

# Independent Automotive Professionals Association



## *President's Message*

March 2012

## You Get What You Pay For

Yesterday as I was engaging in one of my favorite pastimes, which is taking a load of yard stuff to the dump, I struck up a conversation with fellow dumper. He was unloading what looked like a large gas BBQ from a small trailer and just dumping it.

My first thoughts were that it was just an old BBQ that was at the end of its life cycle or something like that. I commented to him that this must be like saying goodbye to an old friend. I'm thinking that this BBQ, even though it's just a piece of metal, has probably seen numerous happy gatherings of family, friends and good times and that this piece of metal might remind him of those times. His response was the opposite. He replied that this throw away is much more of a good riddance to a BBQ that has caused him a lot of problems and frustrations and is a constant reminder to him that you get what you pay for.

Wow! What a lesson learned. I know this lesson. I live this lesson. I constantly am the person that reminds others of this rule. Because in my business, as in most of yours, I am not nor do I want to be the cheapest guy on the block. This position though often puts me in the place of having to defend a price that I am charging. I constantly find myself explaining about the "*you get what you pay for*" theme and I really wonder how often people actually listen and/or get my message. I once was in an office of a repair shop in Goleta (a NON IAPA member) where I overheard the owner tell a prospective customer on the phone that his shop would beat any price in town for a particular job. I did a double take and could not believe what I had heard. Instead of marketing what his shop could and would do, and not committing to a price before he actually saw and inspected the vehicle, he was insuring the customer that he was the cheapest in town. To my thinking he was also insuring his own business demise. He is no longer in business.

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### IAPA Upcoming Events

March

Training Session  
sponsored by ATG  
No regular meeting

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April

Scholarship Month  
A Night to Honor our  
Future Technicians

Mulligan's Café

April 18, 2012

7:00pm

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May

Telephone Etiquette  
Is Yours Hurting Your  
Business?

Mulligan's Café

May 16th

7:00pm

# Independent Automotive Professionals Association

**A Quick Note to our Members...**The month of April is National Car Care Month. On page 5 of this newsletter is an article prepared by Be Car Care Aware (carcare.org) that you can use to make copies and pass out to your clientele to encourage them to properly maintain their vehicles. Be Car Care Aware has gone through a major overhaul in recent months. I encourage you to use the information they provide to promote proper car care.

As I am sure you can see the newsletter this month is a little late and a bit different. On Wednesday, March 7th we lost Mike Pickett due to a massive heart attack. Mike did more for this organization than most know. If we needed a quick flyer or an email blast to keep you informed Mike created it and sent it. He participated at the Board meetings and even for some of us provided our websites. Mike is survived by his wife Paula and his very cute puppy. Group Professionals will go forward with Mike's partner and lifelong friend, Robert Burrows. I hope his ride through eternity is on a candy apple red Harley!



Earlier this year we also lost another member, Everett Hartford. Some of you may remember him for his years of dedication as a board member and treasurer. He owned Motor, Brake and Wheel. I heard a fun story about Everett the other day. When Thompson-Fauskee was located on Victoria Street at lunchtime Everett and the other mechanics (Ron Cooper) used to sit on a wall to watch the meter maids go by. And that is where Everett met his lifelong love Elaine. Elaine passed away in late 2011. Everett was also given the IAPA Honorary Lifetime Membership award in 2009. Please contact Barry at Motor, Brake and Wheel if you would like to express your condolences. Both of these men were a great asset to our industry and association. Personally, they made me a better person and business owner.

On a lighter note, please welcome Gary Preston of J&S East Valley Garage to the Board of Directors, as our newest Technician Representative. Thanks for stepping up to work for us, Gary!

As always, be prosperous,

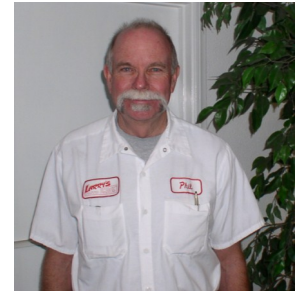
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President's Message cont'd.

## ***"You Get What You Pay For"***

Twenty five years ago there were a lot more repair shops, service stations and parts stores in the town. Now in 2012 there are a lot fewer for various reasons. One of the most common reasons is that the non-survivors were not making enough money to survive this economic time. There were more than a few competitor parts stores that thought selling parts cheaper and thus selling more of them was better than maintaining your level of service and along with that you profit.

I always believed that a maintaining a higher level of service that the competitor and charging a fair amount for it equaled

value and survival. I, along with many of you reading this offer quality and value and are the survivors in this industry.

You DO get what you pay for and our common goal in this organization is and should be to promote

this quality and value. We all need emphasize and get this point across to the customer. The more people that realize this concept at all levels and all types of business, the better for everyone.

***Phil Unander, IAPA President***



## Customer Centricity:

### Why Your Numbers May Be Down

Every activity, project, or goal is built upon certain basic or core elements. If these elements are not working properly then no matter what you do, you will find yourself frequently

coming across hurdles in doing that activity successfully, or even failing the task completely. Take your health for example, if you want to be healthy you need to maintain a balanced diet, exercise regularly, take adequate rest, and live in clean, healthy surroundings.

If you don't do these things right, no amount of diets, supplements, medicines, or fads are going to work for you. You will develop a variety of health problems over time. Fads and programs would at best work as temporary fixes and never ensure a truly healthy body and mind. Nor will simply focusing on one at the expense of the other provide you optimum benefits.

Sales can be approached from an identical perspective. Although there are hundreds of books that attempt to teach us how to master sales, and many of them offer truly effective tips, the fact remains, that there are some core requirements for successful selling which when not fulfilled, would invariably lead to sales failure, or at least create crippling inefficiencies in the process. When looking for the fundamental building blocks of sales interaction, there are three elements that stand out. When you focus on these fundamentals, you would master the art of sales interaction:

All sales interaction failures can be deconstructed to three basic reasons why people won't buy from you-

You are barking up the wrong tree

You don't have a bark

You don't know when to stop barking

Barking Up The Wrong Tree / Selling ICE to an Eskimo: This seems so foolish, but innumerable sales people are guilty of doing it at one level or another. Either out of ignorance or desperation, but often they do not take the time to think whether the person they are pitching to is the right prospect, and worse, they may not even know the characteristics of their ideal customers. Successful selling needs comprehensive groundwork. One needs to assess the product/solution meticulously and objectively, and then create detailed profiles (customer archetypes) of your ideal customers from the perspective of serving their needs so that it becomes easy for you to identify them. Not doing so will result in inefficiency and an incredible waste of resources.

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To Our Friends at IAPA:

In short, car manufacturers are doing everything they can to eliminate your ability to choose where you get your vehicle repaired and driving any repair your vehicle needs back to the car dealer. There is an effort underway to force them to provide aftermarket repair shops like Firestone and others with the data and information they will need to repair your car.

I encourage all of you to go on line and register with [www.righttorepair.org](http://www.righttorepair.org)

Let your voice be heard about having the ability to choose where you get your car fixed.

Thanks for your support.

Johan Gallo, President



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**“Technical skill is mastery of complexity, while creativity is mastery of simplicity.”**

**--Erik Christopher Zeeman, Japanese-British mathematician**





From Your Friends at BE CAR CARE AWARE

## Steps to a “Greener” Car

It doesn't matter if the car you're driving is new or old, big or small. There are preventive maintenance steps every vehicle owner can take to make sure their car is as “green” or environmentally friendly as possible, according to the Car Care Council.

By following a few simple preventive maintenance steps, you can help protect the environment by improving gas mileage, which in turn saves money at the pump.

Keep your car properly tuned for optimum performance. Regular tune-ups, maintenance and having clean air filters will help your car pollute less and burn less gas. Getting a tune-up can improve gas mileage by an average of 4 percent. Simply changing the car's air filter can improve efficiency by 10 percent. Fixing a serious maintenance problem, such as a faulty oxygen sensor, can improve gas mileage by as much as 40 percent.

**Drive Smart** – If you have to drive your car, recognize that how you drive has a lot to do with fuel economy. Avoid sudden starts and stops and go the speed limit. Jerky and aggressive driving decreases your miles per gallon (MPG) and increases wear and tear on your vehicle. Minimize unnecessary miles by combining errands in one trip.

**Lighten the Load** – Get the junk out of the trunk and the stuff out of your car, with the exception of emergency items such as a spare tire, flares and a first-aid kit. Extra items weigh the vehicle down and cause an increase in gas usage.

**Regularly check and replace dirty air filters.** An air filter that is clogged with dirt, dust and bugs chokes off the air and creates a “rich” mixture – too much gas being burned for the amount of air – that wastes gas and causes the engine to lose power. Replacing a clogged air filter can improve your car's performance, but not miles per gallon.

**Have spark plugs checked and replaced if necessary.** A vehicle can have four, six or eight spark plugs, which fire as many as three million times every 1,000 miles. This results in a lot of heat, electrical, and chemical erosion. A dirty spark plug also causes misfiring, which wastes fuel.

**Maintain the cooling system.** A cooling system thermostat that causes the engine to run too cold will lower the fuel efficiency of a car by as much as one or two mpg. There also are improved radiator caps on the market today that allow the cooling system to operate at a higher temperature before boiling over, increasing the system's efficiency and reducing emissions

**Tire Checks** – According to the Car Care Council, around two billion gallons of gas each year could be saved if the tires on every American's car were properly inflated. Optimal tire pressure for your vehicle is listed in the owner's manual. Tires that are not properly inflated add rolling resistance that makes the engine work harder to move the vehicle. All of this increases fuel costs as much as three to five cents per gallon, and increases the risk of engine damage.

**Gas Caps and Fill-Ups** – Check your vehicle's gas cap. Approximately 17 percent of vehicles on the road have loose, damaged or missing gas caps, causing 147 million gallons of gas to vaporize every year. Topping off your gas tank when filling up your car can also release harmful vapors into the environment.

**A/C Maintenance and Use** – The A/C system should be inspected annually, during which a technician checks pressures to test operation, refrigerant charge and outlet temperatures. Use the window to help keep the car cool.

**Vehicle Fuel System** - By properly maintaining your vehicle's fuel system, such as replacing your car's fuel filter every two years or 24,000 miles and having your fuel injectors flushed out every 30,000 miles, you will not only have a cleaner, ‘greener’ car, but you will save money at the pump.”

**Emission systems** - Emission systems control a vehicle's emissions, exhaust and pollutants using an array of sensors, computerized engine controls and the exhaust components. Emission systems substantially reduce harmful gases such as carbon monoxide (CO), unburned hydrocarbons (HC) and oxides of nitrogen (NOx), and prevent harmful gasoline vapors from escaping at the fuel tank. Your car's emission system keeps the engine running cleanly and efficiently in all sorts of operating conditions, and keeping it in proper working condition can save money and protect the environment.

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## **Customer Centricity:**

### **Why Your Numbers May Be Down**

On the face of it all CRM solutions are similar, but to the buyer they are not. While there are many CRM solutions, users have clear preference for one over another, and yet most users are dissatisfied to some extent with their solutions. This alone speaks volumes for the need to create customer archetypes. You have not thought deeply enough if you say that your goal is to get 20% of F500 clients. In fact, planning goals this way is downright bad strategy. Not all F500 CIOs can make for your target market. You may have skipped a lot of steps by making such a pat identification of your goals.

Customer archetypes need to be defined carefully taking intricate details into account such that among all solution providers in your line of business your solution is the best fit for a select group of customers. This means you may need to modify your solution and reduce the target population available for you to sell to. Yes, you would definitely be reducing the number of people you can pitch to, but at the same time you would also be dramatically improving your closing rate and enhancing your sales efficiency. The customer archetype creation is a fairly cumbersome task but is worth the reward. The CIO of AMD may have different needs from CIO of Intel. It is your job to figure out the differences upfront.

Don't Have A Bark / Can't light a spark if you aren't kindled: It is imperative that you be sold on the product first before going out to sell it. You must project total belief in the value of that which you are trying to sell. For those who can do it, faking is not only dishonest and unethical but also inefficient. It does not always work and can be seen through by most, if not all.

The truth is if you don't believe in it yourself how can you expect to convince your potential clients? Different salespeople approach their jobs in varying styles, some might be pushy and aggressive, and others might take a gentle and caring approach. These are all fine but the core from which varying sales techniques flow should be the same, which is a strong, unshakable belief that the product or service you are offering will truly benefit your customers.

One can also say that you can't sell a product/solution to a prospect, if you can't sell it to your mother, father, spouse or any of your loved ones, if they share the characteristics of your ideal customer. If you are not able to, or willing to sell to them, then you do not really believe that your solution is beneficial. On the other hand when you truly believe in the value of what you are selling you can be incredibly persevering, rejections would not ruffle you, and you will keep pitching to your prospects doggedly, trying out, as they say, 'every trick in the bag'.

Think about any of your loved ones, say your child, spouse, parent, sibling, doing or going to do something that might be dangerous, or harm them in some way. In all likelihood you will try your best to persuade them out of whatever it is they are doing, and even if they don't listen, you will keep trying without being weighed down by continuous rejections. That in effect, is the hallmark of a great salesperson, the ability to persevere with passion, till you figure out whatever it takes to succeed. Unsuccessful sales people often get negatively affected by rejections. This wouldn't happen if they have complete belief in the value of the product they are offering, and are passionate about having their prospects benefit from their solutions. They would not only not get ruffled by rejections, but also wouldn't take no for an answer and keep persevering.

When you are passionate about what you are selling, you also exude that passionate energy in both conscious and subconscious ways. For example, the fact that you don't give up easily, that is something your prospects can experience consciously. The subconscious effects would work out in the way you would talk about your product, your body language, tone of voice, twinkle in your eyes etc. You would be supercharged and overflowing with positive energy which would rub off on your prospects increasing their chances of conversion.

But, of course, you would need to back your passion with logical arguments which your prospects can appreciate. Most sales experts agree that 'trust building' is critical for success in sales. When you think about it, trust emanates from honesty and you cannot be honest if you sell a product which you don't believe in yourself.

It may sound counter intuitive and even bogus to some, but a sense of serving others can elevate your sales efforts

Continued from page 6.

### Customer Centricity: Why Your Numbers May Be Down

to unparalleled levels of success. Like a doctor, if you were to consider your job as a service to others for their benefit, you will realize that your self-perception and that of the prospect will change. This changed attitude will result in better application of sales

techniques. Do not see your work as merely self serving. This by definition requires you to be knowledgeable and passionate about your service.

Don't Know When To Stop Barking /Stop Cranking A Revved-Up Engine : So you've identified the right customer, you got a powerful value proposition and you have tried every trick in the bag to convince him/her with no success, so where have you gone wrong ?... You've probably not allowed your prospects to air out their doubts or specific requirements. Have you ? Well then probably you've only gone through the motions of listening but not actually absorbed and understood individual cases. You could have also lost customers who were almost sold but needed your true attention. This is the most unfortunate scenario not only because it means you have lost customers who were closest to conversion, but also because you might never realize it.

Even when you have been meticulous in creating your customer archetypes and identifying your prospects, you need to keep in mind that every customer is an individual, and they might have specific needs and concerns. It might also happen that you are selling the product to the right person but at the wrong time. For example you may have a solution that promises 3 digit growth rates, but you are pitching it to a CEO who has encountered delivery problems recently. Your product is great and you are selling it to the right person, but your customer is not in the right mindset. In other words, your sales pitch would need some spontaneous fine-tuning on a case-by-case basis based on specific customer requirements.

How do you do that ?

The solution – Listen; your sales process should be an interactive two-way process, otherwise what would be the difference between you and a billboard ? You should build in strategic pauses within your sales pitch to allow your prospects to speak up, or ask them questions to get a feel of where you stand. And when you listen, you should try to see the situation from your customer's perspective. This is easier said than done, because during a sales pitch, it is likely that you would be primed up to speak for your product. But keep in mind that listening to your prospect from his perspective would not only help you tailor your pitch for that particular individual, but also help you improve your pitch as well as product in the long run. This awareness would make the process of listening easier, and more effective.

Listen and understand before you try to sell, if you have already identified the prospect. You still might not be successful but you would have put in your best effort. This may sound lame but as your self-awareness improves you will see how often you do not follow this basic requirement. Converting knowledge into practice takes dedicated effort and constant mirror checks. Most sales people can improve their listening skills but they also need to focus on serving the prospect rather than making a sale.

In short, there are three reasons why you may fail in a sales interaction :-



You are selling to the wrong person

You don't believe in your product

You failed to listen when trying to convert.

These are very basic rules which most people know but need to be reminded about.

In short, commit to serving your prospects and you will find improved performance.

<http://www.leader-values.com/article.php?aid=628>

Nick Vaidya is the Managing Partner of The 8020Strategy Group, the President of the Global Alliance of CEO's, and the Managing Editor of The CEO Entrepreneur Magazine [www.8020ceo.com](http://www.8020ceo.com). The magazine has been created and designed to promote collaboration among CEOs, and to inform and inspire the community towards making businesses more efficient.

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