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THE MOTOR DEALER REPORT FROM AUSWILD & CO  
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# Five Constants in Successful Auto Sales

According to **Richard F Libin**, author of the book "Who Stopped the Sale?", there are five things that have been constant when it comes to successful selling and driving profits –

1. A Good Attitude
2. Education and Learning
3. A Solid Process
4. Helping Customers Buy
5. Developing Relationships

## Attitude Is Everything

Maintaining a positive attitude is the first step in converting customers into buyers and then long-term clientele. Focusing on the negative – lower sales, higher over-head, problems with the economy or even a "bad morning," – shifts attitudes and hurts performance. Which would you choose, a positive attitude that drives a successful day or a negative attitude that becomes a self-fulfilling prophecy?

## Education and Learning

Managers must educate and help everyone learn from their experiences, good or bad. Education and learning is not a one-time thing; it is ongoing. Approach education and learning in the same way a professional sports team or coach does. They hold practices for hours every day to prepare for a game that lasts a couple hours at most. They teach new plays, watch films to study the competition, share the latest information on strategy and fitness, run their team through practice and provide feedback.

When managers embrace this commitment, they will develop professional sales athletes. Managers must teach salespeople to use a customer-focused approach, not high-pressure sales tactics. They should demonstrate not only how the process works, but their willingness to lead and work with them.

Monitor, assess, pinpoint, learn and correct selling problems. Finally, in addition to their teams, managers should train and educate themselves. But, that's just the beginning, not where it should stop.

## A Solid Process

The cornerstone of successful sales teams and customer-centric environments is a solid process. Without it, nothing else can be accomplished. These steps can help define and refine a process that creates an exceptional customer experience at every point of interaction.

1. Identify existing points of interactions that influence their experience. Examine the existing process to be sure it is working. If it isn't, change it.
2. Determine whether every person understands the customer experience the business is striving to create.
3. Imagine what a new, improved or expanded customer experience would be like without limitations.
4. Define the new experiences, refinements and changes and their points of interaction. Establish systems and processes. Set baseline standards – the minimum every person must meet every time.

5. Capture best practices – above and beyond the minimum – and share with other people.
6. Communicate, implement and measure.
7. Make sure existing technology complements and supports the process and goals.
8. We do business your way.
9. Re-evaluate, re-evaluate, re-evaluate. Keep looking at everything you are doing to make sure it works. If it doesn't, fix it.

The right process, consistently followed, can make a point of interaction positive, build a loyal client and reinforce the brand. Yet, the best management, systems, processes and practices only are as effective as the people on the front line, those who actually touch the customer.

## Helping Customers Buy

Your job is not to sell; your job is to help your customers buy. It's a core truth of our profession.

Help customers find the exact product or service that meets their needs, wants and desires. In doing so, make sure their experience is positive.

To succeed in this, three things must happen every day, all day. Be 100% on your game and ready to work with a single-minded focus for each client. Ask the right questions, actively listen and learn.

Understand the problems by listening to customers' points of view, so they can guide their selection. Finally, help customers fall in love with the product or service by showing how it improves their lives.

## It's All About Developing Relationships

Any time consumers want to buy a vehicle, they should already know someone at the dealership and have a relationship with them, either through a friend or relative or personal experience. Salespeople with these relationships get and keep business. You know you have a relationship when you call a customer and they answer, when you invite them to dinner and they accept and when you know they won't go anywhere else to buy.

To develop true relationships, salespeople must treat 100% of the prospects who come into the business as buyers. They must help customers find the right product, one that fits their needs, wants and desires. They shouldn't care when they buy, just that when they do, they buy from your dealership. They should follow up, not just after the sale, but continually.

When this happens, salespeople build trust, confidence and referrals.

There are other lessons and practices, but these five have never changed. Keep these five constants at the forefront and watch your business thrive.

*Richard F. Libin is the author of the book, "Who Stopped the Sale?" ([www.whostoppedthesale.com](http://www.whostoppedthesale.com)) and president of Automotive Profit Builders, a firm that works with sales and service departments on customer satisfaction and maximizing gross profits through personnel development and technology. He can be reached at [rlibin@apb.cc](mailto:rlibin@apb.cc) or 508-626-9200 or [www.apb.cc](http://www.apb.cc)*

***Our office will be closed from 12 noon on Friday 21 December until Wednesday 2 January 2019. We take this opportunity to thank you all for your support during the year and to wish you a "Merry Christmas & a Happy New Year!"***

For additional information, please contact your  
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