

# Systematized Sales Training

## Friden Training for Data Processing Systems Salesman

HENRY J. LINDSAY

It has been said that the famous Baron Rothschild was an easy target for those in search of "succor." One day two vagabonds came to his door. The more aggressive one entered to make the pitch while his comrade-in-tatters waited hopefully outside. The mendicant stated his request and was ushered to the second floor, where the liveried attendant, in turn, advised him that such inquiries were best handled on the floor above. On each successive floor a servant directed him to the next landing. When he finally reached the top floor of the establishment, the uniformed guard at the door of Rothschild's private office told the beggar the Baron was too busy to entertain him that day. An argument ensued, and in the twinkling of an eye the beggar went hurtling down

all the stairs into the street. When his partner asked him what he had received, he answered as he nursed his bruises, "Nothing. But do they have a system!"

We know the value of our punched tape data processing systems machines to today's industry just as we are cognizant of the values inherent in a planned approach to training the merchandisers of this equipment.

Before we dissect our method of training a systems salesman, let's consider our modern salesmen's (and undoubtedly yours) prospects, customers, and reasons for sales:

1. He is encountering a more sophisticated, more knowledgeable, better educated, more business-wise buyer.
2. Beyond mere product knowledge, other factors enter the picture. Most

---

HENRY J. LINDSAY is Training Director of Friden, Inc. of San Leandro, California and Rochester, New York, manufacturers of data processing business equipment, calculators/adding machines, graphic arts and mailing machines. Mr. Lindsay was schooled in engineering, business administration and graphic arts. He has spent the past twenty-seven years (less four years in the service) in the business machines field with International Business Machines, Commercial Controls Corporation and Friden, Inc. He has worked as manager in various capacities throughout this period, in engineering, sales, promotion, advertising, sales training. He is presently Training Director for Friden, Inc. and responsible for all sales and customer training for the Friden company.

often the essential factors in the salesman's success are due to his treatment and knowledge of the man who puts the approval on the purchase.

3. Top management of many of our large prospects and users has taken an active interest in major purchases. As a result, our men must be equipped to reach and convince top management at the outset.

4. Many of our successful sales have been made with less concentration on the psychology of the prospect and more emphasis on the demonstration . . . emphasizing what the product can do to meet the prospect's requirements and to help him to greater profits.

In some degree it would seem these characteristics compete with each other—are paradoxical. Yet our training programs—both formal and field—take these characteristics into consideration.

The specialty salesman who sells our systems equipment is hired and trained in the field . . . and in a formal training program. Let's illustrate by following the processes evolving around the hiring and training of "Salesman Sam."

### **Branch Selection and Training**

Sam is hired . . . in Pittsburgh.

Immediately after he is placed as a trainee on the sales force, our Pittsburgh Branch Manager forwards to Training Headquarters in Rochester, New York, the following: man's name, resume and enrollment for the four-week, Formal Basic Systems Training Course *no less than 60 working days away*. This is mandatory because of a carefully planned Pre-School Indoctrination Program which fills this time span. Details

of this program including course content and pre-requisites are spelled out for the manager in an annual prospectus describing all the various product line sales courses.

Forwarded immediately to the Branch Office Manager is the trainee's Pre-School Manual and the manager's confidential training and testing instructions. The manual is designed to put all the weight of training on the sales trainee himself. It is divided into 5 basic sections . . . for example one section is on company history and background. The other sections are divided into various product areas, applications, demonstrations, comparisons, sales techniques, etc.

As the trainee finishes each phase of the book, he is given a test by the manager. These are mailed to Rochester for review and correction—marks are returned to the manager for evaluation. Eight tests comprise this part of the education program.

Pure "book learning" is not the sole basis for this part of the field study. The trainee works with senior members of the sales force on approaches, installations, training of operators and programming of applications. In addition he is required to visit and research two local customer applications of our equipment as a Case History study. This includes a thorough write-up of the "before" and "after" procedures and a listing of the savings and benefits realized by the user.

This latter phase is an extremely important part of their training, we find. In a physical sense the trainee becomes deeply involved in what is soon to become his professional environment. In

an intellectual sense, they will recall facts to use in future sales presentations as well as stimulate others in their class to seek similar solutions to applications problems in their territory.

### **Headquarters School**

Assuming that "Salesman Sam" did well in his field training and field work, he then attends school in Rochester.

Our staff handles all necessary reservations arrangements for "Sam" in a nearby hotel. In all instances we try to pair the more experienced man with the less experienced which we find very helpful.

Because trainees arrive in town at different hours of the day or night the Sunday before school opens, there is no feasible method of personally greeting each one. In lieu of this, a Welcome Letter is waiting for him at his hotel. This gives a feeling of security . . . tells him how to get to the Educational Center . . . when to report.

Between the hours of 8 and 9 o'clock in the morning of the first day, the men arrive . . . they are registered . . . and greeted by a committee of Instructors and Instructresses at an informal coffee hour. This reception is usually held in our large Auditorium which is equipped with hundreds of thousands of dollars of Friden and Allied data processing equipment. The atmosphere is carefully calculated to be both pleasant and impressive to the newcomer.

Obviously "Sam's" total impression of our company up to this point, has been of the Pittsburgh Office . . . the place where he was hired. Now he has an opportunity to better identify with more of the over-all company operations.

After a short welcome address by the Training Director and one or more Executives of the Company, Sam takes a comprehensive Entrance Examination. This test is based on his pre-school indoctrination training . . . no trick or left-handed questions.

Duration of this test is one hour . . . Sam takes a breather . . . his paper is corrected immediately with an overlay template and the mark is determined.

If there are any failures, the man in question does not enter class . . . he is immediately interviewed by the Training Director. His pre-school training, background and performance are reviewed to try to determine whether he should continue in school or not.

If, for example, the man's mind went "blank" during the test . . . which sometimes happens . . . this is taken into consideration and he is given an opportunity to prove himself in class. His progress is watched closely thereafter. Reports are made immediately by telephone to the Branch Manager if any of these cases occur. Sometimes the man is returned to the field for additional training, re-interview by the manager and is given another chance. In other instances he is discharged.

### **Constant Evaluation**

Once the course is underway daily tests are given covering the previous day's work plus a summary test at the end of each week. Other types of tests keep our salesmen on their toes while they are obtaining product knowledge. We have a "you're it" box on the instructor's desk containing all the names of the class members on cards. Every

*120.00*  
*18.00*  
*102.04*  
*290*    *299.96*  
*Jaw.*  
*#6160*

# YOUR EMPLOYEES ARE IMPORTANT TO YOUR COMPANY'S PROFITS

—why not tell them so?

You know your employees are important—but when was the last time you told them so? And how did you do it?

Why not consider using a brand-new motion picture to get across this message? It's called "The Marvelous Mousetrap" and stars Wally Cox. It has color, drama, and an absorbing story with plenty of humor. But it makes its point!

The message? Why the company trusts each employee to do his job the best way he knows how . . . and how every employee contributes to his company's continuity.

Mr. Arch N. Booth, Executive Vice-President, U.S. Chamber of Commerce has said: "The Marvelous Mousetrap does an excellent job of explaining the American Free Competitive Enterprise Sys-

tem in an effective and entertaining way."

BNA also has a new film for stimulating creativity and overcoming resistance to change. Entitled "The Real Security," it features the dynamic management consultant, Joe Powell, in an illustrated filmed lecture.

Each of these films runs about 25 minutes, is in full color and can be shown on any 16-mm sound projector. You may purchase prints for your permanent film library, or rent prints for any period of time. You may preview the films in your own conference room for a nominal charge of \$15.00 per film (which can be applied to the later purchase or rental price of the film). Why not send for both films and preview them at the same time?



**BNA** *films*

**BNA Incorporated, Dept. 2160**

1231 24th Street, N.W., Washington, D.C. 20037

Gentlemen: Yes, I would like to preview:  1. "The Marvelous Mousetrap";  2. "The Real Security." I understand that the preview price is \$15.00 for each film (which can be applied to the purchase or rental price of the films).

Please send me a catalog of BNA films.

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Title \_\_\_\_\_

Firm \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip Code \_\_\_\_\_

day a card is picked at random from the box. It is the responsibility of the "winner" to give a review of yesterday's class or perform a sales demonstration on the machine being studied. This entails advance preparation by each man in the class in anticipation of being the name drawn from the box.

"Sam" is constantly evaluated by the instructor who uses an evaluation form to record his impressions. Speaking ability, product knowledge, salesmanship, dress, etc., are rated.

Each day during the entire training period specific reading assignments and equipment application assignments are given to the trainees to complete in the evening or on weekends. A typical problem is the detailed programming of the steps needed to automatically type and calculate an invoice, at the same time producing a by-product tape for future sales analysis. "Learn by Doing" is a prime requisite of the course and we supply plenty of practice machines.

Another aspect of "Sam's" training is a tour of the manufacturing plants in Rochester. More appreciation of the "custom" nature of data processing equipment is instilled by witnessing the various manufacturing processes.

Daily, weekly quiz marks, and assignment grades for each trainee are put on a large acetate board in the practice workshop. Here, the trainee can constantly check on himself . . . summarize his personal averages . . . as well as the class average. This sets up a competitive class spirit producing better results individually and collectively. Each class always endeavors to do better than any previous individual or class conducted in the Center.

It is evident that "Sam" is not only trained in product knowledge and application techniques but is perpetually evaluated as he progresses. Interim reports are forwarded to his manager indicating his progress. His final report card is immediately mailed to his manager with copies to his Regional Division Manager and the General Sales Manager of the Company. On the evaluation reports are indicated "Sam's" strengths and weaknesses so necessary corrective action and continued training can be accomplished in the field by his manager and/or senior salesman.

### ***"Esprit de Corps"***

All is not work for "Sam," however. An "esprit de corps" is established within the class in many other little yet important ways.

The class elects its own president. He is the spokesman for the class during the course of study . . . arranges various outings with the Training Director such as theatre trips, ball games, hockey, etc. A framed class memento is also created under his guidance. This includes a class slogan or theme and their individual photos. This is usually presented at graduation time and is then hung on the walls of the Educational Center. A return visit to the Center always means another look at the class memento. The class president also speaks on behalf of the class at the graduation.

The formal graduation is preceded by several talks on various aspects of company sales support. A representative from the Sales Department details the correct and helpful methods of filling out the internal Sales Order to expedite the shipping of our custom-built equip-

ment. A member of the writing department explains how technical and operational publications are created as well as enlists the sales representative's support when field writers are researching customer case histories in their territory. Finally, Advertising and Sales Promotion activities are explained by a member of the staff.

The Training Director and class instructors present framable diplomas, a class pin and a cigarette lighter emblazoned with the school symbol. These are *exclusive items* and no one else can wear or use them . . . they are the "victor's spoils" for running the school gauntlet.

This is a systematic procedure, up to this point, but keep in mind "Sam" hasn't contributed "one plugged nickle" to the company till as yet. But the Branch Manager and the Friden Company have already invested thousands of dollars in training "Salesman Sam."

By necessity we must be careful in our initial choice of the man and especially concerned during his training period. This constant evaluation system throughout the entire training program is necessary so that when "Salesman Sam" returns to the field . . . he is going to be a successful salesman . . . a producer for his manager . . . and a perpetual 100 per center!

\* \* \*

Logo \$ 70.00  
 \$ 5.50  
 \$ 75.50  
 Dow.#  
 6161

**GAIN DIRECT AND IMMEDIATE EXPERIENCE IN WRITING  
 PROGRAMED INSTRUCTION MATERIAL**

**PROGRAMED INSTRUCTION: A Manual of Programing  
 Techniques by Dale M. Brethhower**

You will have an opportunity to write two programs as you go through this new **self-instructional** program, and then evaluate your efforts against samples given and the editorial comments of the author. More than 200 participants in the University of Michigan programed learning workshops used this program, and their experience provided the basis for several pre-publication revisions of the manual. Mr. Brethower is on the faculty of the Center for Programed Learning for Business. 520 frames, 272 pp., \$7.50.

**PROGRAMED LEARNING: A Critical Evaluation  
 edited by John L. Hughes**

Nine leading authorities in the theory and practice of this new technology appraise efficiency and effectiveness of programed instructional techniques in such major industrial concerns as IBM, Du Pont and Eastman Kodak. Here are some of the important questions this book will help you to answer:

- How can you get started using programed learning materials?
- How do you assess the effectiveness of a program?
- Can you expect better retention with programed learning than with conventional instruction?

A publication of the Foundation for Research on Human Behavior. 224 pp., \$7.50.

Order **PROGRAMED INSTRUCTION** and **PROGRAMED LEARNING** today from:

**EMI** EDUCATIONAL METHODS, INC.

64 East Van Buren Street • Chicago 5, Illinois • Telephone: 427-0831