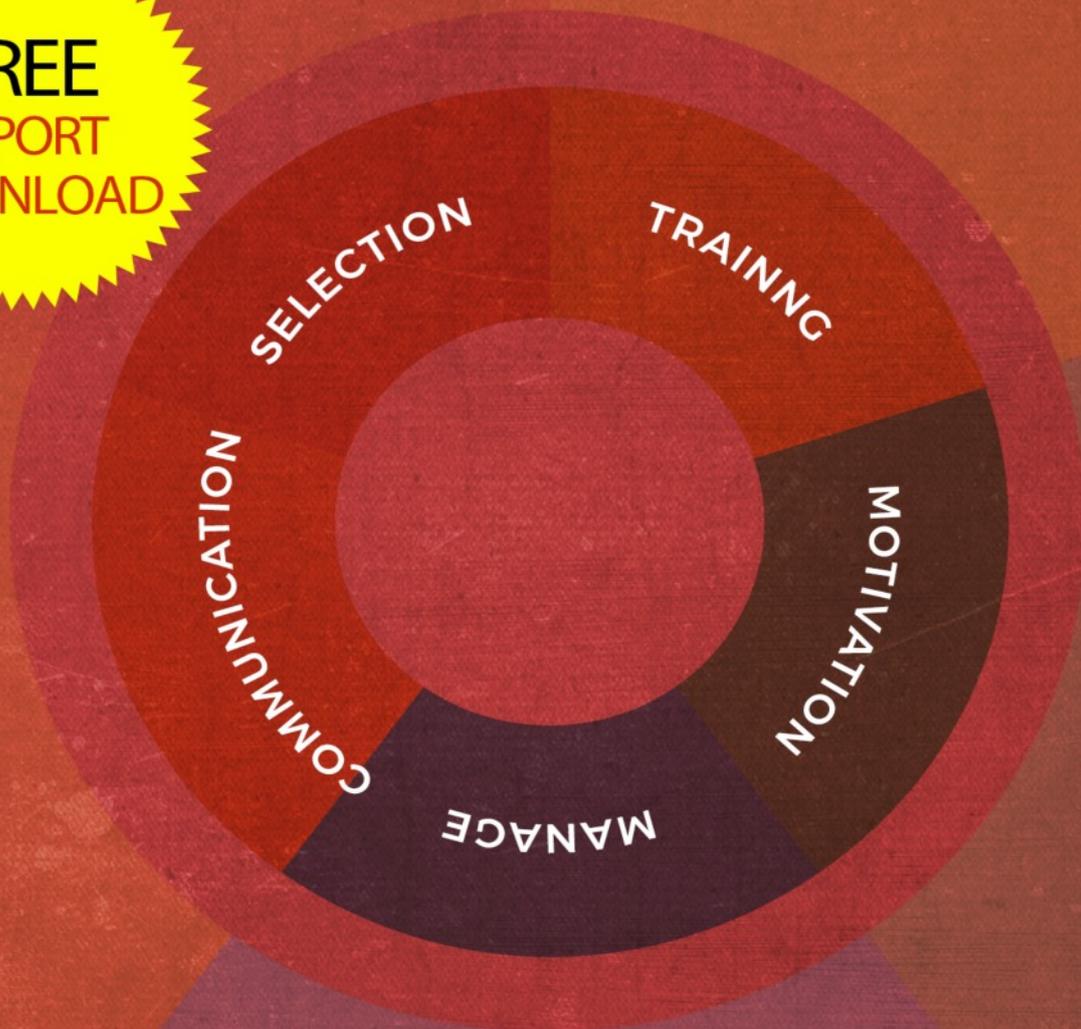


BUSINESS REPORT

EFFECTIVE WAYS TO ORGANIZE SALES TEAM

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BUILDING THE SALES DEPARTMENT

IF THERE is to be a strong sales department, it devolves upon the Sales Manager to be an organizer as well as a Sales Executive. He must investigate the possibilities of his merchandise and territory, plan out the sales to be made, the amount of the average sale, determine how each sale should be conducted, and the class of prospective customers to whom the strongest appeal can be made.

Unless this is done, the sales department cannot grow and it is evident that only by the Sales Manager taking to himself responsibility for all things particularly connected with his work, and then delegating to men connected with him the particular responsibilities they are best fitted to carry, will there be a proper and logical division of the various duties that insures clear understanding, and that gives those who are responsible for the success of the sales organization opportunity for cooperation.

The salesmen should be taught to analyse their problems and "exchange experiences so that each may profit from the others.

If this is done, it brings to the men, through the Sales Manager as a clearing house, a wealth of information that can be used in making sales. Results must always be considered before any idea is accepted as valuable to the organization as a whole. When the experiences of all the salesmen have been brought together and classified you will have a basis on which to gauge the importance of any new idea or plan to your selling scheme.

After responsibilities have been accepted, and the selling data classified, it is then a question of how the Sales Manager is to control his organization. In a real sense, the Sales Manager is the dominating factor in the success of his selling machine. Should he fail properly to control the factors and functions that are a part of his position, he will not make a real success of his work.

He must control his own time, his temper; he must measure up to his present responsibilities and plan to take on future responsibilities; he must learn and study his merchandise and the territory; he must get and keep control of his sales force. In order to be efficient he must in turn teach the

men under him to use their time and energy so that maximum results will flow from their combined efforts — results that will keep his firm in the forefront of the business procession.

Building a Strong Sales Force

Because of the vital importance of the sales department to their own success and that of their firms, Sales Managers should exercise much care and good judgment in selecting salesmen. First of all you will secure a complete history of each applicant who seeks employment with your organization, preferably from the day he left school, and the more care and judgment used the smaller will be the per cent of those who fail to make good after they are hired. Well-selected salesmen will make good in more than fifty per cent of the cases and especially so when they are given extra training by the house hiring them.

If the Sales Manager realizes the importance of each salesman to the success of his selling plan, he is not going to risk selecting his sales force by a hit and miss procedure; on the contrary, he will use the greatest possible judgment in dealing with each prospective salesman, giving preference to “average” men with special training, and rejecting the applicants whose records show they are not “job holders.”

In another report we also take up specific methods of selecting salesmen; a consideration of which will fortify resourceful sales managers with points of view that will prove of great value in selecting salesmen to sell particular products or special lines of merchandise.

Check it here - STP Report 3 Selecting the Right Salesman

It is impossible in a general treatment of the Principles and Methods of Sales Management to give specific plans that will fit all lines of business; but, recognizing the originality and adaptability of the average Sales Manager, we feel confident that you will get from our outline suggestions that will prove of value in securing men who will properly fit into your organization.

Standard for Hiring Salesmen

Scientific Sales Management is interested primarily in records, in standards, in the human factor. It is not so concerned with selling goods as it is in selling them in such a manner that the salesman, the customer and the employer are all treated with the utmost fairness and the result is profit and satisfaction for all. Thus it comes about that Scientific Sales Managers have a definite standard by which they hire salesmen. The method of working out the standard varies greatly with different individuals; but the purpose is the same: to employ only such men as are capable of selling the proposition, and to train such men so they will earn the biggest profits for the house and the largest incomes for themselves.

The application blank used by the Scientific Sales Manager reveals at once whether or not a salesman measures up to the requirements of the firm. The Sales Manager's judgment of the man will be based on what the man writes on the application blank, on looking up his references, on a personal interview, and on any other methods he may have of testing the salesman. On all application blanks there should be provided spaces for the applicant to enter his answers to the inquiry if the applicant has studied salesmanship, and if so, with what school. In any case, the end N. S. T. A. SYSTEM OF SALES MANAGEMENT

endeavour is to get exact knowledge concerning a salesman's qualifications before he is hired and not after he is fired.

After the standard for hiring salesmen is worked out, with due consideration for the necessities of the field and the line of goods, an application form is printed, on which the salesman applying for a position can list what the management needs to know. The Sales Manager also builds up his standard from actual interviews with men. He endeavours to make it as practical as possible, and free from red tape. Methods employed by other concerns and application blanks used by large concerns will help the Sales Manager in working out his own standard and application blank for hiring salesmen for his organization.

Securing New Salesmen

One of the important tasks of the Sales Manager is securing salesmen who are to become a permanent part of his sales force. It is hard to get good men, but it is still harder to select those men who are especially qualified to sell one particular line of goods. It is difficult for the Sales Manager to pick out from among those who offer themselves for employment the men who will have the material in them that will insure their immediate earning capacity and ultimate success.

In the old days, before the work of Sales Management became so important a part of commercial life, most any man who could talk about himself in a convincing manner was put on the sales force. True, some endeavour was made to look into his past history.— to ascertain whether or not he could sell merchandise, but little real attention was paid to those points which today are recognized as the distinguishing marks of better-grade salesmen.

Then it was considered the sole function of a salesman to sell the product of his house, regardless as to how he sold it and regardless of the service which he might render the customer. A ORGANIZING THE SALES DEPARTMENT

A salesman was not judged so much by character as he was by what was called personality. Even if he were a “confidence man,” he was sometimes hired provided the firm thought that he could not take advantage of them. Sales Managers had no definite system of judging salesmen; they did not know what definite qualities to seek in men and a salesman was often accepted merely on his personal statements of his sales-getting ability.

Today there are certain qualities that Sales Managers look for in men who are to sell for their houses. Any man who lacks a number of these qualities, or who falls short in the particular qualities which the Sales Manager considers essential to success in his particular line, will not be given an opportunity to work as a salesman for that organization. Even if such a man should get a position as a salesman, the lack of such qualities would sooner or later force him out of selling.

The high standard which has been adopted for salesmen as a class is sufficiently discriminating to weed out incapable salesmen.

In future pages we shall outline the qualifications a man must have to be capable of assimilating and making use of the training that will insure his being a valuable adjunct to a selling organization.

By Advertising

Salesmen can be secured through advertising in daily newspapers, or in weekly or monthly magazines. Many of the advertisements for salesmen fail to bring the right kind of men because the Sales Manager expresses his desire for a number of salesmen in a “loud” advertisement, while the better-class of salesmen do not as a rule answer advertisements that call for numerous salesmen.

This gives a principle that the Sales Manager will do well to consider: Write your advertisement for one or two good sales

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men, for a large number of prospects is the result of a good advertisement. Better write an advertisement for one good man, and get three or four as the result of running it than to write an advertisement for twenty-five or fifty men and get hundreds of applications from men of a calibre who will not fit your requirements.

Salesmen with the qualifications to hold high-grade positions do not make it a regular practice to follow the “salesmen wanted” advertisements. In hard times, good men can be secured through almost any kind of advertising; but, as a general rule, it is necessary to make the bait attractive, and to give a reasonable outline of the qualifications you expect and the remuneration and advancement possible to draw the right kind of applicants. Only a strong, effective advertisement will pull salesmen who have the qualifications to fulfill your requirements.

Advertising should be prepared to get a few first-class men and should be followed up with additional advertising if more men are wanted. It is not profitable to pull a large number of inquiries, the large majority of which will have to be culled out, after costing the firm money through wasted time and energy; or, if employed, through training, expenses, salary, lost goodwill, and so on. It is important that the salesmen who represent a house do not misrepresent it. Proper representation rests upon proper selection of salesmen, and the proper selection of salesmen through advertising is

determined to a large degree by the wording of the advertisement and where it is run.

Through Salesmanship Schools

From the large number of members who wish to locate positions that fit their qualifications through the employment and service department of the National Salesmen's Training Association good salesmen can be secured. These salesmen are of varied experience ORGANIZING THE SALES DEPARTMENT 11

and it is as a rule always possible for a Sales Manager to find among them exactly the type of men he requires. If his line does not absolutely demand salesmen with experience or if he is unable to employ an experienced salesman with the proper qualifications, he can procure, through the source mentioned above, men of character, and determination who have made a careful study of the Art and Science of Selling; men who exhibit strong possibilities as salesmen.

One great advantage that this plan offers is that it weeds out the most unlikely men. It recommends, as far as possible, only those men who can fill the positions, and no charge is made for the service. As a rule, salesmen secured through the department are permanent acquisitions after they have made good; they have been taught to make good in the position they accept, make the position a better one and stay with it.

The recommendations of the Association can be accepted with regard to the qualifications of the individual salesman. It demands references and satisfies itself that the references are O. K. in every particular before it sends an applicant to interview a prospective employer or arranges for an application to go forward by mail.

The endeavour is always made to select the best candidates on its lists to fit a particular position. This is sometimes carried to the* - point of making special tests of the applicant's fitness for a certain position, and the giving of special instructions.

Furthermore, all such applicants can be tested by the Sales 4- Manager in much the same way as salesmen who apply from having learned of an opening from general sources of information.

Then the Sales Manager can determine the value of the applicant for himself. It is important that it be known whether or not a man can fill a position in every important particular from the start, and whether he can be further trained in those elements that will increase his usefulness to the firm and his power to earn.

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By Field Organizers

Salesmen who have proved their worth are often made travelling Sales Managers or turned into field organizers and sent out with instructions to employ, coach, and teach salesman how to sell.

Every experienced salesman who possesses organizing and executive ability is a potential Sales Manager. The field organizer is the Sales Manager of his field. He is obliged to do, on a small scale, what his Sales Manager is doing on a large scale. There are big possibilities in this plan in some lines. Some men receive larger incomes in salaries and commissions as field organizers than many Sales Managers.

In hiring salesmen, the field organizer of a firm who has hundreds of representatives consults with local merchants, bankers, and customers of the house. He advertises in local newspapers while at his hotel, inviting those who are interested in increasing their earning power and getting into Salesmanship to apply to him thereat a specific time. He may have some ability as a speaker, in which case he may give publicity lectures, in which he features the goods of his house. Since the advent of moving pictures they have been used to advantage through slides and films which the field organizer carries with him.

The field organizer may go so far as to have printed "salesmen wanted" circulars, cards, and blotters, distributing them so as to attract the attention of those who might be interested in selling him their services. In this connection it should be remembered that the field organizer as treated here trains and coaches salesmen to sell in their local fields. He is a travelling Sales Manager.

He hires salesmen usually on a commission basis, and puts him to work on his campaign. He shows that sales can be made by making them himself in their presence. He then shows them how to do the work and gets them started in their territories.

If a number of salesmen are employed in a certain city or territory
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Tory, and a number of territories are covered by the field organizer, he puts each territory in charge of a field manager, who* accepts the responsibility for the results obtained by the men under him.

If the field organizer can get the right kind of a man for field manager, he lets the field manager train the men after he himself has coached the field manager. The larger the number of men employed, the greater necessity there is for executives. A constant succession of Sales Managers in the territories may be necessary to get the best results.

Through Your Own Salesmen

Salesmen who are on the road have an excellent opportunity to get in touch with other high-grade men. From among those they meet it is often possible for the Sales Manager to secure salesmen who will make good with his line of goods, and who will be acceptable to his sales force. No man should be employed who will not fit in well with the sales organization or with the men already working for the firm. To employ an undesirable outsider hurts the cooperation between the members of the sales force.

When the salesman employed has been recommended to the house by a salesman employed by it — one who has the confidence of his firm and the respect of his associates — there is little likelihood that there will be any objection to the man on the part of the sales force in general. Each man will realize that he can get a friend of his on the force if that friend has the qualifications to make a success with the firm.

One of the factors to be here considered is the placing of responsibility on the salesman for the new man. Each salesman should be made to feel that it is his duty to recommend for employment only such men as are likely to be a credit to the concern. He will then avoid recommending relatives and friends who would be a detriment to the success of the business, and will seek among his

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friends and acquaintances men who will add to the strength of the house.

No salesman who does not “grade up” should be pressed to seek employment with the firm. All applicants who seem to be able to render valuable service should be shown that the firm is exactly the institution which will give them an opportunity to make the most of themselves by giving scope to their particular abilities.

Prospective sales-timber located by your salesmen would be shown the advantages of connecting with the firm, and then casually given the name of the Sales Manager by the salesman or given the card of the salesman, with the idea that if he is not sufficiently interested to go the rest of the

way in seeking employment by the house, that he is not the proper man for the position.

Office and Factory Employees

When the Sales Manager employed by a manufacturer is in close touch with the factory he is sure to find some ambitious men in the factory — men who want to get into selling and who feel they are out of place in the manufacturing end of the business. As a matter of fact, for lack of an opportunity with the firm for whom they are working, many capable factory men leave the firms for whom they work and seek employment where they will have an opportunity to get into Salesmanship.

The discerning Sales Manager who needs men, or who is likely to need them in the future, does not neglect his opportunity to interest the right kind of men in the factory, and will often go out of his way to lend them books on selling or to train them for selling, as the needs of the firm demand. Whenever there is a factory hand who seems to possess the requisite education and personality to make a success in selling, the Sales Manager will make no mistake in talking the matter over in a general way, and thus finding out whether or not that employee might become interested in selling.

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When a clerk, a stenographer, a bookkeeper, or a correspondent has been in the office taking care of the salesmen's records or doing other work for years, he often expresses a desire to try his hand at selling. Many of these men would be glad to break into selling, which gives them an opportunity to get into outside work, to travel, to develop and earn more money. The Sales Manager, when he has a likely candidate for salesmanship work, will do well to encourage him in every possible way and arrange for him to make a study of salesmanship to the end that ultimately that man will be a star in the sales organization.

Either the office man or the factory hand, once he has received training and has seen that he can take his place in the sun, is likely to turn out an excellent sales getter. Such men have a knowledge of the inside of the organization that it would take even an experienced salesman years to

obtain. Cultivating the men at hand is one way to solve the problem of securing salesmen.

Securing Salesmen Through Customers

Many good salesmen are located through users of goods. For example, should a salesman have a customer who has a number of salesmen call upon him, that customer can often tell whether or not the salesmen who call on him are strong in personality, how they impress him as to character, mental ability and determination. If a salesman has all these qualities, and the customer mentions this fact to a salesman for the house, an investigation will be in order as it is quite possible that the salesman is not located as well as he would be with the Sales Manager's house.

Further, many a business man who is only making a fair living running a store, and yet who is a good salesman, may be induced to sell out at the first opportunity and connect with the salesman's firm. The reasons for a retail merchant's lack of earning power may be his location, business conditions, limitations of his 16 N. S. T. A. SYSTEM OF SALES MANAGEMENT

line, etc. Many a positive salesman has found himself through the effort of another salesman to give him a lift into a position where his talents and energy would receive recognition, and remuneration that approaches what he is worth.

Many a retail merchant can make more money as a travelling salesman than he will ever make in the business that he is carrying on. Better by far that such a man be given his opportunity to make good on a salary, or on a commission, than to have the distinction of being in business for himself, and only taking out an existence. The salesman who is looking for associates for himself at the behest of his Sales Manager will do well to look into the abilities and talents of his customers.

The Sales Manager who needs good salesmen may go so far as to send out well-written circular letters to the trade, in which he asks his customers to look about for high-grade men whom he might persuade to connect with his firm. The customer may have a relative or friend who has just the qualifications the Sales Manager desires, as well as a knowledge of

salesmanship, selling experience and knowledge of the territory. Thus the Sales Manager is giving the customer a chance to do his relative or friend a favour, besides getting the right kind of a man for his sales force.

The Spare-Time Salesmen

Most manufacturers and wholesalers do not countenance the carrying of side lines by their salesmen, yet it often happens that a Sales Manager who has a specialty to sell can employ the services of men who work for established firms to good advantage, and to the profit of the salesmen. These salesmen work their regular trade with the established line of merchandise of the firm regularly employing them, and at the same time or during their spare time make as many sales as possible with the special line of goods they carry.

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In some cases, a salesman can make but a few calls in a town, and has to wait over one or several hours for transportation facilities. Under such conditions, it is possible that the Sales Manager is not justified in preventing the salesman from using this time in selling a specialty, especially if the sales of the individual concerned do not suffer from carrying the extra line.

Young college men are often employed by Sales Managers to sell in spare time. After school hours, especially in the larger cities, there is an opportunity to sell certain lines of goods. The Sales Manager who is exploiting such a line can use the services of college men to good advantage in particular localities.

In the summer time many teachers are out of employment.

Such persons are usually interested in profitably employing their time, although they are not always concerned with making money.

Often they attend summer schools, but many of them prefer to sell goods, for the extra money, experience and general information they gain in this way. In fact, many excellent salesmen get their start selling goods in the summer season, while not teaching school.

An instance of securing men for spare time sales work is illustrated in the case of a prominent Chicago real estate firm that advertised for employed men. When the right kind of men applied, they were engaged for spare

time work and were sent out to the subdivision the firm was selling, on Saturday afternoons, and Sundays. These employed men also made every effort to interest their friends and others during the week, and much evening canvassing was done to get business. In this way, a large subdivision was closed out in less than six months, which it was thought would take at least three years by the regular sales force.

Organizing Through Colleges

The students of any college, university or technical school offer a fertile field for material for Sales Managers who deal in lines that 18 N. S. T. A. SYSTEM OF SALES MANAGEMENT

appeal particularly to the class of students they would interest.

There is not always sufficient commercial interest in students of divinity, for instance, to make them likely candidates for a sales force, but a religious educational proposition might appeal to this class of men, and excellent salesmen can be procured from among those enrolled.

In one of the large cities of the country, a commercial school enrolled a large number of working girls and young men. These calls had to be made of an evening — after working hours. This necessitated a sales force that could do evening work. A number of college students were employed and excellent results secured. The compensation for each sale was good. The college men could only make about six calls per week, out of which two or three prospects were closed; but the income from the two to three enrolments was such as to be acceptable to the college men.

Engineering schools train a large number of high-grade men in mechanical lines, and many of these men find, after they have finished their Courses, that they prefer to get into the selling end of business, rather than into mechanical or engineering work.

From among the graduates of such schools the Sales Manager can take his pick of men who are especially fitted to serve him, and then give them the training in Salesmanship which will make the mall-round technical salesmen.

Possibilities the Sales Manager Meets

From among the canvassers and solicitors who call on him during the day's work, the Sales Manager will be able to select those men who give promise of developing into the grade of salesmen he demands. He can, through his knowledge of Salesmanship and human nature, interest such men in his proposition, to the extent that they will be willing to drop the products they are selling, in favour of his organization.

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Many men now canvassing and soliciting are doing this class of work while looking for the opportunity that will enable them to get into selling higher-grade merchandise. Men who can face one prospect right after another with a smile, and who make a living in ordinary canvassing, can often secure better than average results from the start when they begin to sell a high-grade specialty or staple line. They have had experience in meeting the public that is a valuable asset and with proper encouragement and training they can handle bigger propositions with credit and profit.

Many advertising solicitors and insurance salesmen are always ready to change when they see an opportunity for something better or a position in a commercial line. Many of the advertising and insurance men are earning incomes that are far above what the average Sales Manager can afford to pay, but are willing to get into a position selling the trade that pays a steady salary and small commission rather than do straight commission work and sell the consumer. Because a salesman admits he is earning more money than you can pay him is no reason you have to meet his price. You may be able to hire him on other inducements.

If the Sales Manager's house is a large one, scores of salesmen keep in touch with it to sell their products that might be required by the office, the factory, the sales department, and so on. From among these salesmen the Sales Manager can choose men who will fit into his organization. It is well for him to have the employees or executives of other departments who purchase from these men send them around to see him — if a particular salesman impresses that employee or executive as being a logical prospect for a selling position with the firm.

Discovering Latent Abilities

Many a man has lived and died with the abilities of a good salesman buried just under the surface of his consciousness. He was 20 N. S. T. A. SYSTEM OF SALES MANAGEMENT

undiscovered and lived his life in a narrow sphere, or in a line of business that did not especially suit him, because his latent liabilities not developed by another man who had made good. One of the chief sources of success of the scientific Sales Manager is his ability to pick men, to get the right kind of salesmen for his firm from every profession, business or trade.

It is not as important where a salesman comes from, as it is that you get him; and then train him in your methods and how to sell your goods. It is not true that every man can become a successful salesman; but, without regard for whether salesmen are born or made, it has been found that excellent men for any proposition can be picked up by a Sales Manager who is on the look out in society, in church, in business, in his daily work among men.

What a man is now doing makes little difference to the hardheaded scientific Sales Manager. If that man has the basic qualities of character and personality that will insure his making a success as a salesman, the Sales Manager usually manages to get him on his sales force, and trains him specifically for the kind of selling he must know to be a success in the particular business.

As an illustration of how Sales Managers can pick their men, the following suggestions may be profitable. A high grade stenographer may develop into an office appliance or typewriter salesman. Trained mechanics as well as men who show a decided interest in mechanical lines are likely to make good in mechanical lines and in selling machines, etc., that require a mechanical demonstration. An electrician often develops into a good man for selling electrical appliances. A musician can often make more money selling musical instruments than he can in his profession. On the other hand, there are many men in other positions who may belong to your particular field of selling; but who have not yet discovered themselves —

who have not up to this time had their natural salesmanship abilities brought to the surface.

There should be a measure of close cooperation between the ORGANIZING THE SALES DEPARTMENT 21

Sales Managers of all large Manufacturers and Wholesalers who employ a number of Sales Managers for different departments or* different territories. At times a salesman who is not making good with the general line would be able to secure big results with the specialty line. Some men who are not good specialty salesmen» make the best kind of general line salesmen. Also watch the matter of territory as salesmen who have failed in one territory have been known to secure a big volume of business when changed to another territory.

Selecting Branch Managers

A branch manager must first of all be a good salesman. Then he must have a willingness to cooperate with the house and maintain the reliability that the house needs in such an employee. He should be a good judge of salesmen fitted for the particular line of goods he himself is to handle, able to quickly handle any new or difficult situation arising in his particular territory — if he does not know his territory when he begins his work.

He is in charge of and must be a Sales Manager of his branch office, or his particular territory, just as much as the scientific Sales Manager is in charge of the company's business as a whole.

He may not be exactly the same type of man as the head Sales' y Manager, but he should know enough of the better ways of getting results in selling that he can be depended upon to work harmoniously and profitably with the head Sales Manager.

In short, if a salesman shows that he can shoulder responsibility, and is willing to take and give orders — yet at the same time has initiative — if he can classify his work and subdivide his territory to get as good or better than expected results, and has, added to this ability, the comprehensive knowledge of human nature that will enable him either to stimulate or discipline other salesmen, he is a logical candidate for a position as branch manager.

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Pace-makers — the star salesmen — are those salesmen who make the most sales in a given time in a set territory. Their work is used as a standard for other salesmen. There is a vast difference in ability and scope of adaptability between salesmen, and this makes for a corresponding difference in the amount of sales each man makes. The pace-maker is a simulator of other salesmen, for they try to make a showing which will at least not leave the min the shade of mediocrity when the star salesman comes in with a success-load of orders.

Oftentimes it is the pace-maker who is chosen to manage a branch office, or who is promoted to the position of Sales Manager. If the pace-maker has managing ability, which is often the case, he is logical candidate for advancement with his firm, and the Sales Manager who needs such men to keep his average salesmen at a high level of efficiency in selling can hold out such advancement as an incentive for the consideration of high grade salesmen.

The Sales Manager as a Student of Human Nature

There is perhaps no single class of men who have greater opportunities to become sound judges of men than Sales Managers.

The average Sales Manager is constantly meeting salesmen, and he will find among the applicants for positions with his firm all types and temperaments of men. In the course of time, if he is reasonably observant, and makes an endeavour to judge men from the principles and methods herein outlined, he will be able to pick his salesmen with an accuracy of judgment that will insure the quality of his selling force.

The Sales Manager is chiefly interested in the ability of a salesman to serve his house. He wants men who can and will cooperate with him. He wants men who are broad-minded, who can be encouraged or disciplined as occasion demands. He wants ambitious men; at least, he wants men who are ambitious enough to seek

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advancement with his house. The success of a business depends on the ambition of the men in it, and upon the desire of each to make a success with the house employing him.

A "high-powered" salesman who has held from five to fifteen other positions during a ten or fifteen year period may for a time make a great deal of money for his house as well as for himself, but in the long run an organization that employs and trains average men reaps the greatest harvest of profits. The occasional "star" salesman is necessary to stimulate the average salesmen to the top of their efficiency, but he is so scarce an element in modern business that he is not the factor he has been given credit for being.

Many Sales Managers have organizations of such a nature that they require exceptional men, even though such men stay with the firm but a short time.

What the average Sales Manager wants, however, is men who will stay with his firm, once they are employed and trained, and who will help him build it up to a point where all concerned are making money — the house, the salesmen, and the Sales Manager. Then, and only then, is the Sales Manager satisfied that his sales force is composed of the right kind of selling timber.

Building Up a Sales Manual

The importance of a Sales Manual has in the last few years been recognized as never before. The largest firms in the United States employing salesmen have gone so far as to hire outside counsel to gather, compile and write such Sales Manuals. The result of the Sales Manual, no matter how crude it may be in the beginning, is a better equipped sales force. Some Manuals, of course, represent only the experiences of the salesmen of the house, taken in shorthand at meetings and conventions, and boiled down until it has become a guide for future salesmen to follow.

The best type of Sales Manual is no doubt that written by a 24 N. S. T. A.
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sales expert who can express himself in apt, forceful language. It contains much material besides the answers to common objections.

It usually outlines the policy of the house, gives the fundamental principles of Salesmanship, shows how these principles have been applied to the business of the firm, and why the salesman should follow such principles. It may also give several suggestive sales talks, or a general sales talk which is to be followed more or less closely by all salesmen.

First of all, a Manual should contain a strong introduction. It should say something about the rewards of Salesmanship, and particularly the rewards that will accrue to the salesman from working for the house issuing it. It should outline the factors of success and show the value of study. In fact, it should show that study is necessary to success in selling, just as it is necessary to success in any other profession.

Then it should take up the manufacture of the merchandise, and give the salesman any inside information he may need that will better help him to dispose of the goods. Regardless of the product handled, the Sales Manager can show its distinguishing characteristics, and select selling points that will make it stand out from among other articles of its class in the salesman's and customer's minds. All merchandise has certain inherent properties, which, although an outline may seem dry to the Sales Manager can be shown to advantage by a good salesman, and will help sell the goods.

Before the Manual is begun, the Sales Manager should draw from his salesmen and from customers all possible information about the uses of his merchandise. It is evident that the ability of an article depends on the great number of uses it has. For instance, a sewing machine oil may sell only to those who have sewing machines until the Sales Manager shows his salesmen that it is equally valuable for oiling typewriters, for preventing rust on steel knives, ORGANIZING THE SALES DEPARTMENT 25

for oiling adding machines and fire arms, for renewing typewriter ribbons, etc.

After a clear statement of the merchandise, from production to use, has been made, clear directions on how to use the manual, not only when beginning to sell but while in actual selling, are given.

The purpose of the Manual is to have a clear-cut exposition of Salesmanship as it applies to the merchandise of the house; and the Manual is valuable to a salesman only insofar as he makes constant and continued use of it.

Samples are also taken up, and the salesman is told how to learn them quickly and thoroughly. Different firms have their own ideas on how to handle customers, and pertinent suggestions are made in the Sales Manual, that each salesman will handle each customer to the satisfaction and according to the policy of the house.

A brief statement of what the salesman's outfit should contain is often made at this point, and the salesman is told how to go about obtaining such material as he lacks to make his equipment complete.

To avoid turning the salesman into his territory without a method of getting to the customer, he is taught how to analyse his territory — in those cases where the house does not make a complete analysis for him. He is shown how to divide his territory by sections, whether this be done by towns, counties, states; or simply, > by neighbourhoods. His procedure in new territory is outlined.

The purpose of the Sales Manual is to think as far as possible for the salesman until he has facts and information on which he cant base his own thinking. He is supposed to do the creative thinking in the field; but the house tries to give him suggestions and information that will make it possible for him to avoid the errors others have made until they had

worked out definite plans of action. Suggestions are also given on how to proceed in old territory, and thus the salesman is prepared to get the best results in the easiest, quickest and cheapest way.

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After the preliminary preparation above outlined, the Sales Manual takes up methods of gaining an audience, if possible giving the one best way used by the salesmen of that house — or several suggestive ways if the best way cannot be ascertained. At least a few principles are laid down which will be of value to the salesman selling the merchandise. If the salesman is supposed to ask preliminary questions of the prospect, these questions are taken up, and standard ways of asking them given.

Usually the salesman is given a definite way to show his samples.

He is told how to make his demonstrations most effective. And last, but most important to his success — as well as the house — he is shown how to close under varying conditions, and if he fails to close at first trial how to come back and continue his sales talk until it is possible to close.

Naturally, it is not always possible to give a complete outline of the merchandise sold by a house, for some manufacturing establishments make and sell thousands of articles. A general talk on these goods is all that is possible in the Sales Manual, which should give above all else, selling commonsense as it applies to the particular line of goods, the policy of the house, and the type of customers to whom the salesmen will appeal. A few pages may be devoted to specialties of the house, or separate technical manuals may be written to take up specialties.

Toward the end of the Manual the salesman may well receive general suggestions on how to help himself, as well as what the house is willing and anxious to do for him. He should be shown his relation to the Company, and his importance in the selling scheme.

He should be urged to shoulder his responsibility, and make a success of himself. Some Manuals go so far as to include health advice. Still others include articles on Salesmanship, or poems that urge a man to greater achievement.

It is the consensus of opinion among Sales Managers and sales ORGANIZING THE SALES DEPARTMENT 27

men, however, that the closer a Sales Manual stays to facts the better it will take with most salesmen. A Sales Manual, in its final analysis, is the combined knowledge and wisdom about merchandise and Salesmanship boiled down so the salesmen can benefit by it in the greatest possible number of ways.

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SELF -QUIZ OR SELF-ANALYSIS PERSONAL EFFICIENCY TESTS

1 —do i investigate the possibilities*of my firm's merchandise and territory, plan out the sales to be made, ascertain the amount of the average sale, determine how each sale should be conducted, and indicate the class of prospective customers to whom the strongest appeals can be made t

2 .—do i

see that the sales department can grow only by taking upon myself responsibility

for all things particularly connected with my work, and then delegating to those under me the particular responsibilities they are best fitted to carry?

3— do i

help the salesmen under me to analyse their problems and exchange experiences so

that each may profit from all the others?

4 . — do i

control my time, my temper; measure up to my present responsibilities and plan

to take on future ones; learn my firm's merchandise and study the territory to

get and keep control of the sales force under me?

5— do i

secure a complete history of each applicant who seeks employment with my firm,

preferably from the day he left school, realizing that much care and good judgment is necessary so that the men i select will be suitable for the class of

selling they must do?

6 —do i

avoid selecting salesmen by a hit or miss plan, use the greatest possible judgment in dealing with each prospective salesman, give preference to “ average

" or “ superior " men with special training that fits them for handling my line?

7 .— do i

reject those applicants whose records show they have had every opportunity with

several good firms but have not made good?

8 —do i

perceive that scientific sales management is interested primarily in records, in

standards; and that its chief purpose is to see that the salesman, the customer,

and the employer are all treated with the utmost fairness, to the end that all receive profit, service or satisfaction?

9 . — do i

base my judgment of a prospective salesman on what he writes on the application

blank, on looking up his references, on a person Ali interview, or on any other

methods that i have found helps in the selection of good men to sell my firm's

goods t 10 —do i endeavour to get exact knowledge concerning a

salesman's qualifications before he is hired, working out my standard for hiring

salesmen from actual interviews with men?

11 . — do

i make my application blank free from red tape and practical, being guided by

my own experience and through the study of the application blanks used by other

firms?

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the sales department 29

12. — do i

ascertain those particular qualities that make a sales man valuable to my

house, taking into consideration the fact that a man who lacks a number of the

qualities may not be a good man for my firm's line

13. — do i

avoid hiring those whose lack of particular qualifications will sooner or later

force them out of selling our line f 14. — when advertising in daily newspapers,

weekly or monthly magazines, do i write my advertisement for one or two

good salesmen, rather than for a large number of men, depending upon the

completeness of my ad to bring me a large number of applicants ?

15— do i

include in my ad, no matter where run, a reasonable outline of the qualifications and experience i expect, as well as the remuneration and the advancement my firm offers so that i can draw the right kind of applicants?

16. — do i

avoid running ads that pull a large number of inquiries ' the large majority of

which will have to be culled out, after costing the firm money through wasted

time and energy; but endeavour to get a few first-class men at a time, so that

my firm will not lose money through training, expenses, salary ,loss of good will, etc., on “ impossible ” salesmen?

17. — do i

perceive that proper representation of my firm , its policies and merchandise ,

depends upon proper selection of salesmen through advertising, and that quality

of the salesmen i secure through advertising and other sources is determined to a

large degree by careful wording of the advertisement ,and where it is run ?

18. — do i

know that every experienced salesman who possesses organizing and executive

ability is a potential sales manager;that a field organizer is a sales manager of his field, and is obliged to do, on a smaller scale, what his sales manager is doing on a larger scale?

19. — do i

advise my field organizer to consult with local merchants'

Bankers,

and customers, advertise in local newspapers while at his hotel, inviting those

who are interested in selling to apply to him there, at a specific time; call

his attention to the value of publicity lectures, featuring the goods of

the house; with and without slides and moving pictures?

20. — do i

train the field organizer so that he in turn can train field managers to develop

and coach salesmen to sell my firm's merchandise

21. — do 7

urge the salesmen under me to keep on the lookout for good sales timber that

will fit into the sales force in a harmonious manner, who have experience with

my line; or special qualifications that will insure their making good?

22. — do 7

keep in close touch with the factory, locate those men who are ambitious to get

into selling, select those who have requisite education and personality, lend or

advise them to purchase a course or books on selling or definitely train them—

and thus add to the strength and personnel of the sales force ?

23— do i

keep on the lookout, in the sales office , for the man who would b glad to break into selling, and whose experience 30 n. S. T. A. System of sales management

Has been

such as to give every indication of success with proper training?

24. — do i

appreciate that one of the excellent ways of getting cooperation from factory

and office employees is to offer 7 hem advancement when thoroughly merited ,

through employment as salesmen?

25. — do i

obtain from users of my firm's goods the names of salesmen they know who are of

strong personality, are impressive as to character, mental ability and

development, and investigate the possibility of connecting such salesmen— if of

the right calibre— with my house?

26. — do i

investigate 11 live" merchants whose earning power is limited by location, business conditions, limitations of line, etc.,with a view to employing such merchants , if i find they will be good sales timber for my firm?

27. — do i

consider whether or not it would be advantageous to send out a circular letter

to the trade asking the names of competent men who might be induced to connect

with my sales force, when I am urgently in need of salesmen?

28. — if I

have a proposition which can be handled in spare time by travelling or city salesmen, do I work out my selling plan so as not to interfere with the regular

lines of those I employ, that I may be assured they will not give up my proposition because it interferes with their regular lines?

29— if my

proposition is of the right character, do I consider the employment of college

men, teachers, preachers, and others, who might be induced to give all of or part of their spare time during definite seasons of the year when I need them?

30.— if

my firm sells highly technical goods, do I keep in touch with the graduates of

technical schools and colleges, so that I may have a large number of prospects

some of whom sooner or later may become capable salesmen?

31 —do I,

in an ethical way, keep on the lookout for suitable salesmen to sell my firm's

line from among the canvassers and solicitors who call on me, my fellow executives, and the employees under us, during the day's work?

32 —do I

fully appreciate that my success as a sales manager will depend upon my ability

to select the right kind of salesmen?

To sell my

firm's goods from every business, profession or trade?

33 —do i

disregard what a man is now doing in making my judgment looking for those basic

qualities of character and personality that will make him successful with my firm's line after i have trained him?

34 .— do i

avoid, as a general rule, employing salesmen whose training and experience has

been very much different than required in my line— except in those cases when a

man strongly impresses me with his personality and selling resourcefulness?

35— if my

firm carries a varied line of specialties, which a handled by different types

of salesmen, do i guard against " firing" ' a poor salesman until after i

have ascertained whether organizing the sales department

31

Or not he

would be successful in selling a different specialty which my firm handles?

36. — do i

select branch managers who are good salesmen, who are willing to cooperate, who

will add to the firm's reputation ,who themselves are good judges of salesmen

who can quickly handle new or difficult situations that arise in their territories or who

have a comprehensive knowledge of the territories in which they are to work?

37. — do i

select only those salesmen as branch managers who know enough of the better ways

of getting results in selling that they can be depended upon to work with me ,

harmoniously and profitably ?

38. — do i

seek as branch managers those salesmen who show that they can shoulder responsibilities , who are willing to take and give orders— yet at the same time

have initiative— who can classify their work and sub-divide their territories to get as good or better than expected results?

39 — do i

select as branch managers those who have that comprehensive knowledge of human

nature that enables them either to stimulate or discipline the salesmen they in

turn will employ?

40 .—do i

use pace makers or “star” salesmen, as standards for other salesmen, and urge my average salesmen to make a showing which will at least not leave them in

the shade of mediocrity when a star salesman comes in with a success-load of orders?

41 —do i

select pace makers, who have managing ability, as logical candidates for positions as branch managers— holding out such advancement to the sales force to

stimulate its members to a high degree of efficiency?

42 . —do i

know that if i am reasonably observant, and make an endeavour to judge men from

the principles and methods herein outlined, i will be able to select my salesmen

with an accuracy of judgment that will insure the quality of my sales force?

43. — do i

seek to employ men who are broad-minded , who can be encouraged without

becoming overbearing , and can be disciplined without becoming antagonistic?

44 —do i

give careful consideration to the present mental calibre of salesmen who have

been long with the house, and have made successful records, employing men of

similar calibre in the future, so that they will become permanent assets?

45. — if

my organization requires “high power” salesmen, do i workout my selling scheme so that such men can make profits that will satisfy them and keep them

with my house, even though the commission on the individual sale might not be

sufficient to hold them without a special selling plan?

46. — do i

organize the sales department to train the salesmen under me and to give them

the utmost cooperation, so that they will make sufficient profits for the house

and satisfactory incomes for themselves?

47 . —do i

realize that when the house makes its legitimate profit ,when the customer receives courteous, efficient service, and 32 n. S. T v a. System of sales management

When i

receive absolute cooperation from the salesmen undermine, then, and only then,

can i be sure that my sales force is composed of the right kind of selling timber?

48.— do i

utilize this set of self quizzes from day to day , to the en 1 that i will proceed on a scientific rather than a guesswork basis in organizing the sales department?

Contact

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