

Marching Orders

By Mark A. Walsh

Recently I have received a plethora of phone calls, a litany of letters and an avalanche of emails enquiring what constitutes an effective job description for a sales consultant.

A job description should clearly state the expectations of the job. Period!

The most important consideration in the construction of a job description is *practicality*. Once its passed the practicality test, next step is to translate it into marching orders. In other words - clearly define expectations. Without clearly defined expectations you don't stand a chance of developing any degree of accountability.

There should never be any discrepancies between the job description document, the training the individual receives and the imperatives to which accountability is applied. The key word here is congruent.

Succinctly a sales consultant's function can be summarized as *find a friend – find a car – find a commitment – find a manager*.

I'll explain how it works:

1. Find a Friend

Ever wondered why 'new hires' are successful the world over? They don't have any bad habits. He or she walks up to the buyer, introduces themselves with the enthusiasm of a one eyed cat in a seafood store and makes friends with the buyer. After about a month, they start making friends with the other salespeople and it all goes downhill from there, however, that's another story for a different day. Seriously, this is critical.

Reason: If a sales consultant doesn't make friends with the buyer, they don't stand a snow flakes chance in hell of even getting to first base – let alone hitting a home run.

The best way to test at least some rapport has been built is to ask the sales consultant the buyers name before he or she goes out on a demo. If he or she can't tell you, the cart is being put before the horse.

One thing I've learned is the numbers don't lie! According to industry statistics, 71% of buyers when they were surveyed after the sale, said they bought their vehicle where they did because they liked, trusted and felt comfortable with the sales consultant.

2. Find a Car

Many of us have cut our teeth on the hideous term 'qualify' and most managers still use the word with almost reckless abandon.

According to the Oxford Dictionary, qualify means: *"meet the necessary standard or conditions to be entitled to or eligible for something"*.

Getting a buyer married up with a specific vehicle that will satisfy their needs and budget has absolutely nothing to do with qualifying and everything to do with **investigation**. Asking the right open ended questions to establish the buyers **FORM** – *Family, Occupation, Recreation and Motivation* – for buying the vehicle. Once the sales consultant can tell you the buyers name, the names of immediate family members that use the vehicle, what the buyer does for a living, as well as how the vehicle will be used recreationally, both

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"Making a World of Difference"

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of you will be a million miles closer to matching the buyer with the right vehicle and closing the sale on the spot without prostituting the price.

3. Find a Commitment

Too many *experienced* sales consultants and managers have become desensitized to what drives any human being to purchase any product – *what will it do for me when I own it?*

We as an industry have become so pre-occupied with price and we think price drives the sale that we have almost forgotten who drives the car.

Finding a commitment means - will the vehicle meet the buyers functional requirements and does he or she like the vehicle enough to own it.

I've heard it said, selling is the second oldest profession. Since the time when Moses had the measles for there to be a sale there needs to be two ingredients - a buyer and a seller.

Hence your sales consultant can be a walking wealth of product knowledge however, if the person he or she is speaking with isn't buying, there won't be a sale. In other words, what on earth is the point in even discussing final figures and becoming engaged in a price negotiation if there isn't a commitment to own the vehicle.

4. Find a manager

The old cliché "*Nobody walks until the boss talks*" has more currency than ever.

If you don't require that **you** meet every single solitary buyer that sets foot in the place – regardless of whether they have purchased a vehicle or not as a condition of

employment – you're kidding yourself.

While we are on the subject of 'practical' job descriptions, a sales manager's job function is to do precisely that: manage sales – *not administer them.*

During our onsite DNA (Dealership Needs Analysis) process we look at how the sales manager operates. Most underperforming stores have a sales manager that leads from their rear in the office. He or she is great at rolling out instructions, but not so good at rolling up their sleeves and getting directly involved with buyers.

So take my tip and get off your seat and on your feet and involved in real play – not just role play and watch sales soar.

There you have it, a functional and practical job description for your sales consultants and a tip or two for you. I guess you could call it ***marching orders.***