



By Carl Davidson

About the Author

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Many dealers ask me how to tell if a salesperson will work out without investing a lot of money in them. My experience is that dealers often let salespeople continue for too long. What causes this? Is it that we chose the candidate and don't want to admit we were wrong? Is it that there is no one to replace the candidate and he is "better than nothing?"

A dealer told me his salespeople are on straight commission, and so he isn't losing anything if they don't sell. This is a serious error. When a salesperson doesn't sell, you are losing about \$10,000 per month that they should be bringing in through profit. You also are losing face with current staff by allowing non productive staff to stay. Finally, you are burning leads that cost between \$200 and \$400 to generate.

For all these reasons, it is important to get sales applicants off to a quick start. Here are a few steps you can do to help them make it or break it in a big hurry.

Training Schedule—Week 1

I suggest two weeks of training. Remember that good salespeople need to

Great Salespeople Sell Themselves

Tough Training and Rigid Procedures Can Help You Weed Out Underachievers

sell right away—bad ones don't mind waiting. In week one, teach them a demo word for word. Start your training at 9:00 a.m. and go until noon. Give them a section to memorize by the next day. Make sure they know every word and action when they return. Those who short cut the demo are rarely successful. Repeat until Friday when they should be able to do a full demo. They have every day from noon until 9:00 or 10:00 p.m. to learn it. Anyone who cannot or will not memorize the demo should be let go.

The Ultimate Test

On the last day of week one, tell new applicants that they must practice

their demo on five friends or relatives over the weekend and hand in the name, address, phone number and results from each demo. People who do not have what it takes to be a success will come in on Monday with an excuse as to why they couldn't do it. Average salespeople will do it but not sell any. Great salespeople will demo five and sell two. This is the ultimate test to quickly find out who will make it and who will not. Those of you who believe in second chances could give the applicant two more days to do this but it rarely makes a difference.

Training Schedule—Week 2

In the second week, start them at noon and go until 9:00 p.m. The purpose this week is to show them how to prospect and obtain appointments. Help them knock on doors, attend a real-estate sales meeting, call on sold

signs and all other ways you want them to prospect. You do it as they watch, then they do it as you watch. They will get appointments as of their first day if you do this right. Go out with them on their first two or three calls to see them demo and close and help if you must. You should give them the full commission on these sales even if someone on your staff helps them. They should be selling by their second week. If they cannot or will not get appointments, and you see no hope for improvement, terminate them.

Normal Procedures

After the two week training period, you are ready for normal procedures. The following is the minimum that will create success.

- **Weekly Meeting**—Have a minimum of one sales meeting per week. At that meeting, give them an article about water, inspect their kit for the three Cs—complete, clean and charged. Make them do a random section of the demo for you. Do this no matter how long they work for you.
- **Accountability**—Every week (preferably on pay day) make them hand in a form stating how many demos they did, how many they sold and what profit they generated. If it is above their minimum, praise them. If it is below, ask how you can help them, discipline or terminate them.
- **Rehash**—Many sales are lost because the salesperson believes the customer will buy at a later date. To completely wipe this from their mind, management should call each family that does not buy and ask them why they did not buy. You should be able to get back into about 33 percent of the homes you call and close 50 percent of the ones you revisit. This will add about 16 percent to your sales. It also will make your staff realize that if they don't sell it on the first night, they are never coming back to the home. We suggest that as cruel as it sounds, the salesperson gets no commission if you get back into the home and close the sale.

If followed, the outline above will take the luck out of making salespeople successful. It is not hard or time consuming. Try following this outline with your next batch of recruits. Also remember to constantly recruit. It is the fear of replacing what you have that makes us hang on to salespeople we know will never be great. **WQP**

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