

# POWERFUL SOLUTIONS

For maximum F&I profitability

## EDUCATING VERSUS SELLING

Educating may be defined as 1). Giving (someone) training in, or information on, a particular subject or 2). developing the faculties and powers of (a person) by teaching, instruction, or schooling. Consider this approach, to what we do, compared with that of selling, which may be defined as persuading someone of the merits of.

While the simple presence of the word “persuade” (in the definition of the latter) does not portend that ill will is afoot, it still sounds like a coercive act (in fact, coerce is a synonym of persuade). And that is coming from a Salesperson, proud of my profession. Heck, let’s go further to state there isn’t a more noble, necessary form of making a living! I find it difficult to imagine money changing hands for any reason, whatsoever, without some sort of sales process first occurring. Sales is what makes the world go ‘round!

That stated, however, we can seek to achieve our goals by a). offering solutions to our Guest’s needs and, therefore, making it their idea, or by b). imposing our will upon them. Call it forming an alliance versus subjugation. The former may create a better relationship, wouldn’t you say?

How do we put the emphasis in the right place and stay true to our Guest’s needs?

A good place to start would be to accept the fact that we may not be the smartest person in the room. We don’t have to be. A little humility will go a very long way. No one cares how much you know until they know how much you care. Get to know your Guests and you’ll understand their needs. How do your products address what is going on in their lives? Remember the ratio of ears to mouth?

What ideas might you share with them that they may not have considered?

A little context...

My Assistant Parts Manager, with whom I had worked for newly 20 years, approached me after I bought my long-bed, crew cab, 4wd pick-up (this thing is so long you have to call ahead to park it!) He asked if I wanted the tubular side steps, like I had on my previous truck. Feeling very confident and sure of myself (based on my knowledge of all things four wheel related), I responded, “No” I’ve got that place in Colorado and the wheelbase on the truck is so long. I don’t want to lower my ground clearance, on a truck that already has a shallow break-over angle, leading to worse high-centering potential!”

“See what a smart guy I am’, I thought to myself.

Rick responded that he had considered the exact same issue, in fact, regarding the truck that he had purchased, just the week before. He continued by reminding me that he also has rural property and had played the same concern over in his own mind. Then he became the Educator...”I quickly realized, though, that sliding out over the side bolster of that front seat was going to wear out the foam in the seat and, in no time, the seat would begin to break-down and wear-out. I know you, Erik, as OCD as you are, that is going to drive you nuts!”

He was absolutely right. “Give me the side steps”, I responded, surprised by the accuracy of his point and the fact that I had failed to consider this. It may seem trivial to some, but I can assure you that every time I get out of my now 4 year old truck, with the seat that isn’t worn-out (or even showing signs of wear), I’m grateful Rick showed me the error of my ways.

You probably don’t have the luxury of knowing your Guests as well, but a few thoughtfully considered questions may yield similar benefits.

Listen for the answers.

What would you share with your smart, seemingly well-informed Guests (They may not have considered), to educate and save them from a bad decision?

Think about it.



Partnership + Performance = Profit