

# Engineering News



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## TWO PAPERS ON SELLING

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### WHAT IS A SALESMAN?

Selling may be simply stated as: The act of moving a thought, an idea, or a product from the source of origin to the point of consumption.

There are many facets to the art of selling, and there are even more types of salesmen. The salesmen whom we will discuss in this paper is the sound salesman; a salesman of sound.

It has been said by many in the sound industry that a sound salesman is a special "breed of cat" and an almost impossible person to find. There may be some merit in this belief but, fundamentally, it is not true. Any salesman who is properly trained... a salesman with average intelligence... can become a good sound salesman. But he must be properly trained.

As the sound contractor, you have the task of doing this training job, and your job is never finished... you must continually work with your men.

Let us review some of the many tasks which befall you as the sound engineer and sound contractor when you start "head hunting". The search for the salesman is only the beginning.

Possibly the overall size of your company is one of the most determining factors of whether you are facing the problem of filling a void in your organizational personnel, or if your task is one of manpower development. In either case, sooner or later manpower development will be upon you; therefore, it is worthy of deep consideration.

Every man in your organization has been an expense to you during his learning and orientation period. On the surface it may seem impossible for a small organization to attempt manpower development, but in reality a small organization is almost continually performing this function during the course of daily business.

In a small organization the lines of job demarcation are not drawn closely. It is not unknown — in the sound business — for an engineer to double in brass as a salesman or for a salesman to be a part-time draftsman. Of course, the sound contractor himself may be called upon to fill every conceivable job description within the contracting organization.

It is to your benefit that each member of your group is capable of performing over, above and beyond his individual basic scope of activity. Should an unexpected vacancy occur, you will have someone to perform the duties of the position vacated... at least on a temporary basis.

Practice manpower development by determining the full capabilities of each employee, then develop those capabilities to the maximum. Here, however, is a word of caution: Do not allow yourself to spread each man's activities so thinly that he is unable to do justice to any one particular function.

One of the important returns from manpower development is that you may promote from within as the occasion requires. Remember, promotion within your own organization... the opportunity for each man to improve himself... is one of the greatest motivating forces that an employee can have.

That will suffice for manpower development for the moment. Now let us hold ourselves to a discussion concerning the filling of a void in your organizational personnel.

Your first decision must be to determine if your company requires the services of additional sales personnel. Next, you must set down the facts and figures regarding how much you can justifiably expend for this service. Then you begin your search for a man of the caliber you can afford to engage.

One of the most important decisions which you must now make is the establishment of the guidelines you will follow in selecting the man who will be your representative; the man who will be your image.

A planned interview with the various applicants is of utmost importance, and you should establish a predetermined list of questions so that you may compile comparative facts on each applicant.

The planned interview is not just a matter of handing an applicant the application for employment. It is an interview where you ask the questions and record the applicant's answers for your evaluation at a later time.

Among the many things you will want to determine are:

The applicant's —

1. business experience (last or present position),
2. next to last position,
3. second from last position,
4. other positions,
5. sales experience,
6. education,
7. family life (former),
8. present domestic situation,
9. present financial condition,
10. the applicant's personal evaluation,
11. health, and
12. miscellany.

In each of these categories many informative questions may be developed. From the applicant's answers to items 1, 2, 3, and 4 above you will want to determine:

- (1) the name of the applicant's previous employers,
- (2) how he obtained the positions,
- (3) the nature of his duties at start and at leaving,
- (4) his earnings at start and at leaving, and how they were figured,
- (5) promotions, increases, and other forms of recognition he received,
- (6) the working conditions,
- (7) the applicant's likes concerning the job,
- (8) his dislikes concerning the job,
- (9) how his work was planned and supervised,
- (10) how he went about organizing his work,
- (11) how friendly he was with other employees,
- (12) if his fellow workers were the type of people he would like to build a permanent association with,
- (13) what made him decide to leave the job,
- (14) how he happened to leave his former position and take another job, and so forth.

The importance of these questions is in the answers you receive. A comparison between applicants will give you a good insight into each applicant's stability. Certainly you do not want an employee who

changes his job like most men change shirts.

Item 5 is of value only if the applicant has had previous sales experience. If so, you will want to obtain his reactions to such questions as these:

- What did you like about the sales work you have done?
- What did you dislike about it?
- What kind of selling do you prefer and why?
- How do you go about making a sale?
- What did you find was the most effective way of increasing your sales?
- What experience of a merchandising nature did you have?

This section of the interview should provide a full background on the applicant's sales experience and should determine if he will be of value to your organization.

Item 6 deals with education and is self-explanatory, but it is essential for evaluating the applicant and his ability.

Items 7 and 8 are for background. Complete information should be obtained in order to determine the moral and domestic issues. You will want to know about the applicant's home life, whether or not he is living with and supporting his family, and if domestic situations may be involved which might hamper his ability to serve you.

Item 9 should be developed fully because financial integrity is one of the most important qualities of a good salesman. You will want to satisfy yourself that the applicant is not continually in debt and that he does understand the value of money. If he does not, he will not give proper thought to the need of profit nor will he guard against loss.

Item 10, the applicant's evaluation of himself, should be given careful consideration to guard you against the hiring of a super-egoist who would not enhance your company's relationships with the public.

Item 11 is for your protection. It assures you that your salesman can and will be on the job performing his duties of selling and will not spend his time away from the job for health reasons.

Item 12 is basically general or miscellaneous in nature, but here you will want to determine, for example, if the applicant owns an automobile and, if so, the year, type, and condition, and whether or not it will be available for use in your business.

After you have obtained the answers to these many questions — and do not hesitate to develop 50 or 60 questions — then your task of evaluating the applicants begins. You want to select the best applicant to represent you and to sell your products and services.

There are many specific characteristics which the personal interview will reveal. Most assuredly, the man you choose should have characteristics which are on the positive side of the ledger.

Should it develop that there are many negative reactions, then you had better look to another applicant. There are a number of "red flag" characteristics to watch for while screening candidates for your sales job. Remember these "red flag" characteristics; they are of the utmost importance!

Be wary if the applicant . . .

- . . . has large mortgages on his car, house, furniture, clothing, etc., or if he borrows from small loan agencies,
- . . . has been sued or has had his wages garnisheed in the past,
- . . . buys expensive items he can't afford,
- . . . has had cars or furniture repossessed,
- . . . has held executive jobs previously,
- . . . has a history which shows declining income,
- . . . is too eager to obtain the job without adequate investigation,
- . . . tries to disguise his age,
- . . . has had too many jobs and has not stayed with any one of them for an extended period of time,
- . . . is willing to give you a "trial",
- . . . says he is "in" with the right people,
- . . . makes it impossible for you to lead the interview,
- . . . backs up when questioned about his statements,
- . . . says the last company let him go because of budget (losing money),
- . . . immediately wants to know the "top" he can make from the territory,
- . . . wants assurance that he will receive regular promotions,
- . . . has a bad conduct discharge on his record,
- . . . cuts you off when you ask personal questions,
- . . . is vague about the reasons for leaving his last job,
- . . . is active in local politics, but seems to have no civic pride,
- . . . asks if you are questioning his integrity,
- . . . is particularly anxious to know the number of nights and weekends he will be expected to be on the road,
- . . . seems to visit doctors too frequently,
- . . . has difficulty filling in gaps in his past history,

- . . . seems reluctant to arrange a meeting with his wife for you,
- . . . has more interest in "fringe benefits" than in the job,
- . . . has more interest in the immediate returns than in the future potential,
- . . . has had to give up his initial goal in life because of family or money.

The salesman you will want to add to your organization should have twelve fundamental characteristics which will identify him as a man of "simple moguls". These characteristics are:

- S—stability
  - I—interest, intelligence, imagination, industriousness
- M—mentality
  - P—perseverance, poise
  - L—loyalty, likeability
  - E—experience, enterprise, efficiency, enthusiasm
- M—mentality
  - O—objectiveness
- G—gawp (getting along with people)
- U—understanding
  - L—leadership
- S—self-reliance

There are four types of salesmen which you probably would not want even though two of these types might ultimately become valuable to your organization.

1. The man who knows he know he knows.
2. The man who knows but doesn't know he knows.
3. The man who doesn't know but doesn't know he doesn't know.
4. The man who doesn't know and knows he doesn't know, but doesn't care.

Number 4 just cannot be trained. Number 1 will not take training. Numbers 2 and 3, however, are trainable.

At this point we will assume that you have been successful in securing a new salesman. Now the training begins and only you can perform this function.

Your business has been a successful venture and it has been so because of you. Therefore, let your new salesman model his actions after you. You should mold him in your own image.

Make certain that he is armed and fortified when he goes out to make sales calls. Just don't hand him an order book and a catalog, wish him "Godspeed", and then expect results. It is your job to teach him the Do's and Don't's. Teach him the line of products he is to sell. Teach him to see the problems — not through his own eyes — but through the eyes of "Joe Buyer". This fundamental ability is the mark of a good salesman. Teach him by having him work with your installation crews. Let him answer the telephone and thereby learn the interworkings of your office. Teach him not to be price shy because quality costs money and it is more fun selling quality than price . . . also, it is more rewarding.

Any man with selling tendencies can sell better if his arsenal of information is filled to overflowing.

Recently 3000 individual buyers were surveyed for their reactions to salesmen. Results of that survey disclosed seven basic complaints, all of which your salesman should avoid. Buyers complained that the salesman

- (1) did not know his product,
- (2) did not make complete presentations,
- (3) did not demonstrate or use visuals,
- (4) did not prove his claims,
- (5) did not know when to stop talking,
- (6) did not sell with conviction or enthusiasm, and
- (7) did not show interest in the buyer's opinion.

The fifth complaint probably has been responsible for more lost orders than any other factor. Too many salesmen have talked themselves into an order, then, instead of getting the signature, they have continued to talk and have talked themselves right out of the order.

A good salesman will:

- (1) waste little or no time,
- (2) spend more time selling,
- (3) make more attempts to sell,
- (4) give more reasons to buy, and
- (5) control the interview.

Furthermore, it is extremely important that you teach your salesmen to budget their time, to plan ahead, to make appointments, and to keep them. Every salesman has a "time bank" which may be described as the daily time average spent in sales effort — time in contact with a customer — time in control of the interview.

The average time bank for a salesman who budgets his time will look something like this:

**DAILY TIME BANK**  
(elapsed daily time—9 hours)  
Not In Contact With Customer

8:30 AM—Leave Office  
Travel ..... 2 hours

Reception Room Waiting .....	½ hour
Administration (office work, call reports) .....	½ hour
Lunch .....	1 hour

**In Contact With Customer**

In Conference With Buyer (I. C. Time) .....	3 hours
Interruptions (buyer's phone, visitors) .....	½ hour
Answer Complaints .....	½ hour
Cold Canvass Calls and Planning .....	1 hour

This shows 3 hours of actual I.C. time (in-contact/selling time) during which a good salesman maintains control of the interview.

Unfortunately, many salesmen have not found a way (or may not have even tried) to budget their time. Their time bank will look more like this:

**DAILY TIME BANK**  
elapsed daily time—9 hours)  
**Not In Contact With Customer**

Travel .....	3 hours
Reception Room Waiting (due to lack of appointments) .....	1½ hours
Administrative (office work) .....	0 hours
Personal Shopping .....	1 hour
Lunch .....	1½ hours
	7 hours

**In Contact With Customer**

In Conference With Buyer On Sale .....	1 hour
Interruptions (buyer's phone, visitors) .....	½ hour
Answer Complaints .....	½ hour
Cold Canvass Calls And Planning .....	0 hours

This immediately suggests a very high cost of sales. This salesman is spending his time in non-productive effort. The N.I.C. time (not-in-contact with buyer) never should exceed five hours. If and when it does, a cold, hard look must be taken at the salesman's activities.

One of the biggest hurdles a sound salesman has to overcome is the fact that he often is strapped with such extra duties as job layouts, delivery of materials to the job site, and helping the installers. Remember, when he is doing these things, he is not out selling. These functions do not provide I. C. time.

Once again let us consider the time bank. There are 240 working days in the year. Assuming that the salesman is responsible for sales amounting to \$240,000 annually, only 1 hour of I.C. time daily establishes the expense value of that hour as \$1000 per-working-day.

The good salesman who arranges and plans his time (by making appointments, knowing his products, and so on) may extract 3 hours of I. C. time daily and thereby reduce the expense value of his selling time to \$333 per-hour.

Every sales manager is alarmed when selling time (I. C. time) is reduced. Another recent survey of 5000 time bank reports revealed that the national average of I. C. time was only 0.63 hours-per-day. Don't let your organization be guilty of this practice.

Let us again review your functions in training your salesman so that none of those seven basic faults of a salesman are found among your sales staff. Remember, those seven faults are that a salesman —

- (1) does not know his product
- (2) does not make complete presentations,
- (3) does not demonstrate or use visuals,
- (4) does not prove his claims,
- (5) does not know when to stop talking,
- (6) does not sell with conviction or enthusiasm, and
- (7) does not show interest in the buyer's opinion.

To avoid these faults in your salesmen, you must —

- (1) teach him his line of products so that he can intelligently discuss his buyer's problems and apply the proper product remedy,
- (2) teach him to see "Joe Buyer's" needs through "Joe Buyer's" eyes,
- (3) teach him to make full and complete presentations,
- (4) teach him to use the visual approach by using demonstrations and literature (not a barrage of words and conversation),
- (5) teach him to prove his claims... claims of superiority, cost, savings, long life, or whatever such claims may be,
- (6) teach him to know when to stop talking (many salesmen talk themselves into an order and right out of it again by being too talkative, too verbose, and — frankly — too boring),
- (7) teach him to sell with conviction and enthusiasm,
- (8) teach him to respect the buyer's opinions,
- (9) teach him to make call reports to you (so that you know what he is doing and may evaluate his work),
- (10) teach him to budget his time and to plan ahead; to make appointments and to *keep them*,
- (11) teach him that a profit is necessary on every job (so that he can be paid),
- (12) teach him to sell by making calls with him (here you may also assess his effectiveness with buyers),
- (13) teach him that as he helps build your business, he is helping build himself,
- (14) teach him to work hard and intelligently as you have always done,
- (15) teach him where and how to develop leads,
- (16) teach him not to be "price shy" (quality is still the greatest economy),
- (17) teach him the 10 Commandments of good business.

**THE TEN COMMANDMENTS OF GOOD BUSINESS**

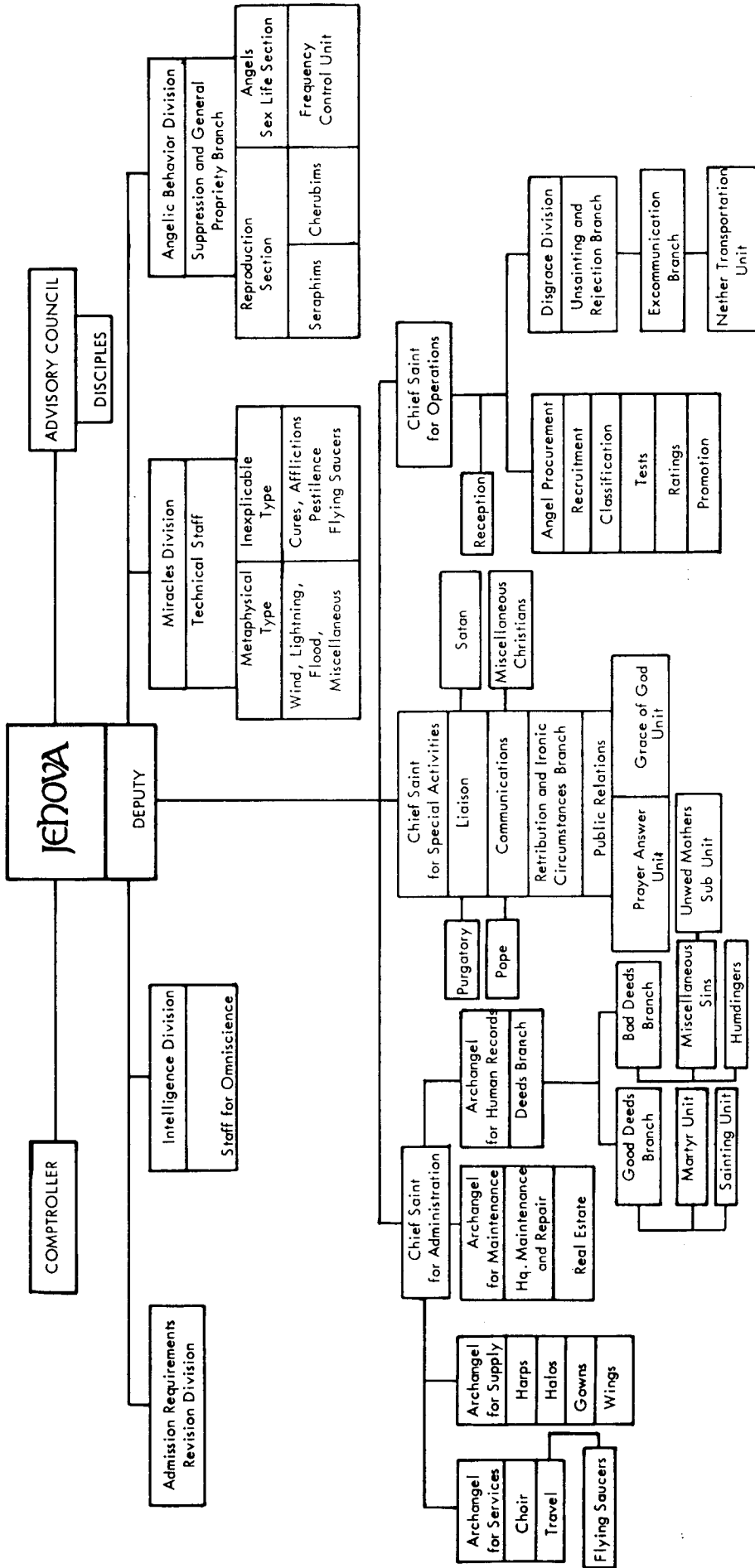
1. A CUSTOMER is the most important person in any business.
2. A CUSTOMER is not dependent upon us — we are dependent upon him.
3. A CUSTOMER is not an interruption of our work—he is the purpose of it.
4. A CUSTOMER does us a favor when he calls — we are not doing him a favor by serving him.
5. A CUSTOMER is part of our business — not an outsider.
6. A CUSTOMER is not a cold statistic — he is a flesh-and-blood human being with feelings and emotions like our own.
7. A CUSTOMER is not someone to argue or match wits with.
8. A CUSTOMER is a person who brings us his wants — it is our job to fill those wants.
9. A CUSTOMER is deserving of the most courteous and attentive treatment we can give him.
10. A CUSTOMER is the life-blood of this and every other business.

The facets of selling are far too numerous to enumerate here, but those we have discussed should invoke your own thoughts toward further exploration.

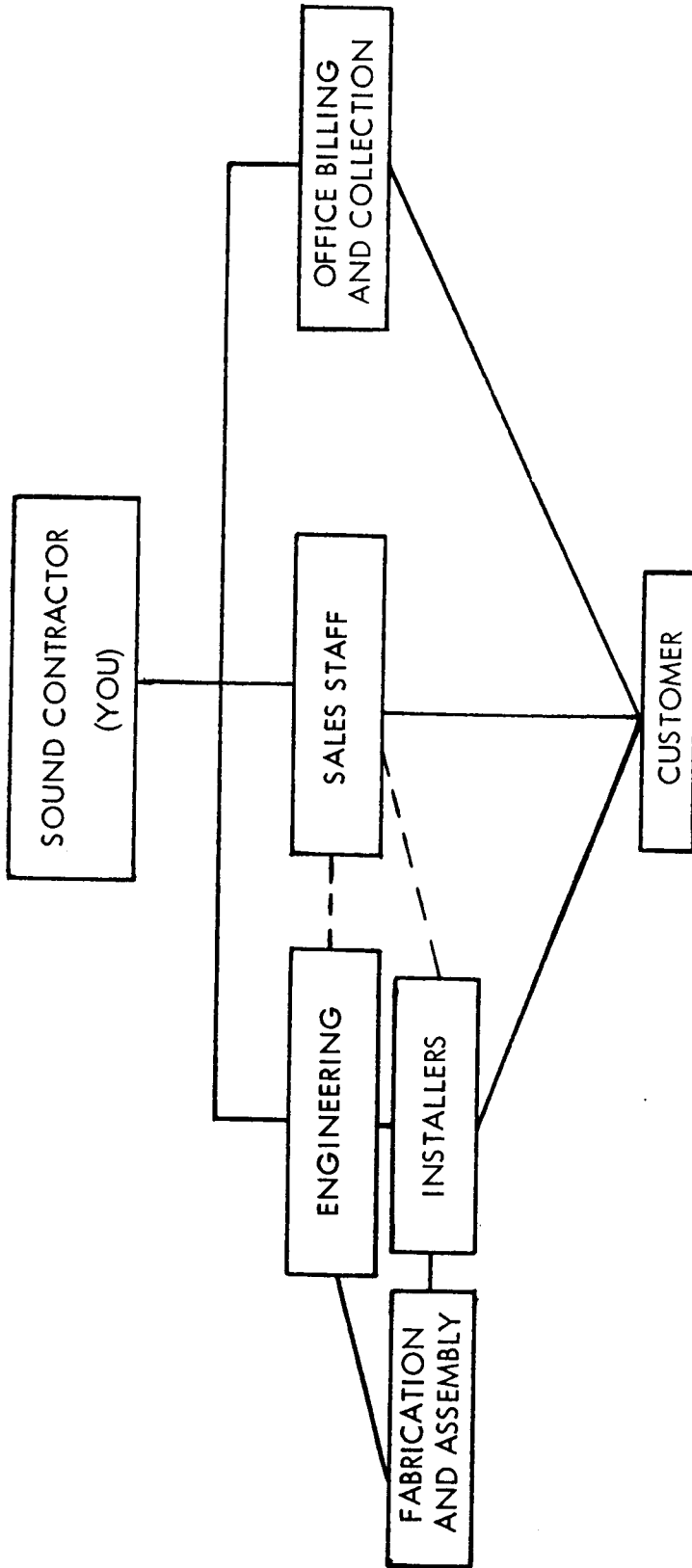
In closing these remarks, I would like to leave one last "teach him" with you. That is: Remember the "Organization Chart". Below is the "Organization Chart of Heaven" and, following that, is a typical "Organization Chart" of a company such as yours.

The first chart is for your amusement, and this one we will not change. Let us, however, study the chart of your organization. We find that it starts with YOU at the top and with your customer down below. A study of thousands of "Organization Charts" reveals that yours (or, for that matter, any other one) may be turned upside down to place the customer on top. Teach your salesmen this fact... never doubt it, never fear... the customer is KING. The customer is NOT AN INTERRUPTION OF OUR WORK—HE IS THE PURPOSE OF IT.

ORGANIZATION CHART  
HEAVEN



TYPICAL SOUND CONTRACTOR ORGANIZATION CHART



## SATISFIED CUSTOMERS (The Function of Selling)

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There are ten basic requisites in selling. All ten of these come into play between that first call on a prospect and the culmination of that call — a sale to a satisfied customer.

These requisites are:

1. Self-sale of the Product Need,
2. History and Image of Your Business,
3. Knowledge of Your Market,
4. Attainment of That Market,
5. Mechanics of Selling,
6. Application and System Engineering of Products and Service,
7. Discussion of the Specs,
8. Procurement of the Order,
9. Installation and Testing, and
10. Warranty and Service.

And they all add up to — A Satisfied Customer.

Each basic selling essential is worthy of many hours of discussion, but since such time is not available, we may touch only briefly on each.

These points are of equal importance. To achieve success, each point must be presented thoroughly and in sequence.

First, let us deal with the self-sale of the product need. No man can sell a product (or a service) to another man until he has sold himself on that product — and the need for that product. A salesman, therefore, must be his own severest critic if he is to sell others in an intelligent and conclusive manner.

The second point regards the history of your business. This means that you must sell yourself to the buyer; sell your company's success in the past and in the future, your company's accomplishments, and your company's abilities to assist him, the buyer, in the selection of the proper product or service to fulfill his needs. Unless this important selling function is accomplished, you need not try for the third plateau.

That third plateau is so simple that it is frequently overlooked. It may be summarized in the question, "Where are your markets?" and it can be answered in one short sentence: "Wherever more than ten people congregate simultaneously." A proper analysis of just where these purchasers of sound may be found is another simple yet often overlooked factor. Every business house, with the possible exception of "Pa's Emporium" or "Barney's Bicycle Repairs" is a prospect for sound. Even the corner filling station should be considered as a potential sound customer — consider the possibility that a sound system here could be used for music, or to entertain customers as they wait in line, or to announce the "Specials of the Week."

Among the general users of sound are service or filling stations; factories and plants; dentist's offices, doctor's offices, in fact, offices of all types and sizes; supermarkets; shopping centers; automotive garages and showrooms; restaurants, bars and cocktail lounges; warehouses; shipping and receiving docks; waiting rooms in airports, railroads and

bus terminals; banks; police and fire departments; stores of all kinds and sizes; schools; athletic fields; bowling alleys; Giant Voice systems, ad infinitum.

In locating your markets, use your imagination. If you can adapt a sound system to a business venture, then you should be able to sell that idea to the purchaser. Do not make the mistake of looking at your competitor and trying to sell where he is selling. Use your imagination to beat him to the purchaser's door.

Do not forget — almost any firm which is listed in the yellow pages of the telephone directory should be investigated as a potential sale. It remains for you, the salesman, to interpret a given business, to recommend to the owners just what equipment they need, and to convince them that a sound system will save them time and money.

One failing of most salesmen is that they see only the larger prospects . . . the Blue Chip potentials . . . the prestige jobs. They pass over the smaller (yet highly profitable) sales which may be had simply for the asking.

And every salesman is all too guilty of driving across town between calls and, during the entire trip, failing to observe any of the many prospective customers he passes enroute. If you cannot stop at that particular moment on a "cold canvass", then make a note of each possibility. Later, make it a point to learn about the operation of each prospect so you can determine the product which will solve their sound problems, then, get into see the buyer. Who knows? A good sale may be the result.

Therefore . . . **BE OBSERVANT . . . BE THOUGHTFUL . . . THINK.**

The fourth requisite on our list poses a question . . . How do you reach the market places?

How?

By advertising. Insert ads in the yellow pages, in local newspapers, in concert, theatre and sporting event programs.

By informal contact. Make yourself a part of your community. Actively participate in a service club; Kiwanis or Rotary, for example. Take part in civic activities such as the Red Cross or the Community Chest. You will find that many people — many interested buyers — will come to you. Before you make a sales call, remember to analyse your prospect and his business. Do not greet him with, "You don't want to buy a sound system, do you, Mister?" but with "I can give you, Sir, a sound system which will save you time and money; and here is what it will do." **ALWAYS BE POSITIVE.**

Mechanics of selling, the fifth point, are as varied as the number of pills and tablets on a pharmacist's prescription shelf. No two salesman exhibit the same approach, the same mannerisms, the same techniques, the same line of patter. However, there are numerous guideposts and benchmarks worthy of consideration for use by all Sound salesmen.

Among these are:

- A. Use visuals in your presentation. Such things as the Prestige Photos, bulletins, pertinent news articles coupled with helpful and interesting comments dramatize your presentation.
- B. Explain how you and your product of service will improve the operating function of the prospect's business and how it will save him time and money.
- C. Be knowledgeable; explain your products and their application to the business.
- D. Make your presentation short but concise... Remember, your prospect is busy and so are you — and time is money.
- E. Write a complete and informative proposal.
- F. FOLLOW UP EACH AND EVERY PROSPECT.

These six items are only a few of the necessary guideposts to selling. The next essential point is Application and Sound Engineering. This is important but it may be covered easily without discussion. The salesman who has KNOWLEDGE of his product and of its uses — and who uses that KNOWLEDGE with intelligence — has the job half finished before he starts; he has it made.

There is little difference between number 6 and number 7, Discussion of the Specs. Both points require only the proper application of KNOWLEDGE and INTELLIGENCE. Properly written specs and good estimates, coupled with an informative bid, can result only in sales... sales... and more sales.

Requisite number 8, Procurement of the Order, is important. A salesman — at least, a good salesman — must know when to stop talking

and to ask for the signature on the order. This is easy if the salesman remains in "control of the interview." Do not be hesitant; be positive, and, above all, be courteous and polite. Such an approach will make the ink from the buyer's pen flow more freely on that dotted line at the bottom of the order pad.

The last two requisites — "Installation and Testing" and "Warranty and Service" — may be considered as a single subject. Truly, these two important facets of the overall mechanics of selling probably are not actual selling functions, but without them, the sale is not complete. The customer is not satisfied. Be sure that those who are responsible for installing and testing the system perform their duties completely and neatly. A system which does not function properly when it is turned over to the purchaser is one which he will remember as "the one that did not work" even though the problem may be rectified in some simple manner. Remember, too, that leaving the job site in a state of dishevelment or in a state of complete confusion and filth will be remembered just as long as will a poor or incomplete, non-functioning installation.

Provide the purchaser with a Certificate Of Warranty of installation so that the man who signs the check has something in his possession which is tangible; not just an invoice asking for the payment of money.

Make every job a TURNKEY job... a complete job... a good job because A SATISFIED CUSTOMER IS A GOOD CUSTOMER, AND A GOOD CUSTOMER IS A SATISFIED CUSTOMER, AND A SATISFIED CUSTOMER IS YOUR BEST SALES ASSISTANT...YOUR BEST SALESMAN.