

A Really Good Linotype Salesman— What Makes Him Click?

THREE ANGLES ON SALESMANSHIP are presented here by men long experienced in Linotype selling. An agency manager draws from his years on the road to talk to the new Sales Trainee. A seasoned salesman emphasizes his pride and pleasure in being a “spark-plug of civilization,” and a sales alumnus comments on the need for breadth of interests.

Your Career in Selling Linotypes

By J. F. SCHUMAN

Manager, Atlanta Agency

FIRST, we probably should define salesmanship, or what is a salesman. Men gain two results from the effort they put into their daily work. The first is the satisfaction of doing a job that is worth while, that in some measure at least makes this a better world in which to live. The second is compensation, to which a man must look for the material rewards for his efforts to provide opportunity and security for his family.

Of the many occupations and professions through which men fill their places in our economic system, selling is one of the most important but often the least understood. Not too long ago success as a salesman rested on a man's capacity to do the things formerly so commonly associated with a salesman—a glib tongue, a vast store of jokes, a warm hand-clasp and a hearty slap on the back. In fact the goal of the old-school salesman was merely to get the goods into the customer's hands and the money into the salesman's pockets. There are still salesmen whose experience originated in those days and they still try to win by luck rather than by careful application of selling principles.

Today's professional salesman has an entirely different attitude about his profession. He realizes that the very essence of salesmanship is persuasion, which implies voluntary participation by the person persuaded. To him, salesmanship is the power or ability to influence

people to buy at a mutual profit that which he has to sell. Selling may be classed as a trade or a job or a profession, depending on the skill, knowledge and attitude of the person doing it. Selling as a job or trade is simple and commonplace, but as an analytical and advisory service, it has the standing of a profession. The question as to whether, in any buyer-seller relationship, it reaches a professional level is up to the individual salesman.

Sincerely, we do not know of a single business in this great economic system of ours that requires its representatives to have the technical knowledge of the many phases of the industry it serves as required by the Linotype salesmen. And this requirement of technical knowledge lifts you to the professional level. So let us be proud of our position as a Linotype salesman.

Thus today's Linotype salesman is a painstaking, well-trained individual who considers himself in a profession just as much as a doctor, engineer or a lawyer. His goal is to recognize and satisfy his customer's wants and he reaches this goal by a carefully thought-out series of professional procedures involving extensive planning, promotion and presentation.

Modern salesmanship is based on the principle of customer satisfaction. It considers a salesman not only as an instrument of the sale but actually a part of the purchase. For, along with the product, a customer buys

the service of the salesman and the manufacturer whom the salesman represents.

Thus salesmanship is a profession established on the basis of service. When the concept of the salesman is that of giving the maximum of satisfaction in service to his customers, he is rendering a professional usefulness in life. When every sale must be mutually profitable, then sound and lasting relationships between the customer and the salesman representing his company are established and the salesman serves his customers and his company fully by bringing them together and continuing favorable relationship.

One of our great salesmen of this country stated that salesmanship is democracy's motivating profession. No truer words have ever been spoken. The American way of life has given us greater opportunity, greater security and the highest standard of living ever achieved by any people in the world's history. It has taken the cooperation of workmen, farmers, industrialists, inventors, scientists, and consumers to make this possible. But the spark so necessary to motivate all these groups into action is supplied by professional salesmen. Let us be proud that we are Linotype representatives.

What Opportunities Does Selling Linotypes Offer Me?

UNDERSTAND we are not advocating to every man that selling is an ideal career but for those who possess the fundamental qualities which make for success in selling, no profession in the world offers a man greater opportunities. For salesmen have the advantage of carving out their own future and reaping reward for the efforts expended.

Opportunities for selling are everywhere because all merchandise that is produced must be sold. Moreover, many business enterprises usually not thought of as selling organizations are demanding that new employees who meet the public shall have training in salesmanship. Doctors, lawyers, teachers, dentists and other professional men are realizing more and more the knowledge of salesmanship may mean the difference between success and failure in their professions.

The secret of leadership for social and business leaders in every community is their ability to influence the conduct and actions of people. It is a result of a developed personality plus a knowledge of psychology of influencing human behavior. In short, they are salesmen because they know how to sell themselves to everyone they meet. This often does more to bring about success and promotion than years of training in their profession,

although the latter is indispensable. Truly, everyone is a salesman and, regardless of his field, the knowledge of salesmanship provides a greater opportunity for advancement. Again, let's be proud that we are Linotype salesmen!

Chances For Advancement

WHAT about your future? In a recent survey conducted among college seniors to learn what a good job should offer, 54% replied that a chance for advancement was number one. These students might consider the selling field because more and more salesmen are being selected for top executive jobs. The Sales Executives' Club in Chicago recently released figures to show what the presidents of their 250 companies had done before they became presidents. It is interesting to note that 38% came directly from sales, 6% from sales and manufacturing, 4% from sales and finance, or a total of 48% of the 250 presidents came from the selling division of their business.

It is Linotype's policy to look first among their own organization for their executive and administrative personnel. Naturally conditions over which we have no control may make exceptions necessary but the policy and procedures are well established.

You enter a sales organization as a sales trainee and then as you qualify, advance to the various stages of a C, B and A salesman. Then to Manager of a B Agency, to an A Agency, Assistant Director of Sales and Director of Sales. You do not have to seek these promotions, as your performance is carefully checked through the established system. The President of the Company is constantly aware of the results you are obtaining through your efforts in the field.

Naturally, there is not room for everybody at the top but your opportunities are not limited to the sales field. With a selling background the entire field of distribution is open to you. Sales promotion, sales training, advertising, market research, etc. are departments of the Linotype selling organization that need the practical experience of the salesman. Even those fields not generally a part of sales divisions such as personnel, public and industrial relations, etc. need men who are experienced in dealing successfully with people. We are confident, if a chance for advancement is high on your list of what you expect from your work, then the sales field offers you more than any other business.

There is a real career in selling, so let's be proud that we are Linotype salesmen!

I'm Proud To Be a Linotype Salesman

By B. O. BOWERS

OUR Atlanta Agency manager invited me to participate in this discussion under the above title.

Peculiar thing—I never before gave thought to analyzing why I was proud of my status as a Linotype representative but I believe I must be quite proud of it because of the simple fact I like it a lot. I'm a relative newcomer compared to some of my co-workers who have traveled much longer and sold many more Linotypes than I have. This is only my seventeenth year on the road for Mergenthaler.

I once read an article that described the salesman as "the spark-plug of civilization." How true that is in selling the Linotype! When I consider that our machines are composing more than 850 languages and dialects throughout the world, my soul would have to be pretty dead not to thrill with pride to the civilizing and educational influence the Linotype has had on the entire world. Believe it or not, the world is a better place in which to live than in the days when ignorance and superstition prevailed. I, for one, wouldn't even care to go back to the "good old days" of my own memory.

Now, pulling my imagination back to the confines of my own territory, I've sometimes thought I might get bored to death doing anything else besides selling Linotype products. I love to travel because I have an instinctive curiosity about people, places, geography and current events. And being able to satisfy this curiosity and restlessness, and at the same time getting paid for it, leaves no longing for a lot of unfulfilled wishes and dreams.

It might take a new Linotype salesman a while to come by the realization that he is received and welcomed for just what he is—a representative of a company that is honored and respected for its products and its services—and I don't recall a single instance in my seventeen years of selling that any buyer ever actually resented my presence or my business or courtesy-call on him if I remained within bounds of what every man of average intelligence knows to be reasonable conduct. But I have had quite a number of buyers and potential buyers feel slighted if I passed them up, whether they wanted anything or not.

The product of printing and publishing is strictly a business of buying and selling and this is pretty well realized even by the buyer who has a lot of sales resistance himself.

I get considerable satisfaction out of a mutually profitable sale of our product. And the more I am acquainted with our product the more likely I can satisfy

a customer on exactly what he wants. Sometimes I'm irked by all the sales bulletins, new developments and radical changes in Company policies that seem to come along too fast for a busy salesman. We wonder, at times, if we try to fully absorb all the new if we won't forget the old. But it doesn't necessarily work out that way—not if we're keenly interested in what we're doing. So I still fully read and study each letter, each piece of new literature and each new directive from headquarters because I know, if I don't catch it when it comes by the first time, the Company doesn't have time to pitch it our way again. Like a good outfielder in a baseball game, we'd better catch it the first time or we'll lose the game.

I've listened to a lot of other salesmen in their efforts to sell me something. Everytime I spend a dime or a dollar I'm interested in how the transaction is handled by the other party. Not that I expect to copy or adapt my own selling ideas and methods to that of some other successful salesman—I don't believe I could—but I do try to learn what it is about that salesman that draws me back to him on my next purchase. I am profoundly convinced that the more successful salesmen of today work pretty much according to the Golden Rule, consciously or unconsciously. I'm as allergic as you are to an insincere and unreliable salesman and I believe the buyers I call on are just as adept at spotting them as I am.

So it behooves me, in self-defense and for every other good reason, to know as much as I possibly can about my own product because it puts me at ease to feel confident that I know most of the answers correctly. The buyer isn't long in sensing that, if you know what you're talking about, you can more quickly give him the facts and the truth than if he thinks you're groping around for an improvised answer just in order to try to close a sale.

So, I'm proud to be a Linotype salesman because I like the nature of the work. I like the kaleidoscopic patterns I see in my travels; I love to watch the cities and the towns and my customers' businesses grow. And, humanly enough, I also like to watch my children and my savings account grow, and I find enough financial reward in this work to enable me and my family to know we're definitely not in the underprivileged class. And finally I love the realization of knowing when I'm doing a good job because, when and if I'm doing a good job, then I don't have to wait for the boss to tell me—I automatically have that satisfaction.

The Need for Breadth of Interests

BY A FORMER LINOTYPE SALESMAN

To THIS MAN, as a successful Linotype salesman, came the opportunity to become assistant production manager of a metropolitan newspaper. Looking back to his days on the road, he makes the following observations "from the other side of the fence"—now he's a buyer instead of a salesman.

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Looking back now, I'd like to make a suggestion: Pick your Mergenthaler representatives not only on the basis of being good printers, operators, or machinists, but also on the basis of their ability as conversationalists and their *general* knowledge of the newspaper business. By that I mean that a good representative should have, and keep up-to-date on such allied interests, for example, as the supply and price of newsprint, labor matters (scales in the important towns, for example). He should have a rudimentary knowledge of press and stereotype equipment, and make it a point to acquaint

himself with the type and size of press and stereo equipment in the plants on which he calls, etc., etc.

I had the same failing as do most Mergenthaler representatives—confined myself to an interest in the composing room only, and was totally ignorant of other departments in the plants on which I called. I'd surely do it differently now, if for no other reason than that it broadens the scope of interest in which you can find common ground with the customer on whom you are calling. It makes you a much broader personality to the individual on whom you are calling.

After meeting and talking personally with publishers and business managers, I know what those guys think about and talk about and worry about in respect to their business. Believe me, it isn't confined to an interest in typesetting machines, by a long shot, and if all YOU can talk about is machines and composing rooms, you haven't got too much common ground with them, and it is tough to get very closely acquainted.

P.S.—On Sales Technique

THE REALLY GOOD Linotype salesman has developed certain instincts for the making of sales presentations that cover these fundamentals:

Clearness—clear explanation; simple, easily understood terms; clear, audible tones, neither too fast nor too slow.

Conviction—contacts through familiar things; outside authorities quoted; exhibits or supporting data shown.

Variety—changes in expressions, tones, gestures; new ways of telling routine messages.

Interest—change of pace; preservation of a bond of intimacy, holding understanding attention to the point of establishment of confidence; interpretation of emotion by dramatization to intensify impression on hearers' eyes—which are stronger than ear impressions.

Impressiveness—fluent instead of forced, easy instead of strained, natural instead of artificial; spontaneity, earnestness, sincerity.

Restatement—an important step to climax; emphasis by re-tracing important points; assistance to listeners in crystallization of thought.

Action—always, until the end of interview; positive reactions from positive actions; logical reasoning, forceful appeal, emotional climax and emphatic closing.

Backing up these essentials for those major opportunities when a definite sales talk can be presented is the vital qualification of **Constant Dependability**—whether the customer is contacted over a period of six weeks or six months, he must always be made to feel that the salesman is constantly dependable no matter what stress or what circumstances may develop. With the loss of that confidence in the salesman the customer loses everything—interest or desire—and repeat sales are changed to initial orders for the competitor.

The most dangerous situation arises when the salesman reaches the point where he takes a customer for granted! He unconsciously lets down and eventually passes out of the picture. *Moral: Never take a customer for granted! Take him as a constant opportunity and as a constant challenge to your spirit of constructive salesmanship.* Only on this basis can repeat sales be built on a bedrock foundation of everlasting confidence!