

The Retail Management Advisors

LEADING A WINNING RETAIL ORGANIZATION

Is your retail organization less than it could be? Are sales below expectations? Productivity down? Do you want to make improvements but are not sure where to start? Actually the answer is quite easy....it's the action that's more difficult.

TRAINING, ENCOURAGEMENT, and ENTHUSIASM will cure 99.9% of your problems.

BUT IT'S EASIER TO JUST HIRE SOMEONE THAT'S ALREADY TRAINED? Well, is it really?

Time after time, when this is the modus operandi for management....you can see the following take place: John comes in, expected to bring his expertise with him. He is immediately accosted with jealousy from someone on the sales floor. He is devastated by the operations personnel telling him how many mistakes he made in writing the tickets. You, the boss, having a bad morning, walk through the store with a scowl on your face. No one really knows what you're mad about. Perhaps it's something the selling personnel have done; perhaps it's not. So ends John's first day.

John's second day begins and someone chidingly asks, "Well, I guess you were high man yesterday, huh?" The operations personnel walks through growling. The cashier says, "Well it's not my job to explain the procedure we use here." The other salespeople say, "That's my customer. Please don't butt in."

GET THE PICTURE? SEE THE PROBLEM?

It's management's responsibility to set the pace, create a professional selling environment....or they can expect John to go right down the tube, previous training and all!

SO WHERE DO I GET GOOD PEOPLE? Again the answer is simple, it's the action that takes diligent effort on management's part.

Owners and management must pay their dues. You have **Salesmanship Responsibilities** too.

If you're having a hard time getting employees, then maybe you're doing a "bad job" of selling applicants on going to work with you. You've got to believe strongly in what you have to offer and then you've got to communicate it effectively. As amazing as it seems, this is what happens too often....The applicant arrives....they are handed an

application....something is mumbled about the pay system and the hours expected. The retailer looks wearily at the applicant and says...."I guess that about covers it, you don't have any questions, do you?"

This is not how merchandise gets sold nor is it an effective way of hiring quality personnel. Muster up some enthusiasm, give 'em a reason, sell 'em on the benefits. Develop a well-planned training program....offer a future. Get personnel off to a good start.

SELL YOURSELF, YOUR COMPANY, AND THEN THE JOB!!!

WHAT NEXT? After the hiring process is completed, management's selling is still not over. (**It Never Is!**). All communication with salespeople should be the same as how you'd like them to treat your customers:

WANT TO CHANGE TO COMMISSION INSTEAD OF SALARY? Prepare. Then sell the benefits.

WANT TO HAVE AN EFFECTIVE CONTEST? Plan it. Announce the contest with enthusiasm. Talk about the rewards, the recognition and honor of winning. Don't just pass out a memorandum with the rules.

WANT TO GET SALES UP? Don't criticize and belittle...Look for ways to pass out praise and recognition for every improvement, no matter how slight.

BUILD CONFIDENCE by bragging on employees in front of their customers and peers. If you expect and tell everyone Johnny is a "bad boy", he probably will meet your expectations. **BUT** if you elaborate on John's best talents, the expertise of your entire sales staff, the efficiency of accounting, cashiering, operations....they will meet your expectations.

You feel good!

Personnel feels good!

Your customers feel good.

Your bottom line feels even better!