

SELLING POINTS

Women are more important than ever in the sales and buying process. Increasingly, they are decision-makers — studies show that women influence 80% of all household buying decisions.

The sales process can be broken down into 5 basic steps:

1. Decision to buy
2. Information gathering
3. Sales presentation
4. Decision
5. Maintenance (payments, filing claims, dealing with customer service, etc.)

A woman is usually the primary factor in 4 of the 5 stages. The one area she tends to avoid: the sales presentation, because she often distrusts or feels patronized by the salesperson.

Something to keep in mind during *your* next sales presentation.

Stop the car(sale)!

Lack of training hampers sales to male and female customers

by Connie Brubaker

Over the past few weeks, I've been doing a little detective work. In preparation for a new training program on the differences between how men and women buy, I've researched many books and websites. But I needed to get out and do a little fieldwork.



Connie's Comments

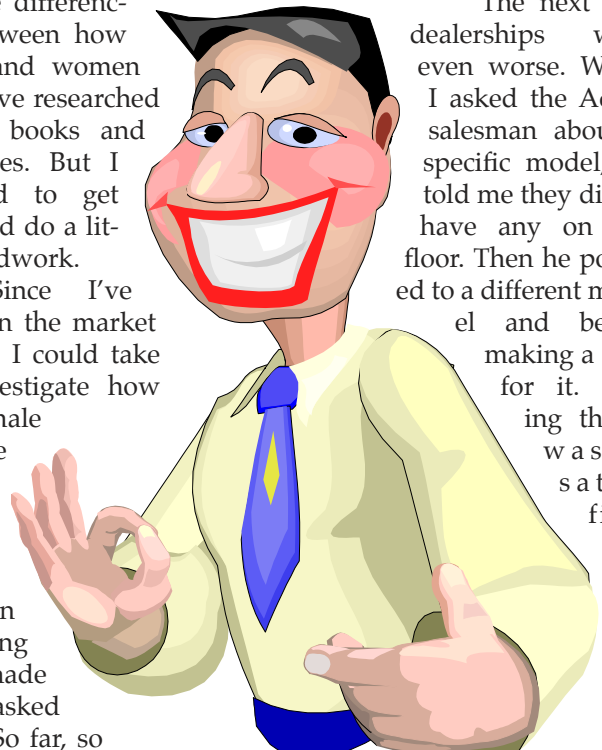
Since I've been in the market for a new car, I decided I could take the opportunity to investigate how salespeople deal with female customers. And just like those mystery shows on TV, the results were somewhat surprising.

At the Lexus dealership, a young salesman impressed me by coming over right away. He made good eye contact and asked a number of questions. So far, so good. But then he narrowed his sales efforts down to a particular car that had been marked down. He became very product-focused — but never unlocked the car for me to see the interior! Feeling pressured, I did what studies show most women do in similar circumstances. I bolted.

The Audi salesman was easy to talk to, explained features of a number of different models, opened doors and lifted hoods. But as I was exiting, I noticed a beautiful mid-size model exact-

ly in my price range that he had never mentioned. Women like options when they buy — and I'd almost walked out without knowing all of mine.

The next two dealerships were even worse. When I asked the Acura salesman about a specific model, he told me they didn't have any on the floor. Then he pointed to a different model and began making a case for it. Seeing that I wasn't satisfied, he



disappeared to check on delivery dates for the model that I was interested in — and never came back. A few days later, by the way, I received an expensive marketing piece in the mail (addressed to "head of household") on the very car in question. I could only shake my head. A high-dollar marketing campaign, and they don't even have the car available to show?

The Nissan salesman was very
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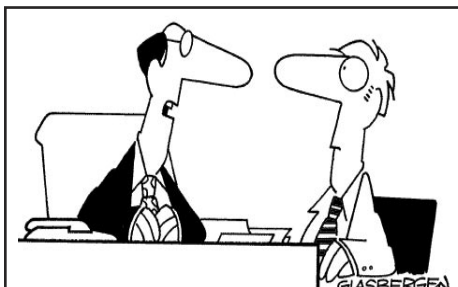
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In this issue of SOLUTIONS:

- How car salespeople lose women customers
- Selling Points: Why women buy . . . and why they don't
- Dale Carnegie on success



"If you want to be a top salesman like me, you need charm, charisma and the ability to show people you really care. Why can't you get that through your thick skull?"

WANT TO IMPROVE YOUR SALES TO WOMEN? Take advantage of our December Booking Special to sign up for one of Connie's informative, insightful and fun workshops on Women's Role in the New World Market. Choose from:

- The Difference Between Men & Women and How They Buy
- Marketing to Women
- Selling to Women

Connie Brubaker is a certified Integrity Systems® business consultant and professional speaker who focuses on sales, customer service and leadership.

QUOTE OF THE MONTH

"The successful man will profit from his mistakes and try again in a different way."

— Dale Carnegie

It's no mystery: car sales lack a woman's touch

continued from page 1

warm, friendly and inquisitive. But when I asked to see a Maxima, he confessed that he had only worked there two days and didn't even know where they were. Even after he found out, he could tell me nothing about the cars except that they came in a variety of colors, and he knew they were good cars.

My final stop was at the Volvo dealership. The salesman there was courteous, knowledgeable and interested in my needs. He patiently answered my questions, explained the various models and incentive programs, and opened doors and trunks to give me a better look. He even offered me a test drive — the first to do so since my investigation began. Points off, though, for failing to give me any literature.

So what did I learn? As a trainer, I

was most appalled by the obvious lack of training these salespeople displayed. They didn't just sell poorly to women — they sold poorly to everyone.

Women customers particularly value being heard, respected and appreciated. None of the salespeople asked one personal question about me — they know nothing about who I am, my business, my family or my needs in a car. I felt very little rapport with any salesman that could replace my existing relationship with the Infiniti dealership, where they know all about me and have demonstrated extraordinary customer service for the past four years. For a woman, the relationship part of the sale is the most powerful influence — much greater than torque, horsepower, price, terms, warranties or other features.