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Turning those lookers and shoppers into buyers

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Turning all those lookers and shoppers into buyers is, in retail, the "holy grail" of topics. We send our managers and sales folks to workshops and seminars looking for answers. We test the waters, view the

landscape, and hope that just over the horizon is the Promised Land, the mother lode.

Retail gurus who enlighten the sales process in ways that ensure success are far and few between, if they exist at all. That's not to say there's no one

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out there who can guide and direct, teach and mentor, in ways that can be beneficial. There are plenty of us walking around doing just that. But here's the rub: There's a lot more to it than just processes and procedures.

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It's more than all the social media you can throw out to folks or how many craigslist listings you all can do in a day. It's more than door swings or what you have or don't have, and it's not about the potential we all have.

It's about making sure that what *needs to be done is really being done*. That's the missing link and it's more important than ever. Lookers and shoppers are a commodity too important to waste.

Status quo and inertia have no place in our business plans, nor in our daily role as leaders. I visit a lot of dealerships and I hear a lot of excuses. What is not being done is usually justified by the person who's not doing it. It could be the salesperson that doesn't ask for the sale because "that would be pushy" or the leadership in the dealership knowing it's an issue, but that particular team member "has been here so long and ..." And what? And he's setting a bad example for the entire sales force? And maybe he could sell more by instead doing what needs to be done on a consistent basis?

It starts at the top, not at the bottom. And you can't blame if you can't claim that you are doing, as a leader, what needs to be done. You set the bar. I know the daily rigors of running a dealership (I did it, and I get it) can be monumental. We put out the fires, deal with all the different personalities and hope that maybe today, just maybe, we can have an uninterrupted lunch.

It's like eating your vegetables. We know we should and yet we sometimes have to be reminded to do so. There's nothing wrong with sitting down with your sales team, which is everyone in the dealership and reinforcing what the sales process is and the need for it. Moreover, you should be doing it on a regular basis. Eat your vegetables, kids, and you will grow up to be big and strong. Do the basics with every sale, every time, and you will retail more. Here's the missing link: make sure that it's being done always, throughout the dealership, everybody, always, without fail. Always!

Mark Mooney is director, retail performance for Pied Piper Management Company LLC, a Monterey, Calif., company that works with motor vehicle manufacturers and dealers to maximize performance of dealerships. One of Pied Piper's most popular services for the powersports industry is Pied Piper Prospect Satisfaction Index (PSI) sales mystery shopping to help turn more motorcycle shoppers into motorcycle buyers.

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