THE NEED FOR SALESMANSHIP

Instead of Policemanship

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The topic which I shall discuss is one that, in my opinion, is fundamental to our way of life—what we like to think of as our American way. There are people representing many viewpoints and many occupations who claim that it is their group that made America great; but an excellent case can be made for the salesman, taken in its broadest sense.

Lee McCanne, Vice President and General Manager of Stromberg Carlson said, "The importance of the salesman as an educator has scarcely been appreciated. What made America Great? Was it the possession of raw materials? Was it our great development of the use of machinery in mass production and our resultant high standard of living? These things could never have developed if salesmen had not continuously created public demand and expanded the markets for our products by forever showing people something better."

But, you may say, "What has that to do with the milk inspector? I have only to see that a farmer lives up to the ordinance or I will shut him off. There will be plenty of others anxious to take his place."

Unfortunately, this has been the attitude of far too many of our inspectors. It is an attitude that creates resentment instead of cooperation. Let's look for a moment at this question of attitude. Lee McCanne said it was salesmanship that educated us to a better way. He could also have pointed out that in America we have free choices: to buy or not to buy, to buy this brand or that brand. We may be urged, but our patronage is appreciated. Compare this with a country that also is blessed with great diversified areas and mineral resources, but that suffers under a heavily depressed living standard. Russians have never enjoyed freedom of choice. Communist police were substituted for Czarist police; the common man has not made that nation great, in our sense.

The salesman is typical of democracy in contrast with the policeman of dictatorship.

The salesman lives by making friends—the policeman normally makes enemies.

The salesman must justify his viewpoint—the policeman enforces; he can even require the ridiculous.

The salesman develops a pride of accomplishment or a pride of ownership—the policeman creates a resentment that makes one satisfied with just getting by.

The American has been raised in an environment of being sold, and resents being told.

I would like to discuss a few of the principles of the salesman that may be applied to your job of assuring high quality milk supplies.

First, we must remember emphatically that the salesman's logic must be sound. This is basic. The policeman can enforce the ridiculous, but the salesman cannot sell the ridiculous, at least not to an intelligent person. All of us will admit that many ordinances contain requirements that just do not prove to be necessary. I urge you to look at your own, and then ask yourself the question: Do I want Grade A farms, or do I want Grade A milk? The city consumer, your boss, is mostly interested in Grade A milk.

So let's not pester the farmer about non-essentials if the record of the milk he delivers at the platform is good. Let's work with the producer who is having trouble, and, by use of the laboratory results, show him the cause on his farm for his troubles.

Leonard T. Thomasma, Assistant General Sales Manager of the Todd Company said, "The basic problem in selling is to change the prospect's mental attitude from indifference or opposition, to eagerness or willingness to buy." Is that so very different from your job? To paraphrase this statement: "The basic problem of the Sanitarian is to change the farmer's mental attitude from indifference or opposition to eagerness or willingness to produce the cleanest, purest milk, 12 months of the year."

It is the salesman's approach that is required. In the words of Dale Carnegie, "There is only one way under high heaven to get anybody to do anything. Yes, just one way. And that is to make a person want to do it. Remember, there is no other way."
Sure, you can inspect, threaten and fine a farmer into keeping a majority of his counts below 100,000 to 200,000. But if he wants to do it, he will have the majority below 10,000. And you can sell him that want. You can sell it through his other wants. The most important secret of salesmanship is to find out what the other fellow wants, then help him find the best way to get it.

I daresay that in many respects, the farmer reacts to authority in ways similar to the laboring man. Careful studies have been made of labor's real wants. One such study, reported by Middlewest Service Co., rated in order of importance 11 things men value in their jobs. The pay scale was seventh in the list! At the top of the list was “Interesting Work”, second was “Job security”, and third was “Interest the company takes in the individual worker”.

The farmer’s wants are different in some respects, but a careful study would show his real wants to be different than what we usually suppose. A farmer wants, to name only a few things:

1. Recognition. He, like ourselves, has pride. He likes occasionally to be told when his work is good.

2. A comfortable standard of living. He is willing to work for it; frequently he is better at physical work than mental, but he does like his milk check.

3. Friendship. He will respond to a helpful attitude.

4. Shorter hours. He is not asking for an 8-hour day, or a 40-hour week, but he is no longer interested in a 16-hour day.

So our first principle of selling quality is to help the farmer to satisfy his wants.

We do not help a farmer by visiting his milk house, checking off a score card, and disappearing. We help him by discussing and showing. This can be done without arguing. Benjamin Franklin has a lesson for us on this point. In his autobiography, he confesses that, when young, he made enemies because he argued—made too many positive statements and tried to dominate people. Later he discovered the Socratic method of persuasion.

Listen to this delightful bit from Franklin, keeping in mind some of our milk house interviews:

“When another asserted something that I thought in error, I deny'd myself the pleasure of contradicting him abruptly, and of showing immediately some absurdity in his propositions; and in answering I began by observing that in certain cases or circumstances his opinion would be right, but in the present case there appear'd or seem'd to me some differences, etc. I soon found the advantage of this change in my manner; the conversation I engaged in went on more pleasantly. The modest way in which I propound'd my opinions procur'd them a ready reception and less contradiction; I had less mortification when I was found to be in the wrong and I more easily prevailed with others to give up their mistakes and join with me when I happened to be in the right.”

Our terminology may have changed since Franklin’s day, but we note that human nature had not changed from Socrates’ time to Franklin’s—a stretch of 2100 years. I daresay it has not changed much in the additional 200 years.

Frank Bettger is considered one of today’s top salesmen. Prentice-Hall, Inc. published a book of his on selling that in one year has been through eight printings. Dartnell Corp. of Chicago has a movie on his methods especially for salesmen. Frank Bettger says the most important word in the English language has only three letters. The word is WHY. Bettger sells insurance. In his book, he quotes one of his customers:

“I don’t know whether you realized what you were doing, Frank, but the first time you called on me, I told you that I was going to tell you the same thing I told every other insurance salesman who came to see me: ‘I don’t believe in life insurance.’ Instead of launching into a long argument, like other salesmen did, you encouraged me to keep on by repeating, ‘Why, Mr. Walker?’ The more I talked, the more I realized that I was on the wrong side of the argument. Finally I convinced myself that I was wrong. You didn’t sell me. I sold myself. But I never knew just how it happened until that night I talked too much down at Skyland. Now, Frank, the point of the story is this: Since I got back, I’ve sat in my office and sold more lumber, right over the telephone, than I ever sold before, just by asking ‘Why?’ So I wanted to let you know in case you didn’t already know how you sold me my first policy.”

Bettger expressed amazement that so many salesmen are afraid to use this technique. Perhaps he would be equally amazed at the approach of sanitarians. He cites case after case where this method has worked.

A valuable point in this technique is to find the hidden objection. J. P. Morgan once said, “A man generally has two reasons for doing a thing: one that sounds good, and a real one.”

Bettger said, “The best formula I ever found to draw out the real one is built around two little questions: ‘Why?’ and ‘In addition to that . . . ?’

The second principle of selling for the sanitarian, then, might be: Ask “Why”, to accomplish two things, (1) Help the farmer convince himself, and (2) Find the real reason for his objections.

A third selling principle, emphasized by many writers, is to be a good listener. If you use the “why” method, you must listen. But listen as though you are sincerely interested in what the other man is saying. Give him all the eager attention and appreciation everyone craves—is hungry for.

To be a successful selling Sanitarian, you must create confidence in you. The most influential way to make others have confidence in you is to believe every statement you make. George Matthew Adams said, “The wisest and best salesman is always the one who bluntly tells the truth about his article. He looks his prospective customer in the eye and tells his story. That is always impressive. And if he does not sell the first time, he leaves a trail of trust behind. A customer, as a rule, cannot be fooled a second time by some shady or clever talk that does not square with the truth. Not the best talker wins the sale—but the most honest talker . . . . there is something in the look of the eye, the arrangement of words, the spirit of a salesman that immediate-
ly compels trust or distrust... being bluntly honest is always safe and best.”

Parethetically, to follow this strictly may be a little embarrassing in connection with some clauses of some ordinances. I suggest that in your selling you emphasize those points that are really necessary for the production of top-quality milk.

Ranking with belief in your statements is the importance of knowing your business, and continuing to know your business. Presumably you are here today for just that purpose — to keep in touch with progress. Our farm inspectors who are out in the country need to know their business thoroughly. A farmer soon knows which visitors are blindly following the book.

I have resisted the temptation to fill this paper with quotations of dairy farmers’ gripes that appear in Hoard’s Dairyman. I have a collection of several dozen. If any one of you does not read Hoard’s regularly, you should by all means do so, because it gives you an insight into the problems and viewpoints of dairy farmers—your customers, if I may so speak. The cost is only two dollars for three years. One quote at this point will illustrate several points. A farmer writes:

“My cow barn is sealed with tongue-and-groove lumber, smooth and painted. Here and there—I’ll confess—some of the paint now has disappeared or it is a little thinner than I’d like. An inspector told me it should be repainted. Now the reason that paint is worn is because the interior of my barn is washed and scrubbed with soap and water, disinfectant added. If I hadn’t washed and scrubbed it, the paint would still be there. But the washing and scrubbing meant nothing to that inspector. Only thing that mattered to him was that the paint was thin in spots. I might have asked him which was the most sanitary—a barn with thin paint that had been washed and scrubbed, or a barn with thick paint that hadn’t been. I thought of asking, but it would have been foolish of me, and so I didn’t. You never win an argument with an inspector. And anyway I’m not as tactful myself as I used to be and you never know what sort of mayhem a question like that might lead to, me being as short-tempered as I sometimes get.”

If the barn was as reported, here certainly was an inspector who was blindly following the book. It is evident that this farmer had little confidence in him. In any event, the inspector had not sold this farmer.

That quotation leads into the last principle: Do salesmanship! I will discuss this morning: Make people want to do business with you.

“If you would win a man to your cause,” said Abraham Lincoln, “first convince him that you are his sincere friend.” Note that Lincoln was not here giving advice to salesmen. He said, to “win a man to your cause...” What greater cause is there for the milk sanitarian than to help build a group of farmers who are willingly producing the best milk for the health of our city citizens who are your city employers. To do this, you must be the friend of these farmers. I know of one market where the inspectors head their cars out toward the east, when they park in the farmer’s drive. They are ready to get out in a hurry—if necessary for personal safety.

A sanitarian has a harder job in being a good salesman than the usual salesman has: for he can take the lazy way by falling back on the law. He has no competition from other salesmen for the customers’ patronage. But this business of getting prepared in advance to run from the clients is going a bit far toward developing dictatorship methods in our democracy.

Make people want to do business with you.

Without getting involved in a psychological discourse, let’s consider a few of the things that may help to make farmers glad to see you turn in their driveways:

1. Your greeting. How about a cheerful smile? Smiles and cheerfulness come more easily to one who is not over-impressed with the authority he carries around with him. With practice, a friendly smile can become natural. “Action seems to follow feeling,” said William James, “but really action and feeling go together; and by regulating the action, which is under the more direct control of the will, we can indirectly regulate the feeling, which is not.” Thus, with practice, our smiles will in time come naturally.

2. Encouragement. How often have you added a note of congratulation to a low-count score mailed to a farmer? How often have you discussed the good points of his record of platform tests, or congratulated him on a clean barn? Are you a salesman or a policeman?

3. Genuine interest. Are you interested, and do you show it, in each farmer’s progress with his cows, crops, equipment? If your memory is as poor as mine, you can easily help it by noting these things in a card file and reviewing a farmer’s card before each visit. The same kind of points apply to his family.

4. Ability to aid. I have heard many business men say that they will always manage to see certain salesmen among those who call on them. These salesmen make themselves useful through the many new ideas they carry from place to place. The ideas may be totally unrelated to the product they sell, but they may be valuable to their customers. What opportunities the observant sanitarians have to do likewise!

It is not hard to make people want to do business with you.

“Selling is the sparkplug of the economy.” The tools of the best salesmen deserve the careful study of all sanitarians. Numerous books are available for your asking. I look forward to the day when our health officers and their staffs will be so imbued with the American spirit that they will look upon their sanitarians as their sales force. This makes the health officer the sales manager. The successful sales manager is not so much a boss as a leader—a stimulator of men. He has many tools in his kit. One of these is the sales contest.

Have you ever tried a contest among your selling sanitarians? At the Los Angeles County Fair each year, awards are made in the “Dairy Inspectors Class”. Why not have a contest in your own jurisdiction? It can be simple. Make an award to the sanitarian whose producers deliver to their plants the highest average quality milk for a year or for a summer period. If a few health departments would like to try this idea, the Milk Industry...
proaches, cross-traffic lanes, etc. Such careful pre-planning of the milking parlor is necessary to assure success of the operation from the standpoint of correct organization of the work routines and centralization of all activities.

The following suggestions might be kept in mind by the producer when planning the location and construction of any one of the several types of milking parlors:

Since it is common practice to include the milk house in the milking parlor building, it is necessary that the building be accessible in order to accomodate the milk hauler during all seasons.

Concrete block or cinderblock construction provides a very satisfactory building material. Ceilings may be of lumber or building board.

Artificial lights directed to the working area help in labor utilization. Lights from below are particularly helpful. Artificial light is needed during 80 per-cent of milking time.

Heat is essential in milking parlors in northern sections of the country. Suitable working conditions for the operator and warm machines for milking conserve labor and make the job of milking more pleasant.

Hot and cold water under pressure, together with a mixing valve and attached hose, are a necessity in the operator’s pit area. It is especially helpful to have warm water available when preparing cows for milking.

A concrete paved yard and feeding area with a paved entrance-way to the parlor result in less dirt being carried into the parlor by cow traffic. Entrance-lanes which permit cow traffic in single file only, avoid crowding and pushing into the parlor.

COMMON TYPES OF MILKING PARLORS

The types of milking parlors in most common use are the Tandem Type Stalls and the Lane Type (Walk-thru) Stalls.

Tandem Type Stalls

The present tendency is to have either a 3-stall tandem with elevated platform or 4 or 6-stall elevated platform with an even number of stalls on each side. This latter arrangement is best from a labor standpoint, but to have two entrances and two exits sometimes presents a construction problem. The necessity of a cross-over for cows on one or both ends of the 4-stall unit cuts the labor saving features of this type parlor as it increases clean-up time and, unless a pipeline milker is used, can materially interfere with the transport of the milk to the milk house. Too many milking stalls defeat their own purpose, as clean-up time absorbs any time saved and investment per animal milked becomes excessive.

These stalls are constructed in line with a 30 to 36 inch alleyway, through which the cows pass as they enter or leave the parlor. Both the stalls and alleyway are at a level of 28 to 30 inches above the operator’s floor level. All gutters slope to drains connected to a 6-inch tile drainage system. Splash grills and drains under each cow with the floor graded to the grills may be provided. Good sanitation requires that all grills and drains be flushed daily.

A curb 12 inches high between the cow and operator with a 22-inch notch provides ease of operation and anti-splash protection for the operator, although curbs four inches high without a notch often are used. A 6-inch inset underneath the curb provides space for the toes of the operator, adding to the comfort and ease of operation.

Lane Type (Walk-thru) Stalls

This type usually consists of two lanes of two stalls each on either side of a 5-foot wide pit. The surface of the lane type stalls is approximately 30 inches above the operator’s pit floor level. A curb 12 inches high between the cow and operator with a 22-inch notch provides ease of operation and anti-splash protection for the operator, although curbs 4 inches high without a notch are often used and make a simple construction. A 6-inch inset underneath the curb provides space for the toes of the operator, adding to the comfort and ease of operation.

Floor surfaces of the cow lanes and of the operator’s pit slope laterally to drainage gutters. Tile with a minimum diameter of 6-inches provides satisfactory drainage. The foregoing items are important to parlor cleaning as well as removal of liquids during the actual milking.

Note: We suggest Marketing Research Report, No. 64, May 1954, U. S. Department of Agriculture, entitled Meeting Dairy Market Sanitation Requirements Economically be noted for its study indicating that with good practices milk of consistently high quality can be produced with a relatively low investment in buildings, and with half or less labor than is commonly used on farms.

In presenting this report, the Committee recognizes that bulk handling of milk on the farm is comparatively new and experiences to date are somewhat limited. We know further changes will come with additional improvements and new, more efficient methods will develop.

Suggested changes will have to be constantly reviewed to keep abreast with new developments. It is hoped, however, that the review of the methods now in use and suggested standard procedures contained in this report will serve as a helpful guide to those using this system on dairy farms.

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Foundation would like to participate by offering appropriate recognition for the winners. I cannot make this an unlimited offer, but would like to develop the idea with the first five health departments that tell me they are interested. We will then work out the details.

I will close by suggesting that if you sanitarians, in your daily work, will follow the principles and methods of salesmen, instead of policemen, you will not only have an easier and more pleasant life, but you will make a much more significant contribution to our great dairy industry.