



BY RICK MCCORMICK

The Rhythm of the Sales Conversation

When customers feel free to speak and share their opinions, they feel understood. F&I professionals that intentionally make the conversation a two-way interaction build high levels of trust and profits.

Everyone has been searching for the one thing that will enable them to be more successful overcoming customer objections.

Is there a closing skill that will magically make things happen? That question arises from people that are looking for a quick fix — a magical phrase or a technique that that will consistently lead customers to buy. Well, one of those is true. I have witnessed top performers across the country in every dealership environment possible, apply this one principle and the results are amazing — “The Rhythm of the Sales Conversation.” F&I professionals that intentionally make the conversation with customers a two-way interaction by asking great questions and listening to learn, build high levels of trust and profits.

Everything in our world operates on rhythm. I challenge you to find something that does not. Day and night, the seasons of the year, the engines in the vehicles we sell, music, your heart ... the list could go on forever. When the rhythm is interrupted or broken, there is only chaos. So, having an intentional rhythm in your sales conversation assures a good flow of information and a comfortable discussion. Top performers use this comfortable flow of information as a launching pad for effective and productive outcomes.

DO'S AND DON'TS TO ASSURE A GREAT RHYTHM IN YOUR EFFORTS

DO: You should have an intentional process after getting a “no” or objection from a customer. Rhythm demands deliberate effort. Here are three steps that make for a good rhythm:

- Make them curious for more information. “That surprises me, especially since you are buying a vehicle built since 2015.” Now they want to know why, and the conversation is not “no,” but rather a “tell me more.”
- Provide just enough information to state your reason for this and then leave them wanting more. “Every vehicle built since 2015 has 100% component parts, which is troubling.”

- Every positive response from the customer enables you to share a little more information. This “rhythm” empowers a customer to self-discover why they need the product. When they discover it, you are much more likely to get a positive response.

Customers want a two-way open conversation focusing on their unique needs for the products offered and how they will benefit. If this is the rhythmic conversation that takes place, everyone wins.

DON'T: Do not launch into a feature-benefits presentation. Presentations leave a customer listening to us when we should be listening to them. If your effort to overcome customer objections and questions involves you talking more than 30% of the time, you are out of rhythm and headed into the danger zone. When you force a customer to listen to a lengthy presentation, they feel like you are selling to them. Few things cause more resistance than this. Something does not seem right. This approach breaks the rhythm, and makes it easy for the customer to say no and move on.

Many F&I professionals believe they are paid to talk when in reality they are paid to get the customer to talk. When customers feel free to speak and share their opinions, they feel understood. This freedom results in a healthier conversation taking place. We have great products that protect customers, provide valuable peace of mind and limit their expenses to unexpected events. The “Rhythm of the Sales Conversation” is the one thing that can make a big difference in your level of success. Use it liberally in every customer interaction and enjoy the rhythm of an upward trend of helping customers where everyone will enjoy the benefits. ■

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Rick McCormick is the national account development manager for Reahard & Associates, which provides customized F&I training for dealerships throughout the U.S. and Canada. He has more than 20 years of auto retail and finance experience.