



Sell More Cars by Mastering Activity Management

WRITTEN BY: [LAURA MADISON](#)

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A critical responsibility of managers in today's business is managing the activity of their salespeople. We all know that the car business has changed. On average, customers are visiting less than two dealerships in person, per vehicle purchase. Many of them have scoured through your online showroom, and have narrowed their choices down to a select few dealerships and models they are interested in test driving. For the dealership, this means that your business is now all about conversion. Your success will be determined by your ability to convert customers from the phone and internet to the showroom.

Then why do we still have salespeople standing around hoping and waiting for the next body to walk through the door? Here's something to think about: salespeople standing around waiting for customers for hours on end isn't a reflection on them, it's not them being lazy or unproductive, it's a reflection of their management. It's the culture of their dealership that is encouraging this type of behavior.

If you have four salespeople standing around for three hours waiting for one customer, does this scenario represent activity being managed? Absolutely not. That is twelve man-hours of potential sales wasted. Instead of actively attracting new leads, you are passively waiting for leads to walk into the showroom.

[ABC: Activities Between Customers](#)

Managing activity means making sure your team is doing the right things, the right way, at the right time to drive traffic. In the classic movie *Glen Gary Glenn Ross*, Alec

Baldwin talks about ABC: Always Be Closing. In today's automotive market, there's a new ABC: Activities Between Customers. At any dealership, we all know what to do when we have a showroom full of customers. All our deficiencies as a dealership, and as an industry, are masked when we have people rolling through our front doors. We have managers who can desk deals and close deals, but what are we doing when we don't have customers flooding the lot? That's what I mean when I say activities between customers. This is the time when your managers need to *really* manage.

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20701 N Scottsdale Rd 107-110
Scottsdale, AZ 85255





How to Get More Customers

Start by training your people on how to effectively motivate customers to your showroom. Activities that have proven to be effective include: following up on hot leads, getting unsold customers back in, calling phone ups that have not yet shown up, pursuing internet leads that haven't touched tile at the store yet, and generating more referrals. Once your salespeople have appropriately contacted these hot opportunities, it's time to get them talking to: sold customers who might be ready to enter the market again, orphan owners who have more drivers in their household, or service customers who, when approached with the right opportunity, in the right way, at the right time, will consider trading into a newer vehicle. It's critical that your team is also working all connections on social media and motivating their connections on Facebook, LinkedIn, and Instagram to come into the dealership.

Don't Get Carried Away

Encouraging the automotive ABCs doesn't always mean having some type of quota system in place for your sales staff. Activity management is about managing your people like adults. By mandating a certain amount of outbound calls each day, you are establishing a minimum. Some days your staff will be busy with customers and only get a chance to make a few calls, but some days they'll get a chance to make 40 calls and drum up some business. Your job in managing activity is to make sure they are proactive and making it happen, rather than waiting for it to happen. If you see your team doing something unproductive, redirect them to a traffic-driving activity.

What a team is doing when there are no customers in the showroom is every bit as important as what they do when there is a showroom full of customers. Get your dealership focused on activities between customers. That's what will bring more customers into your dealership, and sell you more cars.

Learn more from Laura Madison and [Alan Ram's Proactive Training Solutions](#) at their course, [Management by Fire](#).

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