about working in a service station was, "How did you like working in a service station?". Being a relatively intelligent human being, I answered, "I liked it just fine except for all of the grease and oil everywhere." What do you guess happened next? Ever heard the phrase, "Don't call us, we'll call you?" Did I say intelligent? Hey, it just slipped out of my mouth, what can I say? A Freudian slip? Probably.

I also worked at a coffee company in San Francisco pushing a pencil, using an adding machine counting cases of coffee in various warehouses across the country, all the while sniffing the fantastic smell of freshly roasted coffee one floor above me. The cases of coffee were counted on computer printouts that I never saw in reality.

I worked at a Radio and Television parts house and made daily deliveries and stocked shelves and occasionally waited on customers. This job became boring after a very short time. I was just a "go-fer".

I mowed lawns and did babysitting and other such small, part-time chores when I was younger. And all of these different jobs helped prepare me for the career of sales,

right? Well, yes and no. Yes, because I realized that I was not cut out for hard labor in any field. Being greasy, dirty and sweaty is not my style. And no, because none of these things are preparation for sales. Sales is a whole other ball game.

So why did I get into this other ball game? It was simple, I wanted a CAREER. I did not want a job. I was sick and tired of laying on cold concrete, wrenching on some motor vehicle with crud falling in your face and busted knuckles and constant bruises and dirt that would not come off your hands. I wanted something that used one's brain instead of one's brawn. I wanted something that I could really sink my teeth into and grow in, be challenged by, succeed at.

So, upon leaving military service, where I was an auto mechanic, I set out to find this thing called a career. I found hundreds of choices and the more I looked into, the more confused I got. Not knowing what I wanted for sure was the crux of the problem. It's like walking up to an airline counter and saying that you want a ticket to somewhere nice. They will ask you where you want to go, but you don't know for sure. The only thing you do know is that you want it to be a nice place that you would enjoy. Unfortunately, I felt like I was in the same situation. I wanted a career--a nice career, one that offered opportunity and excitement, but I didn't have much of an idea which field or position I really wanted.

I found a lot of closed doors. The doors that would open, only opened enough to get my foot in the door if I had a college degree. Without the degree, many doors are closed entirely. I had some college, but no degree, which to them was like being a little pregnant. No degree, no interview.

Then came the phrase, "Do you have any experience?". Have you ever heard that one before? Almost everywhere I went! That's like asking for a loan and the loan officer forcing you to prove to the bank that you do not need the money. You can want it, but you can't need it. How strange, but how real. Of course I had no experience! But, I was more than willing and eager to learn (and at this point--almost anything). Unfortunately, they were not willing to teach.

Time was running out, and the money was gone. I had to find something and make a decision, even if it was not the right one. Then one day, while thinking about my struggle in finding a career, I started tallying my past job experiences and thought that I knew enough about automobiles, and though I hated working under them, thought that I could maybe, just possibly sell them. SELL? Did I say that word? Me, sell? Cars? Was I losing it all together? Is that what you do when IBM doesn't want to talk to you and Walt Disney lost

your application, and all you can find is a \$5.00 per hour part time job? Sell cars?

The first thing that came to my mind was someone saying to me, "You're a USED CAR salesman?" Everyone thinks "used car" when they think about "car salesman". But, I persisted with the thought and toyed with it enough to gather my courage and actually walk into a dealership and ask to talk with the manager.

He hired me the same day. Later I would find out that is a common occurrence in auto sales, but I thought that he knew how talented I really was. Hey, I was young and green and wet behind the ears, 22 years old, going on 40 and, when he hired me, I was on top of the world. I was going to start out earning more money than I have ever earned in my life-- \$600.00 per month draw against commission! Wow!! In 1972, that was a lot of money to me. It was double what I had been earning in the service for the past few years.

There was a condition to the hiring, though. I had to understand some things about the "negative image" people have about salesmen and particularly auto salesmen. After he told me about many of the problems this business has accumulated, I had to repeat them to my wife and make sure that she was willing to support me through the struggles with people's images and feelings that may lie ahead. If she understood and agreed, I was to start the following Monday. If she didn't, he would understand. She gave her support, and I was going to be a salesman--for a while--at least until I could find out what I wanted. I needed a job. I didn't yet know if I found a career.

So, now I'm going to be a salesman and I'm going to have business cards to prove it and wear suits and stay away from cold concrete and grease! "I can do this, and who knows, I may like it", I thought. Later I would find that I found my career--not my first choice, but hey, it looked good to me at the time. And there was so much to learn and changes to be made--mostly in me.

The money was gone and I had to ask my Mother to buy me a suit to wear to work my first day since I had none. I must have looked strange wearing the same suit day in and day out! Part of my first paycheck went to more clothes, for sure.

I remember that first day and how nervous I was. It was indeed an adventure and my mind was going a mile a minute with all the thoughts of what it may be like. At the end of the first day, I was exhausted from the nervous excitement.

Looking back eighteen years on that start in sales, I now see that I found a good place to start in the business. The manager of the dealership that I chose to walk into was

a professional. He chose this business as a career for himself and he taught much of that to me. He too had started as a salesman at a dealership in San Francisco and worked his way into a general manager position and becoming a partner in this dealership. Based on that, I saw the potential of me doing much the same thing.

He had many books and 33 1/3 records (this was before cassettes existed) that he had collected over the years about selling. They were about selling in general, there was only one record specifically about selling cars. With his encouragement, I took the records and books home and studied them over and over again. I took voluminous notes and practiced everything I could in order to learn this new strange way of selling.

The dealership also had factory provided training materials on film and in printed form and I stayed late many a night and poured over them too. I learned a great deal from them and started on a path of study that has yet to cease or even slow down. This was a solid foundation for which to build upon and I am most grateful for that manager's help and encouragement.

A good deal of what one learns about selling comes from what they call (there "they" are again..) O.J.T. This stands for On-the-Job-Training. That is the most common training method in the world. I was quite familiar with it in the Service. Watch someone else and copy them, right? It's easy. I didn't learn until sometime later to be careful who I was copying. If you copy "average", you become "average". It's a worthy lesson. But, I learned a myriad of details that would take me years to put together in a format that would mean something worthwhile and rewarding. It was sort of like putting a puzzle together where there are hundreds of pieces and no complete picture, just a sketchy one, and it is up to oneself to put the picture together. But, that's how learning is, right?

One thing became apparent very early on in this new sales endeavor. It was more complicated than I thought and the more I studied it the harder it got! How can this be? Shouldn't it get easier? I found out that knowledge and experience are not the same thing. You can have knowledge, but no experience and that won't do. You can have experience and no knowledge, and that is not much better. But the key was to gain knowledge and put it to work in order to gain experience. I couldn't just study, I had to learn and try and do.

I was afraid. Of rejection. Of failure. Of disappointing friends and relatives. Of looking bad. I was

a bundle of fears. But I chose this as a career and I was challenged enough by it that I was going to prove to myself and to others, that I could do this and do well at it. I was afraid, but I tried anyway. It was a mountain to climb, but I started climbing it, and it was okay--I survived. I didn't quite call it success yet, but I felt better and better about it all the time.

The mountain was ominous at first, but I was so eager to learn, so enthusiastic, so daring, and so green. But, that's a good start. Green is okay. Each new day presented new and different things to learn and that excited me. Being an auto mechanic didn't offer me anything like this. How excited I was to be finally working at a career and tackling something that I could really sink my teeth into.

The idea of working for "commission only" was scary. I had never done anything like that. I was used to so many dollars per hour of labor. Now I would be paid on my production only. What if all of the people I talked to said "no"? What if I can't do this? What if I can't pay the rent from my sales efforts? What if I have a "bad month"? What if this, what if that permeated my thinking.

My head was spinning and I questioned my judgement daily in accepting this challenge. No, not daily, it was minute by minute. Somehow I forced myself to think that I "might" be able to do this and in doing so, gave myself enough courage to try. With each effort to try came a little bit more courage to keep on trying and to learn more about this business of sales. It was a big step for me and from where I had been.

So, now I am a salesman. The word salesman became more meaningful to me as I continued my progress in learning the field of sales. And it would take on much greater meaning down the road.

CHAPTER ONE
SUMMARY OF LESSONS LEARNED

- * Be bold enough to try.
- * Find a good starting point, one that has a leader you can respect and learn from.
- * Luck is always part of the story.
- * Pay little attention to what others say about you or your decisions. Instead, look within yourself for your own approval of yourself.
- * Change is difficult but necessary.
- * Don't let what you've done in the past create your future. You can do anything that you want to.
- * Excitement and interest should help tell you that you are on a good path.
- * Seek the people in your field that are doing very well and copy them.
- * Be careful who you are copying.
- * Fear can be part of what you need to overcome. Don't let fear lead you away.
- * Don't give in until you've given it a fair chance of success.
- * Someone else's struggles may make yours look like nothing.

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CHAPTER TWO APPRENTICESHIP

I think that I read more books in the first year or so of learning how to sell than I read in my entire period of junior high and high school. I nearly wore out the manager's records and I even transferred some of them to 8-track tapes (you remember 8-track tapes, don't you?). What did I learn?

I learned that there was a thing called "attitude" that had to be "right" in order to do well (succeed). They called it RMA, which stood for Right Mental Attitude. I wanted to make sure I had RMA. They also call this having a positive attitude, a good attitude. It meant that you had to think positively about what you are doing. To believe in yourself and your abilities.

I learned about the study of body language and how to read what someone is not saying. They may say something and it may be contradictory to what their body language is saying. A salesman must learn to read body language to know what someone is really saying, or how they are feeling. How a person uses their body tells a story that can be read fairly accurately.

I learned about having a professional image and how important it was to change people's image of the car business. The standard car salesman dress used to be a loud colorful sport jacket, white tie, white belt and white shoes. And don't forget the sunglasses! That is not very professional in my eyes. I hate to talk with someone wearing sunglasses--most of the time I refuse to. As I watched what other salesmen were wearing, I knew more about what the manager had been telling me about looking professional.

I learned about prospecting for sales leads and it was likened to prospecting for gold. In gold prospecting, one goes through a lot of gravel before one comes across a gold nugget and fortunately, prospecting for sales was easier than prospecting for gold.

I studied professional salesmen. They were on many of the cartridge movie films the factory provided, and one book in particular really helped with this. The book was titled "How I Raised Myself From Failure To Success In Selling", by Frank Bettger. I read it at least ten times and each time, I found something new I had previously missed. It's a great book. Learning how to become a professional consumed me. I did not want to look or act like a used car salesman, or most people's image of that anyway.

I learned about goals and setting them and achieving

them. Prior to getting into sales, goal setting was something I knew a little about, but didn't fully understand. I found also, that whenever I set a clear goal and worked toward it, that I would usually achieve it. It was amazing to learn such a method of achieving what one wants, and it worked to boot! I didn't use its methods all the time though and had to constantly remind myself of its rewards when utilized.

I learned that I had to become self-motivated. I had to motivate myself to do well. There were plenty of motivational books and records available and they helped put me back on track many a time that I would stray. Being self-motivated meant that I had to take charge of my life and my career and do something with it because it would not come to me. Being self-motivated is very rewarding, but also very difficult to maintain. I had to constantly find things to motivate me and still do or it wanes and disappears completely.

I learned about selling techniques or selling skills. I learned about the steps leading to a sale and memorized them. Closing was the scary one. You had to ask people to buy and you know what happens when you do that, right? They can say "NO!". But, the techniques helped minimize this dreadful response and helped more of them say the magic word: "YES!".

Each time I learned a closing technique, I would gather up all of my courage (there were many times that it was so scattered that I could not gather it well) and try it out. I heard that the best time to try it is right away, so I would do that and more than half of the time it worked! Amazing.

I recall one time in particular that stands out above all the rest. I learned this technique from a record that I borrowed from the manager during my first year of sales. The trainer on the record was J. Douglas Edwards. The technique was stated as such: "Whenever you ask a closing question, SHUT UP!! The first person that talks, loses". On the record, he screamed shut up so loud after saying the first part so quietly, that I almost fell out of my chair. But, it made sense and I tried it.

I was showing a demonstrator truck to a prospect and he liked it and wanted to buy it. I had not offered a discount and he was trying to ask for one, but didn't know how. I wasn't about to teach him! Anyway, he would offer some small objection, I would counter, or answer his objection, and then shut up. It seemed like an eternity between talking, but I kept the record in mind and didn't say a word.

Again, he would ask a question or state an objection to the transaction, and I would answer and counter with a closing question and shut up. After five or six times of

doing this, he finally said okay and bought the truck--at full price! A victory. I would not have sold that truck if it weren't for that record and it has helped many a sale to be closed more easily since. I'll never forget its message, or the presentation of that message on the record.

Years later, as a manager myself, I tried that same method of presenting this idea in a sales meeting. At the sales meeting table which was about ten feet long, the salesman seated at the end of the table said that his hair moved when I yelled SHUT UP! at the top of my lungs. It is one of the most effective closes I have yet to learn.

I also learned about advertising and record-keeping and statistics and the need for keeping them. How was I to know where I was going if I didn't know where I had been? How could I follow up on prospects and owners if I didn't keep good records? My mind could only recall so much data (though I'm convinced it remembers everything in complete detail), and after a few years of selling, there would be a lot to remember and recall. So record-keeping and analyzing statistics from those records became important and this has not changed over the years. Matter of fact, it has grown in importance because of the years and the accumulation of information. Sometimes you may have to prove what you've done and the records you keep will make all the difference.

There were still so many things to learn. It continually amazes me that the more you learn, the more you find you do not know. This is true with anything. But I couldn't use this as an excuse for not learning more in order to improve and expand on what I had already done.

When I took a foreign language in high school, some of the first words we learned were the "dirty" words, the cuss words and phrases. They were so much more fun than "where is the train station?" And as with the foreign language, some of the first words and phrases I learned in the car business were the slang "car talk" words. Maybe you've heard some of them before. Some of them are, "downstroke" (down payment), "double-dipping" (getting more than one down payment loan), "stroke" (a prospect who acts like he wants to or can buy, but doesn't or can't), "flake" (someone who has bad credit and wants to but cannot buy because he cannot get financed), "mouse-house" (a non-bank finance institution or finance company), "upside-down" (when the prospect owes more on his or her car than it is worth on appraisal), "bump" (going back to the prospect for more money than they offered during the negotiation process).

These are the "good" ones. But they are "inside talk" and I never felt comfortable saying them, because it sounded terrible, so I avoided these phrases most of the time and I advise anyone else to do the same. Of course, they are fun

sometimes in "car business circles", but the problem with using them is that you are liable to use them on a prospect and they will not understand your dialect and it sounds most unprofessional. Every profession or job has its own versions of "inside talk", but they call it inside talk because it is meant to be on the inside.

Some of the other things I learned would have to be called lessons, some from the S.O.H.K. or School Of Hard Knocks. It's amazing how many people go to the same school. I think I was put back a couple of times and had to stay longer than most. Now I call these times a "learning experience", but back then it felt like "hell" or at best, "frustrating".

One of the first things I learned was that car salesmen do not lie near as much as prospects. First of all, lying is not something I wanted to do and fortunately did very little of it and most of them were unimportant in the overall view, but I have heard some beauties from prospects. Lesson one became: Prospective customers lie. We all do it, especially when someone is trying to sell us something, but from the side of the salesman, it is no fun at all.

The easiest lie to catch any prospect in is to ask the stupid phrase "may I help you?" When you get the 99% sure response of "no thanks, just looking", you will have heard your first lie. Keep asking those kind of questions and you'll hear them all. I learned to avoid such questions or to re-phrase them to get responses I wanted to hear instead of ones I didn't.

They lie about their trade-in ("it's in excellent condition" and "yes, those are all highway miles" and "yes, those are original miles" and so on), their ability to buy ("I've only had a couple of late payments" or "I make all the decisions in this family" and "No, I've never filed bankruptcy", etc.), and other such things. As a salesman, one must learn how to "see" what they are really saying instead of what they are saying, do you see?

As a professional, you would never allow yourself to lie or mis-represent in any way the offer or services or product or make promises that you could not fulfill. The salesman who does this does not deserve to be called a professional salesman, and I personally regard that title highly. Some do, and those that do lie, always get caught eventually and they move from place to place and it's always a struggle for them. Fortunately, they are few in numbers.

I heard a phrase once that has stuck in my mind about lying. It went something like this: "If you always tell the truth, you will not have to remember what you said or when or to whom you said it". I think that is good advice. Pretty

soon lies become like the Watergate Cover-up; one leads to two and two leads to four and it never stops until you're caught. I have run across a couple of people who lied to customers and they did not last long, nor have they anywhere they have gone. Word travels fast--sometimes it precedes you.

Throughout my apprenticeship, I had help. Each time I would get to the point of a possible close, the manager would help me with ideas and suggestions, sometimes even to the point of specific dialog to aid me in closing the sale. He refused to come in and close it for me though. He always made me do it and this is the best way to learn. I must have cost the dealership countless sales in my learning how to close sales. But this is the way it is done. If someone did it for me, I would have learned very little.

Many dealerships find this learning time unacceptable and so they opt for what they call a "T.O. Operation", which stands for "Turn Over" and they hire closers who do nothing but close sales for their unknowledgeable, untrained "front-men" who start the process with customers and then turn them over to the closers. These untrained people are called "green-peas" or "liners" and their sole job is to get the customer to make any kind of offer at any price and let the closer take over. Unfortunately, since the green-peas are unknowledgeable and untrained, they can mis-represent much.

I was fortunate to have started at a dealership that did not run a T.O. Operation (commonly called "straight-sell", meaning the salesman takes a customer from start to close without turning them over to a closer). I had to learn to do it all and to get better at it in order to survive. I was taught professionalism and studied professionals via film and meetings. I learned sales from the ground up. In order to do this, one must lose sales, and I must have lost a bunch, but another record I listened to told me this story: "There is only one way to learn how to close sales: Close too early and too often". That is pretty simple, yet it automatically means that you will lose sales. That is just part of the game.

This period in my career was the foundation building phase. What you learn in this part of your career will be so important later. The foundation must be as strong as possible in order to build upon. The stronger the foundation, the more you can build on it. I couldn't be afraid to try or worry about the fact that I would lose sales as part of learning the basics. The foundation comes from knowledge that is applied and turned into experience. Trial and error is the only way to really learn and if the foundation is to be strong, there will be a lot of trial and error.

CHAPTER THREE BEYOND THE BASICS

There was a phrase I ran across early in my career that has helped me a lot. The phrase is: "He had twenty years experience...one year's experience repeated twenty times." I found a lot of people in this business that fit into that category. Some of them had even much more than twenty years experience and they were doing no better and some of them worse than I with less than one full year's experience. I thought how can this be? Surely they would get better at what they are doing in that much time! This is common in sales and it is probably common in most fields of endeavor.

A lot of people I know felt that when high school or college was over that learning was done and they could go on from there. I think they missed the point. I heard that school was to teach you how to think and not how to shut it off. Some of that fault will have to remain with the school systems throughout the country. There are so many students per teacher in most classes that learning is not fun and people are passed on who have just shown up for class. Some will have to fall on parents who leave the schools to do the job that they should be actively involved in promoting. And lastly, some will have to fall on the individual. I think that if learning has become a chore, those people will have a much harder time in the business world than those who have learned that learning is fun and exciting.

Remember the book-of-the-month club? One book a month is a paltry amount of continuing education, but I've heard it said that only 3% of the United States population owns a library card. Three percent? Wow. How can one grow without continuing education and particularly continuing self-education? I don't know any other way of improving one's self, but by increasing one's knowledge and experience. It stands to reason that the more you know, the more potential you will have of putting it to good use.

I gave up college mid-stream and that is okay, but to stop learning on your own is foolish and ill-advised I think. The world is becoming more complicated daily and one needs to stay up with it at least in order to stay in one place. Perhaps they were led astray somewhere along the line. Maybe they are completely happy and content with what they have and would never have want of any more, I don't know. I asked myself a lot of questions about this path of continued learning and every time the answer came back to me that I had to continue or forever remain in mediocrity. This I did not want--for sure.

And it is most difficult to continue. Knowing that learning never stops is part of the difficulty, but I am most

grateful that I made the decision to continue and it has made all the difference to me. Ask yourself some questions about continued learning.

I learned that if I were going to improve, I would have to learn all I could and practice as much as possible. This I set out to do and have never stopped. I hope that the reason you are reading this book is to help find something that will help you to want to continue to learn and improve. Perhaps relating to someone who has struggled with it will be important to you, or perhaps you are just starting out and you want to learn all you can about sales. Be proud of yourself for taking the time to read something that may help you improve. I think that growth is what it's all about. If we are not growing, we are dying and I would prefer the former and not the latter. I hope you feel the same.

There are so many sources of knowledge for you and there are more every year. When I started it was hard to find much of anything on sales and business and yet there was more that presented themselves the more I found. This strange happening reminds me of something someone told me once: "When the student is ready, the teacher will appear". How true that statement is. When you're ready and you want to learn more, the doors open up and all of a sudden there are countless books to read, tapes to listen to, video tapes to watch and so on. Until you get to that point, they elude you and keep themselves hidden in obscurity.

So, first comes the decision to do something about learning, and then the doors of the available knowledge open and each step along the way more and more knowledge is made available to you. Once you stop, the door closes until you are ready to move on again. I call these "plateau's", or learning plateau's. You climb and finally get to a plateau where you can rest and look back on your upward travels and rest for a time, then you force yourself to continue the climb upward and eventually you will reach yet another plateau. This will continue indefinitely, at least it has so far for me and I hope that it does for you as well. The periods between plateau's is most exciting and you learn by leaps and bounds and when you reach a plateau, at first, it seems pleasant and comfortable, but after a short time you are rested, then become restless and you must continue the journey again with knowledge accumulated.

While on the plateau, things may not seem right in your life. You may feel frustration or anxiety. This appears to be normal feelings, but once you decide to start climbing again, all will feel better than ever before and fun and challenging and exciting. Once this aspect of the "learning plateau's" is understood, you will have greater understanding of "mood swings" and such things as have been commonly referred to as "slumps" or "dry spells" will have less of an

effect on you. You will take them less seriously and understand that it is time to move on to another plateau, and once you start your journey, the slumps and dry spells will disappear and noticeable growth will take its place.

Growth is what I wanted to achieve throughout my career. I did not want to end up with one year's experience repeated twenty times. In the car business the national average is about 9 units per month. If after only two years I was still doing 9 units I would be severely disappointed in my efforts and learning and skill. Yet, there are many that fall into this category--the majority. One must decide on a path of growth and the reasons need be only your own, but deciding is the most important thing you will do.

Is growth important? Good question. How high do trees grow? This question was posed by one of my "mentors", E. James Rohn, who is a multi-millionaire businessman and motivational speaker. So, how high do they grow? Answer: As high as they can! Trees don't grow half-way or part way. They grow all. They drive their roots deep and stretch their branches out and grow as high as they can. Why would human beings accept less for themselves? Jim says it is because they have the power of choice to do so. How can I not agree with him? How many trees have I seen that only grew half-way? Why would I want to grow only a little or only half-way or only part way? I want to grow all too. That is a decision. We have the power of choosing and one must ask themselves what they are willing to accept in terms of growth.

So, with the decision and the knowledge of growth behind me, I choose growth, I choose life, I choose to be the best I can be. There can be no better than the best. It's all there is. Why choose less? I can't imagine choosing less. How about you?

My first full year I did very well. The trouble with that is topping it. The way to begin to be able to top it is to learn more, so that you have more knowledge to draw upon and put into effective use to gain additional experience and increase your capacity for additional learning and growth. Hence, continuing study, continuing searching, continuing learning. I wanted to do better and it seemed natural to me to want to do better than I had done. After all, I had only just completed my first year.

I decided after earning \$14,000.00 (which was more in one year than I had earned in the prior five years), that I wanted to move onto \$25,000.00. That was a "magic" number to me at the time. I had mentally set a goal that I wanted to earn that much money. Finally, I decided that it was within

my power. I even wrote myself a letter detailing what I had accomplished in the past year and what I would need to improve upon in order to get to the objective. So, I set the goal, wrote it out and enthusiastically shared it with a few co-salesmen. That was a mistake. But, I was elated with my past year's performance and longing to do better and better.

A strange thing happened next. I'll call it another learning experience. Two of the senior salesmen who had been in this dealership for over ten years and in the business for at least twenty years took me aside in the coffee room alone. They had heard about my objective, since I had turned it in to the manager as the next year's goal (we were required to do this every year). They preceded to tell me that they wanted to save me from so much embarrassment by not achieving such an "impossible" goal. They gave me all manner of reasoning including the fact that it could not be done in a city such as we were selling in and so on and so on and so on.

They seemed sincere. I felt that they were indeed on my side and that they wanted to lead me in a direction that was the right direction. I listened to them (mistake number one). I reasoned with them (mistake number two). And lastly, after much conversation about my goals, I believed that they were indeed sincere (mistake number three), that they really cared about me (mistake number four), and that they were right in their conclusion (mistake number five). With my limited knowledge and boundless enthusiasm, I felt that these "veterans" knew what they were talking about and I backed off of my conviction to achieve this "impossible" goal.

The following year, I made some improvement in sales (1974) in spite of a recessionary period and the "gasoline crisis" and earned \$17,000.00. But I felt terrible about that amount of improvement. It didn't seem right to me. In the process of this year, I had studied even more and learned that there was such a thing as people that would hold you back from achievement in order for them to look good.

Jim Rohn tells this story in this way: "There's two ways to have the tallest building in town. One is to tear all the other buildings down, and the other is to build the tallest building. Now maybe you can tear the first one down and maybe the owner of the building was out of town or something. And maybe, you can get the second one down under similar circumstances. But, the third or the fourth one, the owner is going to be standing out front of his building and he's going to say, "I've heard about you!" And so, they tore my building down, but more important, I let them. I didn't know any better. I was green (or is that ripe?). Though I made some progress, it was a victory for them.

I'm so glad that this was an early lesson. Don't let them do it to you. Don't let anyone do it to you. I came across a phrase some years later that I have kept in my wallet that describes this situation and it will remain in my wallet where I can view it often. It says: "People who say it can't be done, should not interrupt the people who are doing it." A great phrase to remember. Some people will tear everyone else down in order to look good, others will just do better. Which will you choose to be?

Being the new kid on the block, the new kid in town, the green horn, I listened to them once, but never again. They knew that I knew after that episode. I'm not totally lame. Fool me once shame on you, fool me twice, shame on me. I ain't no fool. At least, not twice (well, for sure not three times...).

During this period of growth, there were some sales contests that, if you looked from the point of view of the "experienced" salesmen, I hadn't a chance in hell of winning. Hey, a chance is all I need. The first year, I started from behind and they got me. Everyone had a jump on me and I didn't know what I was doing, so the first year's contest, they got me. Last time though. Put a trip in front of my nose and give me even a reasonable chance to make it and I'm out of here. Gone. Having a good time.

Chevrolet was into giving trips away back then. I was born in Iowa and moved to California when I was two. I went to school and grew up in California and the only other time I had been away was during my period in the Service, and that was spent in Delaware. I drove back from Delaware after my discharge and saw a wee little bit of the states along Interstate 80, but that was the extent of my travels. I wanted to see some of the world and to have someone else pay for the trip and expenses was all right with me.

I didn't have a chance as they said. But I blew them away on the next go around. Like I said, put a grand trip in front of me and I'm already packing.

The second contest that I was involved in was a trip to Acapulco, Mexico. Wow! Out of the country and everything. I made first place. How? The odds were against me for sure, being the green horn and all that, but motivation and determination are omnipotent. Watch out world, here I come! I worked harder than anyone else, that's plain and simply how it was done. I pictured myself lying on the beach in Acapulco, Mexico. I felt how it would be, I smelled the scents of Mexico, I became Mexico.

Prospecting for sales potentials was not my favorite

task in the world, but during this trip period, I told everyone I came in contact with that I was involved in this contest and that I wanted to win it. I worked later nights and earlier mornings. I talked to more people. I demonstrated more cars. I wrote more orders. And first place got \$100.00 spending money plus the trip. Second place only got \$50.00 and who remembers second place anyway?

I won the trip and had a ball. The second place winner had 24 years experience and I had one. He didn't have a chance! Superior motivation and determination to make it will win every time. Watch out you veterans! I still have pictures of that trip and look at them occasionally and when I do, the memories come back clear as the days I spent there in the lap of luxury. By the way, one of the people that I prospected and sold a car to earning that trip has become my best customer. I've since sold him ten cars!

Learning and growing. What motivates someone? What brings out that extra something that gets them excited enough to place first place in a contest with people that have years more experience and knowledge on their side? I think it's important to find out what it is that motivates you. Trips motivate me. They are not the only thing that does, but they are high on the list. It's amazing when you find something that gets you that fired up.

Over the years, I've been to Acapulco, Mexico; Bermuda; London, England; Vancouver, British Columbia; Kauai, Hawaii; Turtle Bay, Hawaii (Oahu); Maui, Hawaii; and many trips within the state of California such as Lake Tahoe, Monterey and so on. All of these trips were won and paid for by Chevrolet and the dealer I worked for. Each one was harder than then prior trip because they keep raising your objectives when you win. The stakes get higher. I wanted to go to Hawaii for fifteen years and now I've been three years in a row! Amazing what a little motivation will do for you. All of them were first place except two trips. And I was never the top producing salesman consistently, but I was always on his heels. I'm proud of those accomplishments.

Finding what motivates and drives you to do more and do better is part of what growth is all about. Maybe it's something entirely different for you. Maybe you've already seen as much of the world as you care to see. What motivates you? What fires you up? What drives you to succeed? If there are no answers to these questions, you need to find some and soon. Find something that gets you heart jumping and fires you up. Whatever it is. Knowing what it is can be very important to you.

Growth is learning to do better and better each and

every trip out of the chute. Learning from past experiences, current experiences, planning for the future and adjusting it's outcome as you move forward. And this is the key--always moving forward. Time does not stand still. We need to move ever onward. We need to find the carrot to hang out in front of us and move toward it.

Growth is keeping on keeping on, like a tree, moving ever skyward in its time on this planet. How many years would you want your child to spend in the fourth grade? Two, three, four? A maximum of one, right? So it is with business and your career. How many years do you want it to take to move on to the next level? Ask yourself these kind of questions and answer them honestly. If you're selling cars, how many did you sell last year? Are you going to do better this year? Would you like to sell less this year than last? What will you decide to do about it? I know what I decided--I wanted to grow. I wanted to learn more and grow more and I think that is the way it is meant to be, but it is difficult. If it was easy, everyone would do it. No one would read the books. No one would need to grow and learn and stumble in the process. Valuable things are costly. We must pay a certain price for these valuable assets. If they were free or cheap, we would not value them. And why bother?

These are valuable things, ideas, thoughts. The question is do we want them and would having them be beneficial to us? Would we appreciate them? This is for us to decide for ourselves, but asking the right and tough questions is most important. Your answer is your answer, but the questions are formed in order to help us think and grow. What becomes of the answer is our own affair, but I don't want it to be known that I didn't try, that I didn't enter the race. If I win or lose matters much less than whether I even entered the race and tried. Choosing growth and continued learning can be your greatest gift to yourself. It has been this for me.

CHAPTER FOUR
A FORK IN THE ROAD

After only a few months as a salesman, I decided that I wanted to be a manager. I think that this comes from long ago when I was a teenager. I liked the idea of being a teacher and thought about it at great length. I saw the manager's role as a teacher and there was much to learn to get to the point where I felt that I was qualified to teach. But I knew that's what it was that I wanted to do. Besides, after watching the ones doing the job that were doing it, I knew I could do it better.

After about a year of selling cars, I decided to set a goal and write it out regarding being a manager. I wrote it out on a 4"x6" card and cut it smaller and put scotch tape all over it to protect it for the long haul. I put it in my pocket and was committed to looking at it many times each and every day and picturing myself as the manager of the dealership. Sales Manager. The title had pizzazz. I liked it a lot.

The goal was written thusly: "I will be the Sales Manager at this dealership within five years of this date". Within two and a half years, the job was won. Goals are amazing things when sincerely wanted and written out clearly. This particular goal was a massive achievement to me and considering the propensity of the dealership to not hire from within, it became even more an achievement.

I couldn't just write it out and expect to achieve the goal though. I had to act on it and toward it's achievement. There was much to do. Much to learn. I started by asking for jobs to do that would gain me experience in the tasks of the manager.

I began ordering the cars to sell and I particularly enjoyed this task. It was such a pleasure to order a car and pick the colors, trim, options and then see it arrive completed. On occasion, I would be disappointed in the outcome, but by and large they came out just fine. And I got better at it. The General Manager was reluctant at first to give this task to me since I was so new and inexperienced, so he began slowly and checked my orders carefully. Gradually, he saw that I was learning it and I got the entire task to do--free. I didn't ask for money. Of course, I wouldn't have turned it down, but it was not offered by the company either. It didn't matter. I wanted the experience and I was willing to pay the price to get it.

Boy did I get it. There were so many little things that a manager hated to do and I got the experience of doing them all for nothing. This is the price you may pay to get

something that you consider to be valuable. I considered it such and worked toward it in this manner. Throughout this time of learning, I had to continue to sell cars and increase my objectives constantly. I continued learning about selling and closing sales. How else would I be able to teach it?

At the time, it seemed it would take forever to reach that goal, but in actuality I made it in half of the original planned time. I had just turned 26 years old one month before the word came to me that I would be accepted for the position. What elation! What joy! What a road to hold ahead of me!

In order to be a really good sales manager, I had to learn to stay ahead of everyone else. I had to know a great deal about sales, psychology. In essence, I had to learn how to be a leader.

From the ordering of the cars experience, I had learned more about the products than anyone else. For some time before the promotion, I was sought after whenever there was a product related question. If I didn't know the answer, I certainly knew where to find it. So this ordering experience came in very handy.

I had studied sales and sales psychology as I have said earlier and this came in handy as well. One must be relatively prepared to accept such a position and many are not. I wanted to be as prepared as it was humanly possible to be and still concentrate on my job.

Looking back from my current vantage point, I'm amazed that I survived the trip. Recessions, gas crises, factory strikes, massive price increases, the advent of catalytic converters, 5 mile per hour bumpers, poor production quality, the move to water-based paints, vandalism, and a myriad of other foes struck most every dealership in the 1970's. At one point during the recessionary period about 1974, all the salesmen were called into the General Manager's office one by one and only half of the staff remained to continue on with a bleak outlook on the near future. There were some good salespeople that left us that day.

We had over fifteen 454 cubic inch V-8 Impala's and over twenty-five pickup trucks with the same engine in the middle of the gas crisis. We had to learn how to sell these "gas guzzlers" in a much different way than ever before. What small fuel-efficient cars we did get were sold before they ever hit the pavement while still on the truck or even before the truck arrived. There was an almost panic in the air and people wanted to trade their gas guzzlers for anything that got decent mileage no matter what cost in trade-in value or initial cost. This also led to General Motors's ill-fated Oldsmobile Diesel engine a couple years later. At first we

sold them faster than we could get them and later, we could not give them away.

These were strange times indeed. Nothing even approaching them have occurred since. The recession period of 1979 through 1982 wasn't even close. Waiting in lines over a mile long to get only six gallons of gasoline tops the list as far as I'm concerned. Owning a gas station at the time was probably the best venture around. Dealerships went out of business like crazy. It cost a lot of money to run an auto dealership and one can only lose money so many months in a row before it's history.

But, I survived it somehow. And I think I survived it well and benefited from the struggle to get to the goal. I also found out that my learning had only just begun. There was so much more to know now than before. The challenge was greater than it ever was, but I wanted it enough to accept all of its challenges. For me, at least, the rewards have been more than worth the trip.

I learned a great deal more about selling from changing sides of the desk because I now had to have enough of an understanding of it to teach it to others and to train the new recruits and encourage them to do well.

The hours were much longer than before. I studied twice as hard and long. I took courses, attended seminars, read books, listened to tapes and watched and listened to others who were doing the job. I took it very seriously. Much too seriously at one point. But I wanted to do well. I wanted to be the best sales manager ever.

It's amazing how much you learn about being a good student when you become a teacher. So many more pieces of the puzzle fell into place during this time. I gained a much clearer understanding of the role of the salesman and their value in the overall scheme of things.

If it were not for good salesmen, our standard of living would be much lower than it is. Plants that produce products would have to close down. Without someone to move the goods so to speak, the source of the goods would be nonexistent. The need of the goods would be nonexistent. There are so many products that we didn't know we needed until they were "sold" to us. Selling is not much more than presenting a product that fills a "perceived" need. When the need is not evident, the salesman fills the role of creating the need and hence, the product or service being desirable and then "sold" to the consumer.

Think about some of the products that we take for granted today. Color television. I remember my Step-Father who was a television repairman when I was very young. There

was no such thing as color television. Matter of fact, television itself was new. Later, he went into a business venture with some others in a television store. To sell the new concept and create the need for color television, they most frequently used a selling technique called "puppy dog selling". In this technique, they would place a color television in someone's home free of charge. They would come in and set it up and make sure it was operating properly and then leave it in their home.

They would then forget about it for about a week. Then, they would call and ask if it was working properly and if it needed any adjustment. If it didn't, they would hang up and wait. Invariably, within a two weeks, the customer would call back and ask how they could go about owning the new color television. They couldn't return it. After all, their neighbors had seen it and the children loved it and to then take it back to the store and not buy it would have been unthinkable. Puppy dog selling. No sales pitch. Let the product speak for itself, let the customer sell themselves on the need and desire for the product.

More color televisions were sold in this manner than any other. The key was to get it into their home and let them get used to looking at it and then they could no longer live without it. Amazing.

The telephone was much the same way. Can you imagine living without a telephone today? Many people have phones in their car, boat, mobile homes, etc.. Now if you have to walk more than a few feet to answer the phone, you install some more--even the bathroom! And of course, we have to have a machine to answer it when we aren't home too. Don't forget the call-forwarding so that your caller will reach you in someone else's house.

How about computers? I own two. I can't imagine living without one now and only a few years ago, they frightened me. In less than six years, they have become commonplace. What would we play the video games on?

Other products such as electronic calculators. I remember when they first came out. They were giants. Took up half of the desk. Now they are no bigger than a credit card and many wrist watches have calculators in them.

Transistor radio's, component stereo systems, automobiles, designer jeans, cosmetics, electric garage door openers, alarm systems, tape recorders, compact disk players, trash compactors, automatic dishwashers, clothes dryers, refrigerators with automatic ice makers and ice and fluid dispensers in the doors, vacuum cleaners, Astroturf, credit cards. Look around you. Everything you now take for granted was "sold" to you in some way. Some selling was done by

national advertising, some by other forms of advertising, but probably most was done on a one to one basis by a salesperson. Those who put salesmen down should take a really good look around them and applaud them.

Granted, there are many "pushy" type salespeople that "bug" people, but in reality, without salesmen, we would not even come close to the standard of living that we now take for granted. We'd still be riding horses and shovelling manure, scrubbing our clothes down by the river, building our own houses, and cooking over open fire. Salesmen are valuable in our lives, there is no doubt about that.

So, I learned a lot about sales, salesmen, the need for them, their part in the scheme of things, their value, their problems. Considering the obstacles that are in front of many salespeople, I'm amazed at how many are in the field. And we always need better ones. There is an art to selling and more of the "art" needs to be sold to them. This is something that I accepted as a challenge and have taught ever since--that sales is a profession and an art and it should be treated as such.

CHAPTER FIVE
CLERKS VERSUS SALESMEN

The more one studies sales and salesmanship and the more one learns about what it means to be good at sales, the more one dislikes clerks. There are so many clerks in this world.

I took an unusual college course in salesmanship in 1974 and it was fascinating and eye opening. I hadn't given much thought as yet to the clerks vs. the salesman issue before. But, the word salesman is now a much more valuable and worthy title now from having studied the difference.

In the course, we were told to go to a large shopping mall (at the time, malls were just at the beginning stage) and try to find a salesman. It was a challenge from the teacher and he knew that we would have a real challenge finding one. He was right. I found none and as I remember, no one else in the class found one either.

We discussed the subject at length in class, and having learned what constitutes a salesman and going to the large mall and not being able to find even one, gave us a fresh appreciation for what and who these salesmen are and what value they give to the world.

The teacher estimated that the mall could effectively quadruple their yearly sales by hiring salesmen instead of clerks. Knowing what I now know about the subject, I have to agree with him. It's amazing what a difference they make.

We're all familiar with shopping at a mall (although, any store will do, shopping malls are not necessarily singled out here, they are no more than a concentration of stores into one area) and struggling with trying to find someone to help you and at least answer your questions. Everything is becoming more and more self-service oriented. Many services are no longer. Service stations are now gas stations and so on. Many of the shoe departments have only one clerk and the shoes are laid out for you to help yourself. Even when you go to pay for your purchase, you probably have to wait in line a long time.

Many of these clerks don't know about their wares, can't answer even simple questions about their services or their products and many have an attitude that indicates to you, the customer, that you are bothering them by even being there. Maybe you're keeping them from their break or lunch or something. I've seen many of them stop helping a person right in the middle of doing so because it was break time. How sad, but I'm sure that you have seen similar things happen in your own experience.

Since Tom Peters began the "Search For Excellence" revolution, some stores are paying more attention to these major details and doing more training and requiring better standards, but clerks still permeate our environment.

It's a true statement that a good salesman will not work for minimum wage, but this is only an excuse for lack of concern and proper training on the part of the stores of the world. Consider the thought of what could be done to improve production and sales with just these two items being added to the store's policies and practices. There would be an amazing change throughout the industry.

There are clerks in just about every field of sales. There are many in the car business, computer business, real estate sales, virtually every sales field. Becoming a clerk requires little talent and energy. Becoming a salesman (the word professional is implied to the word salesman from here on) requires much. The first step is understanding the difference.

A salesman cares and thinks of the customer. He knows that though he may work for someone in his capacity as a salesman, his income is derived from his customers. This person is knowledgeable about their product or service and knows where to find the information they may not possess. They are friendly and genuine. They pay attention to detail. They know how to present their product or service in a non-pushy manner. They ask a lot of questions about your needs, your desires, your particular situation. They want their product or service to be of benefit to you.

They are concerned about your ownership experience. They want you to be satisfied long term. They want you to tell your friends and neighbors how satisfied you are with their product, their service and them.

A good salesman stays in touch and remembers his owners and clients. He develops a long term relationship and is always helpful and courteous.

They answer your questions with information that is tailored to give you a greater understanding and knowledge about their product or service and its benefits to you and your special circumstances. A good salesman never misrepresents their wares, for he knows that to do so would endanger the long term relationship that he tries so hard to develop and nurture.

They study their product, their service. They increase their knowledge and selling skills. They are always looking for new and better ways of doing their job. And they look upon their job as a career and don't generally think of it as "work".

In a phrase, they go the extra mile. They work harder and smarter and longer and always put the customer first. To them, customer satisfaction is the end result of their efforts and they build their clientele on the basis of repeat and referral business and they know that in order to achieve these ends, the customer must be satisfied with the entire transaction. In short, they serve.

A good salesman keeps good records, for he knows that to do so makes good business sense and will aid him in understanding better where he has been, where he is going and how to improve that which he does. He understands that everyone has a great memory, but few have great recall, so he aids his recall with good, accurate, complete records.

A good salesman is service-oriented. Even when he sells a product, they are more concerned with follow up service and understand that the sale only begins with the product purchase and it is maintained and expanded by the services rendered.

A good salesman is outgoing and they like people. They don't look down on others, but treat them more like equals and understand the importance and value each person is and has. They look for ways to make people comfortable and at ease during the sale and afterward.

A good salesman understands basic laws such as the Law of Averages. He doesn't allow others' negativity to slow him down or change his direction. He is confident in his own abilities and self-motivated. He knows that if he keeps going when others stop, he will persevere and win in the end. A good salesman is not an easy quitter--they have tenacity and vision and always have a positive outlook for they see a larger picture which gives them greater understanding, clarity and perspective.

A good salesman is not necessarily the "star" of the show. He is a consistent producer in the organization. He may not be the top producer every month, but is always growing and improving on their past performances. They are growth-oriented and look toward the future as being better than their past or their present.

A good salesman is ruthless with their time and knows where to focus their energies to achieve the best results. They do not waste their time chatting with other salesmen or other dead ends. They understand that time is a valuable tool and use it wisely. They maintain high and consistent energy levels for they understand the value in focused energy and that wasting it on dead end pursuits is fruitless.

They enjoy their career and love to watch it grow and blossom in each days small improvements. They understand

that success comes in small steps and they are consistent in their progress.

A clerk reluctantly goes to work and gladly comes home after putting in their eight hours to collect their pay. A salesman gladly goes to work, enjoys his moments as they appear and looks forward to tomorrow's possibilities and their pay is secondary, but well earned and rewarding.

There is a massive difference between clerks and salesmen. A clerk has a job and a salesman has a career. The difference is everything. There are different rewards, challenges, excitement, learning and enthusiasm. They have a different attitude, a more positive outlook on everything, a more satisfying experience. They treat their business as if they are in business for themselves and are in charge of their own destiny. They are in control and balanced.

Now imagine going into the same mall and having all of the clerks replaced by salesmen. Imagine the comfort and the information presented to you in a way that is tailored to your own needs and situation in an enthusiastic, courteous manner that is encouraging to your purchase and ultimate overall satisfaction.

Consider having them see to it that you are still satisfied with your experience after the sale. Consider your feeling of satisfaction from seeing a smile and friendly voice the next time you go into the store. Consider the joy in sharing your experience with others and your overall feeling about the store and its products and services. Consider them remembering your name, your sizes, your special needs. What a difference there would be. How different would be your experience in shopping at the mall.

SALESMAN. It is a highly regarded title to me and if most dare admit such a thing, to them as well. For with more and better salesmen, our purchasing experiences would be so much improved and satisfying and happy. We need them. We need more of them, and we need better ones.

There are even more attributes of a good salesman, but the majority are presented here. They are not achieved 100% but by so few that they are extremely difficult to find; however, it is the endeavor of those who wish to excel in sales as a career, to strive for their attainment. It is in this vein that I have strived and continue to remind myself of definitions of a good salesman in order to have a clearer picture of which direction to drive toward. I wish for you the same endeavor and goals.

CHAPTER SIX
PIECES OF THE PUZZLE

Many salespeople want to do better. They want to earn more money, more rewards, recognition. They want to enjoy their jobs more and have fun at what they do. They want to have generally a more satisfying experience in their travels.

Those that do, are constantly looking for ways to put more pieces of the puzzle together and gain a clearer picture of the path that leads to these accomplishments. Some even look for the "magic methods" as I have, but there are none-- at least I have yet to find them.

There are, however, answers to their questions. Some of the answers are very generalized and some are more specific and both will be addressed.

The answers lay partly in understanding the general attributes of what a good salesman should and could be, how he can proceed daily on a step by step basis toward this goal of success in selling. Knowing what these general attributes are and how important they are and how they apply to sales in general is a requirement no matter what field of sales one may be in.

Other answers lie in more specific terms usually left to each individual field of sales. They are the step by step processes that apply to the sale of the product or service you are engaged to sell and though many are familiar to each other, also many differ. This is generally called approach. The approach in each field may differ and I am qualified in very few, though I feel confident having the larger more general understanding in sales, I could do okay in any field of sales that I found myself in and believed in.

In specific terms, I have sold automobiles, vitamins, cleaning products, business opportunities and musical instruments and accessories, services. Of these, automobiles has been the greater of my experience. I think that having sold automobiles and studied sales to start my career has served to be a solid foundation on which to step into virtually any other field.

I found that selling guitars was no different in reality than selling automobiles. The product differs greatly, but the selling skills involved in doing well at either is virtually the same. Does that sound strange? It really isn't. Selling is selling. Learning the basics would apply to most types of selling. It is with this foundation and the various experiences in applying their skills that I feel even remotely qualified to attempt this book.

In this chapter, I will address some of the general, foundation building attributes that I am confident apply to most any field of sales. Some of these have been discussed so far, but I endeavor to go a bit further and deeper from here on.

The first, and I feel the most important, is BELIEF. You must believe in yourself first. You must believe that you can, only then will you be willing to try and you must try in order to do and you must do often in order to get better and you must do better in order to succeed. Pretty simple.

I don't know about you, but this one was a struggle for me. Some people grow up believing in themselves and their value and ability and others struggle with it. I struggled. I think this comes from the very different ways we are taught and treated during childhood. If you made it out of childhood with a solid belief in yourself, you are several steps ahead of a lot of us and I congratulate you and your parents.

Introverts don't believe in themselves much and I was an introvert. You must become more of an extrovert to succeed at such an ominous venture as sales. This was and is my biggest challenge. You have to be bold enough to venture and boldness comes from being outgoing and secure. Insecurities were abundant in my being and the struggle to overcome them has led me to try so much harder I think than is necessary in others.

You've seen people that seem to do well at almost anything they try, haven't you? They believe in their abilities and have confidence. This word CONFIDENCE is a result of belief. You cannot have confidence if you do not believe. And confidence will prove to be your greatest asset in sales. When you are confident in your abilities, the world, and other people, you can in turn be confident in the outcome of your efforts.

I've probably spent more time and energy studying how to become more confident in myself than anything else. It has consumed so much of my being. And I don't feel particularly alone in this after having taught sales, hired and trained salesmen for the past sixteen years. There are so many that have shared similar insecurities and failings as I and many worse than my own. Consequently, I've spent as much time trying to build my salespeople's confidence in their abilities and in themselves as I have my own. Maybe even more so.

Things fall into place so much easier when a person is confident in themselves. They don't experience "call reluctance". They are confident and secure. Their fear of rejection is so small because they know they are not being

rejected as a person and don't take it personally.

I had the pleasure of working with a good salesman recently who told me that he never gets embarrassed. What an advantage! He was serious. He told me that is was a wasted emotion that would only hold him back if he allowed himself to feel it. What control! And learning how to control these kind of emotions can help anyone do better for they will be less inclined to stop or slow down because of what another may say to them, or what they may say to themselves.

Self-talk is something we can control. I think that we need to control it. We need to help it to say positive, uplifting things about ourselves instead of the usual opposite downgrading that most of us hear from that "voice" inside our heads. You've heard it, haven't you? I know I have.

Whenever I "hear" this ulterior voice saying something negative to me, I try to get it to change its comments to a positive vein or I tell it to shut up. Hey, I said I try... it's not an easy task. But, becoming aware of it and what it is doing to you is the first step toward getting better and being in more control of our lives. One must first be aware that it is happening, then we can move to correct it by replacing the negative talk with positive talk.

During the time I was involved in a multi-level marketing venture, I listened to a tape of a sales leader who struggled with a "comfort zone" barrier. He had risen to a level of income around the \$75,000.00 per year mark and was feeling stuck there. He wanted more, but he was failing to improve his income very much. The opportunity was there and he knew how to do it, but he was holding himself back stuck within his self-created comfort zone.

It struck him one day that he didn't believe that he deserved more. So he began his escape from the comfort zone by first convincing himself through self-talk that he was worthy and deserving. He convinced himself to earn \$100,000.00, then \$150,000.00, \$200,000.00 and so on. Each was a step that expanded his comfort zone and with each increase, he had to go through the self-convincing process in order to move to another higher level of growth.

Having listened to his story, I could relate to it very well. I think that we all limit ourselves based on a lot of past input. Until we finally realize what is happening to us, we are pretty much powerless to change it. First comes discovery and realization of what is going on inside ourselves, then and only then can we move to change its direction and eventual outcome.

So, belief is number one. We must truly believe in ourselves, our abilities, our value. We must believe that we deserve and move toward that reality by gaining a greater understanding of ourselves and making efforts to improve and change. It's not an easy task at all, and I'm continuing to struggle with it, but I do finally understand that it is happening and it comes from within.

Earl Nightengale, world famous motivator and speaker, says that "you become what you think about all day long". He also said that "thoughts are things". The Golden Gate Bridge in San Francisco was a thought and only then could it have possibly been created and built. What are we thinking about all day? What kind of thoughts do we allow ourselves to entertain? Are they helping me or hindering me?

Jim Rohn, in his book "Seasons of Life", tells about how who one associates themselves with will make all the difference in what they become. It's a matter of input, kind of like a computer, nothing in, nothing out; garbage in, garbage out. Being around the wrong people can have a serious effect on our thoughts. And if it affects our thoughts, it won't be long before it affects our beliefs, our work, our family, our lives. It's all intertwined and each affects the other.

So, belief is number one. Learning to believe in yourself. Someone told me once (more than once actually), after having viewed me in my travels for a few years, that if I ever really started believing in myself that there would be no stopping me. It's true and I'm aware of that now and constantly working on myself and my belief in me. If you believe, you can achieve. Belief. It's a requirement to betterment and it comes in pieces and little steps for most of us. The key is to keep moving and keep reminding ourselves and keep those little successes coming.

Confidence. It's a result of belief in one's self.
Self-motivation. It's a result of belief in one's self.
Positive Attitude. It's a result of belief in one's self.
Achievement. It's result of belief in one's self and ability.
Positive Self-Image is a result of belief in one's self. So many things are tied to our belief. Believe that you can and you can. Believe that you will and you will. It's so powerful.

Number two is ACTIVITY. We must move. Standing still will not do. I think that if we believe in ourselves, we will want to move forward. We will be active in our pursuits.

This one sound too simple. Getting out of bed in the

morning is where it starts. Making the daily efforts toward one's objectives is so important. Those little steps each and every day. Sometimes I feel that I take one step forward and two back. You've had those days too? The important part was the forward step. We all have setbacks and struggle from time to time. Sometimes they are daily struggles, but the constant forward motion will prove out the winner no matter how many times you have setbacks.

You've probably heard stories about people who became millionaires more than once. They made a million, lost it and made another. They kept moving forward regardless of the number of setbacks. The only time that its over is when we stop moving forward. Then they've got us. We're finished. But, until that time, there's a chance.

The greatest failing of the salesmen that I have been associated with (and my own for that matter), is lack of sufficient daily activity in the forward direction. Some of this is laziness. Some of it is lack of preparation. Some of it is lack of good record-keeping. Most of it comes from lack of goals and lack of belief in one's self and their abilities.

No matter what kind of sales you may be in, you need to have goals so that you have some sense of what it is that you want. If you don't want anything, you're probably going to get it. When you know what you want and take the time and energy to write it out and concentrate on its ultimate achievement, you have a great chance of getting what you want. It doesn't come from need. It comes from desire. I think that what we need is taken care of, but it's the desire that we alone must create and without desire, there can be little in the way of achievement.

Take some time and sit down in a quiet place and write out what it is that you would like to have, see, do and become. Break it down into sections. Section one is what you want to have, be, do, become in the next twelve months. These are called short term goals. Section two is what you want in one to five years. These are mid range goals. And lastly, the things you want in five to ten years.

Jim Rohn states it this way: "Now's the time to fix the next ten years". That means setting goals now and working toward them. It's amazing how well it works when you know what it is that you want and you take the time to write your goals out clearly and completely. It's a way of directing your own future. He also says that "without goal setting, the future will not pull". The future must pull us along like a magnet drawing toward it a piece of metal.

There are many, many books and tapes on goal setting and each one of them has their own specific techniques of writing

them down and acting on them. I don't think it matters which one you use. The only thing that matters is understanding the need for them, creating them and acting on them. The method is secondary. There is no best way--no one person who has the best answer to continue searching for and putting off your commitment until you find it. How do I know this? I've read many of the books and changed my methods over and over and realized that I was making excuses for writing them down until I could get just the right format that was best for me. Pick one. Any one. It doesn't matter which. Just do.

Goals are decisions. That's the tough part. Little decisions are easy, but important one's are a struggle for a lot of people. We have to make some decisions about what we want, where we want to go, what we want to become. But, that's the only way of getting anything with any degree of control. Otherwise, we just wander and bump into things like floating down a river with no rudder and no oars--out of control. In this manner, circumstances are everything. Things just kind of happen to us and we don't know why. We don't understand why we are being singled out for having things happen to us.

Look around at some people you may know that have bad things happen to them all the time. Maybe they are accident prone. They complain about nearly everything and when offered solutions to their constant dilemma's, they seem to not listen and do the same things over and over that bring even more unhappiness to them. I know people like this. It never changes for them. Some people live their entire lives not realizing what they are doing to themselves. They blame circumstance and other people for everything not realizing that it is coming from the inside and not the outside. The outside is just the result of the inside, like a mirror image.

Goals will change this. Goals will give you direction. Goals will make the future pull. Deciding on what you want is not easy. It requires thought. It's worth the time and energy and after you make a few successes with it, I doubt that you will change the habit of setting and writing out goals. Can you imagine the field goal kicker on a football team kicking a field goal with no goal posts to aim at? Where would he kick the ball? Hey, anywhere will do...Wrong. He needs a goal and his goal for that moment is to kick the ball over the bar and in between the goal posts and anything else is unacceptable. This is a rather simplified way of looking at what goals are.

Another simplified way of looking at goals is this: Goals are what get you out of bed in the morning. You have something to get up for, something to do, a direction that you know you've set, a path to follow. And with all of this, it's absolutely amazing how few people I know have any kind

of goals at all, let alone have them written down on paper.

Someone close to me gave me her reason for not setting goals: She might not reach them. Until I heard that, I didn't understand why a lot of people don't set goals. Fear of failure. Their reasoning is that if they don't set a goal, they can't miss achieving it. Oh, she tried. She tried a little each day, but without the goal and working toward it, her future couldn't pull and she had no firm sense of direction, couldn't quite get her bearing. She convinced herself that entering a contest was de-motivating to her because if she tried hard and didn't make the mark, she would be depressed. That's kind of like saying that if you don't try, you won't be disappointed in the outcome.

There's probably all kinds of reasons for not setting goals, but I haven't heard a really good one yet. I've proven over and over to myself that they work, they pull, they give one a direction, something to aim at, a way to get what one wants. And they need to be strong enough or high enough to cause us to put out extra effort in their attainment. If they aren't valuable, they have little meaning to us.

So, as part of activity, set goals, decide what you want and write them down, work toward them. What you want and when you want it is your own decision to make. It doesn't matter what or when. Winning your goals isn't even that important. What you become as a result of setting and writing them down is important. You'll feel more in charge of your life, have more direction, more satisfaction. And, who knows, you may even achieve your dreams. It can happen, but only if you try.

Act, action, activity. In sales, there is no substitute for action and activity. You must talk to a lot of people, make a lot of calls and the more you make the better you will do. The better you become at what you are doing, will decrease the number of calls that you must make in order to make a sale. But, in the beginning, you can win by making more calls than anyone else. That's how I won the trips being the new kid on the block and inexperienced against the older crowd that had years of experience and many more skills. Jim Rohn calls it "massive action". It's not easy, but it will work.

In the car business as in so many sales endeavors, the number of people one talks to will determine how many cars are sold. Hey, if you just walked up to people on the street and said "Hey, you wouldn't want to buy a car, would you?", you would eventually find someone who says "maybe I would, what kind of car are you selling?". That's an extremely poor

approach, but the key here is that it is an approach.

As you get better at learning how to ask people to buy and determine the best places to find them, you don't have to work nearly so hard, but until then, there is no substitute for numbers. I've heard it said so many times that sales is a numbers game. And pure and simple, that is a true statement.

In auto selling, I try to teach my salesman the value of numbers. If you have one deal on your desk that you are working and you lose it for some reason, it can be devastating to your drive. If, however, you have twelve deals on your desk that are active prospects and you lose one, it's no big deal, there's eleven more to work on. This applies in many types of selling.

The key with the twelve deals on the desk, is to keep twelve deals on the desk at all times. If you lose one, replace it with another active prospect. If you sell one, replace it with another active prospect. Always have the twelve active prospects on your desk. You sell four and that only leaves eight. You lose six and that leaves two. Now what? Tomorrow has to have been planned out days ago. There must be a systematic method of constantly replacing the working deals with fresh ones. Sound simple? It's work, but it's worthy of your efforts.

The future looks bright when we are busy and moving forward. The more we are working on, the better our chances at doing well. Improvement of skills and knowledge plays an important part, but they can come in pieces, but the activity must continue uninterrupted.

During a two year stint in multi-level marketing, I learned some valuable lessons that apply in any field of sales. One was that (and this is key to multi-level marketing success) you cannot stop the forward motion even for a day or two until the business is built. Consistent, daily efforts, so much each and every day was a real key in success or failure in that business. This applies to almost any field of sales. Once it is going strong, it takes less to keep it going than in the beginning. The Law of Motion. Getting an object moving requires far more energy than to keep it moving. First gear in a car or truck gives the wheels much more energy (yet far less speed) and overdrive produces far less energy (yet much greater speed) and requires much less energy to keep the car moving through the air.

You may have to force the activity sometimes, but once it is started, it requires much less energy or force to continue with. Hey, getting up out of the chair is the hardest part of walking from the living room into the

kitchen. But, forcing your activity is something that is unique to human beings. We have the power to force ourselves to do things. To force ourselves to move, to act. To force ourselves to change our direction, activities, habits and our life. The effort may be great, but we have the power to utilize it.

So, activity continues with daily effort and action and applying the numbers to your sales career and learning how to understand their power and their value and their need.

Next is record-keeping. This is part of the numbers game. Understanding numbers and their importance and value. We need to keep good records. Can you imagine a bank not keeping good records of each transaction. It would get out of control in a hurry. It's not much different for a salesman, yet so few keep good records even though they may understand the reasoning behind it. Although, I don't know if I agree with the statement I just made. If they really and truly understood the reasoning for good, solid record-keeping, I think that they would not do without it. Still, few do so.

What kind of record-keeping? All kinds. If you talk to a prospect and don't record their name, address, phone number, interests, special needs, etc., how in the world could you ever hope to follow through with them for a future possible sale? This is one kind of record-keeping. Who are you talking to and is it worth recording?

Along the same lines, your owners. Those who have purchased from you. Do you want them to purchase again at some future time? Do you think it is worth recording as much information about your sale and your owner as possible in order to give you the advantage of perfect recall in the future? Leave it to the secretaries? You better find a damn good one and pay her well and have a back up ready. Help is great, but don't leave the really important stuff to someone else.

Follow up opportunities come from good records. In his book, "Swim With The Sharks Without Being Eaten Alive", Harvey MacKay talks about his "MacKay 66", an in depth report on valuable prospects that is kept on their important clients. And it really goes into depth. It requires a lot more work, but the rewards have made his business succeed where others have failed. Selling is a people to people affair, and the more you know about your prospect, the better your chances of selling them and re-selling them and building a great business relationship with them. Your mind will remember all the data, no computer can match it, but it is not very good at recall, so the records are necessary if you

want to do well in sales.

Gather as much information as you can and find a way to store it in a way that you can put your hands on it when you need it. This is very important. Don't be worried about gathering too much information. Too much is better than not enough. You can always buy another file cabinet or hire another secretary, but without the records you cannot afford either.

Statistical record-keeping. It's important to know many things about your business of selling and these things will help you to improve what you do and help you to know just what needs improvement. Without them, you can "fly blind" forever.

It's very important to know for example, how many prospects you need to talk to in order to make a sale. This is called a closing ratio. You must have a good idea what your closing ratio is. If you talk to ten people and make one sale and then you talk to ten more and make a sale and then ten more and make a sale, your closing ratio is 10 to 1, or 1 in 10. As you improve your closing ratio, you may only have to talk to 7 people to make a sale and then your closing ratio would be 7 to 1 or 1 in 7.

The importance of knowing your closing ratio is because without it, you have no idea how to make more sales. For example, let's say that you have a 10 to 1 closing ratio and there's a contest going and you would like to win it and to win it, you need to make 25 sales. Now your achievement of winning the contest is clear. You must talk to how many prospects? 250. Now you can divide that number by the number of days in the contest to determine how many prospects you need to talk to each day in order to stay on target of winning the contest.

As you talk to numbers of prospects, you're bound to improve. So maybe, the first thirty prospects your ratio is 1 in 10 and on the next forty, it may increase to 2 in 10. Is it important to know when that happened? Is it important to know what you are doing right so you can do more of it? Or wrong so you can do less of it or change it? You decide. Good record-keeping will be your only source of information to provide the statistics to analyze to gain understanding in order to improve.

How long do you have to keep these kind of records? How long do you want to continue improving? Would it be important to know when you are backsliding so you can correct it quickly? Having struggled with the extra effort it takes to keep good records over the years, I know that it is

important. And having watched others who don't know what it takes to do better than they have done, it is important. I've heard it said that "anything of value is worth recording".

Some other kinds of statistics you may want to record would be your sales rate, commission per sales call, income per prospect talked to, improvements in ratio's, averages per month, week, day, per call, per sale. You may wish to categorize certain prospects in order to determine where best to search for good ones. And follow up contact data. You need to know who you called back and when and what transpired so you don't duplicate your own efforts.

Tools. One of the tools that can help you to keep good records and arrange them in such a way as they add value and meaning to your career is a computer. It need not be really expensive or elaborate, but a computer is an excellent tool you can use to keep better records. There are countless programs on the market that can really help you to save time and make your information more useful. A filing cabinet is better than nothing, but it is archaic, and it is very difficult to find information in which to draw a statistical analysis to help you improve. You would have to go through each and every record time and again where a computer will give it all to you in seconds with little effort and print reports that make sense and will be valuable to you.

I can't imagine being without a computer in today's business world. It's almost silly not to own one. They scared me at first, but the more you use one, the less fearful you become. Fear is usually of the unknown. Once you know, the fear disappears. It's a valuable tool.

Other simpler but necessary tools are a notepad that you can carry with you. A pocket tape recorder to record notes while driving or walking, etc.. Daily logs of calls and miscellaneous notes to yourself. Many kinds of records. Organizing them is my largest struggle, but gathering the information cannot wait until I find the perfect system. Use what you have available to you now, and improve your system as you go. There's no excuse for not keeping the records. Keeping the records will help you earn enough money to hire that secretary to help you organize your records.

In this chapter on the pieces of the puzzle, I've covered belief and it's importance. Activity and action and forward movement. And lastly, record-keeping. These are all pieces of the puzzle that when understood, help to make the picture more clear and meaningful. If you do these things, you will be in the top ten percent. So few do. Your greater understanding of these simple assets will take you further

and help you to operate at your best. A little at a time,
but continuing forward motion will serve you well.

CHAPTER SIX
SUMMARY OF LESSONS LEARNED

- * Want to improve? Always look for the ways to improve.
- * There are no "magic methods".
- * Selling different products is much the same.
- * You must first believe. In yourself.
- * Confidence is a result of belief in yourself.
- * Must control "self-talk".
- * Comfort zones will put you to sleep. Break away.
- * Thoughts are things.
- * Be careful who you associate with.
- * Activity. Standing still will not do.
- * Setbacks are part of the game. Keep swinging the bat.
- * It doesn't come from need. It comes from desire.
- * Goals. Without them, there is nowhere to go.
- * Now is the time to fix the next ten years.
- * Goals are what get you out of bed in the morning.
- * Talk to a lot of people. "Massive Action."
- * Must keep moving. Consistent daily effort.
- * Keep good records. All kinds of records.
- * Tools. Acquire the necessary tools.
- * Your record-keeping can make or break you.

- * _____
- * _____
- * _____
- * _____
- * _____

CHAPTER SEVEN
BIG PICTURE THINKING

The larger your vision of the picture, the greater is your understanding and satisfaction. One of the best examples I've run across to define big picture thinking came from a booklet called "Bits and Pieces". It goes like this: A man came upon three bricklayers and doing the same job and he decided to ask each one of them what they were doing. After asking the first one, he replied, "I'm spreading the mortar here and laying a brick on top of it and repeating the process over and over again". The second bricklayer doing the same exact job responded with "I'm building a wall of brick that will be _____ feet long and _____ feet high." And the third bricklayer when asked, said "I'm building a school where children will learn and play".

Now their jobs were identical, but their pictures were very different. Their pictures gave them each a different attitude about their job. I'm sure that the third bricklayer enjoyed his work and had greater overall satisfaction than the first two. This is big picture thinking. Seeing more than at first meets the eye. Seeing the larger picture will give a person a much greater sense of awareness and importance. Some people call it vision. A larger vision. Seeing the end result before it is actually completed. It's a place where when most people see ordinary, you see extraordinary and special.

How does seeing a bigger picture apply to sales? Well, instead of thinking about your product or service in it's saleable form, you would think instead of what the product or service is going to do for your prospect or how it will affect their lives. Even larger than this, you may consider how their purchase will affect people that they know and can influence, the national economy, the world.

This should bring to mind the possibilities of selling them over and over again throughout their lives and expanding through the people that they know or can influence and in turn, how it will affect their lives and so on.

A computer for example is nothing more than a machine. By itself, it has little or no value. But, with the right software and instruction, it can change a person's life or make or break a business. It has great power when properly utilized. It can save people time and energy and that is extremely valuable. It can help them to understand finances and perhaps even help them to become wealthy. Someone using a word processor is not just typing letters onto a screen in front of them, they are writing a letter or a book. Go further and even look beyond this scope and see how the computer can change their lives entirely. So many things.

It's the larger picture you should be looking for, rather than the task at hand or the hardware or software itself. What will it do in the end?

Insurance is nothing until it's needed they say, and selling insurance will be very difficult if you cannot see a larger picture and understand and be able to impart to the prospect the benefits they will receive by owning it. Consider the main wage earner of a family passing on before his time and having set up an adequate insurance plan so that the kids can still finish college, become a Doctor and save lives. Now everything is changed, but you have to look beyond the ordinary. In selling insurance, one must be able to impart this kind of vision to the prospect, or they will only see the expense and may decide to put it off for a better time. You have to be able to paint these kind of pictures for them, or even if they do buy, they may cancel it easily without much thought of the consequences of that action.

Automobiles do a job. They get one from point A to point B. Any one of them will do that. But there is a larger picture to selling cars. How the owner will feel, what it will do, reliable transportation, taking the kids to school, being able to forge a river without swimming, how the automobile will affect their lives. It is much more than a car.

I have been provided a new car to drive since I've been in the business. I have my favorite models for sure, but I've driven many different ones. Each and every model makes me feel different. I've only recently noticed this fact, but with each car or truck I drive, a different part of my personality shows through greater than others. When I drive a Camaro Z-28 with a big V-8 engine and T-Tops, I feel about 23 years old, single and on the prowl and showing off a bit. When I drive a station wagon, I feel much older and conservative. When I drive a truck, I feel like wearing Levi's and think about camping and going off the beaten path and so on. Each is different and each affects my life in a different way. Cars are not just transportation.

Seeing a larger picture will help a salesman spend his time wisely, by learning who to talk to and when, rather than going every which way with no thought or vision of where or when. I use an example of this often in teaching auto sales. Most auto salesmen think of the person they are selling in terms of this one sale. They see too small a picture. I try to teach them to see a larger picture by concentrating on who that person knows or can affect.

Everyone knows 250 people according to the world's

greatest car salesman, Joe Girard. Thinking that one is making only one sale is a very short-sighted vision when selling one car. Since the person you are selling knows at least 250 other people, selling one car could turn into hundreds. In theory, 250 times 250 equals 62,500 people. Even if only 1% bought from you, that would equal 625 sales, not one.

I took Joe's 250 theory and modified it to be easier to understand because of our terrible recall. Now the memory knows 250 people easily, but recalling them would take days, perhaps weeks and a reasonable amount of searching for records, not to mention a major commitment on the part of your prospect. So I divided his number by ten and came up with 25. Now, I figure that everyone could recall at least 25 people and they are probably close enough to that customer or prospect to at least be influential to a small degree.

So, if a salesman has sold 100 cars since he's been in the business and each of them knows 25 people, we now have 2500 prospects instead of 100. Notice the multiplication factor. One hundred became twenty-five hundred. Now even if we deduct for those who have moved out of the area or switched to a different product or were unhappy for some reason, this still leaves us with a whopping number of possibilities here. And we haven't even taken into consideration the 25 people that each of those prospects know. That would send the numbers into outer space! But, you have to see a larger picture in order to understand this as being important.

Now this doesn't just apply to owners, does it? Every prospect would have the same potential (remember that it takes many prospects to create one sale). Mining for gold is fruitful if you know where the possibility of gold being is. Only then can you mine it effectively. The big picture will help you to see the obvious with a different feeling than before. One person's obvious is another person's hidden, one person's vision is another person's blindness. Sometimes the obvious escapes us. I've missed it for a long time, but I see more each day. Jim Rohn says that everyone should take Obvious 1 and Obvious 2. Understanding that there is a larger picture will be all the help you need to begin seeing it and then adding to it until you see it with clarity.

Big Picture thinking will improve your attitude. In an airplane, attitude is your plane's position relative to the horizon. I think that people's attitudes are like that. They are relative to the horizon of the picture we see individually. As one expands the picture, one's attitude must change in relation to it. It seems cause and effectual to me. One who sees a larger picture, a clearer vision, will have a better attitude in relation to others who do not.

Think about people who hate their job. They don't see the value beyond their next paycheck. We say they have a poor attitude. Some of the symptoms are "Is it time to go home yet?", or "When is my break", or "That's not my job" , or "I get paid by the hour, so it doesn't matter", and other such comments. We've all heard them and watched the faces of the people saying them. They must see a really small picture.

Now think about people with whom you would say have a good attitude. They probably do more. They are probably happier in disposition. They probably stay late without complaint. They probably say things like, "Is there any way that I can help you better?", or "I enjoy my work", or "Sure, I'd be happy to do that". A big difference. A bigger picture.

Big picture thinking will cause a person to be more of a team player and be more sensitive to other people's needs and feelings. This person is more inclined to help others and to be of more service to customers than they would be otherwise. Seeing a larger picture, a clearer picture is a virtue worth striving for. You will find yourself a better all around person than before.

One of the things that has helped me to see a larger picture than before has to do with looking at the past and analyzing decisions I've made and paths I've chosen.

Somewhere along the line of my travels, I learned a phrase that kind of stuck with me and I have found that I now use it quite often. The phrase is this: "Everything works out for the best." Ever heard it? Probably hundreds of times. So had I, but one day it took on a new meaning.

Now, I firmly believe that no matter what is happening in my life, that everything will work out for the best. Sometimes it is most difficult to see that--especially as it is happening and if it feels that things are not going quite right, but I maintain my belief that it is for the best.

When you begin to believe this train of thought, you will no longer want to go back and change anything--no matter how ugly or hard it seemed to be at the time. It gives you a broader outlook, a larger picture. Look back yourself, and ask yourself what you would do differently regarding some of the more important decisions you've made over the years.

Pretty soon you may realize that if you changed the way you did it, you would not have learned the lesson, and you probably would have had to learn the lesson anyway and in so doing, do what you had done. That sounds silly when I say it, but it is true--at least it has proven itself true in my life.

Another phrase that goes along with this that has also stuck with me is "Everything happens for a reason." Again, at the time something is happening, it may be very difficult to understand the reason and accept this notion, but by looking back and analyzing events and outcomes in my life, I found that indeed, everything had happened for a reason. Usually it was a damn good one.

This applies to sales by helping you to understand when obstacles are thrown in front of you, that there is a purpose in it and something valuable to gain from the struggle to overcome them. As well as sales, in a larger view, it applies to your life in general.

In addition, it helps to take the "seriousness" out of your travels, hence taking the majority of the pressure off of you, allowing you to move forward with more confidence and a feeling of control.

Do you remember Star Trek? In the original Television show, there was an episode that offers another view of what I'm trying to convey here. I don't recall the name of the episode, but Captain Kirk and Spock went through a "time portal" chasing Dr. McCoy who had gone through it unexpectedly. They had to go through to get him because their space ship no longer existed (and their lives too), because Dr. McCoy changed something in the past that in turn changed history, or the present.

They landed in the 1930's on Earth slightly ahead of the time that Dr. McCoy was to come through, in hopes of being able to stop him from making the change and all of them getting back to the present.

A woman who ran a mission for homeless people was the focal point. Kirk and Spock found out that she was to be killed in a traffic accident and that Dr. McCoy had saved her from that and as a result of that one move, Hitler took over the world and history was changed dramatically.

Having determined the situation, Kirk and Spock had to stop Dr. McCoy from saving her and let history be the way it was or their own existence was erased. They did so and returned to their own time back through the time portal.

The interesting part of that episode, was the fact the one person's actions changed so much in history. When you think about going back and changing history, you must realize that if you did, nothing in your present would be as it is now. It seems to me then, pointless to go back, except to see what you can do NOW that will lead you to better things in the future.

The big picture that I am talking about here was demonstrated so well by this Star Trek episode. How one person's life can affect so many or how one action can affect so many actions down the road somewhere.

In sales, your actions (or lack of them) today, will have a dramatic effect on the future. They may seem insignificant to you today, but down the road, by looking back, you may find that they had a significant and lasting affect.

As in Chapter Three when I learned that some people who had twenty year's experience--one year's experience repeated twenty times, by thinking of this outcome, you can readily see the effect of accumulated actions, or inactions on a sales career. It's too late to change the past, but we can change the present which will in turn change the outcome or the future. Seeing a bigger picture and looking back to analyze possible changes needing to be made can turn your career around.

So, seeing a bigger picture will change everything for you. It will teach you that your actions and thoughts of today will have a far greater effect on the future. It will make your actions more important. It will let you see beyond yourself and how what you do or don't do will affect many other people.

Play with this train of thought for a while. Look back and see how some of your decisions of the past cast their effect on your present. Expand your picture and see what is beyond your current view of your career, your value, your life. It will change you.

CHAPTER EIGHT
TREAT IT LIKE A BUSINESS

In previous chapters, I've mentioned that a good salesman will treat his career as if he is business for himself. Now, I'll take this topic just a bit further and add a little more definition and meaning to it.

I find that it is good to ask yourself tough questions that require one to think about things in more depth. The questions aid in this expansion. The following are but a few examples. Feel free to add your own or modify these to fit your own particular environment.

- 1) If I keep doing the same things that I am doing today, where will I be in five years? Ten years? Twenty years?
- 2) If I were the owner of this company that I am a part of, how would I want it to be run? What would be my goals? What policies would I insist on being enforced? How would I want customers treated? Followed up?
- 3) If I ran my own sales career as if I were in business for myself, would I do anything differently than I am now?
- 4) If I ran this business as if it were my own business and take all of the money I earn home with me, how long would the business last?
- 5) If I were the owner and someone else had the position that I have now, how would I want that person to be? To sell? To follow up? To treat customers? To act? To dress? To fit in?

These are but a few questions that can be important to ask oneself. The key here, as you've already guessed, is to treat your career as if you are in business for yourself.

In most sales positions, you work for someone else and you are responsible for a certain segment of the sales task. You may have a certain territory, certain hours, certain expectations in regard to overall performance. If you were in charge of the business, whether it be IBM, an auto dealer, a department store or whatever, it's good to ask yourself, and answer specifically, how you would want it done. Of course, it currently may not be being done in the way that you would run it, but, this is not important. How you feel about the business and how you would run it and what you would expect of your salesmen is. The next thing is to take these answers and apply them to what you can do about your own career.

When you treat what you do as being in business for

yourself, you will have a bigger picture and a greater understanding of your value and your own expectations of yourself. It will help you to be as in charge of your own career as it is possible to do where you are now.

If you went downtown and opened your own little store, there would be a number of things that you would do to survive and prosper that very few salesmen do in their sales functions.

You would probably open a separate checking account to run you business income through and to pay your expenses out of. You would take a percentage of your earnings and plow it back into the business, else you would not long have a business.

You would probably come up with some advertising and promotional ideas to let people know what you do, where you do it and how you do it and during what time periods you are available to serve them in.

You may be concerned about your environment and how it will look to others. Your display of merchandise might be important to you.

You would probably pay a great deal of attention to some of the things that you are not even giving a second thought to right now.

In a great number of sales careers, you can grow about as much as you could possibly handle. That is one great advantage of sales--unlimited income and potential for expansion. So, why not think of what you do now as if you were running your own little business. Wouldn't you want it to grow and improve? Wouldn't you want to perhaps expand nationwide if that were possible? Or franchise your particular system? Have it be as successful a venture as possible? If you say no, why be in business at all?

There are many things that require a little capital in sales that can really help you to grow beyond the ordinary. Things like advertising yourself in the media or otherwise. Newsletters and other follow up items that can multiply your own efforts. Small gifts and rewards for business referred to you or just to a good customer that you want to remember you instead of someone else.

There are about as many ways in which you can use a little capital in your business as your imagination will allow, but, very few people in any field even think of spending any of the money they earn on their own business. This is small picture thinking. If you have unlimited potential, wouldn't you want to see what you could do with that?

Keeping good records of your expenses will aid you in getting maximum effectiveness of your capital. Watch where the money goes and what you are getting back from its use. The records are necessary for your taxes and for learning how to save money on your taxes each year.

You may want to even consider some retirement actions of your own. Set something aside on a regular basis to help supplement other things your employer may have in force already. This is tough for me. The older I get though, the more I think about it and work on its attainment.

I think that advertising is one of the best things a salesman can do to help expand his career. Helping to have the prospects come to you instead of you to them can be a real time saving advantage. And, a salesman would want to advertise for exactly the same reason that any business would want to. To get more prospects, to make more sales. That's the only reason. It doesn't have to be big bucks to be effective and valuable. Let your imagination fly on this subject and see what you can come up with.

You need to make yourself known. Your prospects need to know that you are different. They need to know who you are, what you do and how you do it. Kentucky Fried Chicken has a jingle out currently that spells out who they are, what they do and how they do it in only 9 words. It is a masterpiece of brevity. It goes like this: "At Kentucky Fried Chicken, we do chicken right!" Nine words! Who are they? Kentucky Fried Chicken. What do they do? Chicken. How do they do it? Right!

So, maybe you'll come up with a jingle for you and your career, but the main focus needs to be letting people know who you are, what you do and how you do it. You can't leave out the how you do it part. That's the most important part. You have to have something about how you do it that sets you apart from the crowd. There are lots of people doing what you do, so why should they pay any attention to you?

By treating your career as a business, you will already be doing a great deal more than most in your field, so that is a good place to start. How about service? What kind of services do you offer or can you offer that set you apart? How about your style? How about your confidence, product knowledge, experience, your friendly personality? By treating it as a business and desiring to grow in your field, you will want to work on these things and develop a style that is unique and your own alone.

In the music field, the ones who really make it big and who do the best are the ones who have developed their own style. They are themselves. On second thought, they are bigger than themselves. Think about it. Elvis Presley. The

one and the only. There are many imitators, but only one original. The Beatles, KISS, Linda Ronstadt, The Rolling Stones, Hank Williams, Paul Anka, Johnny Cash, The Who, ELO, and on and on. They all have their own style. It is their style that makes them unique and when you hear their sound, you instantly know it is them.

By creating and developing your own style, you will be setting yourself apart and offering something that will stand out and have the opportunity to be noticed. They call that a "marketing advantage", which means that you have something that is marketable. And in sales, you need to market yourself and your services--you need to be marketable. Leave the product marketing to the manufacturer, spend your time on learning how to market yourself and your unique services.

By developing a style, you will also aid your career by not spending so much time trying this and that in order to find your comfortable niche. Once you realize that style is important and you start looking for what your style is or could be, grab hold of it and use it and develop it further. Be as unique as you possibly can. Unique stands out. If you saw a herd of beautiful race horses in a pasture and in the middle of them was one Unicorn, what would you really see? One Unicorn, right? The grace and beauty of the race horses would pale to the sight of the uniqueness of the Unicorn! So it needs to be with your style.

You can't even relate style to good or bad. Think about some of the Television commercials that you hate or that you find insulting or stupid. I'll bet that you remember the commercial for a long time and that you even remember the product, manufacturer or dealer. Unique doesn't relate to good or bad, it is just unique. Bonnie and Clyde and Al Capone were unique. I don't think I could truthfully say that what they did in their lives was "good", but they were unique. Think about people that are in the news, people you know, who are the ones that stand out? Who has a unique style?

Think about art. There are certain artists that stand out in their field. Rembrandt, Leonardo DaVinci, Remington and so on. They are all unique, all have a certain style.

Webster's dictionary defines style as "...a manner or mode of expression in language, as distinct from the ideas expressed; a way of using words to express thoughts; specific or characteristic manner of expression, execution, construction, or design, in any art, period, work, employment, etc. Distinction, excellence, originality, and character in any form of artistic or literary expression. The way in which anything is made or done; manner..."

The words in that definition that should stand out are

distinction, excellence, originality, character, manner. The original, the one and the only, the best, the most unique. This is style. This is something worth working on.

Treating your sales career as a business will give you much reward and greater satisfaction. You will again automatically be in the top ten percent by doing this. Anytime you can be ahead of the game, why not take advantage of that and enjoy the rewards of thinking bigger--and smarter.

Treating it as a business is more than just thinking in terms of money and handling everyday business affairs. It crosses the boundaries of style, intent, vision, direction. In order to grow and do really well in sales, you must learn to treat it as a business and the purpose of business is to do business, to exchange something of value for something of value that benefits both parties. A business that is not interested in growth, is soon out of business, or staggering toward that end.

CHAPTER NINE
MORE OF THE PICTURE

What other things are there to think about regarding sales and doing well at it? Here's an accumulation of various thoughts that may be of value to you.

I play the guitar. A lot of people do. Very few really master the instrument or play it particularly well, but anyone can learn to get by on the guitar. I've heard it said that the guitar is one of the easiest instruments to learn to play and yet one of the most difficult to master. So it is with sales. It's very easy to get in and to learn to sell a little and very difficult to master. I think that every career is that way, and particularly sales. There's so much to sales and the further you get into it, the more facets and little nuances you find there are.

I remember the first song I learned to play on the guitar. It was "Louie, Louie". Remember that one? Three chords is all there is. Matter of fact, probably 80% of the world's songs can be played on less than five chords. So why learn more? You find out after learning and playing the five chords over and over again. It gets boring.

So, you learn a few more, learn a little bit of musical theory to at least understand some of the basics and you can go a little further. Then, if you are to continue off of this next plateau, you need to learn more and practice more than ever before. This is where most people give it up. They become satisfied with this level of accomplishment and stay there. That's okay. Everyone must make their own decisions as to what they are willing to accept of themselves.

In sales, much the same thing occurs. Some salesmen get to the three chord level, some the five chord level, some a few more chords and a bit of theory level, and others become professionals and keep learning and still others master it. Get your hands out when you count the ones who master it. Few in number. But, the level of professional is a place that is worthy and doesn't require 110% of your life (I think that is a little more than is available...). Andre Segovia is a master at the guitar. Joe Girard is a master at selling. There's so much room just below them for those that really want to do well and have the rewards of that kind of effort and thinking.

Watching others and learning from them can help a lot. For a two year period, I opened and ran a musical instrument store. There were a lot of musicians that came in to look at guitars and play them (unfortunately, few of them bought). I would watch them closely since I played only moderately well.

What I found was that I learned so much about the guitar from having been around them and watching them, paying attention to every detail of their playing from the chords to the strum patterns to the way they held the instrument, their timing, everything. I put it to use and expanded greatly in a very short time. It's amazing.

Now, if I had been watching people who were students with far less experience and knowledge than I, or even people with my same level of ability, I would not have learned much of anything. There were some pretty good guitarists to emulate and I took advantage of that situation.

This also applies directly to sales. Who are you emulating? Who are you reading? Do they have something of value that you can take and use for yourself? You don't have to be a pioneer. Pioneering is a lonely task. Study others and the way they do things, the way they think, act. Pay attention to every little detail of how they handle themselves and how they talk, act, walk, how they use their body language, dress, everything.

As with the guitar, watching those musicians play the instrument, how they held it and how easy they made it look, how smooth was there delivery, how few their mistakes and how well they covered them when I could even detect one. A good guitar is pretty just to look at it, but when it is played by someone who really has developed a feeling about it, it becomes beauty and grace and melody and art.

This is all about improving, plateau's of learning and expertise, developing a "feel", a "touch", learning from others who do it well, being around the right people, seeing a bigger picture, deciding how far you want to go. I really think that salesmanship is an art and in the position of art it becomes a thing of beauty, grace and melody. It's about seeing detail, the little things that most people do not see.

Now, let's talk about expectations.

No one realistically expects everything all at once. What other people expect of you is something that you will need to always deal with. Your boss and what they expect of your sales efforts is important. Most bosses I think would be happy with consistent effort and improvement.

Jim Rohn expresses it this way. He says, what most bosses expect are measurable results in reasonable time. This applies to the question somewhat earlier of how long you want your child to be in the fourth grade. More than one year is not making measurable results in reasonable time.

So with this phrase, measurable results in reasonable time, you can ask yourself from time to time if you are making the measurable results and if it is coming in a reasonable amount of time. This helps to understand what others expect of your efforts. As long as you are, you should be doing fine. If you're not, take a good look at it and see if there is something you missed or could add in that would help.

If you make ten calls a day and get one sale per week of that effort, perhaps that is measurable results in reasonable time, perhaps not. It depends on your particular field. The question is solid and valuable, you just have to determine through others or for yourself, what the expectations are.

Expectations of yourself. This one can haunt you. Some people expect too much of themselves and consequently, struggle and have little satisfaction though to others their performance is more than acceptable. I have extremely high expectations of myself and I get into a trap now and then and have to remind myself to look back a way and see where I've been and what I have done. By looking back, I can see that I've done okay. Then I need to remind myself often to be thankful for what I have and my own particular capacities. There are many people who suffer, who are in worse position, who enjoy a lower level of lifestyle and so on. It helps to give thanks from time to time--it helps one to be able to move on.

High expectations are fine as long as they are not consuming expectations or unreasonable. I think that it is necessary to have high expectations in order to have the drive to do better and to succeed. But, it's a good idea to ask oneself if those expectations are reasonable or if they are eating you up inside. That's not good at all. We must live to enjoy the rewards.

Too low expectations is the downside of expectations and will make a person flounder and vacillate and this should be avoided. They say when you expect nothing, you won't be disappointed.

Paying a little attention to the expectations of others and of yourself can help you get where you want to be and enjoy the rewards after arrival. There is a balance I think that can be maintained, but again, awareness is the first step.

Along the lines of expectations and growth, there is something that I feel should be addressed here. In a word,

ABUNDANCE. There is an abundance of most things in this world--nearly limitless supply. Sometimes it is necessary to look around us and remind ourselves that there is abundance everywhere we look and that we are limiting ourselves when we believe in lack.

This kind of helps answer the question when is enough, enough? There is plenty. There is an abundance of prospects to talk to and thinking that there are not will keep you back. There is plenty of money. There are more millionaires now than at any time in the history of the world. There is an abundance of money. There's always room for more. I think it helps to believe in the abundance that all around us and to take a good look at it from time to time.

In the car business, it is very much an up and down business. One make is up, another down, one model sales are up and another down. Sales fluctuate with the economy and if you looked at a monthly sales chart, it would look pretty jagged. And a lot of salesmen in the car business get all of their business from the people who walk into dealerships and when fewer people walk in, they sell less cars and earn less money. In the summer time, floor traffic and the resultant sales usually go up, and in November and December with the holidays on people's minds, the traffic and sales rate tends to dip a little. As one of many salespeople on the floor waiting for the next person to talk to, it can be fairly easy to believe in lack instead of abundance.

Now, if you take charge of your career and treat it like a business, you'll probably not spend all of your time waiting around and instead, take control and change things. You may want to find your own prospects and either encourage them to visit you or for you to visit them. There are plenty of them out there. They don't even have to be in your own town. Many people will drive a few miles to buy a fine car at a reasonable price and desirous of being treated professionally and courteously. You must believe in abundance. There's plenty out there.

Every year in the car business, if you look at the total industry production, you'll find that it fluctuates only slightly. Right now it's averaging about 15 million units per year nationwide. That's a lot of cars and trucks. Even in a down market, there will be 13 million sold. Cars wear out--they're machines, and as long as we are going to drive everywhere we go, they will need to be replaced periodically. So, I would say that 13 million is an abundance. You may want to decide to get a larger share of that action, and in order to do that you will need to look at your career differently, believe in abundance and do something about it.

I believe in insurance. There's a definite need for insurance. Some of it is mandated by the State, City,

Mortgage companies, etc.. Auto insurance is mandatory in most States. But, life insurance is something that has to be sold. Almost everyone needs it and there are so many variations of policies that there must be one that fits each and every person's situation. I've got several. If it's valuable, it's worth protecting. So there's an abundance in the insurance field.

Computers. We're in the "tip-of-the-iceberg" stage. There's an abundance of people who need or will learn to want a computer. The computer industry is changing rapidly, creating even more need and desire. I look in the computer catalogs and go crazy. I want the fastest, with the most storage capacity and all the right programs and the laser printer and on and on. A good computer salesman could probably have a field day with me, but they never call. I'm in the abundance out there somewhere, like grapes ready to be picked. "May I help you" will have to wait until I actually decide to go into the store and buy something. That may be a while, I don't know. But I could be easily convinced without my arm being twisted much.

So, whatever field of sales you may be in, I'm confident that there is an abundance available to you, that you can rise to be the best you can be. So, when is enough, enough? Well, maybe it's never enough, maybe it's always enough. It depends on your point of view, I suppose, but one thing I know for sure, there is much and I can't possibly get to it all.

Mid-course corrections. From time to time you'll need to make some mid-course corrections on your travels. Once you've set the goals and written them down and you're applying the daily efforts and learning all you can learn, it can be easy to get off track. There's any number of influences that can help you get off track. So, you'll need to be able to recognize when you're straying from your course and make moves to correct your flight path to get back on target.

Other people can easily influence you and I think that it is a good idea to always guard the door and be careful who you let in. It's simple--we become like who we associate with. We learned this early. We mimicked Mom and Dad and people on Television, teachers and friends. We're like that I guess. Since we are, paying attention to the possible repercussions of who we are associating with can go far in helping us stay on target.

Being around negative people will eventually lead one to become negative as well. The same holds true with positive, uplifting people--you'll become more like them. With this in

mind, the choice seems clear.

Even if you work for someone who is negative all the time, if you don't become like that just as a matter of being around them, at the very least it can have an accumulative effect on your attitude, your disposition, your performance. This can be changed. There are other jobs, other people to be around.

Your record-keeping may indicate the need for a mid-course correction. Or it may be something as unscientific as a feeling that things are not going quite right. This indicates a need to take a look and see if you're on course, to see how things are progressing.

Become aware of the need for mid-course corrections. Make the corrections and move onward toward your objectives.

Next, the word success. Trying to achieve it means that first you must define it. Many people will try and define it for you. Listening to that and trying to understand their perspective and reasoning is fine, but in the end the only one who can truly define success is you.

Boy, I've fought and struggled with this for years and it is only now becoming clear to me. I've fought with other people's expectations of me and my own super-expectations of myself and have listened to so many people's definition of success until I got to the point of wanting to run and hide somewhere where there are no people and no human definitions of success. It can be a tough one for any person if you let too many of other people's definitions get into your head.

Success is a very personal thing. It doesn't necessarily have clear and concise rules as in a contest where you either win, place or show. And success is usually looked on as something that someone achieves when they "win". Placing and showing are something else entirely. Well, if that becomes your only definition of success, watch out for the fall! It will be a struggle for you too.

It will probably take some time and a good deal of thought to finally define what success means to you. In the process of your travels and growth through time, I think your definition will change from time to time and that is fine. It probably should. But, the basic foundation of your definition probably won't change much. Just as in people, they do not change much from their basic characteristics, that is rare, but they can change some of the color and shape without rocking the foundation.

"Success" is the name of a magazine that has been around

for a long time and I've subscribed to it for a number of years. In this magazine they talk heavily about companies and individuals who have done well or achieved success. Some of them have come up with a new, fresh idea and put it into action and it worked out well for them. Others have risen slowly at first, struggling hard along the way, and then much faster toward the top of their field. Some are rising-from-the-ruins type stories. Generally all dealing with the same basic theme of accomplishment of one kind or another.

"Success" magazine is a very good source of inspiration and ideas, but if you take it too seriously, you may think that this is the only definition of success. That's perhaps their definition, but you have to watch out in accepting their's for your own. You must make your own.

And, to make this issue even more exciting, you will probably have many definitions of success. You may have one for your career, one for your family life, one for your own personal self that no one ever knows as well as you. That's okay too. You don't need a pat answer to this complicated affair. Just give it a lot of thought and be aware that other people will want to put their definition of success on you and in order to combat these threats, it will help you immensely to have your own definition worked out.

I used to think many years ago that when I earned \$50,000.00 per year that I would be successful. When I got there, my definition of success changed immediately. It was almost like the brass ring on a merry-go-round that you can never quite get. The closer you get, the more it slips away from you. Thinking of success as something with which you finally at some point catch or grab or win or achieve, caused me to become almost depressed when I got to that goal and success wasn't there. So my own definitions of success, kept me from ever being able to feel successful.

It's a strange word, and now, I am much more careful and thoughtful when I even use the word. I don't want to try to convince people that my definition is the right one. Which leads me to the next topic: Right or wrong, which way?

I've come to believe something a little more broad in defining right and wrong. There is your way and there is my way and there is someone else's way, but which one is right and which one is wrong? They're neither. They are your way and my way and their way.

There are so many ways to do a thing. Then there is the current definition of the right way, and I say current because it seems to change with time.

This reminds me of a story I heard sometime ago. It seems there was a Daughter who, while watching her Mother prepare a ham for dinner, noticed her cut the ends off of the ham before she put it in the oven to cook. The Daughter was curious and asked her Mother why she would cut off the ends of the ham? Her Mother said that it was the right way to do it. The Daughter, still curious and not satisfied so easily, (sound familiar?) asked her why was it the right way to do it?

The Mother was puzzled. There is only a right and a wrong way to do a thing, right? Why would my Daughter question the right way? But, she answered her Daughter by saying that it was the way she was taught by her Mother.

Sometime later, the Daughter asked her Grandmother why she taught her Daughter to cut the ends off of the ham. Finally, the Grandmother admitted that she didn't quite know why, except that her Mother taught her that way.

The Daughter next asked the Great Grandmother the same question and the response was somewhat different. The Great Grandmother laughed and said that the reason she cut off the ends of the ham was because at the time, her oven was too small and the ham would not fit unless she cut the ends off.

Doctors change procedures on common operations all the time. Sometimes they have to be convinced of a "newer" right way to do it. A lot of definitions of the right way to do something changes. Maybe I should change the card in my wallet to say "People who say you're doing it the wrong way, should not interrupt the people who are doing it." Well, it's polite to listen, and who knows, you may learn a better way, but until then, there is your way, my way, their way, and they are all right depending on your point of view.

The message is that if you're doing something and it's working well for you, who's to say it's not right? My ideas are mine. Sharing them with you is a joy for me and I hope that there may be some value you may gain from this sharing, but maybe your way is better. Hey, write me a book--I'll read it and maybe change my "right" way. Maybe.

CHAPTER TEN
STEP BY STEP

These things that I have shared so far I've tried to teach to every salesperson that I have been around. It's been a struggle. So many of them asked me for a plan--a step by step plan that they could follow that would help them to do better. I've worked up many of them over the years.

I understand the plea. We all want to have simple steps to follow that will magically yield the results we would all like to enjoy. I'm no different. These step by step plans however, are nothing more than an outline of what I've gone into more detail in this book.

Here's an example of a step by step plan that I gave a salesman recently after his request that I write one for him. He asked me to write one that would help him get up to and over twenty cars per month. Twenty cars per month is twice the national average.

STEP BY STEP IDEAS TO SELL
TWENTY PLUS CARS PER MONTH

STEP #1: DECIDE WHAT YOU WANT.

- A) SET GOALS AND WRITE THEM OUT CLEARLY.
- B) BUSINESS AND PERSONAL GOALS.
- C) SHORT AND LONG TERM. SHORT = 1 YR OR LESS, LONG = 3-10.
- D) YOU WILL ADJUST YOUR GOALS AS YOU GO, SO JUST SET THEM AS YOU SEE THEM NOW.
- E) RELATE RESULTS IN THIS BUSINESS REQUIRED TO ACHIEVE THESE GOALS; I.E., NUMBER OF SALES, ETC..

STEP #2: GET ORGANIZED.

- A) KEEP RECORDS OF YOUR WORK EFFORT TO BE ABLE TO SEE WHERE YOU STAND IN RELATION TO WHERE YOU NEED TO BE TO BE ON TARGET TOWARD YOUR GOALS.
- B) WHEN A SALE IS MADE:
 - 1) CONTACT BY PHONE OR IN PERSON (AT THEIR HOME OR PLACE OF BUSINESS, NOT OURS) WITHIN 36 HOURS. ASK HOW THEY ARE ENJOYING THEIR NEW CAR AND OFFER TO BE OF SERVICE TO THEM AS THEY MAY REQUIRE.
 - 2) CONTACT AGAIN WITHIN 30 DAYS, AGAIN TO OFFER SERVICE. ALSO ASK FOR REFERRALS.
 - 3) CONTACT AGAIN EVERY SIX MONTHS AND/OR WHEN THEY HAVE INDICATED A NEED TO YOU SUCH AS A CHILD GRADUATION, 2ND CAR NEED OR OTHER SUCH NEED.
 - 4) TAKE PICTURE OF DELIVERY. MAKE IT AS SPECIAL AS YOU CAN MAKE IT.

- 5) KEEP TRACK OF YOUR OWN CUSTOMERS AND UPDATE INFORMATION CHANGES REGULARLY. DON'T RELY ON THE DEALERSHIP'S FOLLOW-UP SYSTEM. SUPPLEMENT IT--DON'T RELY ON IT.
- 6) HAND WRITE ALL LETTERS AND NOTES TO YOUR CUSTOMERS WHEN FEASIBLE.
- C) GET EVERY PROSPECTS NAME, ADDRESS AND PHONE NUMBER.
 - 1) THE SAME DAY, MAIL A HANDWRITTEN THANK YOU NOTE FOR COMING INTO THE DEALERSHIP AND OFFER YOUR SERVICE.
 - 2) FOLLOW-UP REGULARLY UNTIL THEY BUY SOMEWHERE FROM SOMEONE.
 - a) MANY WILL BUY WITHIN 72 HOURS.
 - b) IF THEY BUY ELSEWHERE, OFFER OUR SERVICES ANYWAY AND TELL THEM THAT YOU APPRECIATED THE OPPORTUNITY.
 - c) ASK FOR REFERRALS.
- D) FIND SOME "BIRD-DOGS".
 - 1) ONCE YOU FIND SOME, TAKE EXTREMELY GOOD CARE OF THEM. PAY THEM PROMPTLY AND ALWAYS THANK THEM FOR HELPING YOU.
- E) SPEND YOUR TIME WISELY.
 - 1) WHEN THINGS ARE SLOW, USE THAT TIME TO CATCH UP AND FOLLOW THROUGH ON YOUR SYSTEM.
 - 2) STUDY YOUR PRODUCT FEATURES AND BENEFITS.
 - 3) STUDY SALES TECHNIQUE AND IDEAS.
 - 4) PLAN TOMORROWS ACTIVITY TODAY.
 - a) ALWAYS PLAN TOMORROW BEFORE YOU GO HOME TONIGHT. DON'T COME TO WORK TOMORROW WONDERING WHAT YOU ARE GOING TO BE DOING.
- F) PROSPECT REGULARLY.
 - 1) GET YOUR BUSINESS CARDS OUT THERE WORKING FOR YOU.
 - 2) LEAVE BROCHURES AND SEND FOLLOW UP MATERIALS.
 - 3) ALWAYS BE ON THE LOOKOUT FOR NEW BUSINESS.
 - 4) JOIN THE ELKS, MOOSE, ROTARY OR SOME OTHER SUCH ORGANIZATION. BECOME A WORKING MEMBER AND LET THEM KNOW WHAT YOU DO FOR A LIVING.
- G) ADVERTISE YOURSELF.
 - 1) CONSIDER THE MEDIA AS YOU CAN AFFORD.
 - 2) THINK CREATIVELY OF OTHER WAYS YOU CAN ADVERTISE YOURSELF.
 - 3) ADVERTISING IS A WAY TO MULTIPLY YOURSELF.
- H) RECORDING AND FILING YOUR INFORMATION.
 - 1) CONSIDER AN INEXPENSIVE COMPUTER.
 - 2) KEEP IT ORGANIZED ENOUGH TO FIND THE INFORMATION YOU NEED.

STEP #3 MASSIVE ACTION!!!

- A) WORK. KEEP WORKING. STAY WORKING.
 - 1) THE BEST SYSTEM OR IDEAS IN THE WORLD ARE USELESS WITHOUT ACTION.
 - 2) DO SO MUCH EACH AND EVERY DAY AND DON'T LET YOURSELF GET BEHIND.
 - 3) WHEN YOU START DOING WELL, DON'T FORGET THE

COMMITMENT TO DO SO MUCH PER DAY. IT MAY TAKE A LITTLE TIME AND ENERGY TO GET THE BALL ROLLING, BUT ONCE IT IS ROLLING DON'T ALLOW IT TO STOP OR YOU'LL BE BACK WHERE YOU STARTED.

- B) KEEP EXPANDING AS YOU IMPROVE YOUR EFFORTS AND ORGANIZATIONAL TALENT.
 - 1) ALWAYS BE LOOKING FOR OPPORTUNITIES.

STEP #4 LEARNING AND GROWING.

- A) CONTINUE YOUR "SELF-EDUCATION" BY READING REGULARLY. GET NEW INFORMATION REGULARLY. WATCH LESS TV.
- B) NEVER LET ANYONE ELSE GET YOU DOWN.
 - 1) LEARN TO SHRUG OFF DEFEAT AND/OR NEGATIVITY.
- C) ASK FOR HELP.
 - 1) ASK YOUR HIGHER POWER.
 - 2) ASK OTHERS TO HELP YOU ANYTIME YOU NEED TO.
- D) BE BOLD AND WILLING TO VENTURE OUT INTO THE UNKNOWN.
 - 1) EXPAND YOUR COMFORT ZONES.
 - 2) LISTEN TO AND TRY FRESH NEW AND EXCITING IDEAS.
- E) SELF-TALK AND SELF IMAGE.
 - 1) CATCH YOUR NEGATIVE SELF-TALK AND CHANGE IT TO POSITIVE TALK ALWAYS.
 - 2) ANYTHING THAT ADDS TO A POSITIVE SELF-IMAGE NEEDS TO BE DONE.
 - a) SOMETIMES A NEW SUIT OR A NEW HAIRSTYLE OR OTHER SUCH THING WILL HELP YOU FEEL BETTER ABOUT YOURSELF. IF IT DOES, DO IT NOW!!
 - 3) LITTLE SUCCESSES STACKED ON TOP OF EACH OTHER CREATES LARGE SUCCESSES.

There it is in a step by step plan. This plan could work equally well for auto sales and other types of sales. There are so many similarities.

In car sales, I was taught early on that there are five basic steps to the sale.

- Step 1: Greeting
- Step 2: Qualify
- Step 3: Presentation
- Step 4: Demonstration
- Step 5: Close

These steps would hold true with almost any sales field. The only one you may change would be demonstration. With a product, you would probably demonstrate in addition to presenting your product. Without a product, you may not actually demonstrate it. But, thinking in a larger picture, you still may. For example, in life insurance, you may want to demonstrate your ideas, your conviction, the reasons to own it and so on. We can call this a demonstration in

addition to your presentation. Instead of demonstration, we could call it the "reinforcement step", highlighting the points you made in your presentation for further clarification.

Going through the steps in a bit more detail may be helpful.

Step one: Greeting. This is the point where you are meeting your prospect. How you greet them can be very important to the success of the rest of the steps. You probably will want your greeting to be enthusiastic, warm and inviting. You will probably want to relax your prospect and set them at ease. Now if you're selling a burial site, you may want to be careful about the enthusiasm, but you would certainly want to be warm, friendly and try to set your prospect at ease. So the greeting is very important. They say that the prospect makes a judgement of you within the first ten seconds. Based on this, you must form a favorable impression immediately and this is done in the greeting step.

Step two: Qualify. You want to find out what your prospect is interested in, how capable they are to purchase, what their needs are in relation to their desires, what their fears are and so on. This is just an information gathering session. Find as much out as quickly and tactfully as possible so that you can lead the prospect in the direction of what is best for them of what you offer. This is done by asking questions. The better you become at asking the right questions, the better your closing ratio will be. This is a critical step and if not handled well, will lead to a struggle and frustration from here on.

Step three: Presentation. This one is pretty straight forward. You will present your product, service or idea in a professional manner that is aimed directly at your prospects needs, wants and interest. You will want to be good at this for this is where the "rubber meets the road". Take all of the information that you've gathered about your prospect and tailor your presentation to their needs and wants. Make it make sense to them. Give them the information about your product or service that will be meaningful to them. Make it come alive. Get the prospect to participate with you in the presentation. Attention spans are notoriously short in people, so stay on track and please, do not give too much information. Don't drown them, just splash a little.

Step four: Demonstration. If you have a product that you can actually "demonstrate" (make move, operate, drive, run, etc.), then this is the time to do this. If you don't have a product like this, you may want to make it come alive in the minds of your prospects. This is a time to let your product do the majority of the "talking". Answer questions as they come up with a short, direct answer and shut up. Let

the product speak for itself. If you've given a good presentation, you will not need to speak much here.

Step five: Close. This is the scary part for most newcomers to sales, yet it need not be. Close simply means that you ask them to buy. That's pretty simple. Just ask them to buy. You can do this in many ways including such straight forward methods as asking them, "will you buy this product from me today?" There are many others like, "will this be cash or charge?" and "how will this be registered?" and so on. Studying closing techniques will give you even more ideas, but it still comes down to the simple fact that you are asking them to buy from you. If they offer an objection, you answer it and ask them to buy again. When they say "yes", your sale is closed.

In understanding step by step methods, you may want to modify these five steps by adding some more to this list. Step six may be delivery. Delivering the product or service to your customer can be a very important step. Step seven may be follow-up. Of all of the steps I can think of, this one is the stumbling block of 80% of the salesmen. Follow-up is a key to continuing sales improvement and success. Step eight may be asking for referrals and so on. You could also break down the close step to add close attempt, answer objection, close. By limiting the steps to the basic five or so, we're keeping it simple and easy to memorize and use.

I think that these five steps are valuable to learn and memorize. Be able to recite them forward, backward, inside out and outside in. They must be done in order. If you get out of order, you will lose control, and control is very important. A good salesperson must have reasonable control of their prospect in order to lead them to the close.

Now there are exceptions to almost any rule of course. An exception to this rule would be the following. You're a car salesperson and a prospect comes in and you greet them. The prospect tells you that they have already shopped around a lot and they have driven all of the vehicles involved and they will buy right now if the price is right. In this case, you will probably skip steps three and four and go right to the close. This is an "I'll take it" kind of response. You can't force someone who is saying "I'll take it" into a demonstration when they don't want or need one. But, at the same time, you must also be aware of the people who lie. Remember them? In this particular case, you may temporarily circumvent steps three and four and then when you find that the prospect is not really sold on the product, take them back to step three and go through the process again. So, you must learn to be a flexible, yet follow the steps in order as much as possible and they will serve you well.

The step by step ideas that I've presented here will work for a person about as much as they are willing to put into them. You could write out your own step by step plan. It's not much more than an outline of what a really good, smart salesperson would do in order to do well. See if you can write one of your own and make it work for you. It will serve you best only as a reminder of the things that you already should have learned to do and from time to time forget to think about.

CHAPTER ELEVEN
OTHER THINGS

I ran across two really valuable ideas when I was involved with multi-level marketing. The person who got me involved in the program did not know what he was doing (I didn't know that at the time), yet he was creative enough to come up with some ideas that worked well. His trouble was that he kept changing his methods so often that he really didn't give any one of them a really good chance of success. These two ideas have really helped me and I've used them ever since. Perhaps they will serve you as well.

Number one: People always want that which they cannot have. How true this is. Tell a child they cannot have something and they work twice as hard to get it. Tell someone that they cannot buy something and they will probably find a way.

You have to be careful how you use it. This can be used in what they call a "negative close". You begin by creating in the mind of the prospect that they may not be qualified to buy or that it may be too much for them. You must be very tactful how you say it and to whom, but when used on the right prospect will work extremely well.

In real estate, you may want to create in the prospect's mind that they may not be able to qualify for this much house. This takes their mind off of the price as a negotiation aspect in their search and puts the ball back in their court. Now they will do everything they can to qualify and once that is done, the negotiation of the price will have fallen by the wayside. The same situation works for car sales too, particularly with first time car buyers.

You must be very tactful. Early in my sales career, we were in a Navy-town with a newly installed nuclear power school. The recruits out of basic training that signed up for two extra years and nuclear power school became instant E-4's (sergeant in the Army or Air Force) and the base credit union was free flowing at the time. These 18, 19 and 20 year old guys would come in wanting to see a Chevrolet Corvette or a full-size Blazer, which were our more expensive products at the time. They couldn't afford the insurance, let alone the payment on the loan and I knew it. Having lost some sales already, I learned that it was critical to get them off of these units in their mind before I ever showed them to them.

If I couldn't get their minds off of the wrong cars, they would leave in frustration and I knew they would buy what I was really trying to sell them down the street. So, I started talking about their money and how it was used. I suggested that they could buy the Blazer, but that they

wouldn't be able to drive it anywhere because after the payment and the insurance, they would be broke. These were single guys and they need lots of money to go out every night. I made a number of tactful suggestions about what they could do with the money they saved, they listened to reason and bought the right unit that they could truly afford.

People always want what they cannot have. Remembering this and combating it with an approach that will turn them around will save you many sales.

Number two: Use an "air of indifference". An air of indifference is defined this way. You want their business and you will do everything possible to earn their business within reason, but you do not need their business and making or not making this sale will not cause you to lose any sleep at night.

This is one of the most powerful tools I've run across. I think it is so powerful that it was worth doing multi-level marketing for two years to learn it.

When you use the air of indifference with a prospect, you are demonstrating confidence. You are showing desire to sell them--that you want their business, but at the same time, you will live without it if that be the case. In other words, you retain the power and control. Without it, the prospect can gain the power position and use it against you by holding the sale or possible sale over your head. This won't do. You must maintain control at all times and you must be able to lead the prospect. Without this, the prospect has all the control and the chances of making a sale are slim. Of course, you want the prospect to think they have some control, but don't really give it to them and the air of indifference will aid you in this process.

In the car business it can work extremely well. Take for example, someone is offering you a price that they will buy at that is way below cost and will not work. If you as the salesperson get upset or frustrated over this kind of situation, you will have given the control over to the prospect and you will not have a sale. Instead, you state that you would really like to earn their business (by the way, this "earn your business" phrase is also a great to use often), but that their offer will not achieve anything except keeping them away from buying the car. A lot of salespeople get frustrated by this situation and they don't quite know what to do. Consequently, the prospect wins the control, feels good that they have it, and even though they don't buy the car which is what they came in to do, they leave without achieving the true objective but take pride in winning the battle.

It's an interesting concept. One trouble with using an air of indifference is going too far and actually having "indifference." You don't want that. That is arrogance. No one likes any salesperson who is indifferent. You must only have an "air" of it; that is, a little bit of it. You want just enough to make it clear to the prospect that you won't fall apart if they don't buy. Without the desire on your part to help the prospect and to tailor your product presentation to suit their needs and wants, having an air of indifference will turn into indifference. Like so many other things in life, there can be a fine line where when crossed, you have gone to the other side. Walking the line in moderation can be helpful.

Another additional benefit of using an air of indifference, and perhaps one of the best benefits, is that you won't allow the prospect to dictate how you will feel if they for some reason don't buy from you today. I think that some prospects like to have you feel bad or guilty. Perhaps it's another way they may feel that they won a battle.

The key here is to win the war. Seriously indicate to them that you desire their business, that you will take very good care of their needs, show concern, but don't let them see you falling apart or acting nervous when they indicate they are not going to buy. Remember, an air of indifference demonstrates confidence and you must maintain confidence at all times.

Little things. You've probably heard it said that "it's the little things that make the difference." There is no doubt in my mind about that being a true statement. Paying attention to the little things is part of what big picture thinking is all about. This may sound like a dichotomy-- little things, big picture. It only sounds that way. The little things are detail. In order to see detail, you must see more of the overall picture.

Recently, I was involved in the sale of two commercial units to a company that is 40 miles from our dealership. We made the sale because we had the units in stock and that is the only reason. They saw them from the freeway one day while driving past us and decided to come look. They had an immediate need and we had immediate delivery available. What happened after this is the most important.

They took delivery and one unit made it about fifteen miles from the dealership and the axle shaft came loose from the axle housing and forced them to stop. The vehicle had to be towed in. One of their other new vehicles that they had just bought at another dealership had the transmission go out in only 3,000 miles of use and it happened within a few miles

of our dealership.

Both units were towed in to be repaired. Remember that one of them had not even got to their company before it broke down. By the way, this is an unusual situation, and an unusual situation requires unusual action.

As soon as I found out about it, I got the service department involved. I knew that this company could be a really good account if we could find a way to demonstrate to them that we could be the best dealership that they have ever dealt with. Now, this breakdown turned into a challenge to deal with the breakdown and the customer's disappointment, and an opportunity to demonstrate how we could serve them in their hour of need and thereby demonstrate that we were a good organization to deal with.

I told the service department about my dealing with this customer and that if we could provide exceptional service to them, that I felt we could earn their business for a long time to come, but because of their distance from us, it would have to be exceptional service. He understood and agreed.

We got the units in and out of the shop in record time. One day on the axle job and three days on the transmission. Normally they would have both taken between a week and three weeks.

Next, I took the truck with the axle job repaired and hired two drivers to take it to the company. I gave the drivers a box of special cookies and a note to the company foreman and sent them on their way. Was the customer surprised? They were elated! No one had ever treated them to such service.

Since then, we have had virtually all of their business and continue to give them the exceptional service that earned it to begin with. And when I talk about the little things, the cookies made an unusually large hit. They served to get their attention and to think of us just a little bit differently. You've got to take exceptional care of good clients. Thinking about the little things can make a large difference.

We didn't stop there. Since the breakdown, we've gone down and taken the principle parties out to lunch to discuss their business needs for vehicles and offered some unusual creative financing to their company that could really be a benefit to them. Now, when they need a new unit, they pick up the phone and dial our toll free number and we jump into action and usually deliver ahead of schedule. Why would they buy anywhere else? They know that our words and our actions have demonstrated our service to them and thereby creating confidence in us. What more could you ask for? ...Okay, the

price is right too, but that should be an understood fact; however, it is probably not the lowest price they could get if they tried. Price is a secondary issue to service.

Another deal was won recently using similar "little things", but this time to close the sale and to earn their trust.

A nice couple had been on our lot about 12 months prior and for some reason they were not waited on very well. They went to the next town and ordered a Chevy Suburban. It was a factory order and would take about eight weeks. They wanted exactly what they wanted and since this was the first new vehicle they had ever bought, they wanted it their way. This couple was in their forties and this was to be their first new vehicle--and an expensive one to boot.

The dealer they ordered it from took a \$1,000.00 deposit and supposedly ordered the unit. They had given the customer a "fleet" type price which left the dealer with only a small profit.

Eight weeks later, the customer called the dealership and wanted to know the status on their order and they were given the run around. This situation went on for months. Finally in desperation, the customer called Chevrolet Motor Division to complain. This made their situation with the dealer even worse. The end result was that a year later, they had no Suburban and the dealer was still holding their money.

They wanted to check with another dealer to see if this was normal and I got hold of them. After hearing their story, I knew that the way to sell them a vehicle was to make the way I do business the exact opposite of the other dealer.

So, I sat down with them and got them to feel at ease. We went over all they had ordered on their first unit, and I suggested a few changes and the benefits they would receive from the changes. I knew my product and what I was talking about and they could see that. The other dealer did not even give them this simple courtesy.

When we finished building the unit on paper, I quoted them a good price and told them that I would not accept any other amount for a deposit than \$5.00 (five dollars!). They laughed and I told them that I didn't want to use much of their money while the vehicle was on order. After their last attempted purchase, and the dealer keeping their \$1,000.00 deposit, this move took away much of the anxiety they were feeling. I told them to expect the vehicle in 8-10 weeks, and of course, they weren't sure that we would actually come

through.

I ordered the unit and they felt good, but in the back of their mind, I knew they were skeptical, and under the circumstances, I understood their skepticism. While the vehicle was on order, I followed it's every progression through the system and called the customers and wrote them letters to tell them each time how it was going.

We got the unit within seven weeks and they could not believe that it was really there. They had received four letters and three phone calls from me during that time. The other dealer didn't even call them once and not one letter. They were elated! Their faith in car dealers has been restored and we earned a good customer all because of the little things that no one else was willing to do or thought to be important. Do you think that these customers will be a good source of referrals? Of course! Who will they buy from again? Our dealership, who else?

Most of the time it is the little things that make the difference. You want to stand out from the crowd. You may not have the lowest price or the best product, but if you pay attention to the little things and treat customers and prospects with dignity, respect, courtesy and friendliness, you will do very well. Price is almost always a secondary issue. After all, people aren't just buying a product or service, they are buying you. They're buying the confidence that you will be there for them, when and if they have a need. Most people want a long term relationship, they want to deal with people who care and who will be there to assist them in the future whether it be a problem they need help with or another sale.

Think about some of the businesses that you have dealt with over the years. Do any of them think about the little things and make you feel that you are important? Unfortunately, you probably cannot think of many. This is sad but true. It's a problem and yet it is an opportunity for someone who will pay attention to some of the details and take a lemon and make lemonade.

I used to see problems as problems and now I see problems as opportunities. If a car breaks down that is a problem, but we as a dealership have an opportunity to give exceptional service and demonstrate to the customer that we value their purchase and relationship and that we care and want to help them. This is taking a lemon and making lemonade which is an old sales phrase that is ever true. It's a matter of seeing a larger picture and understanding that within each and every problem lies an opportunity waiting to be seized and addressed. It will make all the

difference to anyone willing to see things in a larger view.

Seeing problems as opportunities is a recent development in me. I'm not sure exactly when it came into my being, but I think that it is something that came in pieces over a long period of time. Now, I don't always see the opportunity, but I now know that one exists. Sometimes, it is hard to see them, but the progress you make when you start to believe in their existence and begin looking for them to appear to you is most important. And, once you begin to see problems as opportunities, you will not shy away from facing them and dealing with them. They will almost be fun.

In sales, the problems can really be a blessing to you. It can really help to win customers and to keep them longer than without them. Think of it this way, if a customer buys something and never has any problem, you have no opportunity to demonstrate how you can be of service. Without the opportunity to demonstrate your superior service, they have no idea how they would be handled if they did have a problem. Interesting isn't it? Quite often, the ones that have a problem and it is resolved successfully, will turn out to be your best customers. The transaction is not a "quality transaction" just when nothing goes wrong. Matter of fact, when something goes wrong, that is when the relationship can get better and be more complete.

Having something go wrong is only part of the picture though. If you sell a product and nothing ever goes wrong, you need to find a way to demonstrate your service to them anyway. You need to find it in order to solidify the relationship, by contacting them regularly or demonstrating through people they know that had problems that were taken care of immediately and completely. Give this train of thought some attention and it will be worth any effort you put into it. It can be very important to your sales career and your future in sales.

The Law of Attraction. I've heard it said that there is a basic law called the Law of Attraction. My understanding of this law is that you cannot chase something and catch it, instead, you need to attract it to you. But, you can attract both good and bad to you, and what comes to you is dependent on your current thinking and belief and direction.

I've seen salesmen (including myself, of course) trying so hard that they fail. They would be putting in the effort, but every prospect they talked to would not be a buyer. There would be problem after problem. Bad credit, needing a co-signer, indecision within the family, a third party that is leading the prospects away from you and your product, etc., etc.

It seemed that these salesmen couldn't do anything right. Every prospect they talked to were the worst possible prospects, and when you are working for commission only, this can be depressing.

Then, a salesman who doesn't work as hard as you do and who isn't a team player like you are, makes three sales in one day, and to make that fact even worse, they are all big commissions.

By this time you may be wondering if this is the career for you, or maybe you should be working at McDonald's or something. Hey, it can be very discouraging.

The Law of Attraction states that you are attracting something to you. The question is what? In this case, somehow, they are attracting bad things to them. But, you don't really want these things, right? You want good things.

It's time to ask yourself what you have been thinking. Remember, thoughts are things. Have you been having negative "self-talk" recently? Has your "global outlook" been poor recently? Chances are real good that you have had these thoughts whether you consciously realize it or not.

I've learned that in order to attract good things to you, one must believe that you are worthy and deserving. It doesn't come from need, it comes from desire and belief in yourself.

Even when you believe, you will not always have good things attracted to you. When this happens, just state that it was a mistake, and that you are deserving and worthy. I think the key here is to watch what you are thinking. You must believe in abundance. Believing in lack will attract negative to you. Abundance is positive.

Long ago as I said earlier, I read a book called "How I Raised Myself From Failure To Success In Selling", by Frank Bettger. In this great book, Frank stated that enthusiasm was one of the most important attributes of a good salesman. He said that we don't always feel like it, so the way to become enthusiastic is to act enthusiastically; that is, to act as if you were. In other words, force yourself to be enthusiastic. The more feeling you put into it, the better it works and pretty soon, you've turned things around.

In the book, Frank decided that he could turn around his failing career in selling, when he realized that he wasn't putting enough into his career, and this was the reason that he was receiving little from it. Jim Rohn calls this "the day that turns your life around". You have to be able to see where you are going and see yourself succeeding. If there is no light at the end of the tunnel, it's time to get the

demolition team out on the job and blow a hole in the end to let the light come in. Sometimes this decision comes from anger. You've probably heard the phrase, "...he was sick and tired of being sick and tired...", or "finally hitting the bottom". It's a turning point. If it comes from anger, that is okay providing, your anger leads to decision and action.

One of the things that will help turn this situation around is to have goals written down. When you firmly know what you want and have taken the time to record them and view them often, the Law of Attraction has the opportunity to act positively for you and attract to you the things that you will need to achieve your goals. Without clear, concise, goals, you could attract almost anything.

Your thinking leads to pictures in your mind. The pictures are what have the power. What you think will create a picture on the "motion picture screen" of your mind and this picture will need emotion to keep it running (to fuel the fire). When the picture is vividly seen and some emotion is added to it, your "sub-conscious" will go to work to make your picture a reality. It all starts with the thought. This is the reason to be careful what you think, and if it is negative, or not what you want, mentally "erase" it from your mind before the picture develops.

You will be amazed how this will work in your life. First, you must understand what is happening and why, then you can turn it around to think the thoughts and create the pictures that you want instead of what you don't want.

When I had my music store I was held up at gunpoint. I can remember every detail about the gun, but the person's face is a total fog. It was the most frightening experience of my life. He asked me for change for a dollar and as I brought my eyes up from the cash register to hand him the change, the barrel of the gun was about 2" from my nose. Ever had your heart go past your throat?

It wasn't so bad to have the gun in my face as when he made me lie on the floor face down. When I was a kid, I used to have dreams that I was an Indian outnumbered two to one by the Calvary. So, I pretended to be dead by lying face down and hardly breathing at all. But, it didn't work, a Calvary soldier laughed and shot me three times in the back. So, what do you suppose was going through my mind just then in the music store? Fortunately, the robber had not seen my dream!

The reason I even bring this story up is that somehow in the back of my mind (a familiar phrase that is more like sub-conscious than I could otherwise describe), I just knew that I would be held up. It was definitely NOT consciously thought. Who would allow themselves to think such a thing?

It wasn't a conscious thought in the form of actually believing it that is. I had previously entertained the thought of the possibility of it happening, but each time it came to my mind, I tried to erase it.

Matter of fact, as I was walking to the cash register with this person behind me, who had been in the store for about fifteen minutes talking about guitars, I had this "feeling" that a hold up was about to happen. Weird. It's like knowing the phone is going to ring and then it does! Our minds are so much more powerful and knowing than we realize.

I don't fully understand all of this, but I have proven to myself over and over (I'm as skeptical as the next guy) again. I know this--you're sub-conscious doesn't care whether your conscious mind "believes" it or not. All it cares about is the pictures you draw in your mind and the emotion that you inject into the picture (how vivid, how real the picture is). Based on this fact alone, we must be very selective, if not careful, of what pictures we are entertaining.

This is a "negative" way that pictures can work on you. The same would then hold true of the "positive" pictures that we entertain.

Have you ever heard people say things like, "things like that always happen to me", "I knew that would happen", "why do things always happen like that to me?". More common phrases that you've probably heard as many times as I have are, "you just can't win for losing", "that figures!", "I just can't get ahead", and "I always seem to be on the losing end". These phrases are affirmations. Whether we realize it consciously or not, they are attached to pictures and we draw or attract these things to actually become true statements of fact in our lives.

Affirmations need to be positive. You must be careful of the things that you say and think. The affirmations can be turned around quite easily by one, being aware that you are saying something that you do not want to be true in your life. Two, erase any picture that you may see attached to the phrase and call it a mistake. And three, replace it with a positive uplifting thought or at the very least erase any thought. Say things like, "this is just a mistake, good things always happen to me", or "I'm usually on the winning end and this must be a mistake".

For some reason, the negative remarks that you've heard yourself and others say are more readily accepted as being "normal", than if someone said "I just can't lose for winning--I have such great luck!". When someone says the positive one out loud, we think they are arrogant. What

absurdity! Still, if we are to change what is attracted to us, we must change our thoughts, vocalizations and pictures created in our minds.

So, the Law of Attraction is at work in us whether we admit it, believe in it, or realize it. Realizing that it is there and working on us will lead to awareness and then we can do something about it. What are we attracting?

CHAPTER ELEVEN
SUMMARY OF LESSONS LEARNED

- * People always want that which they cannot have.
- * Learn to use an "air of indifference" (confidence).
- * Be careful not to develop "indifference" (arrogance).
- * It's the little things that matter the most.
- * Being of service means paying attention, going out of your way, and putting yourself in your customers shoes.
- * When you have confidence and know your product, it shows.
- * Get the facts so you know how to act.
- * Be real nice.
- * Problems are opportunities. Take a lemon and make lemonade.
- * Find a way to demonstrate your commitment to service even if nothing goes wrong and they haven't had a need to find out yet.
- * Learn what a "quality transaction" is.
- * The Law of Attraction. Learn to attract good things to you. Watch out what you are thinking--it acts as a magnet.
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CHAPTER TWELVE
BUILDING THE TALLEST BUILDING

Taller buildings require deeper, stronger and more substantial foundations. The taller the building, the more time and energy is required to complete, but once done, the view is unparalleled. So it is with your sales career. The more time and energy you spend on your foundation and building your building (your career), the greater will be your view when you get through.

So far, I've talked about many things regarding a sales career that require study, time, energy and commitment. There is always more to learn and this you must keep in mind. It is key to keep learning, keep exploring, to keep on keeping on, so they say, every day of your career. The rewards will be there, no need to worry about that aspect. In short, you will win if you keep on trying and continually sharpen your skills and knowledge of what you do.

It may be a rocky path. This is life. Nothing worth achieving is easy. The race is not always to the swift, but to those who keep on running. A customer and an excellent referral source gave me an outstanding two part phrase to remember that helps put things in perspective. The phrase is: 1) "If you're going to be a bear, be a Grizzly. 2) Shit happens." He had these phrases on a plaque in a showcase in his shop and I thought it was one of the best I've ever heard.

I interpret the phrase to mean that if you're planning on entering the race, plan to win and sometimes things happen and you may not, but don't give up, try again. Don't take it all too seriously. Try hard, but live to enjoy it. Don't forsake everything else in your life in order to win. You may win, but you'll also lose. The key is to have a win-win situation. Some balance. Some maturity.

In sales, if you win and the customer loses, that is not called a sale, it's called a rip-off. To be called a sale, there must be a win-win situation. The customer must win and the salesman or company too. This is a good thing to keep in mind when you're out on the firing line with your prospective customer. Both of you must win. You must find something in your product that satisfies some need or desire in the customer. Then you can have a sale. You want repeat and referral business and the only way to get that is with a satisfied customer.

I talked about treating it like a business. When you treat what you do as if you're in business for yourself, you

will think differently and more creatively about your job. You want to find some unique ways of staying in contact with your customers. You want to be unique. There is much value in this. People remember unique people.

By thinking about what you are doing and being unique in doing it, you will probably gather information about your customers that other salesmen do not bother with. Information such as their spouse's name, birthdates, anniversaries, children's names and birthdates, other special dates or information that will bring you closer to them. You may want to send them cards at these times, or a special small gift or something. They won't forget those contacts if they are sincere and not mass produced and impersonalized.

You might even go so far as to drive by their house and see their neighborhood and this may help you to understand just a little bit better how they live. You may also want to send their neighbors a note, since they are prospects too. You can get their names from a cross-reference directory, or an R.L. Polk City Directory. These can be valuable tools to increase your prospects.

I've been going to the same barber for 17 years. In all of that time, I've had my hair cut by someone else a total of five times. That's loyalty. I have to drive 15 miles just to sit in his chair too. But, when someone knows how you like it cut and they do it right 95% of the time, you want to stay with them.

He does all of his business by appointment only and I am not his oldest customer, he has many that have been going to him for this long and longer. The interesting thing is that he never contacts me, never sends me a card, no follow up or interest in it at all. This is not a problem with me, but I am frankly surprised at this. If I were him, I would develop a mailing list and information about each customer and find ways to thank them for this kind of loyalty and commitment. He's not alone in this kind of thing, but by thinking more creatively and uniquely, he may handle his customers differently and maybe have a chain of shops instead of just one. If he gets sick, his business stops cold.

I've been with the same auto insurance company since I was sixteen years old. I've had only four agents in that period of time, and one in particular, I stayed with for over 15 years. I've had better agents, but he bought a car from me once and I believe in giving my business to people who do business with me. In that period of time, I sold him six cars. I had a lot of opportunities for follow up since he was my insurance agent. I gave him life insurance business, business insurance business as well as all of my car

insurance business. This is kind of unique, since I was not the only car salesman that was insured by him, but I stayed in touch and followed-up on him regularly and in 15 years he only bought one car from someone else.

What about some of the people that you do business with, or the ones who do business with you? It's important to do your best to return the favor when it's possible. It's only fair. Also, think about some of the relationships that you've had over the years with businesses and how they have treated you or followed up with you. By doing this you will think of how you might do it if you were in their situation. Being the customer and thinking about how you would like to be treated before, during, and after the sale can give you some interesting insight into how you would handle customers in your selling career.

Think about businesses that stand out in your mind and compare them with those that don't. What exactly is the difference? What did the one that did stand out do differently than the ones that didn't? It is probably small things that stand out. It usually is. The ones who think about the details always stand out. How many businesses have followed up with you after a purchase, especially a big purchase? Never take these things for granted in your career.

Find some unique ways of staying in touch with your customers. Find ways to continually thank them for their business--especially their repeat and referral business. Think about them at Christmas, birthdays, anniversaries. Pay attention to the small details that will make all the difference in your success and the customer's memory of you. Very few do these things and in order to do them, you must gather the information, develop a system to utilize it, treat your career like a business and invest money into it to afford to do these things and follow through on your plan.

Empathize, but don't sympathize. There is a great difference between the two. It's important to empathize with your customers. Empathizing means that you understand how they feel. Sympathizing means that you feel the same way they feel. When you sympathize, you are crippled. You cannot help a customer with a problem, you can only feel the same feelings as they do. When you empathize, you understand how they feel and are not crippled and thereby can be of service to them, but you do not feel the same way as they. I suppose this is one of those fine points, but it is of great importance. Some people do not want help, they want sympathy. Be careful of this.

If you don't ever have a problem with a customer being

unsatisfied about something, you're not selling. This is just a fact of life. You will have some unhappy customers. Of course, you want to have as few as possible and repair every damage done possible, but you can't "plug in" completely with them or you'll go crazy. You must be courteous, sincere, empathetic, and interested in their problem and in finding a possible solution. You want to try to put yourself in their shoes and understand their feelings and their problems. You want to do everything that you possibly can to help them, but you cannot sympathize with them. You must maintain the control that only empathy can give you. If you find that they are only looking for sympathy, you should respect their wish, but refuse to join them.

I've had a few irate customers--just a hand-full. With a couple of them, I listened to their problem and the way they were stating it and each time I tried to solve their solvable problem, I had to listen again to their complaining. When this would happen, I would forcefully tell them that if they truly wanted their problem solved, I would be more than happy to assist them in any way that was possible, but if all they wanted to do was complain about it, I had other things to do. This shocked them. At this point they either had to admit that they wanted it solved, or that they wanted to complain. I made it clear that either way was okay for them, but that I would only participate in one of them--the possible solution.

It seems silly to even mention this kind of thing, but it is true that there are people who just like to complain. Just don't let yourself get sucked into joining with them and sympathizing with their complaining. Sometimes it is just best to walk away. Remember to be courteous, sincere, and interested in helping them, but if they don't care about a solution to their dilemma, why should you stand there and get dumped on. It will ruin your day. Don't let them do it to you. Be in control.

And speaking of complaining, be careful about what you say and to whom you are saying it. In any job, there are daily ups and downs and little problems that will bother you from time to time. Sometimes, you just have to talk about them and how you feel and this is only natural. But be very selective about who you will express your feelings to. Be very careful about when you do it. It's very good advice to NEVER do it with co-workers. You never know when something you said will come back at you and it will come at the worst possible moment and usually after you've forgotten all about it.

As a manager, I've learned this lesson the hard way.

I'm glad that I learned it early in my career. I am not perfect, I let things slip once in a while, but the key here is to pay attention and think before you speak.

I've seen other people who should know better complaining in front of their associates. From the vantage point of being on the outside looking in, it's obvious to me that they should shut up, but they keep on talking. A lot of times, these people are ones who desire a promotion, but they will never get it when they do this. And they don't understand it. I'm surprised at this, but then I'm surprised at a lot of things.

You have to be real selective about who you talk to and when you talk about your feelings--especially things that happen at work or relate to your work. It will come back to you somewhere down the line anyway, so watch out what you say--especially about other people. You never know when someone is related or tells their spouse and their spouse knows someone else who tells them and they are great friends with your boss's wife and so on. Even in public places like restaurants. You never know who is in the booth next to you hearing what you are saying and they know so and so and so on.

I read a quote once from an unknown source that said that "small people talk about other people, and average people talk about things, and intelligent people talk about ideas." That quote has helped me to remember to shut up when I was about to spill my guts about something that angered me. Sometimes I catch myself talking about other people and then I stop and remember this quote. Another quote from my Step-Father was "listen--you will learn more." Most people say that I'm a quiet person, and this is the reason. It's amazing what you learn when you're not talking. Still another quote from my Step-Father that I've remembered even more vividly is, "always put your mind in gear, before you engage your mouth". So, I've learned to be careful what comes out of my mouth and that there is some thought to it.

Teamwork. You can't do it alone. The star of a movie is the one who gets most of the glory (or scorn), because he is the one we see and associate with, but behind that star are hundreds, even thousands of other people that had to work together in order for us to even view the movie and be able to praise the star.

There will be people who will help you and you will need help. You will especially need help when you start doing a lot of sales. It is very difficult for one person to handle such a large load. So there will be those that help you and you will want to make sure that they are treated as stars in

your movie.

You'll want to build bridges between people that can help you. You'll want to develop and nurture relationships. You'll want to pay attention to teamwork and thanking those that help you do what you do. There is always one or more people behind the scenes. I suppose the phrase "don't bite the hand that feeds you" works here. You don't want to build gorges, you want to build bridges. So, you'll want to take care of those special people that are helping you or can help you in the future and you will be building your bridges.

As you grow in numbers of sales, you may need the help of a secretary, someone to help you organize all of your efforts. By treating it as a business, you will think that you need to find a way to multiply your efforts. You can't duplicate yourself, so find some help, and a secretary--a good one--can be very helpful. In treating it as a business, you will be willing pay the price it costs to get some good help. This is an investment; an investment in your future, your growth.

I've seen several salesmen who could double or triple their sales rate if they hired a secretary to help them. Currently, a good full-time secretary will earn between \$20,000 and \$30,000.00 per year. It's hard for a salesman who is earning say \$60-70,000.00 per year, to think of paying out that much money out of their income to hire a good secretary. If they really thought about it as a business, they would hire them, at least a part-time one, and they would be in a position to expand their income and sales rate. They are thinking small and not treating it as a business. Treat it seriously--like a business. Joe Girard doesn't sell 1500 cars a year all by himself! He has a staff! And he thinks big and treats it like a business.

If you're taking all the money you earn home with you, you will never be able to see yourself paying someone talented to help you do better. The money isn't there, so you do the same things you're doing and rationalize it away. So, first you must think differently. Those that do, will do much better by virtue of this unique thinking.

What if the person who started the company you work for thought this way? They would still be operating out of their garage. They certainly wouldn't have hired you, would they? They would try to do everything themselves, just like you're doing now. Don't get me wrong. It's okay to stay where you're at--to get to a certain level and stop. But, this book is not for people who want to stop, it's for people who want to grow and in order to grow, you must think growth. You can only do so much all by yourself, so if you are going to grow, you will need help and help costs money and the money will have had to already be there and have been thought

about and planned, hopefully, ahead of the need.

In the car business, I've seen six or eight salesmen who were very good at what they do. And every one of them needed help to go further, but didn't look at it as if they were in business for themselves and make the commitments necessary to grow. The difference between 20 cars a month and 40 or 50 cars a month is treating it as if you are in business for yourself and interested in growing. Twenty cars a month (at retail) is about all anyone can handle by themselves on a regular basis. At the end of one year, you will have developed 240 customers. At the end of five years, 1200. Now it takes an average of about 7 prospects talked to in order to equal one sale, so multiplying the one year total of 240 customers, you will have talked with 1680 people, or about 6.5 per day. Out of 1680, 240 bought, but out of the other 1440, there are prospects to follow up with who will buy in the near future if they get followed.

Then, out of the 240 customers, each one of them knows at least 25 people that they could influence in one way or another to buy from you as well. Now you've got 240 customers to follow up with, 1440 prospects who didn't buy yet, and 6,000 potential prospects that may buy from you if they had learned about you and your unique ways of satisfying customers. Now you're juggling 7,680 people--in one year! Times five years equals 38,400. On a monthly basis, it is 640, and on a 22 day work month, it is 29 people per day. This is not an exaggeration, it is a "big picture" way of thinking.

You see, when you think of it as a business and you look at the numbers that other salesmen don't bother with, you will see quickly that you could do very well, if you could organize all of these contacts. In order to do that properly, you may need some help. Matter of fact, you will need some help. So, it's a good idea to plan these needs before they arise. Start investing in your business now and be able to reap the rewards of that investment down the road.

Sometime earlier, I talked about keeping good records. Not long ago, I hired a salesman who came from a brief stint at another dealership. Prior to that he was an administrative manager for a corporation and had a college degree. He enjoyed the car business. He was intelligent. I showed him ways and reasons for keeping good records. He invested in a computer in his second month. He did a good deal of follow up and prospective direct mail. He kept good records. After a year of being with us, he had an opportunity to become a sales manager with a dealership in Montana about 40 miles from the Canadian border.

He took the job and he took his computer and good records with him. Now we were in the San Francisco Bay Area and he moved to Montana, and you would probably think that his records of sales and contacts in the San Francisco area would be pretty useless in Montana. Most would think that, but he didn't.

The sales manager job wasn't what it was made out to be, but he had already moved and worked there for a year, so he accepted a position as a salesman again and started thinking about how he could make more sales. He sent all of his prior customers and contacts a letter that stated he could sell them any car they wanted and have it shipped to a dealer in their area for delivery. This is done, but not by many. Still, he sent them out. In the first month, he sold six cars that way! Six cars! Without the records and his vision, he would not have even thought of the possibility.

There are so many things to juggle. The number of prospects you are talking to, your current owners, their referral potentials, their repeat potentials. The records you keep and stay on top of will make an amazing difference in what you will be able to achieve.

In the car business, we jokingly talk about the "Used Car Factory". The used car factory is a myth, there is no factory that manufactures used cars. But, with your good records and your computer, you can come pretty close to it.

People shopping for a used car quite often have something specific in mind. They pretty much know what they want, but they also realize that they will have to be fairly flexible. As an example, they may desire a 1986 Oldsmobile Cutlass Supreme in red with bucket seats and less than 50,000 miles in good condition for a reasonable amount of money. Now they realize that they may find a blue Olds Cutlass with 52,000 miles on it with a split bench seat and will buy that. So they realize they have to be reasonably flexible.

Now you're the car salesman. You don't have a 1986 Olds Cutlass on your lot. You don't have any Oldsmobile's. The prospect is willing to take his time and look around, as I said, he knows about what he wants.

You've been selling for a couple of years and have kept very good records in your computer. So, you go to your computer and you search for such a car in your owner and prospect data bank. Presto! There are two or three. They are currently owned by a couple of your owners, but wait... What if you could offer them such a deal as to have them interested in trading their car in? There might be a two sale possibility here... What do you know?!...

Well this scenario can work for you or against you, but

it will only work for you if you bothered to keep good records. Even if you didn't find one in the data bank, you could log your prospect's desire in a car into your prospect data bank and keep it in mind when you're talking to new prospects. Or, you could even consult dealership records of people who bought that kind of car that didn't buy it from you and call them and see if they would be interested in trading it for the right price. There are a lot of possibilities here.

How in depth should your record keeping be? As deep as you can get. Is it important to know the hobbies of your customers or prospects? Sure. You can talk their language and share common interests. When you sell a business owner a car, is it important to know the secretary and receptionist's names? Of course. Doesn't everyone like to be called by their name? It's the most pleasing sound to their ears. What about children's names and birthdates? Darn right. If you're selling cars is it important to know when a child is turning 15 or 16? Will they be wanting to drive something? Show me a kid who doesn't. Will your owner think of buying a used car from you when their child gets to that point? That's up to you, isn't it?

What if you started contacting that owner whose son or daughter was about to turn 16, suggesting that you could help them get the right car for them at the right price? What about other cars in the family? You sold them one, but they own three. Is it important to know what kind of cars they are and about when you think they may be interested in trading them? Remember the used car factory...

Recently, a customer of our department that I knew had been sold by a salesman who recently left us, drove into the service department. I recognized the company name on the side of his commercial van. I didn't remember his name however, and immediately searched the computer for the deal. In less than ten seconds, it was on the screen. I went out to the service drive and greeted him by name. He was shocked that I knew his name! But, he loved it. We talked for a while and he gave me a referral while he was there. I also made pains to make sure that his service was handled promptly and fully. This is yet another example of the value of keeping good records and being able to access them quickly.

The program I like and use is called PFS: Professional File, from Software Publishing. There are many database programs available. Many are very complicated because they are meant to be used for all sizes of businesses. This one is very easy (they call that "user-friendly") and will handle all the records I can put in it. Ashton Tate's famous D-Base series database programs are excellent, but they are also more complicated and require more time to format. Any of them will help you better organize your records and be able

to access them very quickly and take advantage of situations such as I described a moment ago.

There's been several clothing stores that I have bought from. They all get my name, but who ever follows up? I buy four or five suits a year and miscellaneous other accessories and I have no loyalty to any of these stores.

One saleslady I have dealt with off and on for over 18 years and yet I have bought very little from her. They work on commission, yet they think small. What a difference it would be if she stayed in contact with me and made suggestions that might interest me. If she bothered to gather the information such as my address and phone number and size and preferences and then had a plan of making contacts directly or even indirectly through the mail, she could get rich. Besides, I know a lot of people who buy suits all the time. I could be an excellent source of referrals, couldn't I?

Keeping good records and being able to access them easily can turn out to be one of the best investments you could make in your career. Think smart. Use your creativity and skill. Find someone to help you if need be, but don't miss out on the opportunities because you didn't have the information.

Head games. Sometimes it's important to play some little harmless games with your own head. Here's one from the car business, but it applies to so many.

At the end of every month, the sales are tallied and then you start the new month from zero all over again. This is sometimes depressing. I've seen it have its effect on salespeople. They are constantly starting all over again.

I suggested a couple of them to play a head game with themselves and to tally their sales since they have been with the company. So at the end of the month, instead of having 10 or 12 units out, they have 498 to date. What a difference there is in the numbers! Their next sale in the new month won't be number one, it will be number 499! This is a little head game, but it could be an important one depending on the person. It's all in your perspective. It's what you see or what you interpret from what you see that matters. Find a positive perspective and use it.

This is accumulation. Accumulating the results throughout your time with this company instead of starting over again every month. It may give you a different

attitude. You may even think that you are valuable to the company based on your numbers. You probably are. We tend to be our own worst enemy at times. So change the way you look at things and see if that helps change the results. If it does, play the head games--they're harmless.

Other head games. Pump yourself up. Talk to yourself quietly and tell yourself good things about you. Tell yourself that you are worthy. Tell yourself that you deserve good things coming to you. Tell yourself that you are going to have a really great day, week, month, year, whatever. Tell yourself that you are attractive, that you handle yourself well, that people like you, that you like people, that you enjoy challenges, that you're the best at what you do.

One of the first steps toward improvement is to get your "self-talk" into it. You were probably taught that only crazy people talked to themselves, but that is not true. Talking to yourself can be one of the more important things that you learn how to do. Matter of fact, you will do it anyway, you just want to make sure that it is saying good things and not bad. The more common self-talk is destructive in the long run. It may seem harmless at first, but it will take its toll from daily, hourly negative input. You can "self-talk" your way into becoming better at what you do.

Convince your "self" that you deserve having good things happen in your life. That you are worthy and that you are valuable. Confidence in yourself will come of this after a reasonable period of positive input. If you don't believe what I'm saying, try it for a month and you will soon believe. It works.

Work. Some people say that work is a four letter word. Hey, it is. One, two, three, four...it's four letters long. What they mean by that is that work is WORK. Yet some people say that work is fun. By the way, that's a three letter word--fun, but what they mean by that is that they enjoy what they are doing. That's the simple difference, one group enjoys their work and the other doesn't. Why? Who knows. That's just one of those things I suppose, but the key here is that if you don't enjoy it, why do it? They say there are only two things we really need to do: Die and pay taxes. With that in mind, there's no good reason to do something that you dislike doing.

Enjoying what you do will make all the difference in your career and its success and your life in general. If you work for a negative person and you can't change it and you've

tried hard and it's taking its toll on you, then change jobs. There's an abundance of opportunity out there. There's no good reason for accepting unhappiness. Unhappiness is not something that is given to us, it's something that we give to ourselves.

I changed a six year job after trying everything that I felt I could try to change the constant negative environment I was in. I tried thinking differently. I tried sending loving thoughts. I tried talking directly about my feelings. I tried going from the bottom up and the top down. Hey, I gave it my all, but I couldn't seem to change it. I was left then with two choices. Learn to live with it, or change jobs. I tried learning to live with it for a reasonable period. Then I changed jobs. That decision has made a big difference, a positive difference in my career, my attitude, and in my life in general.

It's scary. I'm not one to move around a lot, and out there is the great unknown, but the unknown can be more rewarding. They say that the grass is not always greener on the other side of the fence. That's true. Every place you are has its pluses and minuses. The question is how many pluses compared with how many minuses? And in that green grass phrase that is so common, the key word in the phrase is the word always. That means that sometimes it is greener. and this is also a true statement. It's wise to think carefully about what it is you are expecting or looking for, but don't let yourself tell your "self" that you are stuck, because that is not true.

Enjoying what you do and who you do it for is a key to success I think. Otherwise, work is a four letter, no good word and you will bring that attitude home with you and it will permeate the rest of your life like a bad apple in the barrel. Eventually it will get you.

So the best advice I've run across is to find something that you like doing and find a place that you like doing it and go to work. Remember that no one place is Eden. There are some snakes in every garden, but you don't have to settle for a prison unless you're convicted. If you're free, then you have the choice of freedom. That doesn't mean that the choice will be free (and this was not meant to be a play on words), but it means that you have the power of choice and what you do with that power is your own concern. Just don't tell me that you don't like your job, because I know that there are some people who just like to complain...

My decision to leave the six year job cost me about \$25,000.00 the first year I was gone. That's a good deal of money! Was it worth the expense? Absolutely. Would I do it again? No question about it. Do I have any regrets? Not one. Am I happier with my current place of employment?

Happier than I have been anywhere else to date. Are there problems at the new place? Yes. Are they important? No.

The negative influence is gone. There are problems wherever you go, but who wants to be around someone who is always negative? Who always puts other people down? Who thinks he is the only one who is right? The grass can be greener and it is greener where you enjoy what you do and where you do it.

CHAPTER TWELVE
SUMMARY OF LESSONS LEARNED

- * Taller buildings require stronger and deeper foundations.
- * If you're going to be a bear, be a Grizzly. Shit happens.
- * All sales must be "win-win" or they are "rip-offs".
- * Gather the information that others do not think important.
- * Look at other businesses and watch what they do and ask yourself how you would do it if it were you.
- * Empathize, but don't sympathize.
- * Some people just like to complain.
- * Remember to be courteous, sincere and interested in helping your customers, but don't let them dump on you.
- * Be very careful of your own complaining and with whom it is shared.
- * Teamwork. The "star" can get the glory only because he is supported by many.
- * Build bridges not gorges.
- * Plan your need of a secretary.
- * If you are not willing to pay the price, you cannot be ready to accept the award.
- * Don't bankrupt your business by taking all of the money home with you.
- * If you study the numbers, you'll see why you will need help.
- * Keeping the records will make all the difference.
- * The used car factory.
- * Head games. If they are harmless, play them.
- * Pump yourself up. Talk to yourself. Say good things.
- * Work is a three letter word. F-U-N.

CHAPTER THIRTEEN
REAFFIRMING YOUR CHOICE

Sales can be a very rewarding career choice. There is a great need for good salespeople. So many people get into sales without ever thinking of it as more than being just a job--a way to earn some money. Others will think of it as a career and study and learn the little differences that lead to a different attitude and vision that encourages them to do well and consistently progress in their field.

Sales is a field that offers a great deal of opportunity. Quite often, the income availability is unlimited. In other words, there is no cap on what you can earn from the company you work for, but the limits one places on oneself. This is one of the largest and most exciting attributes of the sales field.

It is also a field in which you can move about in the various products, services and still have some skills that will get you hired. This means that you are not locked in to a particular product or service. You could sell automobiles or guitars equally well with the same skills learned. Going from tangible sales to intangible or visa-versa may prove to be different for you, but sales is generally sales whether it is computers, advertising, automobiles, real estate, business opportunities, whatever. A good sound foundation in sales will give you many opportunities.

Many sales careers allow you to have flexible hours. Some require weekends as in real estate (residential real estate sales) and some do not (commercial real estate sales, etc.). A good salesperson's time is their own and if they learn to plan their time effectively, they can have all the time off they could possibly want or need. I would call this an advantage. The work needs to get done, but if you can organize your talents and efforts well, you can have very flexible hours and still get it all done.

Sales does not require a college education. A person with reasonable education and desire and ability can do well without a more formal education that may be required to even get your foot in the door in another field.

A good salesperson will earn an above average income. There are indeed many in sales that do not, but a well trained and aggressive salesperson will earn a very good income. Many college degree required jobs start at below \$40,000.00 per year and have hope of increasing only in very small increments over a long period of time, but in sales, one can earn beyond this amount their very first year. I've hired many that have done this and continue to grow. Many good salespeople earn well over \$100,000.00 per year

regularly and without a college degree.

Having a college degree will help probably, but more important that a college degree is the commitment to continue learning on your own. I think that one can get so far beyond what a college degree can offer in the way of knowledge by effective and consistent personal study. You won't have the piece of paper to hang on the wall, but you will have far greater benefits in terms of knowledge and ability.

So, to be a good salesperson requires the ongoing learning process called study. You can stop wherever you like, but continuing learning will help you reach the top of your field. It will expand your horizons and enrich your talents and abilities.

Next, comes decisions. You will need to decide these things I've discussed so far. You will need to decide that sales is a career and that you are actively and knowingly choosing it. You will want to choose your sales field. You will want it to be in a field that you will enjoy. When you enjoy what you do, your rewards will be many times that of someone who has not chosen their own destiny.

You will need to decide to study and learn. This must be your choice. Once you're out of school, the requirement is gone and the incentive to continue on must come from you. You must learn to be a student, want to be a student. With this decision, the teacher will "appear" (the knowledge will present itself to you).

You will need to decide what you want. You will learn about goals and goal-setting and the value in doing this. You will need to decide how high you will go, how deep you will dig (how good you will get and how hard you will try). These are decisions you must make for yourself. No one can force them on you. By failing to make the decision consciously, you will have made one by default and you may not like the default decision. So, in general, you need to decide that you will decide. This is crucial to do really well in sales.

Once you've decided, you must record your decisions and keep track of your progress. A good salesperson keeps good records. I've heard it said so many times that salesmen are not good record keepers. Well, I suppose that is true, but, good salesmen are. That is a big difference between a good salesperson and one that is mediocre. Find a really good salesperson and ask them, I think you will find that they know exactly what they are doing, where they have been, have measured their progress and know about what the future holds for them. They know their clients and their needs. They also know their limitations. They may understand the value in the record keeping department, yet know how much time that

may take and would like to spend more time in other areas, so they may hire someone to do it for them or with them. That is smart thinking. A good salesperson thinks smart.

Once you've chosen sales and are thinking of it as a career and you've chosen one that you enjoy and you are studying regularly and you've made all of these decisions, you're ready to pull it all together. These are pieces of the puzzle and the puzzle is not difficult or evasive. It is simple and clear. You know what the pieces are and pulling them all together is the decision power that you already have. Making the decision to do well. In order to do well, one must pull these pieces together. To pull them together, there is nothing more necessary than to make the right decisions. Once decisions are made, the picture will become clearer and more complete. The little bit that will remain will be the easiest part that follows.

Go to work. That is the rest of the puzzle. Go to work. Go out and do. Try. Achieve. Enjoy.

Take your work plan and work it. Modify it as you learn so that you are continually working smarter as you go instead of just harder. Try new things and see if they work for you. If they do, adopt them and if they don't, discard them. Do more than the rest. Try more often. Remember the 80-20 rule. 80% of the sales are made by 20% of the salespeople. Look in your own organization and you will find this to be generally true. It's just the way it is.

80% of the calls are made by 20% of the salespeople. This means that only 20% keep on contacting when 80% have given up. The same holds true with all aspects of sales. It has proven itself in every organization I have been associated with. The 80-20 rule.

Make the calls that few salespeople will be willing to make. Go for the larger clients. Work smarter, not harder. If you were selling insurance and the average person buys a \$25,000.00 policy, you would have to sell 40 policies to sell one million dollars worth of insurance. But, you could sell a million dollar policy to one company president.

If you sold cars, the average person buys one car approximately every 46 months. Based on this, you would have to sell 100 people a car to sell 100 cars. But, you could sell 100 cars to a large company.

If you sold residential real estate and the average price of a home was about \$200,000.00, you would have to sell five homes to sell a million dollars worth of real estate. But, you could sell one piece of property for a million

dollars or more.

This is part of thinking big and working smart. The opportunities are there and many do not see them. They are afraid and unsure of themselves. You can see a fish bowl or you can see the Pacific Ocean. It's your choice. I think that to earn \$200,000.00 per year, you will have to see the Pacific Ocean. There are no sharks in the fish bowl, that is true, but, there is also a very limited supply of fish...

Of course, there is nothing wrong with, say, residential real estate. You can do very well selling smaller dollar amount parcels, but you have to sell more of them than the other salespeople in order to do well. So, there are a lot of ways to do that, but again, they entail working smarter. You would probably advertise more, make more prospective contacts, be involved in clubs and organizations to gain more contact with more people and more influential people. You would probably be more prepared and know everything there is to know about financing opportunities and market values and such. You would find and secure the prospects before they call a different agent or a different agency.

You would probably follow up with each sale in order to secure other prospects and to add to your clients portfolio rather than just collect your commission and wait for the next one. You would probably stay in touch with these clients regularly through a newsletter program or other kind of follow up. You would be in the top sales position. I've yet to have a real estate person follow up with me, ask me for referrals or even get to know me. I've dealt with many different real estate people and still have not had this simple, yet effective treatment.

The same holds true with car sales. How many times has a car salesman called you? After you bought the car, did they call you? Once? Twice? Three times? Do they remember your name? How many car salesmen have you bought a car from? A different one for each car bought? When was the last time a car salesman prospected you? Sent you a newsletter? Asked you for a referral? It's rare. I'm in the car business, but how many other car salesmen know that fact? It's not plastered on my forehead. In my lifetime, one person called me one time and I was shocked at even that!

Last month out of twenty-five salespeople in our dealership, five sold over ten units. That is 20%--the 80-20 rule again. The top person got fifteen, the bottom person got two sales. The rest were in between somewhere. The point here is that NO ONE got more than 15! Of course, fifteen is not too bad considering, but, to do really well at sales would entail more than fifteen and some kind of growth pattern as well--in the upward direction, by multiplying their efforts and getting the multiplication factor working

for them, leading them on to more sales with less worry and effort. The difference is the way we think about what we do.

Why settle? You don't have to work so much harder to do better, just smarter and understand the bigger picture and make some decisions and apply some effort and action toward your set objectives. What plan you use is of little significance, but using a plan and apply the effort is all that is really required. Wouldn't it be better to come to work with a plan of action and a goal to strive toward? These are but a few of the "pieces" of the puzzle that the 80% are missing. They are not magical omissions, just good common sense and smart business-like thinking.

CHAPTER FOURTEEN
PUTTING A RIBBON ON IT

It's time to put a ribbon on this package and try to summarize some of the things that I have tried to express throughout this book.

There are a lot of books about sales, salesmanship, sales management. They all share some things in common even though each is written by a different person, some with unique ideas.

All the books that I have read (and they are many) have stated that a person needs to have desire. Without desire, there is no hope whatsoever for growth or success. You have to desire something. The stronger the desire, the less skill is needed. The stronger the desire, the less knowledge is needed. Having knowledge, skill and desire would virtually guarantee results.

All the books that I have read state that you must talk to a lot of people. There is just no substitute for the numbers and thinking that there is will virtually guarantee lack of results. Those with no skill can do very well if they talk to enough people. Those that have high skill and don't talk to a lot of people are no better than someone with no skill talking to only a few people.

All the books that I've read state that a person who will do well in sales must keep good records. There's no substitute for keeping good records. Their importance to a growth career in sales is so important. I've tried very hard to make this point clear throughout this book. The ones who keep good records will fair much better than those who have twice the skill.

Here's one last reason (just in case you need another) for keeping good records. There are those bosses who get some kind of bug and may do a stupid thing like letting you and your talents get away from them. Hey, it happens. When it does, you will be ready to pick up the pieces with your records. I have a computer at work and one at home and I transfer the information to and from on a daily basis. I'm never more than one day off in my information.

Joe Girard had one filing cabinet at work and one at home. The one at home was fire-proof. A fire-proof filing cabinet is very expensive, but he felt it was worth it. He understands the value in keeping good records. Read one or all of his many books and you will see him say it over and over again.

Jim Rohn has a cassette tape set out on sales. He calls it his simple three steps to selling. His three steps are: 1) Talk to lots of people every day. There is no substitute for the numbers. You can make up in numbers what you lack in skill. 2) Be real nice. Be nice when others aren't. Be nice when the weather isn't. 3) Keep good records. You've got to get the information. There's no excuse for not getting the information. That's the most concise and accurate method I've heard yet.

So these are the very basic traits. These are the basic skills. This is the foundation on which you expand. This is the "three chord" level.

Going a bit deeper, there are other things that are important enough to remember. Attitude. The right attitude. A good attitude. A good outlook. On life. On business. On the future. On yourself. Toward others.

Enjoying what you do will help you to have a better attitude about everything. Feeling as if what you do has value and worth.

I talked about the value of a good salesperson. What value they bring to each and every one of us. How what they do raises our standard of living and enjoyment. How they exchange something of value for something of value and always create a "win-win" relationship with their customer.

An airplane's attitude is in relation to its horizon. A person's attitude is in relation to its environment. A good attitude is one that has a positive relationship with the person's environment. A bad attitude is one that has a negative relationship with the person's environment.

We discussed growth. Growth is good and natural. Trees grow as high as they can. A person has the choice whether or not to grow. If you are not growing, you are dying. The choice is clear. There is no status-quo. There is always room for some kind of improvement, growth.

Complacency is death. A good place to finally get to would be to be ambitious and yet content. That you are satisfied with what you have done and can extract joy from it, but that you are not done yet at trying to do better. This I think is a truly adult (intelligent) attitude. It encourages growth rather than stifling it.

Learning. Learning is fun. Choose learning. School is never out entirely. Study life, study business, study yourself. Learn everything that you can learn, because you never know when you will learn something that will make all the difference in your life.

Learning is growing. How many years would you want your child to spend in the fourth grade? Moving on. High School or College or even Graduate School is not the end. There is no end. School was meant to teach a person how to think. Thinking people learn more. They buy books, records, tapes, video's, they use the public library. They learn from their own experiences, other people's experiences, from life. Learning is growth, it is life. Without learning and growth, there is stagnation and death.

Be in control. Don't let other people's negativity bring you down. Be careful who you are associating yourself with. Be careful to feed yourself with positive, up-lifting self-talk. We have this tendency to become like those around us, so who are we around?

Be in control of your desire. Find things that get you fired-up inside. Motivate yourself. Find out what does that and feed it to yourself daily.

Be in control of the sale. You must learn to lead the sale and never let the prospect control it. When you do, the sale will not be made.

Be in control of where you are going. Set goals, write them down and work toward them daily. Be clear and concise about what it is that you want. If you don't find out what you want, you can't get it. You have to ask in order to receive and to ask you need to know what you want. Are you willing to work for it? Is it worthwhile? It cannot just be a passing fancy, it must be something that you value and that you desire. What you desire is not important. The fact that you have decided what it is, is important.

Be in control of your thoughts. Thoughts are things and what you are thinking about, you will bring toward you when given any kind of emotional power. Be careful that you are bringing toward you that which you want to come into your life. Change your negative self-talk to positive self-talk.

Be in control of you career. Keep good records. Think of it as being in business for yourself and invest in your business. Take the time to plan your affairs and work your plan. Get the information, record it, use it. Control your destiny. Don't settle for mediocre. Learn the skills, improve your skills. Go to the seminars, listen to the material, try it out and see if it works for you. Make the

mid-course corrections needed to keep you on target toward your objectives.

Study sales and salesmanship. Watch others. What is a clerk? A salesman? What are the differences? Which would you rather be? What will you do that others are not doing? How would you run the business if it were your own? The tough questions. Ask yourself a lot of tough questions and force yourself to answer the questions to gain the insight that will help lead you to betterment.

"CinemaScope Thinking." Think big. Think possibilities. Think action. Think details. Think when other's don't. Think about the three bricklayers. Think about the ends off of the ham. Think about image and its effect on others, your career. Think about multiplication, about multiplying your efforts, your rewards, your skills, your value. Think about 25 to 1. Study the obvious. Think about the numbers, the Law of Averages, the Law of Diminishing Returns, the Law of Attraction. Think about your progress. Are you making measurable results in reasonable time?

Think about what you are saying and to whom you are saying it. Be careful about your expressions around co-workers. It may come back on you when you least expect it.

Think about tools. Invest in the tools that will help you to stay on top of your business. A computer, software, special business cards, time and work saving devices. What tools would help you to do better?

Think about experience. Remember the twenty year's experience story--he had twenty year's experience, one year repeated twenty times. Invest last year into this, and both into the next and all of those into the next and so on. Make the experience worth it.

This is sales. Anyone can do it. Some will have to try very hard. There are those who are more suited to it. People with an extrovert-type personality will probably do better because they are out-going. It is necessary to like people. Selling is people to people.

Skill is important, but you can make up for lack of skill by talking to more people. It is a numbers game. Learn the numbers, study the numbers.

Get better at what you do. Would you want your Doctor to stop learning, reading and studying when he graduated

medical school? No. Why should sales be such a different profession?

Sales is a profession. There is much value in a really good salesperson. The world cries out for them. You can write your own ticket when you get really good at it. Be professional always. Uphold the image of sales being a profession. Don't lie in order to make a sale. That's cheating, it's not a sale. It must be win-win. Treat it as a profession and be professional. Dress the part, act the part, play the part.

Remember the 80/20 Rule. 20% of the people do 80% of the business. 20% of your own clients will probably give you 80% of your business. Take good care of them. 20% of the salesmen will make 80% of the sales. Be in the 20%. Don't hang out with the group.

There's two ways to have the tallest building. Build the tallest or tear the rest down. Be careful about others trying to tear yours down. They will try. They are known as building tearer-downers. Watch out for them. They will try, but you cannot let them get you off track. Keep building the tallest building.

I've struggled with sales, many people have. Those that struggle and keep on going anyway will win in the end. Remember the tortoise and the hare story. The race is not always to the swift, but to those who keep on running. The struggle is important. It means that you are fighting for something that is of value. Valuable things are costly and are worth protecting.

Get around some successful people. Learn from everyone that you can learn from. Expand your skills, your knowledge, your value. Be the best that you can be. Don't settle for less. There is an abundance out there ready and waiting for you. Don't let others bring you down. Keep building the tallest building--however tall your building may become. How tall is not important, what is important is that you are building it as tall as you can, that you are learning and growing and working toward being the best that you can possibly be. There is no more. The best that is within you.

P A R T T W O

CHAPTER FIFTEEN
SO YOU WANT TO BE A MANAGER...

Moving up the ladder is not all it is cracked up to be, but I respect anyone who has the gumption to try. Over the years I've tried to encourage people to try to earn my job. Being afraid of someone taking your job is silly, matter of fact, I think that one must find someone to fill your shoes or you will not be able to advance yourself.

Having become a manager from desire and decision and commitment, I think I could pass along some advice here for those that would like to move up the ladder into this kind of position.

First of all, I've run across a few salesmen in the organizations that I've been in that said they wanted to be the manager, but none of them were willing to do what it took to get the job. Matter of fact, it seems that they did things that insured that they would not get it. That always seemed strange to me. I can only guess that the reason for this is that they really didn't want the job, they were just "fantasizing" about having it.

I've also found those who thought that by becoming the manager that they would work less, struggle less, and have a brighter, more secure future than if they applied themselves where they were. Work less? Struggle less? Dream on.

Where To Start

Number one in the list of things to do is to really want the job. Desire. Just dreaming about it will not do. You must really want it.

Number two. You must be willing to pay the price for its attainment. It may be an expensive price to pay, it may not, but, you must be willing to pay it, or the deal is off.

Number three. You must realize that in attaining the objective of becoming a manager is not the end of the line. Just as in becoming a really good salesman, a good manager must study and learn and consistently improve what they do. And if you are not going to be a good manager, why be one at all?

Number four. You must learn to be reasonably patient. To move into the manager's position means three things: 1) He must die. 2) He must move up or out. There needs to be a hole to fill and this automatically means that the person you are replacing is no longer there. 3) You must create a

completely new position where there was no one before. These things require that you be reasonably patient.

Number five. Managing is getting work done through others. That is the definition of management. You must lead others to get done that which needs getting done. Leading yourself and doing work yourself is one thing and managing others in their efforts is quite another. This fact alone will require that you study and learn to think differently than before. Are you sure this is what you want to do? Okay, onto step six.

Number six. Everything will change. The social aspects that you had with other salespeople in your organization will change dramatically. You may lose friends (although friends are hard to lose, so let's call them associates instead). You may work longer hours. You will have to think differently than you have as an individual performer. You will be given more responsibility and you must be more responsible. Still want the job? Okay, I'll go into some more detail from here on.

How To Go About It

Begin by developing a strong desire. As I said in number one, you must really want to do this, to become a manager. You develop a strong desire by one, making a solid decision that this is what you want, and two, by focusing on your objective and applying action toward that end. This means that you set a goal to become a manager and you write it out.

Then, you need to review your goal many times daily and mentally picture yourself doing the job that you want to achieve. Without the goals and the picturing, you are only fantasizing. To develop a strong desire, you must set the goal, review it often and picture the outcome--as if it already has happened.

Next, you will need to find everything out about the job that you can possibly find. Learn what it is that a manager is and does. Hopefully, you're trying to replace a good manager and you will be challenged. If not, you will not understand what a good manager needs to do and you will have to learn this at some point or accept mediocrity.

You will need to learn leadership, delegation, training and, motivation. These are key attributes of a good manager. You will need to read a lot of books and listen to a lot of tapes and maybe attend some seminars in order to gather the information you will need. The more you can gather, study and assimilate, the better your chances at becoming the

manager and succeeding in the position.

The current manager is probably very busy, and if he is good, he will most likely be more than willing to answer some of your questions as to what he does and what you need to do to become a manager. He may be willing or even eager to offer you different suggestions that could aid you in your pursuit. But you cannot rely on this to learn what you need to learn. If he is willing, great, but if he is not, don't worry about that and go to the library or bookstore instead.

Next, take a good look at what the upside of the management role is and also look at what the downside is too. Add up the pluses and minuses. At first it may be hard to even see the minuses, but there is always more than at first meets the eye. If you were to not understand what some of the downsides are to the job and then you found yourself in the position and experiencing them, you could be extremely disillusioned and discouraged. It's best to find out as much as possible up-front so that you really understand what you are getting yourself into.

Consider also the money aspects of the job. Don't focus on this, but you have to consider it. A lot of people think that the manager makes a lot of money. It has been my experience that the good salesmen in organizations that I have worked in have made substantially more than I did. You must prepare yourself for this. Managing is much like teaching, and it is common knowledge that teachers are underpaid. A manager's pay may be more evenly disbursed than a commissioned salesman's, but a good salesman will out earn most managers in the long term. Management is something that you must truly want to do and enjoy doing. If it is done for the money aspect or the money is high on your list, you may want to reconsider staying where you are.

Responsibility. You thought you had your hands full being responsible for only yourself, well now your hands will really be full! You are going to be responsible for many now, and that is a challenge! You will most likely be responsible for their performance individually as well as the performance of the organization as a whole, depending on your particular management area of responsibility and your company and it's requirements of a manager.

Where Will It Lead?

Moving up the ladder. This is one of the thoughts behind becoming a manager--step by step moving up to the top. Climbing the corporate ladder, so they say. Well, be aware of the possibility that you may not move beyond the first management level you get to. It depends on many things,

including your talent, expertise, training and even your personality as well as what company you are working for.

In addition, as you move up the ladder, it gets harder. Part of the reason for this is that there are less and less available positions as you move up, just as a pyramid starts out with a wide base and comes to a point at the top. Again, this depends on the company's size that you are employed by, but when you get to the upper level of management in any company, there are fewer positions. There is only one Chairman of the Board! Yet, there may be hundreds of managers. And again, something has to happen to them for you to be able to move into the position!

One of the frustrating parts of being a manager is trying to move up the ladder from "middle management" to "upper management". This is why you need to be aware of the possibility of a dead end street in the company you are in. This is one more thing that you will want to consider carefully before you make the leap to become a manager in your company.

Another reason it may be frustrating is lacking in sufficient patience required to "wait it out". You may end up accepting a "lateral" movement in order to move at all, or moving to a different company too. There are still a lot of possibilities, but you will want to explore as many of those "up front" as possible.

Learning The Job. Things To Consider.

Learning the job may be difficult. You may not have access to the information that the manager has. So some things will not be seen before you get to the position. It is still important that you learn everything that you possibly can and get as much of the information as is available.

The first thing to learn is what a good manager is and what is expected of the manager from the top. There are literally hundreds of books on the subject of management. Peter Drucker is probably the most widely read author and he has many books (probably the most) out on the subject. One of his books was the first one I read. Don't just read one author though. Seek many different perspectives. Remember, you want to be a good manager, so study the subject of management in general.

Next, you will need to understand what management means in your particular company. What are the functions of the current position? What kind of time and energy commitments are required? What are the challenges? What do you see from

your current perspective that you would change about the way the manager does his job and why? What big picture considerations are there? What is the big picture? What kind of style would you use? What kind of style does the current manager use? Is he effective? Productive? Could he improve? Can you do the job the way you see it should be done? How does the current manager handle his subordinates? How would you do it differently based on being on the receiving end of it? What are the ideal methods? Are they possible in this company; that is, would the upper management allow you to put them into action? That is a key question. It has been my experience that some upper level managers will hold you back from being really professional. Be careful here. What are the possible roadblocks? Problems? Solutions? What promotion possibilities are there?

There are hundreds of questions that you should be asking yourself to help you be able to move into the management role and be effective and productive in it. One more time, if you're not going to be good at it, it's not worth your effort. To be a really good manager takes more thinking and effort than you can possibly imagine right now. And besides, you probably wouldn't last long not being good at it anyway. Management requires strong commitments and tenacity.

You must be as impeccable as possible. You will have to be more impeccable working toward the position than if you already had it. That sounds strange I know, but it is a true statement, based on my experience.

What this means is that you must shine. You must be a team player. You must keep your negative comments to yourself and not let any of the people that you may end up leading see you fall down. You must prove that you have leadership qualities and to do that you must be "clean" enough to be looked up to.

Leadership requires followers. People will not follow someone they do not respect for very long. You must earn the respect of the people that you are going to be leading. To earn their respect, you must be positive, believable, and respectable. Being respectable means that you are deserving of respect. And who wants to follow a negative leader? We all want to hear the positive stuff. Can you imagine General MacArthur saying, "come on men, let's go secure this hill, even though it's humanly impossible and you will all surely die"? "Okay General, let's go do it, we don't mind dying for you to get the hill secured. We're ready!", they say. Yeah, right! Custer had followers too!

And being believable means that you need to have confidence, and confidence comes from knowing what you are doing. Who wants to follow someone who has no idea what he

is doing? No one. You have to make good decisions as a manager. Knowing what you are doing and demonstrating your confidence in that will allow your followers to believe in you.

Since leadership requires followers, you must have followers. The way to insure this is to be impeccable in your actions, positive in your thoughts, confident in your direction, and believable in your vision. If you've been negative in the past, you will have a lot to overcome. You may have to go to a different company to start your management rise so that you will have an opportunity to turn your past reputation around in order to gain the respect of your needed followers.

I've seen some salesmen in the auto business that stated they wanted to be the sales manager and have spent most of their time complaining with fellow workers about anything and everything. This kind of action is locking you out of becoming the sales manager. When you get into a position of authority and your attitude suddenly and dramatically changes, the people you used to complain to cannot understand or accept that kind of turnaround. It's too unbelievable. Oh, they believe it's possible, but they don't really believe that it is real. If upper management has an inkling that this may be the case, you will be passed over for someone more qualified. This is the reason that many companies hire managers from the outside. In a lot of companies, it is very difficult to move up from within.

Moving up from within will require a serious commitment to the goal, a gradual change to positive, if you've a reputation of being negative at all, and a lot of patience. It may take years to do it and you will need to not lose focus on your objective in the interim. It took me almost three years, and believe me, that was a short time for that company. But, to me it was long time to wait for something that I wanted. Heck, six months is a long time to wait. Be aware that it may take a reasonable amount of time. That may mean six months or five years or longer. Learn patience.

Getting The Job Is Only The Beginning.

Once you get to the management position that you have been committed to, the real work begins. Now you are responsible and you must be responsible and accept any and all of the various responsibilities that go with the job.

If you are going to be good at it (and if you have designs on more upward movement, you better work on being the best at it, not just good), you will have to continue studying, learning, trying new things, and accepting all of

the challenges of the position. You will need to develop your own individual style.

Management Style.

Management style is an interesting subject to study. There are many, many styles. This is one good reason to read many different authors of management books. Each will offer their own "style" of management.

When I first got into management, I had no set style. It took me seemingly a long time to really develop one. I had developed a certain style as a salesman, but now all of that was pretty much out the window. Some of the things that I learned and used as a salesman would apply, certainly, but also, a lot did not apply. There was more to learn, and from a different perspective now.

What I had seen of the style of my predecessors, I did not like very much. Having been on the receiving end of it, I just knew that I would never do it the way they did. Also, by having been on the receiving end of a management style, I had the advantage of that knowledge to help lead me to a style that I could effectively utilize that would inspire confidence in the followers that I would now be leading. I just had to figure out what style I needed.

Management By Intimidation.

The management style that was the most pronounced in the auto business at the time I became the sales manager was what I would call "Negative Reinforcement", or "Management by Intimidation". In other words, they beat you up a lot. They seemed to think that the way to get more production out of a salesman was to belittle him, much like a drill sergeant in the Marines or the Army. They would yell at you, call you names, almost anything to get your attention, and then they expected superior performance. Somehow they thought of salesmen as a different breed altogether, as if they are not "normal" people.

I suppose if you trained your dog that way, he would be scared to death of you and based on that, do what you told him to do, but not much of a loving companion. He probably bites people too. Anyway, it doesn't work in the long run. Unfortunately, it can work in the short run and get immediate response. It doesn't work that way for everyone equally though, and this is the reason that there has been what we call a "revolving door"; that is, high turnover of employees, in the car business. They quit. They may be the smart ones possibly, but the auto business has lost many a talented and

potentially great salesman because of the childish and intimidating way they were treated early in their career, before it had the chance of becoming a career.

Sarcastic Approach.

Another method widely used is what I call the "Sarcastic Approach". In this style, the manager makes constant sarcastic remarks to you, about your performance, your dress, your attitude (their favorite subject), about everything. By the way, being sarcastic about one's attitude seems like a direct conflict here. This approach is better than negative reinforcement, but not by much. It just takes a little longer to build up, before they quit or become permanently damaged.

I can't stand this approach because my Mother was so sarcastic when I was a child. I avoid it like the plague now, but unfortunately, I have found myself using it in the past. It's hard to get away from your training. Now whenever I find myself starting to say anything sarcastic, except something purely in fun and not meant to do the slightest harm, I'll even stop amid sentence. I'd like to say I catch myself all the time, but I know that is not realistic. However, I can say that it is not part of my style.

Management By Pushing

The most common style in the car business that I have seen is what I call "Management by Pushing", or "The Pusher". In this style, instead of leading, they are pushing. They "push" you to do the things that they want you to do, not with sarcasm or intimidation necessarily, but also without believability or much earned respect, because they are usually not willing, or experienced in doing the things they push you to do. In some cases, the manager has never done your job. This does not necessarily disqualify the manager from the job he does, but it lacks the earned respect that one would have had they actually been on the "firing line" so to speak. I think that when one moves up the rank, they have a far greater capacity to understand the problems and needs of the subordinates that you will now be managing and leading.

Sometimes, I have used this style. It was the style that I felt I was being taught by other managers and by some of the factory management training. It is far better than Management by Intimidation, but in the long run, it also is weak. Using this style, there are those salesmen who will stay longer than some other styles, but most will not remain in a position lead by a "pusher", unless they can find a way

to learn to get around them, or at the very least not plug into their game, and at the worst, ignore them.

Pushers throw money at you all the time. They call these "spiffs", which is a slang word that means "spot cash incentives", usually small in denomination. Webster defines spiff as being well-dressed. Giving someone a spiff then, is to "dress them up or well". A spiff is given to motivate someone to do something, usually it is considered a "short-term incentive" to repay a certain directed action or activity--better known as "dangling a carrot in front of the horse".

If the manager wants a certain job done, he offers a cash reward for doing it. This creates a situation in which people will work mainly for the cash reward and will eventually in time direct their focus on that point exclusively. If there are no cash rewards being offered currently, they may not work at all until one is offered.

Not only is this costly to a company, it soon becomes expected and you will have to keep funding it, perhaps indefinitely. It is also only marginally effective. It works with some people some of the time and that is about it.

Most of the time, the rewards are for moving a certain product or a certain number of pieces or product in a certain period of time. Again, this only works with some of the people some of the time. The idea here is to offer the "hungry" ones, additional incentive to "get the food", or to "create the hunger" in the ones who don't appear hungry (or resting on their laurels, so they say). Generally, in my experience, the "hungry" ones get the food. I think a better idea is to find something that works with more of the people, more of the time. Get all of the staff to become hungry, or trying harder, thereby creating a synergy, or a group, combined effort.

Incentives are fine and can be very valuable to a company and the employee, but they must be now and then and not all the time. They also must be well thought out and most important, they must be related to each and every person on the staff. So often, the same people are winning the contests or spiffs. They are usually the top producers, normally the top 20% of the staff. If this be the case, the best thing to do is to offer the incentive only to the top producers and let them fight over it, and do something else for the rest of the staff.

Why aim a program at only 20% of your staff? The idea should be to make improvements throughout the entire staff. I've seen many of the middle people in a staff demotivated by spiffs or at the very least disinterested by them because they are designed toward the top 20% and what hopes do the

middle people have of being in the top 20%? In their minds, usually only a small hope.

When you have people compete against each other, more than likely, the same people will win again and again. If you have people compete against themselves, now you have some kind of chance of getting staff-wide improvements and a meaningful incentive to everyone concerned.

The idea for maintaining the top 20% spiff and not a truly staff-wide incentive, is that it is a common management thought that to reward the middle or bottom of the ladder is wrong. They believe it is not good management. They believe that you must lavish the rewards on the top in order to encourage the middle performers on the staff, and the bottom of the board will have to be replaced.

Reality is that everyone is valuable. Everyone can excel on an individual scale, but rewarding the top 20% is only meaningful to the top 20%. If you moved one more person into the top 20%, someone would have to fill the void left by him in the middle. To think that you could get everyone up there is most unrealistic and absurd. Besides, this seems to be a total waste of valuable time. How long can you go on replacing the bottom of the staff? You're bound to get more of the same unless something else is changed in the organization, such as training, hiring practices, incentive implementation, etc..

Let's say that you have twelve children and you expect that all twelve of them will get straight A's throughout their entire time in school? Okay. You need to go on Television. If you could bottle that, you'd be a multi-zillionaire! I'd copy it and I wouldn't have to work either! Hey, we could all use it and none of us would have to work! What did I say about sarcasm? Sorry.

Incentive Philosophy.

The best way that I have found to offer incentives, is to do it sparingly, and when it is done, to put a great deal of thought into it and make it something that will offer "incentive" to everyone on the staff equally, or as close as possible to that ideal goal. In addition, offering an incentive that is tailored to the individual returns the greatest rewards. To do this, you must research what it is that is motivating or interests each individual, but at least then you are motivating everyone instead of a few.

You have to reward a child that moves from a D to a C or from a C to a B. You cannot just reward the one who gets an A. Rewarding only the A does not motivate the C-group very

much. In this thinking, you cannot have A as being the highest possible grade. You will have to go upward from an A to A+, and then onto a AA and then AAA, then AAAA or something like that. It must be a scale with no complete top or complete bottom, or at least use a much larger scale such as the entire alphabet from A to Z. In this way, it will be more relevant to the entire staff.

In this thinking related to the car business, you have a person on the staff that sold five cars this month and one that sold fifteen. The rest of the staff was in between somewhere. If you reward only the fifteen as being the top, you are locking yourself into the thinking that fifteen is great, when in fact, it could be a C for that particular person. Perhaps, everything being equal, he could have done twenty-two. So maybe he should get a C instead of an A.

On the other side, the person who sold five cars who would normally receive a D for his performance, made substantial improvements and massive growth for his experience and time invested in the business. Based on this method of measuring performance, he probably should have received an A, not a D. If you don't reward this kind of performance, you are automatically encouraging him to stay at five cars by default. It must be based on the individual. We are all so very different.

When I was in school, some kids got an A or a B really easily, without hardly any homework or additional study efforts. They seemed to just glide through the toughest material. I, on the otherhand, did well in school, but I had to work hard at it. Relating this to the subject at hand, how well could the A student have done if they tried? How high a grade could they have achieved if the grading level did not stop at an A? Interesting. Maybe they could have been an AAAA++ student with effort, but slid through because they could do A work without trying. If we are to improve overall results, we must expand and/or change our scales of measurement.

The same thing applies to your sales staff. The salesman who sells fifteen units per month without much effort, could probably be doing twenty units with a little bit of effort. But, generally the scale of auto sales production is related to less than twenty units. Those who do more than twenty are considered extremely rare. This could be part of the reason. There is no grade for the over twenty unit group. They are in a class (pun intended) all by themselves.

The "sliding-scale". I remember in certain classes in school, the teacher used a sliding-scale grading system. In this system, the top was defined by the individual performers as a group and not some arbitrary scale of performance. If

it was a particularly hard test for example, and the smartest kid in class generated only a B, those who would have normally got a D would probably earn a C instead, because the scale was lowered by the highest grade. That system was certainly more palatable to those of us who found it difficult to get A's normally. It allowed us to do better based on the performance of the class as a whole.

Management by Pushing uses the sliding-scale. The difference is that the lower performers are not "moved up" a grade based on the top performers. They are still the bottom performers. The top performers, however, are not "moved down" a grade. They are still the top performers, it's just that the standards are lowered to accept an "A" at a different level than before. An example of this would be the salesman who sold fifteen last month. Last Month he sold fifteen units and received an A or top honors, salesman of the month, etc., and the person at the bottom who sold only five units received a D for his production. Now this month, business is "seemingly" down a bit and the top person only sells eleven units and the bottom, four units. Still, the salesman with eleven gets an A and the salesman with four units a D. The scale was lowered to accommodate the "new definition" of the A grade; however, it was not changed to allow the person with four to move up the scale at all and in comparing these two performance ratio's, the person with four may have made more improvement.

The normal A through F grading system is based on arbitrary standards; that is, standards that someone thought up somewhere along the line (subject to change, of course). The sliding-scale A through F grading system is based on the groups performance as a whole. Neither is based on the individual, yet we are all very individual in performance as well as being human beings.

This brings up the question of what is the best? The best is an individual issue. If we set up arbitrary standards, those standards can also be very limiting to those that are at the bottom, the middle and even the top. There must be enough fluctuation in a scale to accommodate individual improvements in performance. And those individual improvements cannot go unnoticed or we are doomed to the same things that we have always had--those that get A's and those that get D's, and continually trying to "push" the D's into the A category.

Management by Pushing throws a lot of money around, but gets only marginal results from the expense because of how they are using the money and who will be getting the majority of it. They focus on the top of the staff by rewarding them and the rest of the staff they push, trying to get them up there with the group they like. They hold the top performer up and make a show of him for all to see and admire and their

hope is that you will emulate him and fight him for the seat. In this, there is no win, place and show, there is only winning. And according to the standards that I have always been given about winning, there can only be one winner. Having only one winner is very limiting by definition.

Limits: Imposed and Self-Imposed.

The limits imposed by the scale itself are a problem. People also limit themselves by their thinking. We need to have less arbitrary standards of performance (creating winners and losers, for those who don't win must lose) and relate standards only to the individual. This way there can be a "win-win" situation, instead of a "win-lose".

I talked about "comfort zones" earlier in part one. A comfort zone is a limiting device. Quite often, the limits are self-imposed, but nonetheless real.

A comfort zone is like the comfort zone on your heater in your house. They say that 68-72 degrees is the comfort zone; that is, the temperature range that is commonly the most comfortable. Any temperature setting in the comfort zone is "comfortable" and any temperature "outside" the zone in either direction is "uncomfortable". Yet to some people it is 72-80 degrees, to others it may be 65-75 degrees. Someone just set up an arbitrary standard for home heating comfort and called it "the comfort zone".

As I just mentioned, we all have our "own" comfort zones, that place where we are the most comfortable. In taking this comfort zone idea and using it to explain things in our lives in general, we can talk about someone having a comfort zone of performance, or of interaction with others, or even thinking. Anything "beyond" the borders of this zone is therefore uncomfortable and generally resisted or thought to be beyond them.

Each salesperson has their own comfort zones. In order to promote growth and improvement, these comfort zone borders must be continually expanded in order to allow that which was before outside their comfort zone, to be now inside their comfort zone and therefore a part of their lives. As the borders are moved outward in both directions simultaneously, growth is achieved. This is the only way that growth is achieved. They first must be convinced either externally or internally that it is possible for them to expand their comfort zones, then growth is possible. Until then, the primary job at hand is finding a way to help them expand their own comfort zones.

Management by Intimidation will actually close the

borders of the zone; that is, it keeps them where they are or they actually cower, reduce growth or die at little. As I said, growth can only come from expanding the comfort zones and since this method or style promotes the opposite, it becomes clear that achieving growth in an organization of individuals is not forthcoming.

Management by Pushing will expand only a select few comfort zone borders in selected individuals, and closes off the others. Many become discouraged and "pull-in" their own borders. This then means that the manager must change his style to achieve better results or replace the people who's comfort zones have narrowed with fresh candidates to push. It seems clear that Management by Pushing promotes very little growth, and growth is necessary to a business.

No Style/No Leadership Management.

There are other management styles such as "No Style Management", which doesn't know what it is doing because it does something different each day. There is also "No Leadership Management", which is slow, indecisive, lacking in direction, subject to constant fluctuation, trying a constant flow of new ideas without giving any one of them a reasonable chance of success before moving on to the next, following anyone that claims to be leading. Growth is almost impossible with either of these "styles". No one knows what to do (in management), and won't allow those that do know to take charge. It's theirs and they won't let it go--even if it goes bankrupt. This is the "I'm in charge" syndrome of management. What are they in charge of? They don't really know for sure.

Nobody Does It Better...Than Me Management.

Then there is the "I can do it better than you" manager. And he proves it constantly. He does it for you. He's always disappointed. No one lives up to his expectations, because no one can do it as well or in the manner that he would like it to be done. He does not "allow" growth, because in order to grow, you have to make mistakes, and mistakes are not allowed, so growth is not allowed. If this manager got out of the way for a while, serious accomplishment could probably occur, but he can't get out of the way--he can do it better. Comfort zone borders remain the same at best under this style of management. There is no way for them to expand, since he won't let you try--and even when he does let you try, he says you did it all wrong. No growth, only stagnation.

I had a manager tell me that "No one ever has the same

feeling or intensity about anything that I do". Of course! No one else is him. He has his standards of performance and no one can equal them, because they are his. If he allowed a different set of standards to enter the picture, accomplishment could be achieved, albeit not his, but at least it would not be stagnation and apprehension. I haven't found anyone who does a thing quite the way I do, but if I were not here, life would go on without me. We're all individuals, all very different, so trying to make us all the same would be a waste of valuable time and energy.

Management By Encouragement.

A style of management that I have grabbed hold of because it promotes growth staff-wide, I will call "Management by Encouragement". I also sometimes call it "Management With Love". The phrase Management by Encouragement should be pretty self-explanatory--you manage people by encouraging them. You encourage them to be the best that they can be, not necessarily the best that is in the staff.

The best that they can be is purely an individual matter. If a person's best sales efforts are five units, then that is their best and it must be recognized as such. Perhaps they will never be salesman of the month. This is a reality that must be addressed. The key is to concentrate on what the individuals best is and finding that out.

Going back to the school grading system that I discussed regarding spiffs and incentives, you will grade your people based on their abilities, their performance related to their own efforts and improvements. If someone starts out and sells two cars the first month and then improves to three then next, that is worthy of reward. If they move then onto five and six and nine, the rewards must be lavished on them for this is the kind of progress you hopefully would like to see in each and every person on the staff.

When they occasionally fall back, you cannot discourage or belittle them. You must encourage them to keep on trying, re-new their efforts, obtain more knowledge and turn that into experience--in other words, help them. You need to pick them up, dust them off and help them to try again with knowledge accumulated and experience increased as a result of the fall. You need to constantly encourage them to do their best, whatever their best is. They probably do not know what their best is, so you as a manager must learn how to determine what their best may be and be able to impart that to them and have them learn how to accept or acknowledge that. You need to help them to expand their comfort zone borders to new limits.

Something to be a little careful of here, is in defining the term "best". It is very much an individual definition as I have said, but there can be a tendency to "judge" a person's best by your own standards. Sometimes, it is hard to "see" the best in someone. One person may do a job and get exactly the same results as another and yet we may praise the one and ignore the other. This gets into the realm of personality and how that comes off to other people to allow them to either "see" or "not see" the same performance results.

I worked for a man when I was about 17 years old. He was a hard worker and ran a little landscaping business. He was also short, only about 5' 2" tall. I was a gangly kid at 6' 3" and thin. Side by side we would have looked strange. When I took a step, the stride was about 6' and his about 3', so when I walked I did not appear to be moving very quickly, but I made a lot of ground so to speak. He on the other hand had to move twice as fast in order to maintain the same relative speed, so it appeared that he was moving further and faster when he wasn't. So, he thought I was slow and I wasn't really.

He hired a high school friend of mine (matter of fact, I got him the job) who was almost exactly the same height as my boss. The new hire and I went to work. Later in the day, the boss was just elated at the amount of work this person did and the speed at which he moved around. I did the same amount of work, but was not rewarded at all. My best and his best were "seen" differently. They were seen from the boss's eyes and the boss was short. This was the only difference. He liked the short guy's performance because he could relate to it better, I guess, but I'll never forget that episode. I learned a lot from it--mostly that I pace myself according to who's standards I am working at.

The point here is that you have to be aware of your own possibly "cloudy" vision. You have to see a person's best from their perspective as well as your own. You may think a person can do so much better and from their own perspective, they already are. This issue must be dealt with. It cannot be ignored even though your own perspective is true. So, there are other things that can cloud your sight of the best. Personality, height, attitude, many things can have an affect on your vision.

In the Management by Encouragement method, you are less concerned with performance quotas and more focused on growth. You will also be more focused on training, learning and teaching and will have little time or energy left over for pushing.

There are so many different nuances to closing sales and prospecting for sales. How can we expect that new people will pick up on the majority of these without a great deal of ongoing training and guidance and support? Each sale is different and it will require months and years of experiencing these different situations in order to be really effective on their own. They will need guidance along the way. If you are effective at giving it, they will hardly know that you gave it to them, but if it were not there, they would notice the void immediately.

Guiding a person is a lot like turning around a ship like the Queen Mary II. You have to nudge it a little and then a little more and so on. You can't just turn the wheel as in a car. And it takes a lot of room with the Queen Mary, as it will in people. It takes time and patience.

Training is much more than classroom style training. It is much more than product training. We must teach and not preach. We need to guide their movements through each sale for a while and then, we will guide them with little hints and suggestions and general support later. This is the biggest part of training I think. The rest is lectures. Lectures have their place and are necessary, but the most effective training will be the daily, ongoing support, encouragement and direction that you will give.

Your training will not even appear to be training. You will just talk with them during the day about what they are doing and how they are feeling. After each encounter with a customer, you'll just discuss it with them, see how they felt, what was said, what transpired and what to do or not do next time and why. You won't be lecturing them about it, just talking. You have to let them learn from it and the way to do that is to discuss it without them thinking you are lecturing them about it. It must appear to be their idea, lessons they learned, not what we learned.

Based on this, you will need to grade (assuming you grade at all) your people on an infinite scale or an individual scale that has no top or bottom. It is especially important to have no top. If you put a top on the scale, you are locking yourself into a maximum performance level that is arbitrary.

Because you are the manager and you are responsible for production and all owners want more production, you will want to encourage more out of every individual on the staff. To get more, they will have to expand their comfort zones and grow. In order to promote this, you will have to grade your people on a scale that is meaningful to them. You will have to pay attention to details about your people that you would miss or not consider important using other styles of management.

The top producers on the staff have to be encouraged to grow as much as the people on the bottom or the middle. Remember, this is individual study. In encouraging the top people to grow, you will need to work with them individually more than collectively. You will need to suggest things that will help them grow like keeping better records and the use of a secretary and seeing a larger picture and then guiding them nudge by nudge to the new horizon.

The bottom people will need to be encouraged in much the same way, but they will need praise at each and every little improvement level. Even if they lost a sale, they would have to be encouraged by something that they did right. Maybe their greeting had improved, or their qualification questions were better, or they handled objections with more confidence. You must find something good in every effort. They will respond to this like nothing you've ever seen. They will grow from it and as they grow will require less praise.

You have to remember how thirsty you were as a child for Mom and Dad's praise and acceptance. The new salesmen or the low past performers are dying of thirst in this department. They will respond like a plant brought back to life with food and water under the Management by Encouragement style.

You must get everyone on the staff to begin to develop new and wider-vision definitions of what is their best. You must paint them pictures in their mind. This will be an ongoing practice. Since the best is a temporary definition subject to constant change, you will continually paint an ever-widening picture of what their best (and yours as well) is and what can be done about and with it.

Now, let's say that you are coming into an organization as manager and you have learned the Management by Encouragement style and you are going to give them a new scale to grade their performance by. What happens now? First of all, it will be extremely difficult to change their thinking if they have been in the business very long or they have been doing the level they have been doing very long. Second, by implimenting this new scale, you will be setting them up for discouragement. It will take time. You will have to work with them individually for a long period of time in order to even get your style understood and accepted. Once it is, you can make some inroads into upper level performance improvements. Until then, you must exercise patience and tenacity.

In the middle and lower ranks of the staff you can make progress more quickly. Probably, they have been used to a different style of management, but you will find that they will respond very quickly to Management by Encouragement. They will eat it up. They have been hungry for it for a long time. They will be suspicious at first, but don't let that

disuade you. It will work and it will work extremely well. Believe me, I know it for a fact.

Management With Love.

I said that I also sometimes call this style, Management With Love. I've studied management principles and theories very hard. I worked toward a style that allows the word love to be used in management theory for some time. Finally, in about 1985, it became me--at least I realized it was there--it wasn't something that just suddenly appeared, but was more a gradual change in me.

When people talk about love, it is usually associated with romantic love, or family love, or love of life and such. I began to associate love with management back in the early 1980's and learned how to put that to use in the business environment. It's not hard, it's just different and some people would even say strange. But, it works like nothing else.

It came to a head one day when one of my salesmen died. His name was Bill Cimmino. Until that day, I had been slowly integrating love into my management style as if it were just a natural thing for me to do. It seemed so strange to me to segregate myself from my salesmen.

I was taught that managers should not "fraternize" with salesmen. They said that the reason for this is that you lose control of them when you do this. I could understand them losing respect for me if I were to "act off", or be childish when I socialized with them and then the next morning I cracked the whip. That makes no sense whatsoever and I can understand why they taught me to not fraternize with them under these circumstances. But, I was not in the habit of acting childish (child-like sometimes, but that is very different), or cracking the whip either, so I chose to ignore the fact that I was taught to keep my distance.

I chose instead, to treat the salesmen with respect and dignity and to treat them as friends. I enjoyed being with them in a social atmosphere, so I learned that I could not be "two-faced" and crack the whip the following morning. This has nothing whatsoever to do with working together. Cracking the whip is a whole other style of management. It's called "Management by Intimidation". Since I thought of myself as working for them instead of them working for me (the reality here is that a manager truly does work for them), this socializing or fraternizing was not a problem (although, I must add here that socializing too often can go against you. Moderation is a good buzzword to use here).

I had not yet got my style into what I would call a confident mode, but it was getting closer and I had been working out all of the little details of it for a period of time. Then one day, Bill Cimmino passed on. He was 41 years old. I was only 36 years old at the time and I think that the closeness of the age had it's affect on me as well. Needless to say, it was a shock! One day he was here and the next he was gone.

I was on vacation when he died. Matter of fact, I was "vacationing" at home, and I think because of that and what I was doing the day he died, his death had a larger impact on me than maybe it would have otherwise.

I write songs. Over the years, I've put together my own little professional recording studio. At the time of Bill's death, I was in the middle of recording parts to a song with one of my salesmen who played keyboard. The song's title was "Living for Today". The song lyrics help explain how Bill's death could affect me so strongly and so I include them here:

LIVING FOR TODAY

I've been passing up all I've got
for something I hoped to get.

I've been living in the future
and now I find that I regret.

The moments that I've searched for
have all but slipped away.

I think it's time to stop this game
and start living for today.

There are flowers in the springtime,
and summers at the beach.

There's skiing in the wintertime,
and Autumns' pretty leaves.

I missed it all 'cause I worked so hard
and they almost all slipped away.

I was so preoccupied
with what was up ahead

And missing all the beauty here
as if my eyes were dead.

The right time never came along,

it seemed to fade away,

The further that I got away
from living for today.

I took this life so seriously.
I would always pull my load.

No matter how I felt inside,
I did what I was told.

And now I think it's gone too far--
No more will slip away!

Can't wait for no tomorrows,
I'm living each new day.

Two days later, I came into the dealership for the normal weekly sales meeting in my Levi's and asked the General Manager if I could say a few words to the group. Everyone was there. I told them all that I loved them and cared about them. I mentioned some of the special qualities that some of them displayed in their personalities and how it made them more unique and special. I said that I didn't want to wait for a eulogy to say these kind of things to them and the fact that Bill died and I couldn't say it to his face was enough to bring all of this to the surface in me and there it would stay.

It was an emotional few minutes. I said what I had to say with tears in my eyes and then left. It was very hard for me to do. We're not taught to be that open with but a few really close people. After reading the song lyrics over, I decided that "I can't wait for no tomorrow's..." and had to do what I really felt inside.

Using Jim Rohn's vernacular, this was one day that turned my life around. Now I think about people being people instead of bosses and employees and other such "inhuman" words. And it has made a magical difference in not only my management style, but in the way the people on the staff respond and deal with one another. I think it allows us to do our job and work at improving ourselves and our performance, and still allows us to be "real people" and care about each other and our very individual needs, problems and desires.

Since that time some years in the past, I have lived the Management With Love and Management by Encouragement style. It is me now. I cannot imagine changing it. It works so

well and feels so comfortable and good. I can see in others how they respond to it and how I respond using it.

I can't force anyone to do anything. I can, however, encourage them. I can love them for who they are. I can respect them. I can help them and they can help me. They are not my slaves to do my bidding. They are fellow employees who have their own problems, aspirations, expectations, responsibilities and needs. They are people, not machines. They deserve more than some management styles will permit. They deserve love and encouragement.

This kind of management style will promote growth in an organization. I have proven it fully to myself. It works extremely well. People are encouraged to remain in the organization and grow with it. They are valuable and you don't throw valuable things away. When someone is "burned out" in their job, which happens from time to time, you find another place for them and hang onto them, you don't throw them away and get a new one. I have seen so many people thrown away in my travels that it angers and saddens me. How little we think of them. I've seen some of the best employees with the best attitudes and friendliest personalities just discarded because their sales were not up to the grade point average that is expected. So sad.

If you tally up all of the cost involved in hiring, training and getting an employee up to speed, and then you throw them away and start over, you'd be shocked. It is a very high cost, but, unfortunately, it is not shown as a direct cost on the financial statement or they would change their ways. Instead, the costs are rather hidden and you have to research it to determine what they are. No companies that I have been associated with have even tallied the numbers. If they did, they would be shocked.

These are just some of the challenges of management. One challenge is just having this kind of thinking. It is not really common and because of that, it is a struggle to have it to be accepted. Some day in the future, all companies that are growth-oriented will think in this way, but until then, this is kind of like pioneering--at least in my business. I'm sure there are some sales businesses where these thoughts are common, but I don't know who they are. Please write me and tell me when you find one.

So, style will be the most important thing you will decide on and develop. You will want to look at as many as possible and find one that suits you. As long as it works for you and you have a "win-win" situation going from manager to subordinate and back, it is a winner.

Transactional Analysis.

Sometime ago, I studied Transactional Analysis or T.A. for short. In T.A., a good transaction is when you can say "I'm O.K., and you're O.K.". If your management style allows this, it is probably a "win-win" style. If you say "I'm O.K. and you're not O.K., you will have marginal results and even less satisfaction for your efforts. Remember if it is "win-win", it is a sale, if it is "win-lose", it's a rip-off. The same hold true with management and it's transactions.

Also from T.A., they teach a method of understanding how our mind works and how to more effectively communicate with others. Basically, T.A., is a layman's way of understanding psychology. It's very simple and straightforward. That's why I like it so much.

They talk about the "Parent, Adult, and Child" They draw three spheres on the board and the top one is labeled Parent and the middle, the Adult and the bottom one is called the Child. They state that all three entities are inside of us interacting with each other on a constant basis. This is also a good way to relate to your "self-talk", what it is saying and why, and how to change it.

The Parent is divided into two sections, the Nurturing Parent and the Critical Parent. The Nurturing Parent cares for and nurtures. The Critical Parent scolds. Sarcasm is a function of the Critical Parent. Soothing a child's disappointment is the function of the Nurturing Parent.

The Adult is not divided. The Adult is fact oriented and lacks emotion. Math is a function of the Adult. Reason is a function of the Adult.

The Child is divided into two sections, the Natural Child and the Adapted Child. The Natural Child is playful and imaginative. Wonder and delight are a function of the Natural Child. Creativity is a function of the Natural Child. The Adapted Child throws tantrums. It wants it's way and won't listen to reason. Revenge is a function of the Adapted Child. Disobedience is a function of the Adapted Child. Sarcasm is a function of the Adapted Child.

This is the basics of T.A.. The study of T.A. is the study of how these basic "characters" interact with each other. How there can be a positive flow, or complimentary flow of information between the characters, and when there is a negative flow (a loop, or negative loop), what can be done to break that transaction and install a more beneficial one.

It is interesting study. And it relates extremely well to the business environment. If you picture three sphere's in yourself and three of the same sphere's in another person,

whether it be one of your salesmen, a customer, your boss, your wife or husband, whatever, you can then begin to see how transactions can be studied and be able then to gain benefit from their study.

As an example, if I were to yell at my Son and scold him for having messed up his room, I am "coming from" or talking from my Critical Parent, since one of the functions of the Critical Parent is scolding. Instinctively, he will almost always react from his Adapted Child. Almost all of the time, instinctively, the reaction from the message of a Critical Parent will be "from" the Adapted Child--no one likes to get yelled at or scolded from anyone and we will either rebel or we will cower and hold the feelings inside instead of letting them out and either is an operation of the Adapted Child.

Yet, you know you don't really want that kind of response, right? It is a "loop" transaction; that is, it has no end unless someone breaks the loop. Since you don't want the Adapted Child to respond, you must not "come from" the Critical Parent. It's that simple. A better place to come from in order to gain the response you want would be the Nurturing Parent or the Adult. An Adapted Child response from the Adult is not a looped transaction. It is a non-functional one. It doesn't even make sense to the Adapted Child to respond from this position to an Adult message. It happens, but it does not take on the fight that comes from a Critical Parent and Adapted Child loop.

An example of this would be a parent saying to the child that he or she would like to see their room cleaned up and these are the reasons and won't you like the way it looks better too and so on, with no scolding tone or body language. If then, as a response, the child threw a tantrum, the parent could respond again from the Adult and just repeat the same request again, ignoring the child's response. In this case, there is no loop.

In a loop such as the Critical Parent and the Adapted Child, the Critical Parent "feeds" the Adapted Child by the nature of the communication itself. In turn, the Critical Parent is "fed" by the Adapted Child's response. This then creates the "loop", feeding each other and each response just intensifies the loop until one of them breaks it. The Critical Parent, usually being the elder or more authoritarian of the two, will usually break the loop; however, in this particular loop, the transaction will continue for an indefinite time inside each of the parties involved; that is, it did not really end, though outwardly, the loop appears to have been broken. Many of us carry childhood memories of encounters such as these with us deep into adulthood.

The same thing holds true with an opposite transaction.

If your Son comes from his Adapted Child toward you as the initial communication, the natural tendency is for you to respond from your Critical Parent. When you do, you have completed the loop and it will last until broken by one of you. If, however, you respond not from your Critical Parent, but from your Adult, you will "block" the transaction and avoid the loop.

One way this relates to sales, is by being able to understand how various management styles will work or not work. You can analyze them before you even try them. This saves a good deal of frustration from ever occurring.

Consider the "Management by Intimidation" style. Where are they "coming from"? The Critical Parent, of course. What kind of reaction will this undoubtedly create in the receiver? A response from the Adapted Child, instinctively. What will this achieve? Extremely short term results and ill-will generated, eventually accumulating until the breaking point.

Consider "Management by Encouragement". Where is it coming from? The Nurturing Parent and/or the Adult. What kind of response will it generate? One from the Natural Child and/or the Adult as well. A much more positive transaction, wouldn't you agree?

Transactional Analysis is worthy of your time and energy to study. You need not become an expert at it, but gain a thorough understanding of the basics and be able to utilize that understanding in your "real" world--your reality.

T.A. is also beneficial to learn so that you can teach it to your salesmen. Can you imagine your salesmen knowing how to analyze a transaction with one of their prospects? Imagine what they could learn and how much faster they could improve by knowing how to stop a "loop" transaction and how to create a more beneficial response. They would know that when they said a certain phrase, they would most likely get a certain response. They could then look at the responses that they would like to get instead of the ones that they would not like to get and develop the proper initiating communications that would get the responses they desired. Interesting--and so time and energy saving as well.

Also included in T.A. study, is the concept of "warm fuzzies" and "cold pricklies". This is my favorite part. I like warm fuzzies. Everyone does. They are warm and fuzzy and snuggly and cozy and comfortable. Who could not love a warm fuzzy? It's a beautiful thing to feel. On the other hand, a cold prickly is ugly, cold, painful and hurting. Who

could want a cold prickly? It is what everyone doesn't want.

A warm fuzzy is when someone says "I love you", or "I care about you", or "You make me happy". It could be something so simple as "Good-Morning! How are you today?". It could be a hug or a smile or when someone just notices you and says something nice. Warm fuzzies are nice. When you give a warm fuzzy away, it is almost always received in kind and you get a warm fuzzy in return. Like a smile. Smile at someone genuinely and it is very difficult for them not to smile back at you. These are but a small sampling of warm fuzzies.

Cold pricklies are the opposite. They are cold shoulders, frowns, un-welcome attitudes, "closed" body language, scolding, yelling, put-downs, name calling, not paying attention or ignoring you, sarcastic remarks, hurting digs and a myriad of other "negative" responses, approaches and feelings. They feel bad. They are cold and ugly and no one but a true "scrooge" could like them at all.

There is a little story that goes along with the warm fuzzy and cold prickly idea. The story says that everyone was given a bag of warm fuzzies at birth. The bag was full of warm fuzzies and there were plenty to go around and everyone was encouraged to give each other warm fuzzies.

One day, after someone had given out many warm fuzzies, he peered into his bag of warm fuzzies and wondered how many warm fuzzies remained. He could not see the bottom and did not know how many there were, but he felt sure that there couldn't possibly be an unlimited supply, so instead of giving out a warm fuzzy one day, he gave out cold prickly instead. He felt that in this way, he could save his warm fuzzies for the special people and give other people some cold pricklies. In this way he would have a sufficient supply for his closest friends.

Henceforth, the word got around that there was a shortage of warm fuzzies (a crisis) and everyone should be careful who they gave their warm fuzzies to in order to insure that there would be an ample supply for those that were more important.

Of course, there was really a limitless supply of warm fuzzies available. But someone, somewhere began theorizing that there was lack, instead of abundance and created the possibility of a shortage existing and thereby creating a worldwide warm fuzzy shortage "crisis". This action brought cold pricklies into general use and they were given to each other freely, saving the feared short in supply warm fuzzies for more important encounters.

Relating this story to business, it should be clear,

that since we do indeed have a truly limitless supply of warm fuzzies available that we should give them out and discard our cold pricklies. This will improve business worldwide. It must start with us. By giving warm fuzzies instead of cold pricklies, our customers will respond in kind. It may take a while with some customers. It may take a while with some employees who deal with customers. It matters not. We just need to give them out everywhere we go, including while we are at work.

Transactional Analysis can be a real help to any manager, any salesman, any person. I recommend highly any book on the subject by Alwyn M Freed, Ph.D.. He has written a whole series of books on the subject. My personal favorite was really written for children, but is great for any age group to read. It's called "T.A. for TOTS and Other Prinzes". Also, Eric Berne, M.D., has several books out on the subject, and probably his most famous is "I'm O.K., You're O.K.".

Dressing For Success.

There has been a book out for many years called "Dress for Success". It is a great book and I highly recommend it. Beyond the book though, I recommend that you learn how to dress successfully.

I always thought that I dressed well, but found out that I didn't. One of my best salesmen did a lot to teach me more about looking my best, mostly by example. He gave me a lot of little pointers that have made a difference too. He introduced me to a wonderful store called Nordstrom's. Of course, it cost me a lot more money than before, but by paying the price and considering it important in my career, I have gained much benefit from the introduction.

I feel more successful when I look good. I think everyone does. So from that aspect alone, it is worth the cost. Also, the cost doesn't necessarily have to be exorbitant, you can look for the sales and buy only when discounts are available. That will help tremendously.

Probably the best thing that happens when you dress well and pay attention to how you look and what you wear and how you wear it, is that others will look at you differently than before. Your co-workers will, your boss will, your spouse will. Everyone will notice, whether they say anything to you or not.

Walk down a street in the financial district of any large city and look around at the people and how they are dressed. You can pick out the ones that look really sharp and the ones who don't. First impressions make a decided

difference. Lasting impressions are what you want and a strong first impression will get you closer to a lasting one.

Don't dress wild. You don't have to be on the leading edge of fashion, you just need to look your best and wear quality clothing and make sure that everything is coordinated and fits well. I don't think that you want to stand out too much, so a little more conservative is best.

I would much rather wear my old worn Levi's and a tattered shirt and tennis shoes to work and be very comfortable, but this is not the impression I want to convey, so I don't dress that way at work. I dress that way at home when I'm not going to go anywhere.

I've got a lot to learn about dressing and I've only been accumulating fine wearing apparel for three years at this writing, but I feel that I've come a long way from the stuff I used to wear and think nothing of it. I say stuff because when I see a picture of myself from a few years ago, I have to laugh. It was stuff alright.

People will take you more seriously when you look good. The boss will notice you immediately. Your image will encourage others to pay more attention to themselves too. It's amazing the differences that appear when you dress better than before.

If you know someone that dresses well, learn all you can learn from them. Try some of the books available. It will be worth any effort you put into it.

Translating Management's Vision.

I think the most important thing you will do as a manager is to pass on to your employees the vision and direction and feeling of the company's leadership. To be able to pass this vital and most important information down the ranks is one of the tasks of any manager. In this respect, a manager needs to be the company leadership. He needs to emulate the leadership and pass all of the feelings, ideas, and vision along the line.

To have the rank and file see the same vision as the owner of an enterprise is most important. If everyone sees the same vision of what is to be accomplished by the company being in business, the business will grow tenfold faster than it would otherwise.

Why is the vision important? It is everything. Everyone wants to know that what they do has meaning and gives value in return for their pay. They want to know that

what they do counts. When they know what the company wants as its purpose of being in business, they can help that objective to be achieved. Without the employees, the business is nothing. Everyone needs to be the company from this perspective.

The vision has to be clear and deliverable or presentable to the staff. They need to know exactly what is desired in the long term. They need to feel that they are part of something big and wonderful. People will put forth unbelievable efforts when they think they are part of something this valuable. When the vision is passed down in such a manner as to have them believe it as well, the company is on their way to the objective.

The employees need to know what is expected of them in the way of performance in the job function. They need to know what the parameters of it are. They need to be apprised of the gentle nuances that are also a part of doing a thing very well. The little things. The daily little things that make such a big difference.

So many times, we just expect people to have the same feeling about doing a thing as we do. This is unrealistic. We need to lay it out for them and continue to project the vision to them as time goes on. It may take a while to get the right picture across, but if we keep on keeping on, they will see the picture.

In order to have an employee feel that they are a part of the business, they need to be given periodic information regarding the business. Its little successes as well as its little failures. Both are important. It is more important to project the successes to them and let each and every employee know that their particular position on the playing field was valuable and important and helped us make the successes a reality. Everyone's job is important.

You cannot let this idea slide away from the forefront of your mind. You must pass the vision and the information and periodic progress reports on to the employees. It is critical. Sometimes we ask for their support and exceptional performance and then forget that we asked them. We must remember. They will.

Be Willing To Do What You Ask Of Others.

Thinking along the same lines as passing along the vision of the ownership and the enterprise itself, I've always thought it to be important not to ask of others, that which I am not willing or able to do myself.

One example of this is that I wouldn't ask a salesman to make "cold calls" to prospects unless I were willing or able to do the same. I'm not saying that I would be doing it, but that I was willing and able to do it. Children don't let their parents get away with this either. It takes away some of your earned respect and believability and puts you back in the Management by Pushing role.

Hey, cold calls are tough. I've done them, but I could never say that I even remotely enjoyed them. I know there must be those who do enjoy cold calls, but it's hard for me to try and force my salesmen to do this since I have direct and personal experience with it. Instead of pushing them, I'll tell them how I felt about it and what happened in my experience and encourage them to make the calls if they can find the courage and tenacity to make them, but if they can't, we'll move on to another area that they could possibly be more successful with and concentrate on that.

Get Out Of The Way.

After you have explained the job, what is involved and what expectations there are and the parameters of authority, and the vision of the organization, it's time to get out of the way and let your people do their job.

The "I can do it better..." manager cannot seem to let his people perform. He is always in there correcting and meddling with them. It is most important to allow people to find their own levels and standards after they have been instructed in the job.

In this light, you have to sometimes re-define your values of right and wrong. As I mentioned sometime back, there is only your way, my way and their way, and it is important to let people find their way. It is amazing what a person can do when they are given proper instruction and told to "go do it" and then you let them do it by leaving them alone or getting out of the way. They can and frequently do excel, but they may go about it in a completely different manner than you would have.

One very big point here is that they may even see a larger picture of the job than you see. This can be very beneficial to the organization as a whole. The original parameters of the job may have been seen by you as being much smaller in scope and when the employee is allowed to do the job, he sees a new perspectives not previously thought of.

This is often a result of creative intelligence at work. We all see with different eyes though we may be looking at

the same picture, just as in the old phrase where one sees the glass half full and the other half empty.

One key ingredient to putting this to work for you as a manager is to be careful about giving them too much information or specific direction about a task or job and in this way you allow their creative intelligence to come out and find ways of doing and looking at the job differently.

I've had managers above me that gave me too much of a definition of the job at hand and would not allow me to inject my own creativity into the task. It is sort of like being hand-cuffed to a pole--you can only go so far. The job may be being done, but only and specifically the way that the manager saw it being done. There may be a better way.

I've also had two managers that allowed me to be creative about how I would go about getting the job done. In the most recent example, an extremely basic job description was given me with a basic goal in mind. It was stated at the time that I may think about the job description and make my own suggestions based on what I saw about the goal.

This method has its pluses and minuses. The plus is that one is given a great deal of freedom in his own environment. Basically, you write your own job description and plan your own goals with theirs in mind and all the time thinking of the whole organization and how your job and/or actions affect the whole. The minus is that one must be very self-motivated in order to even do this since there is no instruction to latch on to. Another minus is that it takes a little longer to get going and there will be innumerable course corrections along the way. But, again, the benefits are that creative intelligence can be utilized and the results of this approach can be most beneficial to the organization as a whole due to the larger vision available from the use of creative intelligence.

From my perspective, I would prefer the freedom anytime. It is a great deal more work for me, but it becomes a labor of love--something that one can sink their teeth into and explore. The other way is "just a job"--nothing more, nothing less. What a difference! And this then addresses the issue of attitude and how different one person's attitude may be from another. The difference may lie in how they are either allowed to accept and grow in the challenge and freedom of a position or not. My own attitude from having seen both situations is far better in being allowed to excel than having my hands cuffed.

The freedom approach will create some problems too. There will be errors. This is a learning experience. But, growth will come from it with the right person and it will be such growth as you may not have experienced in the past. It

is exciting to watch. And, it is exciting to feel on the receiving end.

You will also need to "touch base" with your people periodically. You will give them substantially more time between contacts, but you still have to keep the lines of communication open. Rather than having structured meetings, you would do better to just "talk" with your people from time to time to see how things are going without indicating any pressure or dissatisfaction. Lately this is called "rapp". You just "rapp" about how they feel and what is going on. You also want to ask if there is anything that you can do to help them. It is important to offer assistance, but do not give it until it is asked for specifically.

You must also show that you have confidence in their ability. This is very important. If you hired them to do the job, you must demonstrate your confidence in their ability as well as your choice in the person for the job. This will insure that you are backing them up and standing behind them while they find their way.

If for some reason you feel that they are truly not going in a direction that you feel is beneficial to the organization, you will need to sit down and talk about that very tactfully. Creativity is something that is very sensitive. It can be damaged easily. It is bolstered by your confidence in the judgement of the person and your periodic encouragement through communication. Take these away and it closes off creativity. So, how you talk to them and what is said is key to keeping them on the right track.

There's an old management phrase that says that "you get what you inspect and not what you expect". So your communication should be a light inspection of progress and trying to understand the problems involved and offering assistance and support instead of dictating expectations.

You may ask them to re-convince you of what direction they are taking and why. This should not intimidate your people. They should at the very least be expected to know what they are doing and why. If they don't have a reason for what they do, this is a clue to the fact that they may need more assistance and this would be a good time to jump in for a little while and offer some direction as well as support.

If they can re-convince you that they know what they are doing and why and it seems to make sense to you, then support and a re-affirmation that they are doing fine is in order. Sometimes, because we are different and so think differently, we may "forget" that we are allowing them to be creative with their position in order to grow and benefit the organization. We may have to re-convince ourselves that they are doing just that, except in a different and perhaps unorthodox way.

You cannot just let someone go indefinitely. You must communicate and understand them and what they are doing. You can risk losing a great deal by just forgetting about them. But, all in all, I think that by allowing people to do their job and have a relatively free hand in defining and pursuing it will give you much reward.

Guilt-Trips.

This is a favorite ploy of many managers that I have worked for and been associated with. They attempt to lay guilt on you for something you did, failed to do, or could be doing. Some, I recall, layed it on thick.

Some people are more sensitive than others. This is just a fact of life. Those that are more sensitive, will react poorly to guilt-trips. They may keep it inside, but when it overflows, watch out!

Using guilt-trips is a favorite of the Management by Pushing, Sarcastic Approach, and the Management by Intimidation styles. It does not fit into the Management by Encouragement at all. Giving guilt-trips comes from having a bad attitude, or using the Transactional Analysis point of view--the Critical Parent response.

Parents have a way of using guilt. If they can make their child feel guilty, they think they are leading them into a direction that is beneficial to them. From some perspectives, this is partly true. To be made to feel guilt and shame for stealing, as an example, is reasonably positive way that guilt can be used; however, personally, I think that it is not positive, but really negative and a better way would be to utilize methods of the Adult (reason, factual judgement) in combination with the Nurturing Parent and have the child understand rather than feel guilt. Consequently, guilt has become a part of our lives and many parents utilize it greatly. In addition to this, we brought it with us into the business environment and found a use for it in dealing with people, particularly, subordinates.

Using guilt is another way of talking down to a person. You are attempting to put them down because they are not doing what you want them to do. Whether they are doing what is right or best for them is another issue entirely--they are not doing what you want them to or how you would want them to do it. In your poor attempt to correct their behavior to more closely match your expectations, you give them guilt and you may very well get short-term results from that gift, but long-term results will be the opposite. They will lose respect for you at the very least.

You will want to avoid this in order to excel in your management role. So, you must be careful about listening to what you say and how you say it, including the tone of your voice (just another method of communication), body language, and your timing.

The most common guilt-trip is when someone calls in sick. They may or may not be sick is the thinking of the manager. It may be Monday and they partied all weekend and created this "sickness" themselves. Still, laying guilt is not the best answer to someone who is cheating the rest of the staff by overloading them unnecessarily. There are more direct ways to deal with this later. But, they may very well be sick and should stay home and properly recover, so to lay guilt would only compound their sickness.

Based on my own experience, most people are basically honest, fair and willing to work. Their attitudes change from good to poor based on how they are treated, especially in situations such as calling in sick. These seemingly small communications are stored away inside them and will build up to an attitude problem that is very difficult to change back. They need compassion, not guilt.

There are many other ways that guilt-trips are given to employees. They seem to remind me of growing up and getting them from my parents. "John has twelve units out, what's your problem?", says the sales manager. You should feel guilty that you are not doing the job as well as John, is the implied meaning. "You better watch out John, Sam is catching up to you", he says, implying that you should feel guilty that you're not moving faster. These are pretty blatant guilt-trips, but many are more subtle, such as the sales meeting where the sales manager says to the group, "John is really pulling the board this month. I wish we had ten more just like him.", an implication that everyone is not doing their job fully or at least as well as John.

I think the majority of the guilt-trips that I have seen are not spoken at all. They are "non-verbal messages" meant to say something without really saying it. We've all had some of those "dirty looks" from someone. As a leader, we must be extremely careful and sensitive to what and how we are communicating to others, and I think, especially with our non-verbal messages. If we've got something to say, we should find a good way to say it and not pout about something or give anyone dirty looks. They create ill-will at best.

Beware of "Burn-Out".

There is a tendency with sales management to continually push for higher numbers. That is business. Business is

meant to grow and to grow means higher numbers. Because there is this drive for higher numbers, we can sometimes push too hard; that is, work people too much until the day comes where they are experiencing burn-out.

As in the automobile business, there are many other sales related fields that have salespeople working not only odd hours, but long hours. Some people can do this indefinitely, but most will do it for only so long and they can't do it anymore. It is important to insure that time off is taken when needed and made to be a regular part of the work week--especially when someone is working odd hours or split shifts.

One of the biggest reasons for professional people not coming into the automobile business has been the hours. A typical salesman is expected to work 8:00am to 2:00pm Monday, 2:00pm to 8:00pm on Tuesday, rotating back and forth through the week. Then they will work the weekend, perhaps 8:30am to 6:00pm, have one day off the following week and get every other or every third weekend off. The idea behind the 8:00am to 2:00pm and reverse shift is to allow each person to have the best chance possible at catching their fair share of the walk-in traffic, and the other reason is that they could utilize the balance of the day to handle their other business affairs, such as, prospecting, follow-up, training and paperwork requirements. The schedule doesn't encourage much of a life beyond work, so many professional prospects who could do very well, stay away from the business because of the strange hours required.

I'm not picking on the car business, the point is that many sales fields have unusual demands in a schedule and expectations partly as a result of it being sales, and partly the demands of specific sales field employers. It can take its toll on people after a time and if we want to keep good people, we need to make sure that they are fitting into the schedule alright and that they are getting sufficient breaks in the form of time away from the job.

Because many sales fields are commission only, there is also a tendency for people to want to work more hours, more days, to get more sales. They're motivated to earn money. Great! Something to keep in your mind as a manager is that they can create burn-out in themselves as easily as we can create it for them by our time demands. Watching for the signs of someone being tired, listless, making mistakes, attitude changes, complaints to co-workers, etc., can help avoid the loss of a good salesperson--or any employee for that matter. You may even have to force them to take time off and get away.

One way to help alleviate some burn-out is to encourage combining of business and pleasure. An example of this could

be this: One of your salesmen is a golfer and he could spend a day taking one of his prospects out for golf. He may be able to discuss some business at the same time without the pressure of the organization being in the way. Perhaps he could close a sale that would not otherwise be closed and enjoy the day away from the store at the same time. Participation in clubs and organizations such as the Elks, Rotary and others can be a real good way to combine business and pleasure, as well as add some spice to their business life.

Hiring and Firing.

As a manager, you may be required as part of your job description to hire personnel and fire them when necessary. Hiring and firing are opposite, of course, but they are so interrelated and some managers miss this fine point. They are interrelated because by hiring the right people the first time, you save yourself the negative chore of firing the ones who don't work out. It can be a time saver too.

Hiring. Boy, tell me the perfect system and I'll follow it religiously. I haven't found it yet. Sometimes I think it is just as well to have no system at all. Personally, I like to just chat with a prospective employee and get to know them. I like to ask a lot of questions that cause them to think and I evaluate not only their answers content, but I want to learn some insight into how this person thinks and in what scope they think.

I'll ask questions like, "what are your short-range business goals?", "what are your long-range business goals?", "where do you see yourself in five years, ten years?", "name some of the personal development books in your home library", "what would you choose to do, if you knew you could not fail?". These kind of questions lead a person to think about where they are and where they want to be. In my experience, few people even set goals, let alone are able to dictate them to me, so I want to find out a little about where this person is headed. Do they have a direction; that is, a path they are following? How do we fit into the path? Are they able to express themselves coherently? How much thought do they give their actions? What motivates them?

Then, I'll have them tell me about where they've worked and some of the problems they've experienced and how they were dealt with and how they felt about them. I'm looking to see what kind of pattern there may be. Are they dealing with problems or running away? How long have they been in past positions? Are they chasing money or the hot product this year? All along in the questions and answers, I'm looking

for how they respond more than with the substance of the response. In sales, you must be able to think on your feet, be flexible and creative in your thinking, and most important is the tenacity. Without tenacity, they are doomed in sales.

I think it is important to also know why they applied here. Did someone send them? Did they do any research about our company or its products? How are they dressed? Their dress is an indicator since people have a tendency to look better on an interview than in normal everyday dress. If it is shabby now, what will it be then? If they are not dressed in a business-like manner, what is their thinking about getting the position? I've interviewed some people that I swear were sent in by their Mother and told to get a job or else!

I finally hired one salesman some years ago that had done a good deal of research before he applied. He determined that our dealership was the place he wanted to start into the car business by asking a lot of people questions. He got all the information about the business that he could and did not want to work anywhere else. I have to say that I was impressed about his homework, but that he did not impress me much. It took three tries for him to get my attention (I was fairly new in the sales manager position) and hire him. He wanted to get out of the operating engineer field. He said that the machinery was beating him to death. He turned out to be the top producing salesman regularly! And I didn't even notice him the first two times. I've changed my system since then.

I've used personality tests and other tests in the hiring process, but none of them proved to be better than my own instincts. I think the bottom line is that you want someone who is interested in growing and improving in what they do. They must have basic talent, beyond that, your training and encouragement and caring for them will make the difference. Good luck!

Firing. Ugly, no fun, hate doing it. I've had to do it about six times in eighteen years, if I'm recalling correctly. Still, with that few in number compared with those that came and went on their own, six is too many. It still must be done when the situation dictates this drastic move. And, on the positive side, it can be very beneficial to both parties to fire someone. It breaks them free and maybe they were the kind of person where that is what it takes, and it clears the deck for a fresh opportunity.

I recall one firing that I almost enjoyed. I went against my own philosophy of staying away from salesmen who had a lot of experience and worked at a lot of places. I

don't remember why I went against this philosophy, but I did and hired him. Within three days, I overheard him out on the showroom floor making negative comments about the organization and/or the way it was being run to another salesman. I was furious! I called him into the office and fired him that minute. I don't need anyone that new bad-mouthing the organization--especially when they haven't been there long enough to even learn it. Best to get it done quickly and be on with business. That one could have cost me a lot if I didn't catch him so soon.

I've had to fire some that I did not want to. Some were friends. When the high command says do it and they can't be dissuaded, you have to do it, reluctantly perhaps, but it must be done. That is one of those things that you hope never come up in your career.

I give people every chance and then some. But, sometimes people just have to be shocked into action and sometimes firing is one way that becomes necessary. You cannot afford to have a progressive organization with people that are talking negative all the time. They need to try and fix it with some action instead of talk, but I've seen so many that just love to talk about it--to the rest of the salesmen on the staff. You have to correct this situation immediately. Try everything else first, but don't keep someone who has no respect or feeling for your company or product. It's the opposite of what you want.

When the time comes, do it firmly and quickly and with respect for the person. Tell them why. They may change down the road with another company and do very well, but they need to be aware of the reason. And once the decision is made, there is no backing down from it. I had one salesman cry in my office and it was very hard to hold firm, but I knew that I had to. He is a friend today and I've been introduced by him to others at a party as the manager who hired him into the car business and the manager who fired him as well. Interesting. And now he is still in the business and doing well and has been with the same organization for over ten years!

Training/Sales Meetings.

I've given and received hundreds of training and sales meetings. I still to this day after all of that practice get nervous standing up in front of a group of people--even people that I have worked with for a long time. One on one is easy and to talk to a few in a casual atmosphere is also easy, but when you have to stand up in front of the sales staff and are responsible for presenting something that is

worthy of their valuable time and energy, the nervous energy is bubbling inside.

Nervousness is something that you can use if you don't let it overcome you. I find that if I use my hands and arms in gestures, that the nervous energy is utilized in a way that doesn't show generally. You can't worry. You must have confidence and demonstrate that and the way to demonstrate confidence is to be prepared.

In order to be prepared, you will need to spend some time with the subject that you will talk about. I suggest also that you make a basic outline to follow. This will help you to stay on track. I have a tendency to think of things at the podium and inject them into the talk at the wrong time and throw everything out of context. When I have an outline, I can stay on track. When you are prepared and know what you are going to say and do and how, you will have confidence.

Another thing that is very important about meetings is to have something important to say. I've been to so many meetings where I felt that it was a total waste of my time and energy to attend. You don't want your audience to feel that way. You want them to go away from the meeting changed. That may mean that they are enthused, enlightened, wiser, more knowledgeable, better skilled, or in some other way changed. So, as you prepare for the meeting, keep these thoughts in mind and they will help you to offer something valuable.

Breaks. So many meetings are too long. In order to present the material, it may have to be long, but, if you allow short stretching breaks, it will allow your audience to absorb and even tolerate the material and presentation. Of all the possible faults of meetings that I have attended, this is the largest. Just having everyone stop for a moment and stand up and stretch and maybe move around the room for even as short a time as two minutes can really help your meeting presentation.

There is also a tendency to talk about things that should be discussed with individuals and not a group. If you are talking to a group, it is a good idea to discuss only those things that would be appropriate to discuss with the group. Have individual meetings for the rest.

On the subject of individual meetings, I have found these to be the most productive of all. We are all different and in order to make progress with people in a sales organization, I think meeting individually is more meaningful to them. You can discuss the subject as it relates to them and not a group. They will in turn get more substance from the subject at hand and be better able to put it to use.

One last thing about meetings. Try to have as few as possible. I don't think anyone really likes meetings much. The fewer the better. Make the ones you do have really meaningful and if you don't have something important to say this week, cancel the meeting until next week.

Paperwork.

You thought you had paperwork as a salesman, watch out for the avalanche! Now you've got reports and charts and graphs and more reports. This is just part of the job. The boss has to know what is going on and in order to know that, the report is needed.

I used to try to avoid reports, or at least put them off until the last minute. I learned that a good report is beneficial to me as much as it is to the boss. I need to know what I'm doing and that is part of the reason. The other reason is that you will be able to get the things more readily that you need from the boss to do a better job. When they see what you are doing and you can report your progress, philosophy and procedures, asking for the help you need will be so much easier and you will be more likely to get the help, tools, money you need to achieve the objectives.

I've learned a lot about how to make a report too. If you make it as professional as you possibly can, you will be much better off than just throwing it together. You may even put it in a binder of some kind and perhaps include some graphs. Graphs are great because we see pictures easier than we see words. Graphs jump out at you and get your attention. They also tell the story in a much more easily understood and exciting way. There are many different types of graphs and I don't think it matters which you use so much, as long as it conveys the picture the way you want it and it can be easily understood, it will work fine.

Vision. If you have a vision of what you are doing, that needs to be conveyed to the boss. One way to do this is with your regular reports. So, making your report complete and meaningful will help to get your vision across.

The key to reports is that since they are necessary, do them and if you do them at all, do them as well as you can. Having access to a computer and the graphics abilities of it can really be a help to you, but even without it, you need to make your reports professional.

Remember Who's Boss.

There is a tendency when you are a professional and working to increase your skills, knowledge and experience, to forget that you are working for someone else. Periodically, I look outside at the big sign of the name of the company. If it doesn't say Minion Motors, I can then remember who the boss is.

I think we all get caught up in what we are doing from time to time and it is easy to think of how you would be doing it if you owned the business and then acting as if you did. You must treat it as if you are in business for yourself in order to be a real professional, and so there is a tendency to carry that too far sometimes. So, it's a good idea to refresh your memory from time to time and look out the window at the sign and relate your thinking to what the boss wants and expects. If you don't, arrogance can creep in on you and soon you will be approaching a new boss to try and remember.

Accumulation. It's The Journey.

As time progresses in your management experience and knowledge, hopefully, you will allow this to accumulate. Just as in sales, little successes become larger successes like a snowball rolling down the hill. The snowball will only grow as it accumulates fresh snow in front of its path and if it is still moving forward. If you run out of fresh snow, the accumulation stops and the snowball cannot grow and will even begin to melt away. So it is with you. You must keep learning and accumulating fresh ideas, knowledge, skill, and by putting these to work, gain additional experience.

The word accumulation indicates continuous movement and gathering, adding more to what is already there. As in the snowball comparison, the snowball will continue to grow as long as it is moving and it has fresh snow in front of its path. This means that it has no final destination, but only a journey. So it is in your career. If you think that you will reach a destination where the work is finally done, you cannot continue to accumulate because you will have stopped movement and run out of snow. There is only the journey, when you stop, it's over.

I've given this concept a great deal of thought in the last few years. When we are young, we are taught about destinations, not journeys. The destination of finally going to school, then finally getting out of school, moving out on our own, getting the job, having a family, retiring, death.

The part that is missing is the journey. When these destinations that we were taught are achieved, there is at best, a temporary lull in movement and then you realize that it is not a destination at all. We thought it would be great, but it was really empty feeling instead. Have you ever felt that way?

As you look out across the land, you see the horizon. From our training, we see that as a destination. Now travel forward a mile and look again. The destination appears the same, but it is not the destination that we saw a mile before. As we move another mile, the same thing will occur. What happened to the mile we just traveled? Did we pay attention to it? What did it feel like? What was the experience? Are we even aware of the travel or movement?

So many times in my career, I've looked so hard at the destination (goals, objectives, desires) that I missed the journey. And it is the journey that we must learn to experience and get our rewards from, not the destinations. In some circles, they call this "now" thinking, or "living in the now". It's like the song lyrics several pages earlier where it says "...I was so preoccupied with what was up ahead and missing all the beauty here as if my eyes were dead...". Missing the journey by getting to the destination can make reaching the destination a large disappointment. Learning to "smell the roses along the way" can make the destination less important and the journey meaningful and enjoyable.

Pictures help recall and re-experience the journey. This must be one big reason for taking them at all. Another thing that has helped me is to just sit down from time to time and review the journey. Jim Rohn included this idea in one of his talks on tape. He calls it "running the tapes again". He suggests that at the end of the day, to run the tapes of the day--review it, feel it again, and learn from it--re-experience it. Then at the end of the week, run the week tapes and at the end of the month and the end of the year. In this way, we can more readily absorb the actual experience of our journey and focus less on the destination and thereby enjoy our journey more and learn more from it.

Keeping a journal is one good way too. Anytime you choose, you can look back into the past and re-experience parts of the journey you've been on. If you record some of your feelings as well as factual data, those moments will come back to life vividly. A journal becomes like a diary, telling a story of your travels and experiences along the way. It's a good way to "capture the moments". They need to be captured, savored, slowly digested.

There was a T.V. show when I was young called "Route 66" about two young men in a Corvette travelling across America meeting with and experiencing something new and different in

each episode. As I recall, they had no particular destination. It is kind of a fantasy of many to just travel and experience and not be concerned about any particular destination--I've fantasized about it many times. They were living moment to moment and each moment brought some new adventure in a new place to experience, taste and accumulate. They were just off on a great journey and the journey was all there was. It was a very good show.

How is this important? By learning to enjoy the journey and the experiences along the way, you will really enjoy coming to work. Each day will be a new experience to accumulate and add to your journey. You will be less concerned or worried about reaching a destination and thereby more interested in your daily efforts and your daily efforts accumulated will lead you to success. Success is then not a destination, but a journey and learning this alone can add more meaning to your career. You can then smell and taste each small success (experience) and savor the beauty along the way. You may have a destination in mind, but it will not consume you, instead, you will be able to taste each bite (each movement forward), save the memory of the experience. You will realize that the horizon is moving as you move and it is impossible to catch it, so as you travel toward it, look down periodically and experience where you are now.

This train of thought will change your life if you've been like me and always focusing on the goal without experiencing fully, the travel toward its attainment. You will have a fresh new appreciation for what you do every day. Your whole career may then be seen in a different light--the light of day. It's a way of not taking things too seriously and at the same time being interested in achieving more, because by experiencing the moments in your travels, you will have learned to enjoy the trip. I think that this is the place that one gets to when you're ambitious and yet content.

The Rest Of The Story.

So, you want to be a manager... I've told you some of my story and some of the things I've learned. The rest of the story is yours. You write it. Take charge. Be good at it. Learn everything you can learn. Experience everything you can experience. Enjoy your journey. You'll be great!

APPENDIX

SUGGESTED READING & LISTENING

So many books and tapes have had their influence on my career and my thinking about sales. Here is a partial list of what I consider some of the best available:

BOOKS

How I Raised Myself From Failure To Success In Selling, by Frank Bettger, Prentice-Hall

(This book helped me so much that I have bought and given away over 25 copies of it over the years. It may still be available directly from the publisher (Prentice-Hall, New Jersey) or from a bookstore. It should be available in Public Libraries.)

How To Win Friends And Influence People, by Dale Carnegie,

Swim With The Sharks Without Being Eaten Alive, by Harvey MacKay, 1988, William Morrow & Company.

Your Erroneous Zones, by Dr. Wayne Dyer,

Management: Tasks, Responsibilities, Practices, by Peter F. Drucker, 1973, Harper and Row Publishers.

Thriving On Chaos, by Tom Peters, 1987, Alfred A. Knoph

The Best Seller. The New Psychology of Selling and Persuading People, by Ron Willingham, 1984, Prentice-Hall, Inc.

Being The Best, by Denis Waitley, 1987, Oliver Nelson, a division of Thomas Nelson Publishers.

I Can See You Naked. A Fearless Guide to Making Great Presentations, by Ron Hoff, 1988, Andrews & McMeel.

A Passion For Excellence, the Leadership Difference, by Tom Peters and Nancy Austin, 1985, Random House.

The Managers Motivation Desk Book, by Thomas L. Quick, 1985, John Wiley & Sons.

Executive Success. Making it in Management, by the Harvard Business Review, 1983, John Wiley & Sons.

The Entrepreneur's Manual, by Richard M. White, Jr., 1977, Chilton Book Company.

In Search of Excellence. Lessons from America's Best Run Companies, by Thomas J. Peters and Robert H. Waterman, Jr., 1982, Warner Books, A Warner Communications Company.

Acres of Diamonds, by Russell H. Conwell, 1905, Harper & Row Publishers.

The Seasons of Life, by E. James Rohn, 1981, Discovery Publications.

The Effective Executive, by Peter F. Drucker, 1966, Harper & Row Publishers.

No Nonsense Management. A General Manager's Primer, by Richard S. Sloma, 1977, McMillan Publishing Company, Inc.

I Hate To See A Manager Cry, by Martin R. Smith, 1964, Addison-Wesley Publishing Company.

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Books.

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Passages. Predictable Crises of Adult Life, by Gail Sheehy, 1976, Bantam Books. Originally published by E.P. Dutton.

Illusions. The Adventures of a Reluctant Messiah, by Richard Bach, 1977, Dell Publishing Company, Inc.

T. A. For Teens and Other Important People, by Alvin M. Freed, Ph.D., 1976, Jalmar Press, Inc.

T. A. For Tots and Other Prinzes, by Alvin M. Freed, Ph.D., 1973, Jalmar Press, Inc.

PERIODICALS

Insight, a monthly publication available from Nightengale-Conant Corporation.

Success, a monthly magazine founded by W. Clement Stone, published by Lang Communications.

Sales & Marketing Management, a monthly publication. A Bill Publication, New York.

I also recommend that you subscribe to a minimum of two periodicals that relate to your specific field of sales. As an example, for the automobile business, you might subscribe to Car and Driver, Automobile, Motor Trend, and such. You may be surprised to find how many kinds of magazines and periodicals are available.

TAPES

Cassette and Video tapes are available from a number of different sources. I highly recommend Nightengale-Conant Corporation for a wide selection of valuable tapes. You can call them and get on their mailing list and they will send you catalogs displaying their fine selections of motivational and sales related tapes.

There are many other sources of tapes, some direct from the person being recorded, as well as other companies like the Nightengale-Conant Corporation who gather tapes from various sources. The American Management Association is one good other source. Listed below are some of my favorites, many that I have listened to over and over again.

The Strangest Secret (for succeeding in the world today), by Earl Nightengale, Nightengale-Conant Corporation.

The Inner Winner, by Denis E. Waitley, Nightengale-Conant Corporation.

See You At The Top, by Zig Ziglar, Nightengale-Conant Corporation (and other sources).

Transformation, by Dr. Wayne Dyer, Nightengale-Conant Corporation.

The Psychology of Selling, by Brian Tracy, Nightengale-Conant Corporation (and other sources).

Success Strategies. Seven Keys to Wealth and Happiness, by Jim Rohn, Nightengale-Conant Corporation.

The Psychology of High Self-Esteem. A Life Changing Program for Personal Growth, by Nathaniel Branden, P.h. D.

Managers Edge. Communication. Managing People. Time Management. An ongoing (subscription) publication from Managers Edge Corporation.

Executive Classics Series, An ongoing publication (books on tape) from Managers Edge Corporation, Box 1347, Englewood, Colorado, 80150. 1-800-334-5771.

(I highly recommend the Executive Classics Series from Managers Edge. These are a wide variety of business-related books on cassette tape. This is a real easy way to get some more "reading" done. I especially like the biography series. By the way, you don't have to take them one month at a time. I like to go at my own speed and so order many all at once.)