

Unstoppable Selling offers a blueprint for sales success

BY LAWRENCE PAPOFF

The road to sales success starts with knowing what to focus on. Sales do not come from technology.

"Too many sales people ignore these nuggets of advice," says sales trainer Duane Marino.

They peck away constantly at their computer keyboards as if doing that will sell cars. It will not, Marino insists. "There are so many distractions in the dealership. There is this system and that system. Sales people become so knowledgeable about technology, they forget the most important aspects of selling."

Those aspects are contained in what Marino calls the "six sales powers."

To spread the word, Marino authored *Unstoppable Selling* available on Amazon.

The first power is the power of customer service.

"Do things for your customer, not to them. Be of service to your customer," he says.

Examples include taking a car to the customer if they cannot make it into the dealership and making sure they can turn to the salesperson with any problem they have after they bought a car.

"Be their first point of contact in the dealership. People buy again from people who give a damn!" he says.

He hammers home these points: there is no computer or software needed: salespeople have to discipline themselves to provide "extreme levels" of customer service.

The Internet may have made the car the star, but the salesperson's attention to the customer is what is going to close more sales, he says.

The second power is the power of communication. Marino advises the sales person to



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study the customer's way of communicating. If they are polite, be polite. If they are easy-going, be easy-going.

"Mirror their language and their body language," he says. "But do not slouch," he warns.

The third power is the power of relationships. The salesperson must build relationships both inside and outside of the dealership.

The fourth power is the power of time.

"We spend a lot of time at our computers," he says. "The key is to spend your money hours focusing on the above. The moment you stop doing these things, your productivity drops."

The fifth is the power of understanding body language. The sales person must understand their own body language as well as the customer's.

Finally, the sixth power is the power of the state of mind.

"Whoever said 'attitude is everything' made an understatement.

Your state of mind drives every other power," says Marino.

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FROM THE CORNER OFFICE

Streamlining systems, operations to produce better results

BY IAN REILLY

With the Canadian market holding strong, the automobile retailers I talk to are focused on improving operational effectiveness and transforming the customer experience to gain the best competitive advantage.

I highlighted one dealer group with that focus in this publication's June edition. That group's leadership team mapped out, department by department, the entire customer journey with the dealership. They identified all of the interactions between the dealership and its customers.

They also pinpointed a number of obstacles keeping customers from an optimal experience and the dealership from optimal effectiveness. And then they set about looking for areas where they could change how work gets done in the dealership to remove those obstacles and improve the customer experience with their stores.

One of the "Aha!" moments they had was to see the number of third-party systems plugged into the DMS. They also began to see the limitations of those systems and how those limitations impacted their results.

Many dealerships use software that plugs into the DMS to manage a specific, narrow dealership process



Ian Reilly and those tools often handle that process well.

Yet, many dealers also tell me about the concerns they have with these tools. The most common complaint is a lack of complete integration with the DMS.

The first problem a lack of integration can cause is that dealership employees may have to re-key data into the DMS to complete the transaction.

Secondly, the lack of integration with the DMS can hamper management's ability to gather critical decision-making information all in one spot.

As an alternative, when applications are built to work together and are wholly integrated with the DMS, dealership data is available seamlessly across each application. The dealership is able to operate on a complete retail management platform.

The result for dealers can be streamlined processes, greater efficiencies, and more robust and accurate reporting that can help managers make better business decisions.

For customers, it can mean fewer obstacles, helping create a smoother transaction and a better experience with the dealership.

If your management team has not already tried mapping your customer journey with your dealership, I encourage you to do so.

Look closely at all of your process steps, including the systems and software you use every day. I think you will find a number of ways to streamline your dealership operations, improve your overall business effectiveness, and create a more rewarding experience for your customers.

Ian Reilly is the vice-president of sales for Reynolds and Reynolds (Canada) Ltd.