

safety, had set the stage for some direct selling that followed.

We have found that the experts are right when they say that the only great difference between selling and any other line of activity is that the process of selling deals with people *more* than with things. Have you ever heard a comment like this? "I wouldn't mind trying to talk safety to my people if there was just something more tangible about it!" or, "If it wasn't such a dry subject." If we say this we are in essence saying, "I don't have the ability to handle people." This is bad, for our success as a salesman will depend largely on our ability to handle people.

We must be salesmen for we are, after all, actually in the business of selling safety to our employees. We are not always dealing with things we can lay our hands on. We aren't adding up sums in arithmetic, or counting bricks. We are dealing with human beings. The only place to really learn and improve our sales ability is right there with the person we work with, at *his* machine, with *him*, in *his* work area, meeting face to face. And every contact, whether successful or not, is another lesson in this fine art of dealing with human nature.

The skill that enables us to approach a man in his work place, change his mind, his attitudes, and work habits, lead him to do something which he may even have said he would not do, can only come from constant daily effort in selling. Each interview may not result in an immediate change of attitudes to what we want, or a complete change of work habits from the unsafe to the safe. Yet, we can be sure it has been profitable to both the employee and ourself.

We find our attention must be constantly directed toward production problems. Nevertheless, we have got to become tremendously interested in people. We must learn to make friends of each employee, to understand his plans and motives, to become genuinely interested in his interests, and to look at his problems with sympathy and understanding. These things we must do until that man and his mind become the province in which we learn to live.

Our real problem in selling is not so much to get the employee interested in safety as it is to get ourselves so interested in the employee that it is easy to get him interested in safety.

We said that we will sell safety to our employees only to the degree that we know all that we possibly can about safety.

At Delco-Remy Division, all foremen have been through the "Supervisor's Safety Training Program." This is a program geared to train line supervisors in the many facets of safety. It was an organized two hours per week for eight weeks—studying and learning about the corporation's approach to all elements of safety which we would encounter on our jobs. Our division's director of safety was personally involved in teaching the program. We recognized our responsibility as he stressed to us that the safety of our employees was to be the number one task before us at all times. He pointed out how this could only be true by our conscientiously accepting our role as the key man in the safety performance of the people we work with.

Of course, this sounded good. But, the real impact of it didn't sink in until he began to go into a detailed explanation of a single sheet of paper he had given us. This was not just a sheet of paper! The contents of that one page were enough to fill a book!

Talk about impact! Talk about impression! Let me share the first statement with you:

"The General Motors Safety Program is based on the concept that safety is the individual and personal responsibility of everyone in General Motors—management and employee alike." How about that for tagging the responsibility for safety! All of a sudden, every last person in the corporation is in the act!

You can begin to see now why we were impressed as our director of safety stood there expounding on this single sheet of paper and the "Seven Basic Principles of Safety" in General Motors.

As these seven basic principles were being outlined, the feeling was, "Man, what a system for implementing a program!" We spent hour after hour studying the details of these principles and what they meant to us in our job. We studied everything from how safety affects the employee, production, cost, and community to the details of accident investigation, accident reports, and tagging procedures for hazardous machines or materials.

These sessions had a tremendous effect on our ability to sell safety to our employees.