



The Business Side of Selling Boats

Marine Salesperson, Inc.

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Disclaimer

This book is written in the masculine gender for ease of writing. Salesperson, Inc. has absolutely no bias to age or sex, and believes that any person who applies himself to the study and practice of marine sales can and should be successful.



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WHAT IS MARINE SALESPERSON, INC?

Thought:

The best way to predict the future is to make the future happen.

Marine Salesperson, Inc. is a program that teaches salespeople to become better business people. Many salespeople simply run their business by “hit or miss.” They come to work in the morning, take whatever the dealership, the economy, or the manufacturer has to give them, then leave the dealership at the end of the day. But throughout that day they never do anything to actually develop their business, and run their business as if they actually owned it.

This is not a selling skills course.

Salesperson, Inc. has determined that increasing a salesperson’s selling skills alone will not give this individual the tools necessary to attain that next level of success. Once a salesperson learns the basic fundamentals of selling, or the “10 Steps to the Sale”, additional business will come from understanding the business aspect of sales; all of those areas above and beyond the basics that salespeople need to learn.

What if salespeople thought of themselves as business people?

So I started looking at these salespeople sitting at their desks and I asked myself, “if they had overhead to pay, if they had em-

ployees to pay, if they had to make sure their company profited every single month, would they run their businesses differently, then if they thought of themselves as mere salespeople?" And the ultimate response was a resounding, yes!! They'd have to.

Your own business with no investment whatsoever!

When salespeople get hired into a dealership, they get a free phone, a free desk, a free telephone answering service, a free advertising budget, and a million dollars worth of inventory, with no investment on their part whatsoever. All they have to do is run their business from their desks just as if it was their very own business. Well, that becomes the problem. Most salespeople don't look at it as a business. They look at themselves as salespeople, and it's the dealership's responsibility to get them business.

Salespeople need to develop their own business.

Even if it is the dealership's responsibility to bring in business, if salespeople want to increase their sales and profits above and beyond their current production, they need to begin looking at the details of their business, aside from selling skills.

Business people need to know the numbers.

For years, salespeople have been told that sales is a game of numbers. The more numbers you do, the more sales you make. The problem is, no one ever taught salespeople how to do the numbers. If a salesperson set a goal of 14 sales and \$4000 per month, he never really knew whether he reached the goal until the end of the month. He also never had a plan of attack on how to reach the goal. So the result was, this salesperson seldom reached his/her goal. It doesn't have to be this way. By keeping accurate statistics, real life numbers, a salesperson can conceivably predict exactly what needs to be done in order to reach his goal — because the numbers don't lie.

Salespeople need to run their business like a business

So Salesperson, Inc. developed **Marine Salesperson, Inc.**, which teaches salespeople to run their business like a business, as compared to running their business by "hit or miss." As you read through this manual, you will find everything you'll need to start thinking and acting like a business person. Once you focus your mind in this direction, the sky will be the limit.

MONEY: DO YOU KNOW HOW TO MAKE IT?

Thought:

Money won't buy happiness, but it will buy you a lot of things that will make you happy!

Thought:

The person who said money isn't everything, probably didn't have any.

MONEY — It's been the focus of every salesperson who ever worked on a commission basis. I've never known another word that respects so much attention, that we've virtually based our whole life on it. And no matter how much you make, it never seems to be enough. The latest statistic I've read says that the average **marine** salesperson across the United States earns an average income of \$40,000 per year. This is in an industry that claims you can make unlimited income. If this is true, why then do most salespeople make so little money?

MONEY — You make it and spend. You save it and invest it. It is the cause of stress, frustration, and divorce. You need it to eat with, to drive your cars with, to heat your homes with. You're criticized when you don't have it, and envied when you do have it. Someone once said that money isn't everything, but it was probably said by someone who doesn't have any. You surely can live with much less, but then you wouldn't have searched for employment in an industry where the hours are long, the rejection is high, and the money is inconsistent. If you wanted a lesser lifestyle, you could have taken a job at McDonalds, received \$6.00 per hour, be guaranteed \$240 every single week, and live off of that. But that must not have been good enough.

You wanted to make more. So you became a **marine** salesperson because someone said you could make unlimited income. Then, how are you going to do it?

Let's list some of the most common reasons that I've heard over the years why a salesperson couldn't make unlimited income:

- The economy is down.
- Too many salespeople in the dealership.
- Not enough advertising.
- Not enough customers.
- Not enough boats.
- No rebates being offered by the manufacturer.
- Pay plan is terrible.
- My manager isn't strong enough.
- The dealer is mean.

And I'm sure there are many more. But the fact is, none of these reasons have anything to do with the individual salesperson. There's always something or someone else to blame for the fact that a salesperson doesn't make enough money. Some of these reasons could be valid. But I've never heard a salesperson blame himself for not making enough income. That fact is, a salesperson could be to blame. It could be that the salesperson was lazy, wasn't responsible and accountable for his own income, didn't learn the correct way to earn unlimited income, didn't invest in his own career, didn't want to do anything more than the basics. If this is the case, unless this person was handed sales on a silver platter, the chances are he/she wouldn't make it.

This model is dedicated to the individual who is concerned about long-term success, and not just short-term gain. Many of the things I'll talk about would not be of interest to the short-term salesperson. It takes a lot of work and persistence in order to become a professional salesperson who has the potential of earning \$100,000 per year. And in most cases, it is possible despite the dealership, the town, the boat line, the management, or even the economy. The most important fact is that it takes a lot of work.

If you are willing to put in the time and effort to be successful, this is the program for you. **Marine Salesperson, Inc.** can get you thinking and acting like a highly successful businessperson. Even if you didn't do everything within this program, keep in mind that it's the thought process that will make you successful. As long as your mind is always thinking about what to do, what to change, how to get better, how to get results, you're going to have a better than average chance of getting where you want to go. If you accept mediocrity, that's exactly what you'll get. So, make it happen!

YOUR ROAD TO SUCCESS

Thought:

Successful people do all of the things unsuccessful people don't want to do.

What is success?

Success has been defined as *“the progressive attainment of a worthy goal”*. While this is a good general definition, each one of us has our own specific idea about what success means to us. So, what does success mean to you? For some people it means status, prestige, and respect; for others it means power — the ability to influence and command others. But for most people, their definition of success includes financial independence and security.

What is financial independence?

Like success, financial independence means something different to each of us. A better question might be: *“What amount of income would make you feel financially independent?”*

For some salespeople that might be \$25,000 per year, for others it might be \$100,000. The important thing isn't the amount of money itself. What really matters is how will you make enough money for you to feel financially independent.

Understanding how a **marine** salesperson's business works is one way to make sure you don't become just another statistic. In order to succeed in boat

sales, you have to do what unsuccessful salespeople didn't want to do, that is, acquire the knowledge that successful auto salespeople had learned through trial and error.

And you don't even have to go through the costly, painful process of trial and error learning. You can prepare yourself for business success by learning all the activities that go into making your business successful, and by making sure each of them is handled properly.

The other key that determines business success is energy. Energy for business comes from self-motivation. Highly motivated people are successful because their enthusiasm for what they're doing has a positive influence on everyone around them. A high-level of motivation also creates excitement, giving salespeople huge amounts of physical energy, enabling them to accomplish even more.

It's important to have the right attitude

You need to know the business side of **marine** sales to become successful, but it isn't the only thing you need. The right attitude is equally important — and in my opinion, even more important. Each of us is somewhat different. We each have our own opinions, beliefs, likes, and dislikes. Yet one thing that all successful business people have in common is their attitude. They are highly motivated. They know they can get the job done, and they know they'll succeed. That makes them very positive about themselves and their business.

How you can get the right attitude

The right attitude is the one that winners have. It's the "can-do, never give up" attitude. In order to get the winners attitude, here are some things you need to do:

- **Expect success**

Experts in motivation say that 85 percent of success is based on your attitude, so keep your attitude positive. Look for opportunities in every situation. View setbacks as stepping stones rather than obstacles. Keep working your plan based on realistic goals, and don't become discouraged by setbacks.

- **See yourself as successful**

Form clear mental picture of yourself attaining your goals. See yourself enjoying the kind of success you want. And try to experience the feeling you'll have when you meet your business and personal goals.

- **Prepare yourself for success**

Stay informed about what's going on in the **watercraft** business. Read

positive books and magazines. Listen to success oriented tapes at home and in your car. Attend seminars and workshops to upgrade your education.

- **Associate with positive people**

Spent your time with winners and eliminate the losers in your life.

- **Act like a winner**

Positive thinking and positive thought, to yourself as well as to others, are the ways to stay mentally healthy, just as positive health habits are the ways to stay physically healthy. Get motivated and stay motivated.

Habits are the key to success

Everyone has habits. The difference between someone who succeeds and someone who fails is the kind of habits they have. Bad habits are easy to form, but hard to live with. Good habits are harder to form, but they will ultimately lead to success.

Failures generally find it difficult to sacrifice the immediate pleasure bad habits may offer. That's why they don't accomplish much. Successful people, on the other hand, realize that success depends on them. They're willing to put their long-term goals ahead of short-term pleasures by cultivating the habits that lead to success.

The major difference between winners and losers is inconsistency. Winners are consistently just a little bit better. They keep at it and they keep trying to improve. So strive to become just a little better each day. Keep at it and don't be discouraged by setbacks. The amount of persistence will measure your belief in yourself.

I know you can do it

It all boils down to how motivated you become, and how much business sense you attain. You can measure your motivation by your commitment to your business. If you're committed to making your business successful, and you make the effort to prepare yourself with the necessary business skills, you're bound to succeed — provided you stay with it.

So get yourself ready for business success. Be clear about your goals and get motivated to accomplish them. Learn as much as you can about the boat selling business. And do something every day toward making your dreams come true.

Now that you have an idea of the nature of this program, let's begin a step-by-step process that will get you started toward your financial dreams.

Step 1

EVALUATE YOUR QUALITIES AS A BUSINESS/SALESPERSON

Making money takes a lot of thought, as well as a lot of work. You must make a commitment that once you start your business, you will do whatever it takes, legally, morally, and ethically to make it succeed. This will start with how you feel about yourself as a businessperson.

Thought:

Insanity is doing the same things over and over again, and expecting a different result.

Many salespeople have no desire to evaluate themselves, and their performance. Because once they go through an evaluation process, then they need to become responsible and accountable to make the necessary changes, or improvements to achieve that next level of success.

We all enjoy living and working in a “comfort zone.” Let’s face it, it’s a lot easier to live that way. But it’s like a baseball batter who’s batting a 250 average, and wants to get up to 300. Something in that swing’s going to have to change. Because this batter can’t keep swinging that bat the same way when batting 250 and expect to get up to 300. If changes need to be made, it may make you a little uncomfortable. But focus on the positive results, and it will make it all worthwhile.

So, let’s determine if you have the fortitude to be a successful businessperson. Answer the questions on the next page, and be honest. After all, you can’t fool yourself.

Step 2

DETERMINE YOUR CURRENT FINANCIAL SITUATION

Before you begin determining how much money you need/want to make, and how you're going to do it, let's figure out how much money you have available, versus how much you owe every month. This becomes a good way to get your mind straight on your current status.

Thought:

Most salespeople get used to living on the money they make, instead of making the type of money they want to live on.

The first step requires you to get organized. If you currently have your bills in a shoe box or stuffed into a drawer, you may want to get them all together now. Understanding your financial situation isn't that hard, but being organized will be your first important step. You'll need to have all your bills you pay monthly, quarterly, semi-annually and annually. Many people forget about the occasional bills and just worry about them when they come due. You'll make your life easier by planning all expenses so you don't have to worry.

Now that you have all your bills in front of you, fill out the worksheet on the following page:

Step 3

DEVELOP A BUSINESS PLAN FOR A STRONG FOUNDATION

Realize that there is usually a critical difference between those businesses that succeed and those that fail. Many times the difference is the quality of a simple business plan. Without a plan, a business can easily get off course.

Thought:

If you don't know where you're going, any road will take you there.

For a marine salesperson who wishes to become successful, a well-prepared business plan will serve at least two critical functions:

Getting your business started off right

A business plan serves as the foundation for any new business. It will help your business get off to the right start and help it stay on track. If you are already in business, a business plan will help you determine where you are at this point in time, where you want to go, and how you're planning on getting there. Putting together this business plan forces you to think strategically about your business, as compared to running your business by "pot-luck", which basically means, whatever happens, happens.

Thought:

A goal without a plan isn't a goal at all – it's merely a wish.

A blueprint to keep your business on the right track

A blueprint is as essential to building your business as a blueprint is for building a house. In fact, a business plan is the blueprint for your business and its growth. It details your

Step 4

DETERMINE STRATEGIES FOR YOUR MAJOR COMPANIES

Now that you've developed your business plan, it's now time to determine your success strategies for each of your major companies. As a reminder, your major companies include:

Thought:

The best way to achieve your major goals is to break them down into smaller, more manageable goals.

- Ups Company
- Phone-Ups Company
- Referral Company
- Repeat Customer Company
- Networking Company
- Accessories Company

Thought:

Every moment spent planning saves three or four moments in execution.

The beauty of **Marine Salesperson, Inc.** is that you don't have to make your income off of one company, which is typically called "sales." You now have six separate companies to get business from, all with their own goals and strategies for success. So, if you want each of these companies to flourish, you need to develop a plan for how you will run each company.

The following pages include some ideas to start. At the end of each section, feel free to add to the list. This should be a continuous work in progress.

Step 5

DEVELOP YOURSELF A MARKETING STRATEGY

Now that you have a business plan, it's time to determine how you're going to market yourself into more sales and commissions.

If you're going to be a successful businessperson, you'll need to become an excellent marketer of yourself – not of your boats or your dealership, but of yourself. To start your thought process, ask yourself this question: For as long as you've been in marine sales, could you conceivably still have these people who don't know you sell boats?:

Thought:

Your customer has a free choice, and only by supplying what the customer wants, and not by your efforts to impose your product, will you get your maximum share of the market's potential.

- Family
- Friends and acquaintances
- People on your sporting teams
- People in your church
- People you do business with like your dry cleaners, grocery stores, gas stations, insurance agents

And if they don't, why don't they? Marine sales is your livelihood – it's the way you make your money. The fact is, you're not selling basic transportation, or expensive pieces of fiberglass, you're selling dreams. You should want to tell everyone you sell boats.

The key element to winning in the business of marine sales is the same as in sports — preparation.

Step 6

WRITE A DAILY PLAN

Your daily plan will be just as important as your business plan. It will help you determine how you'll occupy your time throughout a typical day to be more productive.

Thought:

Most people don't plan to fail, they just fail to plan.

A typical salesperson will do 2-3 hours of productive work per day. And when I use the word "productive" I'm always talking about *profit generating* work. What if a salesperson did 5-6 hours of productive work per day. Could this individual make more money? The ultimate response would be an astounding **yes!**

Thought:

People who are goal conscious don't spin their wheels. Their purpose is not to look and feel busy, but to achieve.

For example – let's say that it rains all day today, and the chances are low that the dealership will be getting much traffic. What will you do? Will you lean against one of the boats on the showroom floor looking out the window, waiting for the one magical person to walk through the door who will make your whole day? Or will you have a daily plan ready to develop your business? The difference between the two will determine how successful you become.

On the following page is a list of many areas of work that can be accomplished on any given day. Review each one, then begin to develop a plan that will accomplish your goals.

Step 7

ORGANIZE YOURSELF FOR INCREASED PRODUCTIVITY

Now that you've had some time to develop your business plan and marketing strategy, let's begin looking at your organizational practices.

Organization is a word that falls into two categories within vehicle sales. The first has to do with the way you organize your time away from the dealership, and the second consists of a systematic process of doing business. Both are very important and should be studied, as well as practiced.

Thought:

If you're going to want to do more business, you'll need to become more organized.

Why is it important to be organized? I must admit that I have encountered salespeople who had sloppy business practices, seldom made follow-up calls, and still managed to make a decent living. But these are isolated cases and exceptions to the rule. The most successful people in any profession are individuals who have good organizational skills.

To be organized means to be systematic, to plan ahead, to use your time at home and at work efficiently and effectively.

Organization gives your life purpose and direction, and the structure and raw energy needed to succeed. The more organized salespeople become, the more confident, alert and sharp they remain. Because life

Step 8

GAIN THAT COMPETITIVE ADVANTAGE

Your business will flourish if you find ways to gain a competitive advantage over your competition. Many salespeople base their entire selling process on three things:

Thought:

The ability to learn faster than your competition may be the only sustainable competitive advantage.

- The Price
- The Boat
- The Dealership

If you are basing your sale on these, it may not be enough to give your prospects enough reasons why they should buy from you. So before you let your prospect leave the dealership without buying from you, ask yourself this question:

Thought:

It is not the increasing competition; it's going back to working hard that most of us complain about.

“What makes me different from every other salesperson out there?”

Because let's face it, if you're not doing anything different than other salespeople, why should they buy from you? It's not going to be because of the boat, because everyone has nice boats. It's not going to be because of price, because no matter what price you give them, everyone can beat it. It's not going to be because of the dealership, because most people will either buy close to home or close to work.

Step 9

FOLLOW-UP TO DEVELOP FUTURE BUSINESS

Thought:

In every instance, the best run companies stay as close to their customers as humanly possible.

Thought:

Treat your customers as an appreciating asset.

As you continue developing your plan on how you will run your business, remember that your ability to follow-up with your prospects and customers is the single most important thing you can do to develop future business. The following is a list of possible times and ways to follow-up successfully. You don't have to use them all in order to have a productive program. But if you decide to incorporate some of these into your business plan, make sure you approach follow-up in a consistent manner.

If you currently have a follow-up company develop letters for you, don't make this process the only follow-up you do. Mail keeps your name in front of your prospects and customers, it does not build relationships. If you want most of your business to come from referral and repeat customers, it will happen through *relationship building follow-ups*.

PROSPECTS WHO DON'T BUY

Make a 24 hour follow-up call

Once you let your prospect leave the dealership without purchasing from you, you must make a 24 hour follow-up call. Waiting three

Step 10

USE A COMPUTER TO DEVELOP YOUR BUSINESS

Thought:

A computer will not make a good salesperson out of a bad salesperson. But it will make a good salesperson "better" faster, and a bad salesperson "worse" faster.

Thought:

When you put powerful computers in front of employees, people will find new ways to make their companies work better.

When I was a speaker at a National Convention, there was another speaker doing a presentation on Mega-Trends, which revolved around, what we can expect as we approach the year 2000. He asked the audience, which was made-up entirely of dealers and managers, "how many in the audience have computers in your household?" And virtually everyone raised their hands. Then he asked, "how many of your children know how to work the computer better than you do?" And nearly everyone raised their hands. Then he finished by say, "are we going to be selling your children exactly the way we sold you?"

The fact is, technology is here to stay — it's not going away. You can dismiss it, you can fight it, or you can realize how much easier it can make your jobs. For some of you, the learning curve at the beginning will be a little high, and possibly a little frustrating. It will be no different than starting anything for the first time. But once you learn the basic fundamentals of your computer and software, you will be quite amazed at how productive you'll become. And remember, anytime I use the word productive, I'm talking about "profit-generating."

So, let's get started.

FINALE

Thought:

Every journey starts with a single step.

Well, there it is. Your 10-step approach to “running your business like a business.” If you’ll make the commitment to start thinking and acting like a businessperson, your success will be virtually assured. Have the confidence of knowing you possess the skills and talents to sell boats, and simply take that next step to develop a strong work ethic. The very least that will happen is you’ll make enough money to live the type of lifestyle you desire, and continue your rewarding career in marine sales.

Continued success.

Thought:

Success is peace of mind which is a direct result of self-satisfaction in knowing you did your best to become the best you are capable of becoming.