



**The Business Side of Selling Recreational Vehicles**

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# **RV Salesperson, Inc.**

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## **Disclaimer**

This book is written in the masculine gender for ease of writing. Michael Learning Group has absolutely no bias to age or sex, and believes that any person who applies himself to the study and practice of RV sales can and should be successful.

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## **WHAT IS RV SALESPERSON, INC?**

### **Thought:**

*The best way to predict the future is to make the future happen.*

**RV Salesperson, Inc.** is a program that teaches salespeople to become better business people. Many salespeople simply run their business by “hit or miss.” They come to work in the morning, take whatever the dealership, the economy, or the manufacturer has to give them, then leave the dealership at the end of the day. But throughout that day they never do anything to actually develop their business, and run their business as if they actually owned it.

### **This is not a selling skills course.**

Salesperson, Inc. has determined that increasing a salesperson’s selling skills alone will not give this individual the tools necessary to attain that next level of success. Once a salesperson learns the basic fundamentals of selling, additional business will come from understanding the business aspect of sales; all of those areas above and beyond the basics that salespeople need to learn.

### **What if salespeople thought of themselves as business people?**

So I started looking at these salespeople sitting at their desks and I asked myself, “if they had overhead to pay, if they had employees to pay, if they had to make sure their

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company profited every single month, would they run their businesses differently, then if they thought of themselves as mere salespeople?” And the ultimate response was a resounding, yes!! They’d have to.

### **Your own business with no investment whatsoever!**

When salespeople get hired into a dealership, they get a free phone, a free desk, a free telephone answering service, a free advertising budget, and a million dollars worth of inventory, with no investment on their part whatsoever. All they have to do is run their business from their desks just as if it was their very own business. Well, that becomes the problem. Most salespeople don’t look at it as a business. They look at themselves as salespeople, and it’s the dealership’s responsibility to get them business.

### **Salespeople need to develop their own business.**

Even if it is the dealership’s responsibility to bring in business, if salespeople want to increase their sales and profits above and beyond their current production, they need to begin looking at the details of their business, aside from selling skills.

### **Business people need to know the numbers.**

For years, salespeople have been told that sales is a game of numbers. The more numbers you do, the more sales you make. The problem is, no one ever taught salespeople how to do the numbers. If a salesperson set a goal of 14 sales and \$4000 per month, he never really knew whether he reached the goal until the end of the month. He also never had a plan of attack on how to reach the goal. So the result was, this salesperson seldom reached his/her goal. It doesn’t have to be this way. By keeping accurate statistics, real life numbers, a salesperson can conceivably predict exactly what needs to be done in order to reach his goal — because the numbers don’t lie.

### **Salespeople need to run their business like a business**

So Salesperson, Inc. developed **RV Salesperson, Inc.**, which teaches salespeople to run their business like a business, as compared to running their business by “hit or miss.” As you read through this manual, you will find everything you’ll need to start thinking and acting like a business person. Once you focus your mind in this direction, the sky will be the limit.

## **MONEY: DO YOU KNOW HOW TO MAKE IT?**

### **Thought:**

*Money won't buy happiness, but it will buy you a lot of things that will make you happy!*

### **Thought:**

*The person who said money isn't everything, probably didn't have any.*

**MONEY** — It's been the focus of every salesperson who ever worked on a commission basis. I've never known another word that respects so much attention, that we've virtually based our whole life on it. And no matter how much you make, it never seems to be enough. The latest statistic I've read says that the average RV salesperson across the United States earns an average income of \$45,000 per year. This is in an industry that claims you can make unlimited income. If this is true, why then don't more salespeople increase their incomes?

**MONEY** — You make it and spend. You save it and invest it. It is the cause of stress, frustration, and divorce. You need it to eat with, to drive your cars with, to heat your homes with. You're criticized when you don't have it, and envied when you do have it. Someone once said that money isn't everything, but it was probably said by someone who doesn't have any. You surely can live with much less, but then you wouldn't have searched for employment in an industry where the hours are long, the rejection is high, and the money is inconsistent. If you wanted a lesser lifestyle, you could have taken a job at McDonalds, received \$6.00 per hour, be guaranteed \$240 every single week, and live off of that. But that must not have been good enough.

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You wanted to make more. So you became an RV salesperson because someone said you could make unlimited income. Then, how are you going to do it?

Let's list some of the most common reasons that I've heard over the years why a salesperson couldn't make unlimited income:

- The economy is down.
- Too many salespeople in the dealership.
- Not enough advertising.
- Not enough customers.
- Not enough RVs.
- Pay plan is terrible.
- My manager isn't strong enough.
- The dealer is mean.

And I'm sure there are many more. But the fact is, none of these reasons have anything to do with the individual salesperson. There's always something or someone else to blame for the fact that a salesperson doesn't make enough money. Some of these reasons could be valid. But I've never heard a salesperson blame himself for not making enough income. That fact is, a salesperson could be to blame. It could be that the salesperson was lazy, wasn't responsible and accountable for his own income, didn't learn the correct way to earn unlimited income, didn't invest in his own career, didn't want to do anything more than the basics. If this is the case, unless this person was handed sales on a silver platter, the chances are he/she wouldn't make it.

This model is dedicated to the individual who is concerned about long-term success, and not just short-term gain. Many of the things I'll talk about would not be of interest to the short-term salesperson. It takes a lot of work and persistence in order to become a professional salesperson who has the potential of earning \$100,000 per year. And in most cases, it is possible despite the dealership, the town, the model line, the management, or even the economy. The most important fact is that it takes a lot of work.

If you are willing to put in the time and effort to be successful, this is the program for you. **RV Salesperson, Inc.** can get you thinking and acting like a highly successful businessperson. Even if you didn't do everything within this program, keep in mind that it's the thought process that will make you successful. As long as your mind is always thinking about what to do, what to change, how to get better, how to get results, you're going to have a better than average chance of getting where you want to go. If you accept mediocrity, that's exactly what you'll get. So, make it happen!

## YOUR ROAD TO SUCCESS

### Thought:

*Successful people do all of the things unsuccessful people don't want to do.*

### What is success?

Success has been defined as *“the progressive attainment of a worthy goal”*. While this is a good general definition, each one of us has our own specific idea about what success means to us. So, what does success mean to you? For some people it means status, prestige, and respect; for others it means power — the ability to influence and command others. But for most people, their definition of success includes financial independence and security.

### What is financial independence?

Like success, financial independence means something different to each of us. A better question might be: *“What amount of income would make you feel financially independent?”*

For some salespeople that might be \$45,000 per year, for others it might be \$100,000. The important thing isn't the amount of money itself. What really matters is how will you make enough money for you to feel financially independent.

Understanding how an RV salesperson's business works is one way to make sure you don't become just another statistic. In order to succeed in RV



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sales, you have to do what unsuccessful salespeople didn't want to do, that is, acquire the knowledge that successful RV salespeople had learned through trial and error.

And you don't even have to go through the costly, painful process of trial and error learning. You can prepare yourself for business success by learning all the activities that go into making your business successful, and by making sure each of them is handled properly.

The other key that determines business success is energy. Energy for business comes from self-motivation. Highly motivated people are successful because their enthusiasm for what they're doing has a positive influence on everyone around them. A high-level of motivation also creates excitement, giving salespeople huge amounts of physical energy, enabling them to accomplish even more.

### **It's important to have the right attitude**

You need to know the business side of RV sales to become successful, but it isn't the only thing you need. The right attitude is equally important — and in my opinion, even more important. Each of us is somewhat different. We each have our own opinions, beliefs, likes, and dislikes. Yet one thing that all successful business people have in common is their attitude. They are highly motivated. They know they can get the job done, and they know they'll succeed. That makes them very positive about themselves and their business.

### **How you can get the right attitude**

The right attitude is the one that winners have. It's the "can-do, never give up" attitude. In order to get the winners attitude, here are some things you need to do:

- **Expect success**

Experts in motivation say that 85 percent of success is based on your attitude, so keep your attitude positive. Look for opportunities in every situation. View setbacks as stepping stones rather than obstacles. Keep working your plan based on realistic goals, and don't become discouraged by setbacks.

- **See yourself as successful**

Form clear mental picture of yourself attaining your goals. See yourself enjoying the kind of success you want. And try to experience the feeling you'll have when you meet your business and personal goals.

- **Prepare yourself for success**

Stay informed about what's going on in the RV business. Read

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positive books and magazines. Listen to success oriented tapes at home and in your car. Attend seminars and workshops to upgrade your education.

- **Associate with positive people**

Spend your time with winners and eliminate the losers in your life.

- **Act like a winner**

Positive thinking and positive thought, to yourself as well as to others, are the ways to stay mentally healthy, just as positive health habits are the ways to stay physically healthy. Get motivated and stay motivated.

### **Habits are the key to success**

Everyone has habits. The difference between someone who succeeds and someone who fails is the kind of habits they have. Bad habits are easy to form, but hard to live with. Good habits are harder to form, but they will ultimately lead to success.

Failures generally find it difficult to sacrifice the immediate pleasure bad habits may offer. That's why they don't accomplish much. Successful people, on the other hand, realize that success depends on them. They're willing to put their long-term goals ahead of short-term pleasures by cultivating the habits that lead to success.

The major difference between winners and losers is inconsistency. Winners are consistently just a little bit better. They keep at it and they keep trying to improve. So strive to become just a little better each day. Keep at it and don't be discouraged by setbacks. The amount of persistence will measure your belief in yourself.

### **I know you can do it**

It all boils down to how motivated you become, and how much business sense you attain. You can measure your motivation by your commitment to your business. If you're committed to making your business successful, and you make the effort to prepare yourself with the necessary business skills, you're bound to succeed — provided you stay with it.

So get yourself ready for business success. Be clear about your goals and get motivated to accomplish them. Learn as much as you can about the RV selling business. And do something every day toward making your dreams come true.

Now that you have an idea of the nature of this program, let's begin a step-by-step process that will get you started toward your financial dreams.

## Step 1

# EVALUATE YOUR QUALITIES AS A BUSINESS/SALESPERSON

Making money takes a lot of thought, as well as a lot of work. You must make a commitment that once you start your business, you will do whatever it takes, legally, morally, and ethically to make it succeed. This will start with how you feel about yourself as a businessperson.

### Thought:

*Insanity is doing the same things over and over again, and expecting a different result.*

Many salespeople have no desire to evaluate themselves, and their performance. Because once they go through an evaluation process, then they need to become responsible and accountable to make the necessary changes, or improvements to achieve that next level of success.

We all enjoy living and working in a “comfort zone.” Let’s face it, it’s a lot easier to live that way. But it’s like a baseball batter who’s batting a 250 average, and wants to get up to 300. Something in that swing’s going to have to change. Because this batter can’t keep swinging that bat the same way when batting 250 and expect to get up to 300. If changes need to be made, it may make you a little uncomfortable. But focus on the positive results, and it will make it all worthwhile.

So, let’s determine if you have the fortitude to be a successful businessperson. Answer the questions on the next page, and be honest. After all, you can’t fool yourself.

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- Are you a self-starter?  Yes  No
  - Are you entrepreneurial by nature?  Yes  No
  - Can you motivate yourself on a daily basis?  Yes  No
  - Will you do whatever it legally takes to make money?  Yes  No
  - Do you enjoy learning new ideas?  Yes  No
  - Do you give up easily?  Yes  No
  - Are you really motivated by money?  Yes  No
  - Do you strive to win no matter what you do?  Yes  No
  - Are you willing to take controlled risks to get what you want?  Yes  No
  - Are you an organized individual?  Yes  No
  - Will you work whatever hours it takes to make money?  Yes  No
  - Will you take work home with you if needed?  Yes  No
  - Will you learn to work a computer to be successful?  Yes  No
  - Do you like to keep busy throughout the day?  Yes  No
  - Do you read business books, cassettes, go to seminars, etc.?  Yes  No
  - Do you eat right, and keep yourself physically and mentally fit?  Yes  No
  - Do you set goals with written plans?  Yes  No
  - Will you get to work early, and stay late if needed?  Yes  No
  - Do you take advise well?  Yes  No
  - Will you seek advise to make your business succeed?  Yes  No
  - Do you have a strong work ethic?  Yes  No
  - Are you friendly to other people?  Yes  No
  - Do you like to have fun in whatever you do?  Yes  No
  - Do you like to buy things?  Yes  No
  - Do you normally make enough money to buy what you want?  Yes  No
  - Are you the sole income producer in your family?  Yes  No
  - If not, do you and your spouse make enough to live like you want?  Yes  No
  - Do you have a retirement account?  Yes  No
  - Do you have a college fund for your children, if applicable?  Yes  No

Now that you've completed this evaluation process, let's take a look at some of the attributes that will help you become, not just an excellent businessperson, but also an outstanding salesperson. While the answers of your evaluation are fresh on your mind, you may want to write your thoughts on page 19, Business Development page.

For as long as there have been salespeople, there have been "good" ones and "bad" ones. For just as long, dealerships have been looking for the perfect salesperson — the person who not only meets sales goals, but who cooperates without being a prima donna. Managers look for the salesperson who will loyally stay with the dealership for years, all of the years being highly productive in sales and profits.

Your company should have this same philosophy for its employees — namely you!

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**Based on observations of top-flight salespeople, they possess the following characteristics:**

**A strong drive to be successful**

The top-flight salespeople dislikes periods of inactivity. They always need to be doing something productive, and the activity is normally in the area of producing future business. They have persistence and tenacity that helps them succeed over the long-run.

**High levels of energy**

The real pros take care of their health. They exercise regularly, watch their weight, eat properly, and maintain themselves in excellent physical condition. They know their high energy level contributes to their success.

**Anticipation of success**

They have positive expectations of results. They realize that their attitude and mental outlook have a great deal to do with the results they create.

**Sensitivity, combined with assertiveness**

Top-flight salespeople have a keen awareness of where the prospect is relative to buying, as well as the assertiveness to guide the prospect towards doing business. They know when to back off, as well as when to move forward. They possess the delicate balance of empathy and ego drive.

**Ability to think and act quickly**

They're spontaneous in their thoughts and actions. They know their prospects, so they're more relaxed and comfortable than the salesperson who can only perform well if the prospect should just happen to want to buy. Their spontaneity and openness build credibility and trust with prospects.

**High self-esteem and independence**

Top performers don't need to look to others for emotional support. They can function well if left alone to plan and work their prospects, and follow-up with their clients. They're self-starters. Others admire their self-esteem.

**Skills in the art of persuasion**

They quite naturally want to persuade prospects and clients to move forward and make buying decisions. They capture attention quickly, arouse interest, listen well to clients wants and needs, and make presentations based on both the logical and emotional wants of their prospects. Their human relations skills enable them to develop positive relationships with everyone.

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### **A need to succeed**

Top performers thrive on challenges. Their driving ambition is to “win.” Because they recognize that establishing “win/win” relationships is the key to creating more long-term profitability, they constantly seek ways to solve problems for clients so both parties actually win.

### **Focus on goals**

Top performers set goals which challenge them to stretch and grow professionally, and they’re persistent in their drive to achieve and surpass their goals. They also realize how important it is to have a plan attached to their goals to maximize their chances for success. They don’t easily quit.

### **Honesty with themselves**

They constantly strive to know themselves totally, and they admit and accept their limitations. Self-evaluation enables them to maximize use of their inherent and learned talents, while not being unrealistic in their expectations of success.

### **Optimism**

They anticipate achievement of their goals, almost to the point of having a “vision.” They avoid negative thoughts, destructive pessimism and cynicism. Positive expectation of success enables them to overcome obstacles along the way toward their goals.

### **Comfort with the title “Salesperson”**

The best salespeople see themselves as true professional salespeople. They don’t hide behind titles like: consultant, product specialist, etc. The real pros have a strong belief in sales as an honorable profession.

### **Belief in their product and services**

Because persuasive communication requires congruent expression of words, tone of voice, and non-verbal messages, total belief in their product enables these special salespeople to produce at high levels. If there is any doubt or hesitancy in the sales message or any lack of belief in the value being offered, the sales opportunity may be lost.

Now that you have a basic idea of what it takes to be a successful business/salesperson, complete the worksheet on the next page to fine tune yourself.

## **BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT WORKSHEET**

What do you feel are your strengths as a businessperson?

What are your strengths as a salesperson?

List some improvements that need to be made to fulfill your goals.

How do you want your clients to perceive you?