

MEGABUCKLES:

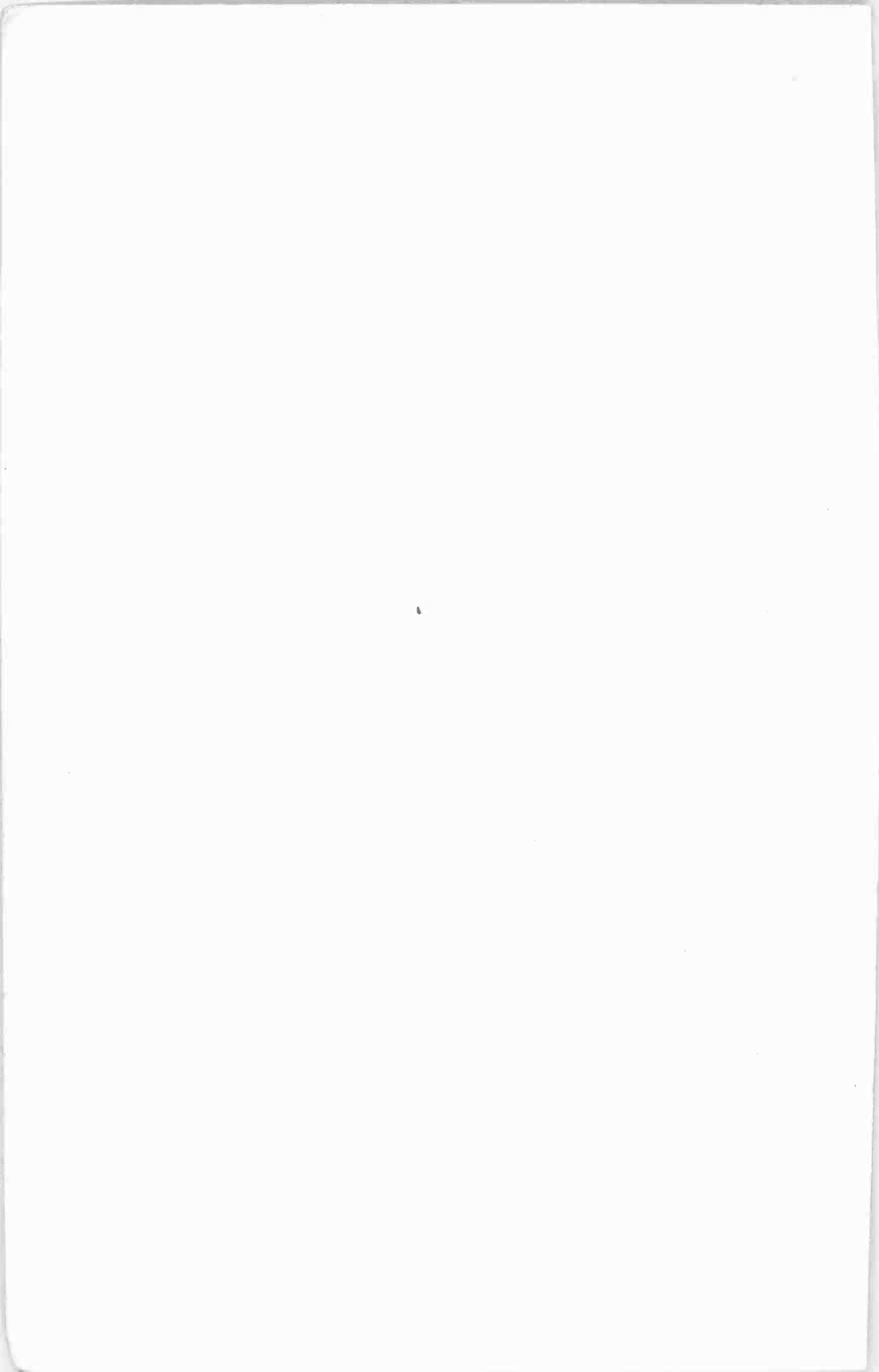


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HOW
AMERICA'S
MOST SUCCESSFUL
RADIO SALESPEOPLE
DO IT

National Association of
NAB[®]
BROADCASTERS





MEGASALES:

How America's Most Successful Radio Salespeople Do It



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Other important radio publications written for NAB by William C. Moyes and The Research Group include:

MegaRate\$: How to Get Top Dollar for Your Spots

MegaRate\$ Videotape

Successful Radio Promotions: From Ideas to Dollars

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Executive Summary

In 1985 and 1986, the National Association Of Broadcasters funded a major research project called “MegaRates: How To Get Top Dollar For Your Spots,” which, when completed and published in book and video form, was NAB’s most successful and well received sales-related publication. By speaking to the most rate-aggressive *managers* in the country, “MegaRates” developed a clear picture of the principles and techniques used in *managing* spot inventory to get higher rates (per thousand average quarter-hour audience)—sometimes a lot higher rates—than competitors who enjoyed similar ratings. Shortly thereafter, David Gingold, a client of The Research Group and President of Barnstable Communications, brought an important fact to our attention.

“MegaRates,” he pointed out, speaks to managers—general managers and general sales managers—not to *salespeople*. In fact, some sales professionals might not appreciate the “big picture” and might actually see the systems outlined in “MegaRates” as crosses laid upon them by overly aggressive managers, rather than something to help them. He suggested that what the industry needed was a similar study, but this time conducted among the nation’s most successful radio *sales professionals*—not managers—to develop an understanding of *how* they get the success they enjoy. His idea was a sound one: Learning how your *peers* are accomplishing tremendous personal sales success—right from the proverbial “horses’ mouths”—is a lot different in its motivational effect than reading a text that speaks to your *boss* about what he or she can do to get an improved P & L. After all, the end result of “MegaRates” is to increase the value of the station, and many rank-and-file salespeople see that as a benefit to the ownership of the company much more so than to themselves.

So, thanks to David taking the time to write to me about this, thanks to the NAB for funding the project, and thanks to 40 of the country’s top sales professionals for sharing their secrets, we have *MegaSales: How America’s Most Successful Radio Salespeople Do It*. The good news is that for any sales-

person who takes the time to read these pages, the comments of the contributors are so filled with great ideas and nuggets of wisdom, so in tune with each other in forming a set of principles to sell by, and so clearly expressed, that it would be impossible not to come away from the reading as a better, more effective salesperson.

Warning: “For best results,” as they say, this summary should *not* replace the reading of the individual comments of the text. There are hundreds of excellent insights in those verbatims that simply can’t be captured in a summary. In fact, what I’d suggest is that you read all the text first and then come back to the summary as a way to focus on the *key* ideas—the common principles and techniques—once you’re ready to capitalize on them.

I. Developing Strong Relationships With Value-Added Customers

There are five areas of investigation in this study: (1) methods of developing value-added customers; (2) getting *more* dollars from clients year after year; (3) the role of high rates; (4) the use of rate cards; and (5) the resources or tools management provides that maximize the salesperson’s performance. The first two questions asked of the respondents dealt with the area of developing *more* and *stronger* relationships with customers who were not price-only “vendor buyers,” but who cared about and appreciated things that the salesperson and station could do for them *beyond* addressing cost per point . . . things that *added value* for them in a way that would make station-to-station comparison impossible, or, at least, irrelevant.

Jim Morley, Senior Vice President of NewCity Communications, clarified the importance of developing more value-added client relationships while speaking at an NAB convention panel on “MegaRates” about a year after that study’s publication. No one had ever made it as clear as Jim did. He was empathizing with how tough it can be to get a rate increase from a client. “There’s a difference,” he said, “between *asking* for the rate and *getting* it. That difference is that stations and salespeople with *good selling alternatives* can get the rate. If you don’t have good selling alternatives, you can ask, but you probably won’t get it.” Jim went on to explain that the *significance* of good selling alternatives was the heart of Herb Cohen’s book, *You Can Negotiate Anything*. Cohen points out that if you have just one potential buyer for your product, and that guy feels your product is worth \$20 per unit, you can ask for \$60 per unit all day . . . chances are you’ll sell it for nearer \$20 or let it go unsold. But if you have five or six people (causing demand pressure against your inventory) who see *more* than \$20 value in the prod-

uct, now you have a chance of getting your rates. These are value-added customers, as opposed to customers who are strictly price-oriented. If you keep the “demand pipeline” full of these people by nurturing *more* solid relationships with them, you’ll always be able to tell a buyer—a price-focused low-baller—that you’re sorry, but the price is \$60 because you can sell it for that if they don’t buy it.

So what do these super-successful radio salespeople do to develop and nurture such value-added customers? There is a wealth of good concepts and secrets in the verbatim question answers, but it seems to boil down to five major steps these people take. All of these steps have certainly been around for a while; it’s just that these people make sure they deliver on all of them, 100 percent:

1. **Prospecting clients for the right customer/station match or fit.** That’s where it all starts. If you’re selling Rolls-Royces, as quality a product as they may be, if what is appropriate for the client is a two-seater race car, you’re wasting your time. What the station delivers in basic audience must have a decent match to customer product or service targeting.
2. **Focus on the client’s business from the very first encounter.** These salespeople talk a lot about *listening*: listening to the client and asking the questions necessary to learn their needs, and they do very little, if any, talking about their radio station, its audience, and so on. As one respondent puts it, “I’m not trying to sell them something. I’m trying to become a partner with them to solve their needs and their problems. After we’ve established that that’s what our goal is in our working relationship, then the first thing I do is I don’t assume anything. I ask questions. I let the customer talk.”

And all communication *from* the salesperson to the client starts with a focus on the client’s needs and problems: “The proposals that I do are very focused to a specific client need,” says one respondent, “and the other stations’ proposals are really trying to make a client’s needs fit their package. I don’t call that a proposal. A proposal is a specific problem-solving set of papers and ideas. It identifies what the problem is and it says, ‘This is how I suggest we go about doing it.’ And very often it involves considerably more than radio.”

3. **Gaining and using a lot of knowledge about the customer’s business.** These sales professionals work at learning more and more about their client’s business as the months and years go by, both by learning from the clients themselves and by reading trade publications of the client’s industry. And they are constantly demonstrating that product knowledge

in working with the client.

4. **Becoming a constant source of good ideas, both creative ideas and marketing knowledge.** In fact, these successful salespeople perceive that the value-added for their client working with their station is *themselves* . . . that they are acquiring “me” as an unpaid employee who can really help their business. And it’s important to understand that very often the ideas—ideas that are powerful and bond the relationship—have *nothing* to do with radio.

The ultimate goal is to be *the* idea source for the client: “I’ve got a car dealer who called me in and said, ‘OK, what are we going to do this month? What’s our idea?’ What a great position to be in. You’ve removed yourself totally from cost. He knows what he’s going to spend on advertising. I’m not debating that with him. Now we’re talking about the ideas, and that’s what’s exciting.”

5. **Staying close to the client all the time.** The client, the salespeople feel, needs to know that you have their best interest at heart all the time. The sense of caring comes from a number of things: the ongoing information and ideas you give them, the promptness with which you get back to them when they call, the follow-through. And staying close implies two other things: (1) staying in the forefront of their minds, and (2) keeping abreast of the changes in their business.

II. Getting More Dollars From The Same Clients Year After Year

Three major themes came out here:

1. First and foremost, it’s great creative ideas—ideas for promotions, for a major campaign, ideas that solve problems—that get more dollars and often a larger share of the client’s business.
2. To develop ideas that make sense, respondents again stressed the need to stay in close touch with the client, understanding their changing marketing priorities and generally, as one person put it, “servicing them to death.”
3. Finally, it sounds elementary, but you’ve got to “ask for the order.” As one salesperson puts it, “I tell them we have our annual review coming up next month and I want them to know I’m going to ask for a larger share of their budget dollars next month for this reason. I do it verbally. I do it a little bit at a time. By the time I come in and say, ‘I want a 20 percent increase,’ they know why. I’ve shared the reasons with them on an ongoing basis.”

And here's a somewhat unorthodox, but perhaps effective, way of doing it: "I ask how I could get my unfair share of the ad budget and recognize that it might be my unfair share. That helps you to learn from the client the kinds of problems and the needs that the client may have. That's when they start to open up and say, 'Listen, if only you can do this, this, and this for me, I'd be more than willing to give you 100 percent of the budget.'"

III. The Role Of High Advertising Rates

How do these people feel about the importance of high rates in bringing them success? Here it is:

Very Important 65%
Somewhat Important 32%
Not Very Important 3%

And how do they get high rates? A *lot* of techniques were mentioned, but only one with great frequency: establishing the value, worth, or results that the station brings *up front*, before rate is even discussed. Selling that value early enough is key: "If I have done my job right, they already perceive that the value of this radio station far surpasses my competition anyway. So, I lose very, very, very few orders because of rates. And if I have, then I haven't done my job."

Remembering that a lot of the value imparted by these salespeople is their own work, their own ideas, and their own expertise, one starts to see rate in a different light: "A lot of times, I feel that people get tied in with what the market norm is: 'Gee, \$150 is the comfortable average in this market, and that's all I should ask for.' That's bull. If you're doing a good job, and all this work, then you deserve higher rates. It's having pride and self-confidence in what you do. My philosophy is, no idea, if they like it that much, is too expensive. They'll find money for it."

Certainly a component of *perceived* value is the perception of how in demand your product is, as one respondent understood: "I'll always try, other than in first quarter, to give my clients a feeling that my station's in heavy demand. Whenever a client says, 'Can I get on this week?' I usually give them the impression that I'm going to have to check on it. I want them to feel like everyone out there is trying to get on my station. So that when it comes down to annuals, or the next order a couple of months down the road, I want them to feel that my station is in great demand, and they're going to have to pay a price for it."

IV. The Role Of Rate Cards In The Selling Process

Fully 83 percent of these salespeoples' stations have rate cards, and there were a *few* people who thought they were useful: "Yes. We are required to use the rate card. We are not allowed to negotiate. You should always use the rate card because it justifies what you're asking for, right on paper. I use the rate card extensively, and my philosophy would be to use it whenever possible."

But the vast majority of these professionals *never showed a client the rate card if they could avoid it . . .* it was for internal use only.

So the most common role of the rate card was really a communication device *between the management and the salesperson* to signal what the station needed, ratewise, for its inventory from week to week.

Many salespeople did not even put rates in the contract, but instead showed one "package" price for all that was provided: "It's really not the card we sell. It's not spots that we sell. It's a bigger thing than that. It's selling these ideas or what the client needs are"

V. Resources Most Valued That Management Provides To Help Maximize Salespeoples' Performance

High on just about everyone's list was ongoing *training*. Lots of types of training were mentioned, from selling courses (Greenwood, Goldsmith, RAB, and so on) to in-station training: "We do intense training courses three mornings every week where we role-play, videotape, and we have to actually do a sales presentation to the top banana here at the company."

Sales research of all types was frequently mentioned, particularly *qualitative* audience research.

Apart from these two very tangible resources, there was a great deal of talk about one other thing: management's belief in giving the guidelines (rates, etc.), and then "letting us do our thing." It was variously expressed as autonomy, flexibility, freedom, belief in "me" as a person, but it all spelled a supportive attitude.

And there was something that was never specifically stated by the salespeople, but their comments virtually *dripped* with it: Their station had helped to instill in them a tremendous confidence that they, the station, and the company as a whole were *winners . . .* totally professional and way above the rest. They all work for the very best radio station in the world.

Conclusion

If a salesperson wants to get “pumped,” to get motivated to be great, and to learn the keys to greatness, a reading of the comments of these sales killers will do it. As with the “MegaRates” book for managers, the industry again owes a debt of thanks to Eileen Marshall, Vice President on our staff, for doing all the groundwork on this study to identify 40 of the country’s top radio salespeople and then to interview each in such an in-depth and comprehensive fashion. And, of course, to each of the salespeople who were good enough not only to be interviewed, but to share with the industry their most treasured possession—their secrets of success—we thank you and applaud you. Your cooperation will undoubtedly lead the industry to become more professional and more *lucrative for all*.

Methodology

This research project, conducted by The Research Group, Seattle, Washington, for the National Association of Broadcasters, Washington, DC., is a compilation of interviews with 40 radio station account executives, recommended by their peers. These account executives were recommended on the basis of their superior ability to get high rates for their commercials, and for their ability to develop for their stations the kind of long-term advertisers who see value beyond just the spots.

Respondents represent a cross-section from the top 180 markets—both large and small market ranks—and a wide variety of formats. Interviews were conducted between April 1 and May 22, 1989. These interviews were either telephone-administered interviews, 20 to 30 minutes in average duration, or in-person, in-depth sessions of up to one and one-half hours in length. All respondents' comments were tape-recorded, transcribed, and then edited into final form.

The views expressed in this publication are those of the authors and the research respondents and do not necessarily reflect the views of NAB, nor do they constitute endorsement by NAB of the approaches and techniques suggested or described.

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Question 1



First, think about your client list. Among all the clients that you work with, you probably have those clients who really see a lot of value in advertising with your station. These are not the “vendor-oriented” clients, whose only concern is price and cost per point. These are clients who see the overall value that working with you personally and having a relationship with your particular radio station offer. I’d like to know *how* you work to develop more of these kinds of advertisers. What two techniques do you find most effective in nurturing and developing more of these types of value-conscious advertisers for your station?

“The first thing that comes to mind is service. Once you get them on the air, you have to take it beyond just calling on them. You have to take the opportunity to do more creative things. It’s amazing how many people in radio do everything off the top of their head. You have to put things down in writing for them. For example, you give them their schedule written on a calendar. That’s mostly for direct clients. I’ve even had smaller agencies take the calendar and incorporate that into their own presentations. Radio is such an intangible already, and as part of my service I make it as tangible as I can. Giving them their commercials on tapes—I think that’s an imperative. It’s not always that easy to get that done. Give them an aircheck if there’s something promotional going on.

"I read *Fortune* magazine, and that's something we do here. Everybody's assigned a magazine to read. If an article pertains to the car industry, then I send it to my car dealer clients. The grocery industry is also very appreciative of that because not everybody has time to read all these magazines. Yet these articles are very pertinent. I think that comes under the umbrella of general marketing research, as opposed to just selling radio spots. You're looking at the big picture for the client, and that pays off.

"We write a lot of commercials for clients that aren't in agencies. And if you come up with promotional ideas that they incorporate into their commercials, it's of tremendous value to them.

"You have to basically get information on their business. Some are more willing than others to give you that information. Sometimes you have to get it through salespeople or secretaries as opposed to the decision-maker. If they've never heard of the station or they don't listen to you, you have to make sure they do and either set the dial for them or get them an aircheck. I take it a step further and try to familiarize them with some of our advertisers, because they're fairly upscale. I go so far as to provide them with names. I say, 'Ask these people what successes they've had with the radio station.' Then I say, 'This is the way I would put you on the station. This is what it would cost. Here is an idea.' Sometimes I'll write copy for them or even have something produced. Then you can come back and play a commercial. A lot of times that'll do it. Then you get them the times to make sure they hear their commercial on the radio station as opposed to just on the tape.

"I have a tremendous grocery account that I got on the air because I was working with a vendor group that had 30/30. I was able to give the account free 30-second commercials, and basically that got me in the door. I said, 'Here. I have X number of commercials for you.' I got their attention that way. The next thing I knew, I had a tremendous buy from them."



"My clients have been a very critical part of my success over the years. When I first got into the business, I didn't have a nice list of agency accounts to call on. So I had to develop that skill first. Now I do call on major agencies, but I've never lost sight of going in and having product knowledge, category knowledge about the client.

"If you're calling on a lighting, flooring, carpeting, baby products store, or whatever, you have to have a very relaxed attitude about yourself and not start with the radio station. The radio station, in their mind, is secondary to everything. It's way down the list of important factors. So category knowl-

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edge is very important when you're calling on new accounts, especially retailers and service businesses. I get category knowledge through trade magazines. I get it by walking through other businesses, maybe the ones I know won't advertise at all. I walk in there and act like I'm a customer and do a little research into it. Therefore, I gain not only a lot of category knowledge, but also market knowledge—knowledge about where this particular client fits into the market scheme.

"Another technique or thing that I'm driven by is empathy for retailers, because their businesses are very difficult. Everyone will tell you that. There's not enough new business coming in. They're paranoid every month, even the most experienced retailers. I tell them straight ahead that retailing isn't easy, is it? And they agree: 'You're right.' They beam. They smile. I connect with them in that way, because I know it's not easy. Before that first interview's over, they're going to hire me because they know first of all I'll work for them, that I understand, and that the station is secondary. So they're not hiring the station, they're hiring me. Fortunately, I work for a very good station. That helps a lot. But that's the difference between succeeding and succeeding a lot.

"There are a couple of other things. Flexibility. Willing to go see them at 5:30 when you know you want to go home. Maybe they have a moment to sit down and talk about radio advertising with you, to talk about the warehouse, to talk about those things they're concerned about. You're employed by these people. They're writing you a check every month for advertising. I make some off of that, so why shouldn't I treat it like I'm actually working for them?

"And then the added value is another one. Added value would be any way that I can participate in their marketing effort beyond the radio advertising. The added value would be: What are you going to do for St. Patrick's Day? Maybe you're not going to advertise on radio, but let's put green tags everywhere. Things like that they might not even do. Giving them a lot of other ideas beyond the radio advertising. And that comes from experience and listening to others."



"I think the first thing that I try to do when I start working with somebody is to mirror my pace to the growth timetable of their business, instead of concentrating on my own monthly billing bottom line. If I time myself with them, I find that the trust happens a lot sooner, and that relationship builds early on. I try to make them feel as comfortable as possible. With a lot of

them, this is the first time they've used broadcast advertising and it's a big risk to them. I try to bring as many ideas to the table as possible, things that will take whatever budget level they are in and make them unique and have impact for them. Service is a big part of it. That can be a lot of different things. I try to establish the trust so that person will think of me in a consultant sort of way—just like any other professional that they've hired, whether it be a lawyer or a CPA. So that any decision they might be considering with advertising, they'd let me in on or ask my opinion on something. I think lastly, I just really try and listen.

"I try to find out as much about their business as possible. Sometimes I think that salespeople make a mistake in thinking that because this person is, let's say, a car dealer, they know everything there is to know about that business. They're doing too many things; they don't have time to keep up on all the information. So I think information on how I can bring that back into the plan and make something unique from it is part of my job. I help them to market themselves.

"Sincerity is also important. When you do things for them that have a motivation beyond the money you're going to make out of them, I think that stands out and makes you different."

"First of all, the key thing that I do with all my advertisers is to be very honest with them about everything—about how we can help them and if a certain type of a schedule is going to work for them. I basically build a good business relationship with them and try to find out about their business. It takes trying to reach a lot of people so that you can hopefully hit the ones that you're going to be able to get along with. They find out that they can trust me, which means being honest with them through the good and the bad. Those are things that help build the relationship. That's basically it, and through prospecting and being organized, that's where you find those people.

"I try to find out more about their business, get them to talk about themselves, and try to find out if they're the type of people I can form a good relationship with. There are a lot of people who are going to be extremely businesslike, but there's always some way you can get to know them. Make them feel like they're going to be the one you concentrate on. They're not going to be pigeonholed till the next time you see them. Maybe it's a new business that has had an article in the newspaper. I try to bring up things that were mentioned to show some extra interest."

“I think there’s a couple different things that go into it. First of all, I try desperately to steer away from price. Radio is not a loaf of bread. You’re trying to accomplish something. I try desperately to get all the information I can from them—what they’re trying to accomplish, who they’re trying to reach, your normal demographic questions. It’s my job to customize a schedule for them based on my expertise and the tools that I have available. In this way, you avoid selling on your first call. When you’re first meeting someone, there is a certain amount of qualifying that goes into it. We are expensive. If they have a couple hundred dollars to spend, they probably don’t want to do it here. It’s doing both of us a disservice. After the qualification part, the people who say, ‘I don’t spend more than \$125 a spot,’ are media buyers. They’re not clients and they’re not concerned with how much product they’re moving or how many people are coming in the door. So I try to get them to think as an owner of a company would.

“There is not one person on my list that I don’t work with the head of the company or someone in charge on the client side. These media buyers don’t care. They have their own hidden agendas and their own goals to meet. I certainly respect that, but everyone’s got to see the big picture. When I can come in and say, ‘I talked to Mr. So-and-so and I know what he wants to accomplish,’ I have a lot more credibility.

“Number two: I don’t want to sell on the first call. I want to find out. I’ll take as much in as possible and then come back with a plan that answers what they’re looking for. So I become a source of information for them. I’ll read a lot of related, but seemingly unrelated, articles regarding industries. I’ll just clip anything that I feel is interesting and I’ll send it to people. Frankly, I’m sure 80 percent of them don’t read it, but they like to know that I’m thinking about their business, not just thinking about the radio buy. It’s just a way that I feel I can give them more and they should buy more from me.

“I think that the value of being the source of information really does help because 90 percent of the people are too lazy to do it on their own. And it’s pretty hard work. We recently had a seminar on closing, and to me it didn’t have much value because I think that your work should be done by them. Obviously you close and go for the deal, but they’d better already know that they want me, because I’m not going to be competitive.

“I do a lot with new business, and a lot of times they’ll say, ‘I’m not buying anything yet.’ This is the time when I want to get in and talk to you. It’s easier to get the appointment because fewer people are calling them because

they're saying, 'No, I'm not buying anything.' That's when I want to be there. That person will call me up and say, 'So-and-so called me from this station. Is that a good station?' I want to be the station that they count on."

"I think that it starts with prospecting those types of accounts that are going to be right for your station and successful with your station. After a while you get to know these types of advertisers. If you're, for example, an 18 to 34 radio station, you're not going to get great results if you're going for an advertiser who is 25 to 54. So, I think it all begins with prospecting and qualifying accounts. I think service is the number-one thing, really. That is the utmost important thing when developing a relationship. I think a lot of salespeople make the mistake of going in, selling a schedule, and then they disappear. There's no service involved. And I think that is real important. It makes the client feel important as well.

"My ultimate goal is for this advertiser to believe that I am a marketing professional. It makes my job a heck of a lot easier. In order to get to that point, first of all, let them know you not only know your own business, but you know their business as well. You're not an expert at the business, but you know enough so that they trust you. You do your homework. I send out newsletters geared to specific industries. Let's say I have quite a few car dealers. What I'll do is I'll put together a newsletter that talks about the importance of women buyers in the auto industry. When I'm asking questions of an advertiser, I preface it by putting in a little bit of information about their product, and then asking the question. So they will know that I know a little bit of what they're selling. Follow-up is also important. Let's say they place a schedule, then you call them with their times. The littlest things, like phoning in with log times—other salespeople don't do it. So if you do that, that's just a little extra thing that these people remember. Say you walk into one of their locations, treating their people well. Then go back to the owner and say, 'I met your general manager at your --- location. Wow, what a great gal. She's really on the ball.' Just letting that owner know that you're interested in their business and you were even in their location."

"I think the most important thing is the exclusiveness of your station. What do you have and what can you offer a client that no other station can offer? That way, you can't be refused. Obviously the client has to have a need for your particular station or format. And exclusiveness is something that they

can't shop elsewhere for. Obviously, and in dealing with non-cost per point, non-agency-type clients you also have to look at effectiveness. It's unfortunate that at an agency level it tends to be much more cut-and-dried. Bottom line in why radio, I think, has been effective over a long period of time is: Does it work? Does it make the cash register ring? Does it make people come in the door? Clients are interested in results. They're not really interested in cost per points and a lot of statistics. Their concern is: How much can you help my business grow over the next year if I invest with you?

"Case in point would probably be success letters. It's an old, old sales tool, but it's really one of the best. If I put myself in a client's chair, what is the one thing that's going to prove to me that the station works? It's somebody else in my industry who has had success on that radio station advertising a similar product or service. Success letters are really an old tool but they're one of the most effective I've ever found. The effectiveness of your station, honestly, has to be in the forefront.

"And finally another one that's probably kind of similar to the other two, but slightly different, is dealing direct with the advertiser. You really have to position yourself and the station as a marketing package. You want to be important to that person, but more as a marketer—somebody who is knowledgeable about the market, about the client's business, and about the station. The most disservice you can do to an advertiser is to draw them into radio and take their money without having a good idea that this might work. You have to be a marketer. You have to put packages together and be creative and do the kind of things that are going to help sell the goods and services."

"My first response would be: when appropriate, find a promotional hook or opportunity that they can become involved with. Then I think, secondly, fully understand their marketing objectives and address those objectives at every opportunity. Always remind them why. There is a reason there is a radio buy, because obviously there's a marketing objective. That was something I think that I've found helpful for me—going back to the grass roots of what we are really trying to accomplish here.

"Initially I would probably do a fairly extensive interview process to find out what your objectives are. And then we would find the proper way and proper direction for you to work with our radio station. We would design a program for you in that way. Almost always, with us, there's a proposal that would go out after an initial conversation."

“I think we have a pretty unique situation here with our radio station because we’re locally owned and operated. That makes a real difference, I think, in a marketplace. The most important thing that we do here in creating a perceived value where our station is concerned is to keep the people informed of just what kind of involvement we have within the community, the kind of community work that we do. I think that goes such a long way—the perceived value. If you’re perceived as good guys and involved and caring about your community, *and* you have ratings like we have. We are in a position in this market that virtually no other radio station is in. ‘We can sell your products. We can make you money.’ It’s a little different selling situation because when you’re in a position like this, you have to try harder with the people that you’re doing business with. You don’t want them to think, ‘They have such great ratings and they don’t give a blank: Just do it our way or don’t do it.’ We just don’t want that at all. The way I build relationships with my clients is kind of like the perceived value of our radio station. Any information that I can provide them about things that we do or the product that we have. Those are reasons why I think we have the kind of product we have. And it just makes the sales situation much easier. People have grown up with us, and the listener loyalty to us is just very unique. We’re in a different-type selling situation. We’re very much in a service-oriented position. I’m not saying that we don’t try and sell and increase business and all that good stuff, because we do. But just the way we go about it is a bit different.”

“I think probably the first and foremost thing that I do in finding those kinds of clients is to really match up my format and what my audience is with the clients’ needs. In other words, it’s not just a demo, but a lifestyle kind of sell that I do. It makes much more sense and works much better for the advertiser to advertise with us if, in fact, what we have to offer them is the kind of customer they’re looking for. Secondly, I’d say that the nurturing and developing is an ongoing, 12-month process. I do it on a real personal basis. I really sell myself. It doesn’t have a whole lot to do with the radio station. It’s being on time; it’s sending ‘Thank You’ notes for every order. It’s just the little things done on a day-to-day basis to make the person feel special.

“Another thing I like to do for people is not waste their time. And I let

them know that a lot. I'll say, 'I have something important to talk to you about,' and they will see me because they know that I won't call them on a weekly basis to tell them what our morning man said or things that really aren't pertinent. It's important to value people's time. We all have so little of it."

"Two things, part of which is listening. One of the things I try to do is have a good understanding of what's expected to happen. And I try to underplay it a little bit. I figure if I can underplay the potential results and then come up with that, great. If I do better than that, then I'm a hero. They love it. If they're willing to buy what I have to sell with a good understanding of what will happen for them, then I think we're in good shape.

"I don't over-promise anything. That's the fastest way in the world to kill yourself. What has to happen is that they have to have their act together; they have to know what sells. We can work on things from a creative standpoint, but basically they have to have a good product, they have to run a good company, and they have to take care of people when they walk in the door. If their salespeople are sloppy, they don't have the inventory, or whatever, what they're probably going to do is take a look at their sales figures and say, 'We didn't sell any more with you than before we had you,' when in reality, we may have done them some good. We have to be working on this thing together. So, if you want to be successful, your commercials—the attitude of the commercials, the feel of the commercials—have to match what they find in the store. Otherwise you're going to get the wrong people coming in and they're automatically going to be disappointed because the reality is not going to match the perception that the commercial gave them.

"The other thing is just to tell them up front that nothing's going to work every time. Just because they're on the radio doesn't mean a thing, other than the fact that a lot of people are going to hear them. But I really don't make any guarantees at all. I just tell them it should help, should work, and all we're doing is making it possible for them to get the word out to a lot of people faster."

"First, in developing these kinds of advertisers, I look for the correct customers, which is very important. A good match between who the client is and what the radio station has to offer. And from that point we use empathy. I'm honest. I have a lot of integrity and I sort of become an unpaid employee to these people. In developing advertising for them, I try to look at it from

their point of view, not the radio station's. And at that point, it seems that I become an unpaid employee, indispensable because I'm essentially doing free marketing for them. The biggest thing is finding people who are a perfect match. That's the most important thing for me. I look at what sort of advertiser they are: Do they like to buy just advertising, or do they like to buy added value? Do they have the dollar potential that's going to be worth my while as well? Does their product fit my product? Also important is that I can have access to these people. Without access it's worthless. When we need to talk, not just when they want me to talk. Those are the things that are the most important."

"One of the things is understanding about the kind of clients that are going to have the best results from the radio station. When you're working on developing new business, for example, knowing enough about the marketplace and about the potential advertisers in the marketplace to be able to really key in on those that you think you're going to be able to help. The ones that are going to be value-minded beyond just the average cost per commercial. You become a little bit better as time goes on at figuring out which clients are going to place a value on the kind of things that our station can offer them and on the kinds of service that I can offer them.

"One of the things I do in initial meetings with those kinds of customers is to really find out in depth what they want and what they're looking for from advertising, and from radio in particular. Then when I go back in after that initial meeting to present something to them, I bring them a lot of information based on the information that they gave me. A lot of times it will take me a week before I get back to them because I'll do a lot of reading and research. Maybe it's just sending off for a big packet of information from the RAB to get the background. When I come in and do that first proposal or presentation, it's more than just, 'This is the radio station and this is the spot schedule and this is how much it's going to cost.' It's a lot of background. If they're working on a specific project, for example, and I know there's a lot of media dollars there beyond the radio station that I'm working for, I might suggest what other stations might work and why. I use the research that we have available here at the station, like the RAB or magazines that we have, as well as Strata, Media Audit, those kinds of things. With the information I've gotten from them—knowing what segment of the market they're most interested in going after—I position the station the best way I can in reference to the particular thing that they're working on at the time.

“The other part of that is, beyond the presentation, I can usually figure out that there may be a promotion going on at the station that I could tie them in to. The best kinds of meetings that I have like that, the ones I know are really going to work for a long time, are the ones where I’m just sitting across from somebody and the ideas start to pop. We’re not really talking about a schedule anymore or the radio station at all. We’re talking about ideas that will work. Those are the kinds of things that work.”

“I have a lot of clients that are not rating oriented or price oriented. It is important to them, but what I try to do is go beyond their expectations. I try to look for ways that I can help them with new ideas or suggestions without them having to ask me. I try to go to them first. It sometimes takes a long time to do that or to get your point across, but it has worked for me. I’ll give you an example. A friend of mine works at this particular company. I want to do business with this company. One of the problems that I’ve noticed at this company has been very poor telephone techniques. The phone doesn’t get answered on time, it takes them a long time, messages are lost. I found a very good article on how important telephone techniques are and showing how that can position you in the consumer’s mind, and this particular business depends on telephone inquiries in order to make money. So they’re actually losing a lot of business. My friend is in sales, so it’s very important for him to get those calls. I sent the article to him. He presented it to his boss and they started working to try to clean up their act internally. I just found out this past week that the owner of the company didn’t know the article had come from me. He said it just came from Teddy and he’d done such a wonderful job. That was fine; he didn’t have to know. What it did for me was get an appointment with the owner because I had helped my friend Ted out. So now we have a very good relationship with his company.

“I tend to do a lot of reading and researching. I try to go in and make myself familiar with the organization. I like to know. I don’t want to go in cold to a company. I want to know a little bit about their business, and usually on the first or sometimes second sales call, I don’t sell. I listen, which I sometimes think does take them aback a little bit. I try to just listen, pull them out, try to be myself, use my personality, and try to get them to trust me.”

“I think the number-one thing is identifying the client’s need. A lot of clients have different needs based on the type of business and what type of mode

they may be in—a growth mode or a trouble mode. The key is finding out exactly what their need is and then being able to meet that need with a solution, by way of the radio station and what we have to offer to satisfy that need. A couple of things that I do to nurture and develop my relationships in getting these people to trust in me is to try and be a resource for them. We have a research department here and we have creative and production. Different clients have different needs for different things, and I try and wear as many hats as I can so that I'm a resource to them in other areas besides putting in an order for a 30-second spot. Another thing is being accountable. One thing I've learned is that my credibility is in doing what I say. If I say I'm going to call with a spot, then I play the commercial. If I say I'm going to be there at 2:00, I'm there at 2:00. People learn to believe in you as well as what you're representing.”

“I think the biggest thing with any client, big or small, is getting them out of thinking of cost-per-point and realizing that what they want to do is get results. And the only way we are going to be able to do that is to understand what their business is all about. I try to learn as much as I can about a business. If I'm working with a couple of supermarkets, I try to read their trade publications so that I understand what's going on in their business. This way I can anticipate their needs even before they say, 'This is what we need.' I can bring them ideas or something that is going to work for them. And knowing also where they are in the marketplace, learning about them, talking to the people who work there. That type of thing. That seems to work real well with those clients.

“The big thing is just knowing a lot about them. It's the biggest thing because other stations have no idea what's going on in the client's business. All they know is, 'I've got to put this together and here's a rate.' I, on the other hand, am constantly in there talking to them: 'What's going on? Is business good? Is business bad?' And when you know that, you can anticipate what's going on with them.”

“On one side it's definitely relationship, with either agency clients that see a value in your station that will pay over the cost-per-point or direct clients that just feel that you're their marketing consultant and they rely on you. As long as their cash register is running, then you're the best thing that ever happened to them. So I would say number one is definitely relationship.

Just nurturing along a relationship. Being able to give them all the information that they need. Being able to service them, being there when they need you. Showing the results of your station that you have had for other clients. Keeping them up-to-date on exciting events that the station is doing and community involvement that the station is doing. And basically just showing them that your station is worth it. Having been on the agency side for a number of years, I think one of the most important things that I have always found was service. You have to be there or be able to call them back right away. When they have something on their desk, they want to get it off their desk. And they want to get it done. I've found that more times than not, that's the one thing that they mention the most about me—that they can always get hold of me. That's the one thing when I was a buyer that I found was my pet peeve. If I couldn't get hold of somebody, I wouldn't pay them anything for their station. I could care less. If your clients have a good thought in their head about you as a salesperson, then the station becomes secondary because they feel that you work for them. My clients' spots always run at the right time. I never have any discrepancies. It's all a matter of service. They see that as being almost more valuable than whatever rate they're paying on your station."



"Number one, I think it's important to show them that you care about them and their business. Make them feel like they're your favorite client, the most important client that you have. I think you need to be prepared to spend as much time with the client as the individual client may need. Some of them need a lot of your time and a lot of hand-holding, and you need to be willing to give that to them. I've also found that a lot of times some AEs may not be prepared because they are too busy to give the time certain clients need. But in the long run, it's worth giving them the extra time for the relationship's sake. The two techniques that I find most effective in nurturing are: number one, to sit down with them and really figure out where they need help from me, and to help them, even if it has nothing to do with radio. Oftentimes a buyer is new to an area or a client has had trouble with other radio station reps or salespeople or doesn't understand radio. I'll do everything I can to acclimate them to the market, to the radio station. And the other thing I do is include them in as many station events as possible. And I don't mean just promotions. There may be something that we're doing here for our salespeople, such as holding a dinner or special incentive event for the salespeople. And I try and get the advertiser included in it as if they're

part of the family here. I came from a much bigger market than the one I'm in right now. The first thing I noticed at the station was the fact that clients didn't hesitate to stop in at the radio station to visit with the sales department or their favorite salesperson or sales manager. We make them feel like family."

"First of all, I want to make a distinction between agencies and clients. Most of the people who I call on are advertising agencies. I will refer to them as buyers or people from the agencies. When I refer to clients, I think that will be more advertising directors, directly at the client.

"The first point I'd like to make is that the value-oriented clients evolve from the vendor-oriented clients. I've found in my experience that the people that I have the best relationships with, and the ones that feel that there is a value to my service and my station, are people that started out shopping around for the best price. Once you get that kind of person on the air, that's when you really start to develop those value-oriented relationships. I can't tell you how many times I've taken someone from a vendor-oriented person just looking for price to a value-oriented client. There are two ways that I do that. First of all is through the agency, making sure that once you do get a buy, never let them get buyer's remorse. Make sure that you call and thank them, send letters and thank them. Find out the account supervisor, account executive, people that are above the buying level, and thank them as well for the business. It's a lot easier to go to somebody and set up a meeting to thank them than it is to get to them with a problem. I think if you can avoid the problems and start off on the right foot, you're really on your way to developing some sort of value orientation there.

"Second thing is to get to the client. Find out who the director of advertising is, or the regional director of sales, or whoever the client is who's responsible for ultimately creating those advertising dollars and ultimately saying 'yes' to the choices that the agency makes. For them as well, I think, a 'Thank You' letter, a 'Thank You' call, possibly taking them to lunch, or letting them know that you appreciate the fact that they're advertising with your station. Again, you never want to let them have buyer's remorse. You want them to feel that it was the best decision they possibly could have made to advertise with your station. And once you have that established, then you can continue to 'post-sell,' I call it. Everyone talks about the pre-sell, but I look at 'post-selling' as well. You want to reassure them that they made a good decision. You do that by sending them articles or letters, or things that you've

noticed about their business. For instance, I peruse a lot of the newspapers and trade journals about different businesses. If you see an article that is about, for instance, an airline, and that's one of your clients, you send a little note to the advertising director. I think you really start to establish a bond there that says, 'Hey, this person cares a little more about my business than just getting some spots on the radio.' The other side of it, too, is making sure that you ask them concerned questions about their business. Something else that I use that seems to be pretty effective and gives them a good feeling is, 'What can radio in general, or what can I, do better for you? What can I do? Can I send letters to your distributors? Can I make phone calls to let people know you're going to be advertising on ---?' Things that are above and beyond just selling the spots, and it gives the client a real good feeling that, 'Hey, this person is in it for me as well as for themselves.' Because no one feels definitely that you're just in it for them. Everyone knows you're in it to make a sale eventually. But if they get that feeling that this person cares a little bit more than the next guy, then when you go in to them with a special package or you go in to them with a new idea, then you have the upper hand. You start to really establish those relationships."



"I'm very fortunate in that I have a lot of agency experience, and I think that plays a big part in offering credibility and in being more than just a radio station or a radio salesperson. I have a broader perspective than just radio. I know about print because I've bought print and I've worked in print production. I've worked in television production and bought television. I've been an account executive for an ad agency and I've owned my own ad agency. So I have a perspective of what they want to do. But I don't think that I have a technique. Basically what I want to do is identify and satisfy a client's needs. What I really want to do is anticipate them. I want the client to tell me about their problems. Or maybe they don't even know what the problem is and I'm able to put my finger on it or find a solution. In the relationships that I have with clients that have been very successful, where I'm not viewed as just a vendor, those are the things that I have been allowed to do.

"The proposals that I do are very focused to a specific client need, and the other stations' proposals are really trying to make a client's needs fit their package. I don't call that a proposal. A proposal is a specific problem-solving set of papers and ideas. It identifies what the problem is and it says, 'This is how I suggest we go about doing it.' And very often it involves considerably more than radio. It might involve in-store merchandising or some-

thing like that which the station is capable of handling for clients. It involves employee morale. You start working with the employees to get them motivated and to get them to understand what this event is going to be like. I think it's just clearly understanding and identifying the problem first and then finding the solution."

"One client that comes to mind is the local Snapper distributor. He has a network of about 80 dealers in our coverage area. He can buy anything he wants. He elects to use our station, and me, for his radio needs. We're the only radio station he uses. We're extremely strong in the demo that he wants: 35+ males. He can buy television and all media, but he likes the fact that I come to him with ideas—reasons for him to change and do things differently than he has in the past. He doesn't always do the things I suggest, but he loves the ideas and he molds and shapes them to make new opportunities for his dealers. He has invited me to speak with their annual meeting of dealers and give them my ideas on advertising and how they can best use radio. Being available to him, striving to work with him to sell more product is the key. He doesn't look at me as the guy selling a bunch of spots. The radio advertising is a means to an end. I try to give him as much information about the station as he needs, and I'm constantly looking for new distributor/dealer situations such as this. This has worked very well for me. The Shindiwa is a chain saw company and they also have a network of dealers. It's not as large as the Snapper distributorship but it's the same principle. I look at the strength of the station and try to match that with the clientele."

"I think the key is to approach them first as a marketing type of person so that you're not really selling the station—you're first finding out the needs of the person or the company. Then developing radio, not really the station—talking about how radio could help them, and then getting to the station. It's more of a conceptual sell, and I think that if you don't begin with that, then you go in selling spots. You've got to go in and really figure their needs. Sometimes I don't even recommend my station if we don't fit. I think the key is to find the needs of the client and help them to solve the needs. Then cost is not as much of an issue. Obviously, that varies if you work with an ad agency, where it's a whole different ball game. But even sometimes there it can be helpful. If you haven't sold the value of the quality of the audience and the reach and all the other conceptual things, you're just not going to

compete. Especially in retail, I don't even bring up numbers or competition. I just talk about who we are and who they are. If it matches up, great; if it doesn't, then let's see what they should be doing. First of all, they really learn to trust me. It always knocks their socks off when I don't recommend my station, but it's funny how they'll often recommend me to other people or they'll come back later for something different. I have to be honest. There are certain people you'll have to deal with on a cost-per-ad basis—that's where it's at. You can't try and change someone like that. You either walk away from it or you deal with what they want. I find that when someone really needs an education in radio, that's the most fun part to me. I enjoy that. I enjoy educating them about the market, about the station."

"I think the things that I have to offer that are probably my strong points would be servicing the client and probably just going the extra mile more than the other marketing salespeople in the market do. I have an agency background and so I tend to think in terms of promotions and research rather than just selling spots at a cost-per-point. I find that I really don't get myself into a cost-per-point battle very often because I like to lead with ideas, not just schlepping spots. I really think those three things: my background and ability to put together promotions and ideas, as well as providing research, and then serving the account the way I would want it to be serviced if I was still in the agency business. After I had my agency, I also owned a small retail business for a couple of years, and I find that my experience gives me credibility that most salespersons in media do not have. When I'm trying to sell something, I can tap on those different areas of experience that I have, and it just gives me credibility"

"I'd say actually one of the main things if I'm trying to get somebody to work with me personally is to sell radio first, instead of my own individual station. I like to talk about radio after I've done all my fact-finding and learning about the client. The other important thing is to listen to their needs and then show how radio would fulfill their needs. Those are the two most important things. Before I even get into selling spots, or selling my station, I like to have them know about radio in general, and I listen to what they're trying to do, what their needs are. I guess that's about it in a nutshell, though.

"The main thing, like I mentioned, is listening to their needs and then offering proven results or testimonials. You know what you're going to get

with our radio station—consistency that's been here for so many years, from management all the way down to programming. There's not going to be a 'For Sale' sign on the door."

"Probably the first thing I do when I go into an account like this is I want to set the parameters to create the environment that you're talking about. That makes a difference. That sets me and the station apart from all my competitors. One of the things I do is create a picture where my client understands that what I'm interested in and what the radio station is interested in is a partnership. I'm not interested in just a short-term, quick, in-and-out: 'Give me your advertising dollars and you'll never see me again.' I think that is something that is a little different than the majority of people who try to sell them something. I'm not trying to sell them something. I'm trying to become a partner with them to solve their needs and their problems. After we've established that that's what our goal is in our working relationship, then the first thing I do is I don't assume anything. I ask questions. I let the customer talk. I get him to tell me where his concerns are and what his needs are. That's where we start because he's the one that knows what he wants to create, what he needs to solve, and what he needs to achieve. If I go in assuming that I know, then I could be giving him all sorts of information that isn't important to him. Very basic, very simple.

"Probably one of the things that I go to clients with is the attitude that this is a business within a business. I am my radio station as far as that client is concerned, and I'm responsible personally. My station is responsible business-wise, and it's my job to follow through on this. Once we reach a plateau and a level of understanding that we're in this together and it's not a 'win, lose, buy, sell' situation, then the sky's the limit."

"First of all, I'd have to say getting a better understanding of a client's business is critical to being able to work with them and feeling that you're a partner in their business. If they feel comfortable working with you and they trust you, then they're going to want to do business with you. So I'd say listening and getting to know their business is a critical element of success. Following up when you tell any client that you're going to do something is critical. You're going to succeed a lot better if you do exactly that. Get back in touch with people and look for best ways to promote a client's industry and products. When I think of clients that are long-term users and aren't

buying on a cost-per-point basis, it's persistence and really working with people over a long period of time that pays off. Whether that's one month or three years, at some point in the relationship you reach a turnaround point. Those are probably the best moments of satisfaction when you have been persevering and having a lot of patience. So those two factors, patience and perseverance, are very critical elements."

"I think just making what the advertiser wants, making it work for him. Making him money, making his promotion and his schedule profitable for him. By doing that, earning their trust, they'll listen to what you have to say when you're trying to advise them on what to do, on what kind of schedule to run, and how to make it work. So I guess, earning their trust and making it work for the client would be my two techniques."

"The biggest thing that I do, which I learned from my management, is to ask questions. And ask a lot of questions. Because the more you can find out about what their goals are, the more things you can find out about them, the more ways for you to show what you can do to solve it. It's like going to a doctor and telling the doctor everything that you feel. You give the doctor a full picture and he can prescribe what's going to fix those problems. It's very similar to that, in that if you ask enough questions, you can really get a big picture of an account and what it is that they're really looking for. Cost is always a factor, and it's as much a factor with big accounts as it is with just a one-store local retailer. So, what's more important and what makes my cost better than somebody else's cost, if they're the same or mine is greater, is that I'm proving an added value in my radio station. I'm doing that by asking questions and showing how I can fulfill their needs, how my station can fill their needs for them. There's one account in particular, where we were going to lose \$200,000 of business. We asked a lot of questions. To make a long story short, by asking enough questions, we were able to answer them positively, and we got more money than we had last year. So, one technique that I use is simply asking a lot of questions.

"Of course the other thing, and it almost should go without saying, is that whenever somebody buys my station, they're also buying me. And I make people know that I come along as part of the package. I don't love you and leave you. I will be there. I have no qualms about giving people my home number, my car phone number—some of them even my beeper

number. Because the biggest thing that people are afraid of is that they're going to give you an order, and they'll never see you again. Or, that you're only around when there's a buy up. I don't want people to ever feel that way. I want them to know, because I'm really dedicated to this, that I'm always going to be there for them. I do watch their accounts, and if the spot isn't running right, I will call them before they call me. They may have never known that it existed, but knowing that I found it, that I've corrected it, means a lot to them."

"The two most important things are: Number one is absolutely servicing them. And the second one is honesty. The new owners at this station taught me about radio, and they put the customer first. Under the old management, it was a terrible station. And the station seemed to come first. Radio in general, the market, and all salespeople were like that. They were selfish. There was one station that was number one, and they were taking buys just on that basis, not servicing the client. The one thing that I learned was that servicing your clients, and letting them know you're there for them before, during, and after the sale, is so critical. Because radio is so intangible, it becomes very hard for them to understand what they're buying. It's just that they aren't hearing their commercials. That bill comes in the mail, they haven't heard from you, and it's the last bill that they absolutely want to pay. So by being there for them, you walk them through it, especially the first few times, so they don't feel so alone in it. And then they don't feel so trampled on by all the other salespeople in town. That's one big reason that I have a lot of clients who pretty much just use our station. They get the service that they need, so they feel comfortable with the medium itself. In that service, it's important to be honest, and to be logical about explaining radio and how radio works for them. Sometimes I'm not the right station for a particular buy they might be doing. If I'm going to be honest, I need to sit back and say to them, 'Maybe you need to do this, or expand your dollars into some other station.' The overall goal has to be that the client receives results for his advertising. That's what we're all striving for. And once they do that, they learn to trust you. Then the service is there and you never let them down. You've got yourself a customer. Some other things that go with that are planning, scheduling, and always being on time for appointments and things like that. Reliability is the word there."

“The first thing that I do is to make sure I stress the value of the station. I try to get beyond number of commercials per week, number of spots per month, and things like that. I stress what’s going on at the station, so they can see that this particular station is doing something. Through these types of things, stressing the value of the station, it separates it from a pure price-and-item type of product. There are two techniques to do this. The first one would be stressing the value of the station, and the second one would be trying to provide exceptional service to all the clients. It’s one thing if they say, ‘I want to spend so much money,’ and you come back with a schedule of exactly how much money, but it’s another thing to try to put it in their terms, trying to show them what they’re going to get for it, and trying to legitimize it. In other words, if it’s a restaurant that wants to beef up lunch and dinner, make sure all the commercials air between 12:00 and 7:00. Trying to show that you’re not just pumping out schedules for them, that you’re actually putting some thought behind what you’re doing”

“Once we’ve sat down and talked about what they’re going to do, I ask very specific questions. I don’t make the assumptions. I qualify them to see if this is a legitimate advertiser. That’s all pretty standard stuff. By the time we get down to talking specifics, I also want to be talking to them about philosophy, what they want to accomplish. I just don’t want to do business with this person one time. I want this to be an ongoing relationship. This is motivated from my desire to make a good living, and, secondly, from my desire to get to know people.

“I tell people something about me, and what I believe in. And then, people will naturally tell me about them and what they believe in. That’s what begins an interesting relationship. There are different types of people, so I have to respond to what’s happening. Who am I dealing with? Am I dealing with somebody who wants to begin a long-term relationship with me? Am I dealing with somebody who’s going to talk about their business, and how I can help them?”

“I really don’t think it’s a technique necessarily. It’s the kind of thing where it’s a matter of just positioning yourself—if you really can help the client, if you really can increase their business, or you can help them win personally for some reason. For example, I have a client that’s a small fast-food chain. We helped increase their business, and we were able to create a

character for them. The way we did that was simply by just positioning ourselves and working with them to help them out. And the creative was that aspect. So, I don't really think there is a tactic or a position or a thing that you do one way or the other. I think it's more just if the chemistry works, and all the things kind of come together. Another one I would think of would be a water sports store that we have here in this area. They really see results in their advertising on the station, and they get the personal wins, whether it be that they like the exposure they get on the station, or they like the music, or whatever it is. I would say there really aren't one or two tactics that make it happen. I wish it were. You hunt for them day in and day out.

"My product, obviously, helps. I have a great radio station. But if there's anything, before I walk into a door, I try to think of the reason to be there. What idea are you going to bring to the table that's going to help this person's business? Again, I feel like a broken record, but when I feel most confident when I walk in the door is when I really have a great idea. It's the creative ideas that distinguish us as a radio station from our competitors in the market—creative ideas that really make sense to the advertiser and are results-oriented. When you can think of those kinds of things, you feel you are an important part of their marketing. You're a real resource for them. I've got a car dealer who called me in and said, 'OK, what are we going to do this month? What's our idea?' What a great position to be in. You've removed yourself totally from cost. He knows what he's going to spend on advertising. I'm not debating that with him. Now we're talking about the ideas, and that's what's exciting."

"I can't really think of two techniques. I just base everything that I do in sales on honesty and integrity and being myself. I honestly believe that you have to sell yourself first. I don't believe that anybody is really going to buy from somebody that they don't like. So no matter what I'm selling—I happen to be selling a very fine, fine product—I don't think, as good as this station is, they would be buying maybe as much as they buy if they didn't believe in me and trust me. So I think honesty and integrity are the two most important things.

"I sell myself. I try to get involved. I just try and figure out the type of person I'm dealing with. So I first sell myself and then sell the station. I think the transition is a lot easier when you go in to sell yourself first and act as a consultant a little bit later in the next step or two in the progression of the sale.

"I think the most important thing is give them value. More spots means

a better opportunity of it working. I've always said to advertisers, 'What do you care if you spend a million dollars with me if you make two?' It really doesn't matter. The most important thing is to listen to them, understand what their needs are, and let them know that you're working for them and give them the best results possible."

"The value-conscious advertisers are those customers who appreciate value-added. I try to prospect people who are a good match for the station, who fit the ideal customer profile. That way it ends up a 'win/win' situation for both the client and the station. You have to do a lot of qualifying in your mind before you try to develop these kinds of clients. As far as nurturing these types, it's very much service, service, service. I try to tie a lot of them in to the station with more than just spot schedules, and a lot of times that involves promotion. I don't want to sound like you have to give someone a promotion or someone something extra, but we do like them to feel like they're part of the station, not just buying a schedule. I like to get them involved in a whole package where it's collaborative. For instance, --- Park. This last weekend, we sponsored their Springfest, which is perfect for our audience. The major part is that all the station people are involved in it. The client's involved in it, and you have a weekend where everyone is getting to know everyone else. They feel like they're all part of the team, rather than me just being the seller and them being the buyer.

"It's really building relationships. That's one thing I try to do up front. It doesn't have to be a buddy-buddy relationship, but one where they respect me. My sales manager said, 'One of the things that I've noticed is that your clients really feel like you have their best interests at heart.' I don't know, technique-wise, how you do that. It's just something instinctive. I put a lot of emphasis on follow-up. I try never to just sell something one time only. We try to sell from a need/satisfaction standpoint. In other words, find out first what the customer's or client's major needs are. Then show them what you're going to do to try and fill those needs, rather than just coming in to sell you radio. It's built from the bottom up. What do you need? What are your goals that you're trying to accomplish? Then I'm going to come back not just with a spot schedule, but a system of ideas. If it includes a promotion, great. It might not. It might include just advice for them, something they can do internally. I try to make myself very accessible. I try from the beginning never to promise anything I or the station can't deliver. I'm a perfectionist about that. Just service them. Always be there and really build

trust. I want to be, of all the media salespeople that are calling on them, the one that they look forward to hearing from. Not just because they like me personally, but because I'm doing them some good."

"I think having a thorough knowledge of the demographic make-up of my audience and exploring my potential customer's business really is what I work within. Let me give you an example. The typical listener of an urban contemporary station, which is what mine is, indexes way above average in purchases of jewelry. So, I try to prospect my accounts based on the strength of the audience of my station. My attitude is to completely maximize my strengths. I go and look at accounts that have had good success in using my station in the past, and I go after their competitors. I really go by category and use that as a basis for making a foundation for my account list. And that's really what's worked very well for me. The techniques I use are to identify strong areas of my audience, and then prospect on businesses where I'm right for them. I marry the two."

"Number one, which I've felt for a long time, and it really does work across the board for everybody, is timeliness. When a buyer asks for something, I get it to them immediately. They may give me a week to do it, but I'll get it to them the next day or the day after that, no matter how busy I am. It's amazing how many buyers have responded to that so positively. They have also said to me (and these are major accounts in the market) how long it takes reps to respond to what they ask for. It's important not just to be timely, but to anticipate their needs before they ask. The second thing is to develop credibility with them, which is something that takes some time. It's not for the person that's out for the one-time sale. My objective is not to get them on the station the first time—it's to get them on a second, a third, and a fourth time, and to make it work for them. That's a process of building trust and of shooting straight with them. I think a big part of that is not negatively selling other stations, but positively selling your own. The other thing in developing credibility is to 'pre-sell' your station, so that you've already positioned yourself exactly the way that you want your station positioned when the buy comes down. You've already done half the work."

“What my clients like most about the way that I handle their business is service. I’m constantly calling them and helping them. For quite a few of them I put together their campaigns, even if they’re going to use other stations. I work really closely with them. I think another thing that is really important to them is when I start to learn about their business, when I start asking questions when I don’t know the answers, or when I really do my homework and read some of the trade magazines. And I learn when is the best time for them to advertise, and who they’re reaching. Just going through the consultant sale process with them. I really think that they enjoy that, just knowing that I care about their business and I want to learn about it. I think that also helps me effectively put together campaigns that will work for them, too.

“There are a lot of other stations that do this, but not to the extent that we do here. We want to be their number-one source of information regarding anything. We hold Arbitron seminars the minute the book comes out. We have a meeting at a local hotel. We serve them breakfast and we invite all of our clients who are interested in the book. We send out a lot of mailers. We send out a direct mail piece every month, giving them information. I think it’s just service. And I don’t think the other radio stations do it quite like we do.

“You have to treat each one of them differently. One could be an agency, and another could be a little direct guy. That’s what I love most, working with these little directs and getting to know all about them. I know a lot about them personally, and I think they know that I really do care about them. If I have a client that I don’t get along well with, I’ll turn it over.”



“The first thing, as far as trying to develop more of these kinds of advertisers, is calling on the right people. When I say the right people, what I really mean by that is the person who can say ‘yes,’ period. Not the one who can say, ‘I’ll pass it on.’ Also, the person who would be very aligned with the station. I’m with a news/talk and a rock and roll station, AM/FM. With the news/talk, I call on the people I know are going to be listening to that station. The other thing that I do in nurturing these advertisers is to get involved with all of their marketing. I help with their newspaper, and I help buy other radio stations a lot of the times. I’ll work with their point-of-purchase. So things like that are real good in helping develop more of those types of advertisers. Value is the key word. You add value by doing those things.”

“I don’t know if you’re going to call them techniques. I think how I am able to get these types of clients, keep them, and make them see the value of working with the station is, first of all, building their trust and being honest. If you don’t have that, you might as well not walk through the door. The other thing is how you talk about other stations, other media. The point is, don’t talk about them negatively. What I say is, ‘I’d love to tell you. But I can’t. I don’t work there. But I can tell you about my station.’ And I think there’s a sense of respect and honesty that goes along with that.

“It’s very important to be empathetic. And if it’s not real, they’re going to know right away. And not patronizing them. Building their trust. When you promise something, getting it done right away. Helping them justify what they’re doing. If you can get them to trust and believe in you, then all they ever ask of you is, ‘Help me buy you.’ And you find a way.”

“In terms of nurturing the ones that we have and keeping them in the fold, I think the two most important things are that we are very focused on finding out exactly what the client’s business is all about. Get as detailed as he or she will let us get, and then be thorough on trying to solve those needs. We’ve done a lot of surveys of our clients to find out what it is that they really want. And it isn’t that they want low rates, and are concerned about certain times on the radio stations, or if their commercial is astoundingly creative. What they want is for the salespeople to be service-oriented and to follow through. I think those are the two reasons that we shine in this market.

“Also, a sincere interest. Having the foresight to go in and say, ‘Before I try to sell you anything, Mr. Advertiser, let’s find out what your business is all about, make sure that we have a match here, and that we’re going to be able to help you sell more.’ Rather than, ‘Hi, I’m from a radio station and what I have to sell you is 60-second commercials.’ As far as developing them, the trend, locally, where dollars are coming from the national level and are being spent on a regional and local level, the best way to develop that business, which isn’t going to be cost-per-point oriented, is to get to that regional or local decision-maker. And that’s where we’ve had some good successes—finding that person, and then helping that person come up with programs to really make his product move.”

Question 2



How do you develop strong, ongoing relationships with your clients? What three or four specific things do you do to build a good relationship so that a client works with you on a regular basis and values your advice and help?

“Being knowledgeable is very important. That comes from the magazines and everything else you can read about the industry. Knowing their business, knowing their own language, and talking to them in their language. Also, asking questions.

“I find out as much as I can from them. I follow up with them. I don’t just run a schedule and then call them up and ask them for the next schedule. If it’s a car dealer, I try and call them on Monday morning and ask them how their ads were. If there’s been a problem, you address that in the next campaign. Sometimes when I get somebody new, I call them in the middle and see how things are working. If it’s dead, I still have an opportunity to adjust the copy and try something different. If I wait until it’s over, that’s it. The guy may never be on radio again.

“Another thing is to make the client feel important. Make them a part of a lot of your ideas. Take ideas from them and incorporate them into the copy. Although they realize you wrote the spot, they also pat themselves on the back for having been a part of the idea.

“Make them know that they can talk to you. Those are the ones that I do have control over. It’s that trust. They don’t question me as much about

where their spots are, or when they're running. They just know that it's taken care of.

"And to get there, it all takes time. It's knocking on doors and staying with them. I'm not the type of salesperson who just expects to walk in the door and sell something. It takes time and nurturing. Once I do get them, I usually keep them. So somebody else may get the buy first, but when I do, I keep the account, and most of that's through service. It's a general marketing skill."



"I attempt in every case to have personal affinity with the individual that I'm working with. It's not always easy. What I mean by personal affinity is not necessarily a totally amiable, warm, friendly relationship, but an affinity for what that person is dealing with on a day-to-day basis and how they respond to their world. If I can tap into that and become a part of that, they're going to recognize that. That's first and foremost. I have had people say, 'I don't really believe in your product that much. I don't listen to it, I don't like it, but I buy the radio station because I know it brings people in the door and I like working with you.' That's a real compliment. It's hard to develop that. It takes a while for a person to say that, but if they sense that you're moving with them—not trying to 'sell them' on something—then they'll see that.

"Another thing that I try to do is to give people a thorough explanation of what we're doing and why we're doing it. That goes a long way toward creating a close personal relationship. Most of these cases that you're talking about are direct accounts where you can really develop an ongoing personal relationship with them and generate regular revenue for the radio station and for yourself. First and foremost, generate new customers for them.

"I can come help them market themselves, to set up their market positioning and their strategy so the consumer comes in. It also helps to share information: 'I was in your competitor's store the other day and I want to tell you something that they're doing.'

"Ongoing relationships are so critical. I've had some that have had to end. They are heartbreakers. They end because the guy sells his car dealership and he retires. I think, 'Where am I going to find another one like that?' And you don't, that particular kind of account. You find others that take shape in their own way. When they tell me that some competitor station has been in, then, and only then, do I put on my aggressive media hat. I tell them: 'I'm going to show you the numbers and show you how cost-per-

thousand works.' And I'm going to make my point extremely clear, and that person from the other station hasn't got a chance."

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"The first thing is to put together something that I know is going to get them some results. Trust starts right from that point. And then you have to keep in touch with them on a personal basis and evaluate how it is working. I've been in the business for about 13 years, most of that on the other side of the table, either in retail or agency. So, I consider myself knowledgeable and I try to impart to my clients any tricks of the trade that I know from those experiences that will make them more educated. If they can make smarter business and marketing decisions, then their business has a much greater chance of growing. And just never, never take the business for granted, even when it is working for them, because there are always new and different ways to reach people. The pie can get split many more ways. It's not just other radio stations. You're competing against everything, including the yellow pages."

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"It's just caring about them and being reliable for them, because you're actually helping them spend their money. You want to show them that you're not just there to take their money; you're going to help them get the most out of it. That means good and bad for me because sometimes my station doesn't have the audience that they're looking for, and I have to tell them that. Maybe down the road, they've got a different product that will work with my station. In the meantime, I just stay in touch and perhaps even get a referral from them. People know that you really care about them, when you go back and talk to them, even when they aren't buying from you at that moment. They may say, 'There's a jewelry store going in next door next month,' so you can get referrals. That's something that only takes a couple of minutes of the day, so you're not wasting any time doing it.

"I always watch for newspaper clippings that might interest my clients. For an owner who is out of the market, I watch their competitor to let them know what the competitor is doing. I let them know how the market's going—what the economy's doing in the area and new things that are coming up. Giving them new ideas. We get ideas that we pass along to the client from RAB or some other industry magazines. Just letting them know that they're always in your mind. That takes a lot of organization."

“On a first call, I try and talk as little about business as possible. They know my station is number one, and they know I’m the most expensive, so they’re already a little defensive about it. I want to steer away from that and find anything we have in common.

“The list of questions the RAB prepares for you has some really good points—things that you need to know about what they don’t like, what makes them mad, what they like. Basically, I just shut up and let them talk. My number-one thing is that I am an information gatherer. I also read a lot—*Forbes* articles, *Wall Street Journal* articles, and things like that. Usually one article is good for half your list.

“Then there are the common-sense things, like promptness. If they want something, then we’ll get it to them. A lot of times they’ll laugh and say, ‘I don’t mean today,’ but I will get it to them today if I can. I will do things immediately because then they’ll call me first. Not because I do it better because, frankly, most people have the same materials we do. It’s just that I’ll do it first. They feel that I’ll drop everything to do it. Some of it is frankly treading from behind because most people have a perception of our station as big and expensive, so some of this is just keeping pace. Everyone else can say, ‘K--- is so expensive.’ Our competitors say, ‘Don’t buy them—they’re too expensive. I can give you 10 free ones.’ I can’t do that, but I can do other things.”

“To develop a strong, ongoing relationship, they have to believe in you and trust you. In order for them to do that, you have to be a marketing professional. Things like putting out the newsletters, knowing their industry, doing your homework, phoning them with the log times. All of that stuff really adds up for a strong relationship. You can do little perks, like free tickets to concerts and baseball games. That helps too, but that’s really secondary. More importantly, it’s your relationship. If they trust you, then they’ll take your advice. And that’s the best position to be in. Then it makes raising the rates easier. It makes getting a larger portion of the budget easier for you to do.

“I haven’t run across too many other salespeople who send out newsletters. Also, if you’re doing a promotion with a client, I find in this industry there are a lot of salespeople who do not even go to the promotion. That is so terrible because you are portraying to the client that you don’t care. The client is there and this is the most important thing to them. It’s impor-

tant to them, so it should be important to you. I was with one of my clients one Saturday at his sporting goods store and two of his salespeople called in sick. We were supposed to have had a meeting. But it was so busy out in the store that I started waiting on people. He just loved that. You have to want them to be successful, and that includes doing anything.”

“In all my professional career, I’ve tried to keep things very simple. You’ve got to be a credible person. In this market there are 50 radio stations that make the Arbitron every quarter, 50 choices that somebody could use to advertise. And a lot of them are separated by tenths of ratings points and shares. There are multiple formats in the same areas. I’ve got to know where their strengths are and where their weaknesses are, and why my station, specifically, is going to be a better buy for this client or why it’s not. It’s no different than selling hardware or hi-fi equipment. A lot of the same selling techniques apply. Obviously, knowing your product, your competition, and being credible all become very important.

“Secondly, I would say you have to be top-of-mind with the buyer. Buyers are busy. I generally deal with an agency list but I also do a lot of retail. There’s so much money out there. You can create money in radio, but you’ve got to be at the forefront of a person’s mind. You need to be in touch with them regularly, whether it’s giving them a call or mailing them information. There’s a fine line there between bugging people and being informative. Once again, it goes back to your credibility as a professional and establishing yourself in their eyes as someone about whom they can say, ‘When he calls, he’s not going to waste my time. He’s going to give me some information and make it worth my while.’ I’d say being top-of-mind, a continual flow of information, and trying to be the one that comes to a person’s forefront when a decision or an idea about advertising, especially radio, comes up.

“Finally, you come down to the basics of what a salesperson’s job is. It’s service. There are many choices. Any station can be bought around. It’s service, service, service. You don’t have to be a grand intellect to be a success at selling radio. You have to be a hard worker and one that’s diligent enough to pay the price, to get up early, to make the calls. It’s a percentage business. You’re not going to sell everybody every time. Service also comes in the form of computer research. We have a huge research department compared to other stations in our market. So that’s an exclusive tool that I can offer. Not only do I get a little inside track with that client, but I also see where they’re looking at advertising, so I can position myself within their overall plan.”

“First, you have to build a relationship on trust. If you say you’re going to do something, do it. Just do it when you promised. That’s the main thing.

“Secondly, maintain an objectivity. For example, if another radio station or even another medium would be more effective for that client, don’t hesitate to suggest that. What I have found with the long-term kind of clients that really rely on you, it’s stock in your benefit and value to them. They learn the value of your opinion. They learn to trust your objectivity. And then when it comes time to recommend your station and maybe you need 75 percent of the budget, I find that you generally win then. You’ve maintained some objectivity—they trust you, and clients will generally go along with that.

“Thirdly, never stop selling the merits of your product. Even with the regular users, continue to sell them. Use encouraging data that supports their buying decision, even if it was one that they made some time ago. Never assume. What I mean here is that there are some of those guys that in January we make a big proposal to, with a lot of supportive data and selling information, to secure their business for the year. Then we get it. A lot of times you’re just writing orders, and it’s easy to get away from why they’re there in the first place. Offer them supportive data and bits of qualitative data. Keep them informed on what the station is doing. It’s easy to get away from that because you assume they know. A lot of times they don’t.

“I think fourthly is service, service, service. Treat them like gold. Do lunches when it’s appropriate. Make them comfortable and relaxed. Take that time to take an interest in their personal life.”

“The first thing you have to do with your clients to build a good, solid professional relationship is keep them very well informed about your product, and also about how you relate to other entities in the market. And always tell it the way it is. It’s also important to be dependable—to always be there and pay attention to what they say and to hear what it is that they are needing, what their goals are, and what they’re wanting to accomplish. Then try and fill it by being dependable, being there first with the most current product knowledge and research material that you have access to, and keeping them very well informed. Always, at the same time, make them very aware of how dominant you are in the marketplace in a very soft-sell way, so that it doesn’t come across as cocky or smug. I think it’s very important that

we make our clients, as well as listeners, feel cared about. Their business matters to us even though we have this incredible market share, and inventory is always a problem. We want to have a part in what happens to their business. We want to do the best job for them that we can. I have clients who say, 'Here's my budget for the year. Put it where you think I need it.' You've got an obligation to these people, when you work with them year in and year out, to do the best job for them that you can. Maybe it sounds a bit simplistic, but that really is the way it is. Making them feel like they're important is just very necessary because of the market position that we have."

"I would say that keeping in touch with people on a regular basis is very important, but again, valuing their time so you're not wasting it. I think that answering their questions and helping them in an intelligent manner, and basically being fair and honest with people on a daily basis, is what eventually builds a strong, ongoing relationship. It's not any one, two, or three things that you do; it's a hundred things that you do. And I think that it's like raising a child; you're raising a client.

"They know they can rely on you. They know you're not hopping from station to station. I think one of the mistakes salespeople make is going for the greener pasture and the account list in the sky. It's very important to be honest and even the bad things that happen have to be brought to the forefront. It's kind of a trick in a sense, but it works very well. When you do have a bad book, admit it first. And people realize that what you're trying to do is bring them information, good or bad. A lot of salespeople will just bring the good information and hide when the bad book comes out. And be there when you say you're going to be there. If you say, 'I'll call you in a month,' then actually do. Lots of people don't. So it's important. When I have people call on me, selling me things, it's very interesting to see how they respond. If they say, 'I'll call you back and get this for you,' they very rarely do."

"One thing is that I try to bring them ideas—ways that they can do a better job with their business. For instance, there's a computer retailer that I work with, and with the advent of fax machines, we worked out a concept where we would do advertising on the radio, and we also tie it in to his newspaper ads. We called it 'Fax Quotes.' If you want some information or you want a price on a specific printer or computer, here's our fax number. You fax

us the information and we'll fax you the answer back within an hour. And pretty soon some of his competitors started doing the same thing too, so we had a winner on that one.

"As far as developing a relationship, it's also important to realize that a 'no' is not a 'no' forever. It may be a 'no' this week, this month, or even this year. I have some clients who haven't bought anything from me for two years and I still keep in touch with them. Things can change.

"And the other thing is: listen, learn, and don't pitch. I need to understand first what he's trying to accomplish. And then don't come back and try to tailor what I want him to do with us to what he's trying to accomplish. In other words, don't try to make his buy fit what I'm selling. You won't buy a red car when you want a blue one. That's it.

"Another one is don't try to appear to a client like you've got all the answers. That's unreal. While on one hand you may think that will establish you as a professional, credible person, the reality is it establishes you as being slippery. Nobody has all the answers. You're trying to look like a real pro, but I think you're scaring them because you've got all these great, wonderful snap answers."



"In developing the relationship, it's different with everybody because we're dealing with people whose needs are different. I try to find somebody who has a problem or a need of some sort. They may not even know that they have a problem, but they just know things aren't right. Uncovering that need is the first step in building a trust bond with this person. If you can uncover a problem they weren't even aware of, all of a sudden a light goes off in their head: 'Wow! This guy has something to offer here.' And then if you can come up with a solution that will solve their problem, you've become God.

"You need to be personable. It's not just the business-to-business relationship. I'm dealing with people. It's not just the big pocketbook with money in there that you're trying to get. You're dealing with a person who has the same ups and downs as you do on a daily basis. So you need to be aware of those things and watch what's going on as well."



"We were talking in the first question about developing a relationship. So a lot of those things I do at the beginning with a client I develop further. I already understand them, hopefully, and know what they need as a company, know what kinds of things they're looking for, even on a personal level.

You have to spend a lot of time with them. If you're willing to keep that relationship going, never, ever let down. You have to constantly be in contact—in front of the client, on the phone with him, and keeping him up-to-date with new things. If it's an agency, for example, send new business their way, because you know the kind of business they like to work on. If something comes up that you think they're going to be interested in, call them up. I help out anytime I possibly can. A couple of my agency people will even call me if they're working on new business, and that's how I find out about it. I really keep in touch with what's happening at their specific business. I have a lot of car dealers, for example. It's important to know when the new models are getting ready to come out and when the special rate incentives are coming out. Just trying to keep up with what's going on. That means being in front of them a lot. Even with an agency-generated account, they're so used to the fact that I will do a thorough job for them and that I understand how to do research and pull it all together, that if there's new business for them that's not even going to be radio, they'll call and say, 'I need some help. Can you give me some background on this type of account?' That really makes me feel good when they do that. I know I'm making an impression.

"The other thing we believe in and that really impressed me when I first started talking with this company was the fact that you have to always be really honest and completely ethical with your client. Follow through on things you say you're going to do. Admit it when you make a mistake, no matter how stupid, and take the responsibility for that. They really appreciate that. I let them know they can depend on me. I'm kind of an extra arm. Two of my fortes are research and writing. I put together proposals and information. I have an English background, and so I'm good at that, and I use that a lot."

"I try to put myself in their shoes. I try to look at how I would want to be handled. I do what I say I'm going to do. It's very important. If I say I am going to contact another client of mine and see how he could help, and we could put the two together, I do it. I did this recently. I have a bank and they were doing a grand opening. I said, 'Let me do some research with some of my food clients. Maybe we can get all of these people to work together to make this a very good grand opening.' I toted boxes and did things like that so I was showing the bank people that I really cared about them. I cared about my food clients, too. They're going to remember that I did this for them. I put them in front of the public, which is very important to them.

"I like to surprise my clients sometimes. I've found that with retail clients, it's hard to get to them during normal business hours. I have walked in on a Saturday morning or late Friday night knowing that I can catch them at a specific location. That makes it easier for them, not in their peak busy times. I've done it even on a holiday. I do this with one of my biggest accounts because he has five different locations. He's all over the place, so it's hard to catch him. I want to surprise him. I want him to say to me, 'You didn't have to do that.'"

"Once you establish a client, you have to continue to learn about their business and the changes that occur. The market is constantly changing. I have to follow my clients' businesses and what their competitors may be doing and how the market is affecting their particular businesses. And if I can stay on top of that, then I'm continuing to assess their needs, because their needs may change as well. On the second part of the question, one specific thing I do is to send them research information. I read the paper every night and if I read an article or something related to their business or a competitor of theirs, I'll send the article just in case they didn't see it. I help with other projects. For example, I have a client that needed me to help him with his newspaper advertising, as crazy as that may sound. So I did. I was a resource for him with that particular project. He also needed help with setting up a presentation, so I set that up, which made his life and job a lot easier for that particular situation."

"For developing strong, ongoing relationships, I think it's really important to talk with my clients a lot about their business. Not necessarily advertising, not about my business, but about theirs. You can get a lot of information from clients. You just really get to know them, and when you do, they're willing to share information with you that they might not be willing to share with other reps. That begins to build a trust bond. They know I'm not taking this information for any other reason than to help their business. Once that trust bond is developed you start to get a lot more information. Also, I try to talk with other people in the businesses, not just the people who buy advertising, but the people who are actually on the sales force. What are their needs, what are they facing? That really helps because again you become more than radio. You're not just out there saying, 'Here's a schedule for you for this month. What do you think?' You're out there anticipating

their needs and really learning a lot about them. The other thing I do a lot is seeding—sending clients articles and things about their business. Again, it's getting it out of the advertising world and into theirs.

"I tell clients I'm going to bring them ideas constantly. These are often things that have nothing to do with me and my station. If they're doing a grand opening, for example, and I know that they're not even interested in using radio, I'll still put together a list of ideas that I think they can use. Not because they have to use it with the station, but because I want to be a resource to them."

"Number one: I supply them with any amount of research that they need. I sit down, talk to them and ask a lot of questions about their business, and sometimes about them personally. But I don't try and get too personally involved with my clients. I regularly take them out to lunch, because I feel it is important to build a relationship on a somewhat personal basis. You need to do it away from the office. When they're in their office, they're busy, they're working. I try not to take up too much of their time within the office. I try and supply them with absolutely everything that they need, either what they ask me for or what I anticipate they might need based on the questions I've asked them. It's an ongoing thing and it takes a while. The one thing that comes out of all of these questions that I've answered is service, number one, and number two, I don't want to ever become a pest to my clients. Sometimes you can border on bugging them too much.

"When I first got into sales, the first thing I did was I sat down and I figured out all of the things that I didn't like in salespeople. And then I did the opposite. One of the main things that just kept sticking out to me was when I needed to get a hold of them, and needed them to do whatever I asked them and get back to me on time, it would take three or four days to get a hold of some of these people. It would drive me crazy. In my mind, they were the last people I would call if I needed a proposal. And they would be the first people that I would grind down on rates or cancel a schedule with."

"The most important thing is prove yourself first before you ask them for any money. Find out if you are the right station for them. Be informative. Know your market as well as any neighboring markets that their business may be expanding into, so that you can help them make intelligent decisions that contribute to the growth of their company. My largest account

is expanding into a neighboring market. Because I come from that market, I've been able to steer him in his purchasing of franchises based on population, income level, and the media available to the particular area. And as a result, he finally brought in an in-house marketing person (after offering the job to me) who has been instructed to work with me in making the media decisions. So that's given me control. I think the first thing that clued them off, besides my knowing about more than just my marketplace, was my honesty. He asked my station to help him, and I didn't feel it was realistic that my station could do a good job in that area. I said that perhaps another radio station really could help him better. Once he saw me willing to turn away a piece of business, he became very anxious about asking me about other things. He knew that he was dealing with somebody honest. Show an interest in their future. Learn where they're headed, where they're going to."

"I think the main thing is to nurture that relationship—to have a caring and empathetic attitude that says, 'I know you're a person. You're working hard. I'm working hard to do what I can for you in the long run.' You have to be honest. Never give them something that's not true, because you'll end up getting caught in the long run. Never sell something you can't deliver. If you sell somebody a schedule and you end up bumping it all over the place and don't give them what they ordered, then you're hurting that relationship. So you really have to be careful to be honest. Another thing is to get back quickly. These are busy people. They usually have a lot of markets to buy and a lot of information that crosses their desks. The person who gets back to them quickly, concisely, and professionally is the one who is going to get the opportunities.

"One thing to always have in mind: I have a note that I hang over my desk. It says, 'What's in it for the buyer or the client?' Whenever you're presenting something, that should be the question that you're trying to answer. Never try and sell somebody something that's not a benefit to them. I feel that if you ask someone's advice, they will feel free to ask your advice. If you make them an ally, then they will do the same with you. A lot of times I'll be talking with a buyer who has a teen buy, or an adults 18 to 24 buy. That's just not my demographic. I'm not going to push for something that obviously shouldn't run on my station. But you can be the one to give them advice on that. You want to be the one who is the source of their research and their information. If you can establish the relationship well enough so that they give you a call first, you're in the catbird seat. Because when you go

in with your package, they'll work everything else around it. Honesty, empathy, working quickly, and working hard for them are the main things that keep those relationships going.”

“I set out to develop strong, ongoing relationships with all of my clients. Certainly, some go better than others. I think in those areas where I'm allowed to do everything that I'm capable of doing—where I'm not hindered or restricted by an ad agency that might be threatened—if we can all work collaboratively, then those relationships develop. I've got a situation right now where there's a very big ad agency that handles a very big bank, and the bank has a smaller division. The agency is really allowing me to work with this smaller division in identifying some of the problems and working with some of the solutions. I meet directly with the client and I keep the agency informed. They're letting me do a lot of the leg work and look for ideas. But they don't feel threatened. I'm not meeting with their client. I'm meeting with our client. I certainly would not try to remove the agency from the situation. They're as much a part of the solution as everyone else.

“It's also important to listen to what people have to say and not go into some retailer's business and say, 'I've got a package here that I think would be great for you.' That happens all the time. We don't do it because how do I know if that package is great for him? We don't even have packages. Everything we do is custom for our clients. I think that going in and giving somebody an opportunity to say what's on their mind and listening to them is probably one of the single most important things that anybody can do.”

“Honesty and dependability are very important. I am genuinely concerned about their business and I try to learn as much as I can about their business and their needs. I try to give them ideas, advice for commercials, schedules, and the best way to motivate our listeners. If need be, I recommend other stations when they make a two- or three-station buy. All in all, I try to get on their side of the desk. It's 'You and I against the world,' and we're trying to make this thing happen for you. That seems to work best.

“If I think that 30 commercials is too many, I tell him. If I think 15 is too few, I also tell him that. In order for me to be successful, I must first help you become more successful. When I do that, then everything goes properly.”

“I think it goes back to that first question. I think first, if they can trust you and feel that you’re working on their behalf, then you make them feel special. You give them information. I find more and more that people have been approached by a zillion reps and they’re overwhelmed sometimes with all the information they’re getting. You can fine-tune it and make it really specific and directed for them. And if you keep saying, ‘I’ve got more information if you need it.’ If they feel they can count on you to service them and they feel you’ll give them an honest answer and that you’re really going to work with them to help them resolve their problem. That’s the type of thing that I try and do. That’s what really keeps relationships going, whether it’s a client or an agency. That’s the whole ball of wax. I have agencies that work with me that know that I’m going to work my butt off to get them the best I can. I had a client that I used to call on that’s being serviced by another AE. They feel the other AE isn’t giving them the service that I did. It’s interesting because I know that I had to constantly tell these people how much I was doing for them, and I was constantly selling what I was doing for them so they’d appreciate me. I really do put myself out there. I don’t let things slide too much and I’m pretty organized, so I think they feel confident about me and that’s a very important thing. I’ll get the job done for them the best that I can.”

“I’m a little bit unusual in that my whole life, personal and everything, is involved in this business. I’m not married. All my friends are in this business. I’ve just grown up in it, so I don’t leave here at 5:00 and go home and not think about it. I do things with my agency friends. Before I became a salesperson, I had those relationships. So I haven’t had to form many new ones, which has been a real positive thing for me. The thing I try to be all the time—and it’s not always easy in this business—is extremely honest with them. If what I have to offer isn’t something that I feel that they absolutely should spend their money on at that time, I will tell my clients that. I’ve found that it comes back to really work for me in the long run. I want to spend their money like it was my money. If I have something better down the road to offer them, say promotion B vs. promotion A, which will help me make my budget this month, it’s a real fine line there. My being honest and suggesting that they might wait has made them have more faith in me. I find

that a lot of the buyers around town ask me what they should do with other stations. It's invaluable, that relationship, to my being successful."

"Actually, I think the most important thing is to *earn* their trust. You can do that several ways if they know you're not just like a regular spot peddler. You gain and earn their trust depending on how you present yourself to the client. The trust is a big thing there. The service is also very important and you can earn their trust by having good follow-through. If you promise something, you don't just say, 'I forgot.' You have to have good follow-through and service. And again, listening. And try to fulfill their needs, and telling them that 'I'm working for you, not against you.' And by maintaining consistency."

"I think the number-one important thing here is that obviously the client has needs and problems that they want to solve by advertising. I need to determine, through asking the questions, exactly where his problems are. Sometimes that takes a very short period of time and sometimes that takes longer. Sometimes it takes asking the question several times to get the answer of where the problem really lies. Once we've determined where the problem is, and where we, as a radio station, can help them, then I go right into qualifying exactly how much that client is willing to invest to solve the problem. There are clients who perceive a problem but they're not willing to spend any money to solve it at all. If I assume that they are willing to spend money to solve the problem and then get down the road a bit and find that I haven't covered that base, then I'm not only wasting my time but his time as well. So, once we've decided what the problem is, and how much the client's willing to spend to solve the problem, then it's my job to come up with possible solutions. Possible solutions can be a multitude of different things. It would depend upon how well versed I am in his industry and how many like situations I have handled in the past. I could suggest a couple of ideas to him to solve the problem to see what his response is going to be. Probably the key to effective selling in regard to solving problems is qualifying each step along the way to make sure you're on the right track. Sometimes, if it's a new experience, I will have gathered all the information that I wanted to gather, come back to the radio station, and call on the resources that I have here. We will come up with a solution and, having already set up a follow-up appointment, I will take in a proposal to solve the problem. After that

point, the key to prove to this client that we truly have a partnership once we've agreed on the solution, is the follow-up right to the end. Because if I drop the ball somewhere in between, we don't have a partnership. I took his money and ran. I don't do that, and that is really key."

"This is kind of a similar answer to the first question. It's important to be their partner, to become a trusted source of information—not just in the area of broadcast information, but in marketing and advertising knowledge. I like to present my clients with articles, programs, literature, and things that I come across that I think they might benefit from. Little things that come under the general term 'service,' but more specifically, thanking your client for business—whether that's in the form of written notes, sending them articles, or giving them tickets to particular events that mean something to them. If you learn your clients on a personal basis, you know whether they like golf, or if they love Neil Diamond. You file these things away. Then, when a client least expects it you come out with a little 'perk,' if you will, and reward them. A good relationship has to have ongoing contact, and that gets back to service, service, service. Don't just take their business for granted. Keep in touch with them on a regular basis. We do an interesting thing here. Every month we deliver candy to our key clients. We presented them with a candy jar at the beginning of the year and every month we go back. Obviously, it's a good excuse to get in front of a client. It's something fun. They look forward to it. They don't see you as another sales rep coming in. It's, 'What's our candy this month? My jar is empty.' You start talking about what's new and get them involved in additional advertising. So that's a little bit different and creative."

"I think that to establish a good relationship, you need to always be honest, and never be deceiving in any way. Have good follow-through, and service the account once you've got it. Then also help them to come up with good ideas. Sometimes retailers won't know exactly what to say in the ad, or how to present their sale. So just coming up with good ideas and being creative to help them out.

"It's also important to work hard for them. They know they can call you when they need something and you get it done. I think there's also a little bit of a personal aspect there. When you get to know them personally,

then you know better what they want and what they expect. It all goes into building a relationship.”

“One thing that I do is I really try and get to know the people personally. It makes a big difference. And I’m not being phony; I sincerely care. But it adds just another element to it. The biggest technique that I do is that I remove myself from the company that I work for when I’m in their office. Because when I’m there, I work for them. And I have to keep in mind the goals of my radio station, obviously, in terms of where I can go with my rates and everything. But while I’m there, I’m working for them, and I want them to know that. And then beyond that, it’s just a myriad of little things that you just do on a daily business. I read the business section of the newspaper every day. I read magazines all the time. If there’s something about them, or a product that they produce, or one similar to what they carry, I’ll read through it, highlight the things that might be important, and send it to them with a little note: ‘Fred: Saw this in Nation’s Business Week. Thought you might be interested.’ Now, he may know that or he may not, but the fact that I know it means something to him. It makes him feel that not only am I working for him when I’m in his office, but I’m working for him when I’m not there. People say to me, ‘I know that I’m not your biggest account, and I only spend \$6,000 a year’—not a lot of money. But that \$6,000 ultimately helps me make my living, and I have enough little \$6,000-a-year guys that, combined, probably represent \$200,000. The minute I lose sight of that, I lose all \$200,000. It means a lot to these people that, regardless of the fact they’re only spending maybe six grand or whatever, that I give them, in their minds, as much attention as I would give a guy who’s spending a half-million dollars a year with me. Obviously, I don’t. I have to spend more time with those other people, but I never let them feel like they’re a second-class citizen.”

“My number-one thing, again, is being there for them before, during, and after the sale, because I think that’s so critical. And it shocks them, almost, when you call them two days after their schedule has begun and say, ‘Is everything going OK? Do you need any adjustments in your commercials?’ Constantly offering to help, and letting them feel that they’re really a part of the station. Calling them with their times every day the first week, just making sure that they’re hearing their commercials. Generally, if they’re hearing the

commercials themselves, they don't feel their money's been wasted. So that's my most important thing. Another thing is, because it is an intangible product, for my local direct people, I demand that they review copy with me so they get a chance to go over it and make adjustments in the script. They play a role in that. And then, once the commercial is completed, I bring them a cassette, and we keep an audio library for each one of my local clients. So they have every single commercial they've run with me. Now, there are some exceptions who aren't that interested, but for the people that I nurture and develop, I just make sure they have everything in hand. They really seem to like that, because it seems to make the intangible tangible for them. They can take it home, play it for their family. So many newspaper advertisers hang their ad up in the office and everybody can see it. Radio is so different. You can't see it. Not seeing is hard to believe.

"We have a computer here with Strata and Tapscan. I bring my clients in and let them see the computer, and we can do schedule runs. We have multi-media programs, so I can be more knowledgeable on television and newspaper, as well as radio. Knowledge is a big part of trusting. If you know what you're talking about, they feel very confident in using you and accepting your advice. So I find the computer a huge asset, even though they don't care that much about numbers. They do care what kind of saturation they have in the market, particularly if they're crossing over mediums.

"The last thing I would say is not always making them come up with the ideas for their commercials. Constantly give them ideas. I'm fortunate in one respect because that comes very easily to me. I can be talking to them, and an idea can come to mind, and we develop it on paper right there. They really like that. They're at their business every day and sometimes an outside opinion can be very valuable to them. So I spend a lot of time trying to help them with that."



"The first thing that I do is try to show the value of the station, that it's something that is of use to him. If you don't do that, then there's not much else you can do. If he doesn't see any value in your station, then he's never going to pay attention to you. But assuming you've done that, then always trying to provide good information for him, not necessarily just information about the station. I try to read outside journals, his trade journals, *The Wall Street Journal*, and publications like that. Then you can talk to him on his level. By reading these things and keeping abreast of his industry, you're better able to talk about his business.

“The second thing would be providing him with lots of good information. With creative ideas, I try to provide things that relate not only to his advertising but to other areas. If it’s a clothing store, and you think you have some ideas to change his store window, talk to him about it. If you have an idea about something that he could do better, you could diplomatically say, ‘Why don’t you think about this?’ I’ve often found that when I give them ideas that have nothing to do with advertising, that then they start to respect you and you gain credibility. Finally, I always do what I say I will do. If I say I’m going to be there at 4:00, I’m there at 4:00. I found that once people see that you’re on time, that you do what you say you’re going to do, and that you don’t always hide behind an excuse, then they’re going to respect you. There’s nothing worse than, once you procrastinate or drop the ball, trying to build that back up.”



“Very specifically, I give them suggestions about their business. I tell them, ‘Have you ever thought about doing this or that?’ That gets people into talking about their whole business, and I learn a heck of a lot more about it. I genuinely like to know about other people’s businesses. And sometimes you come in contact with some really unique retail ideas. People who now are living their dream. They’ve opened the store they always wanted to open. I also write copy for people. I don’t think anything is more revealing than when you sit down with people, at a table in their store or in our conference room, and you hammer out copy. We’re talking about the retailer. We’re talking about the guy who’s taking the money out of his cash register. We’re now getting him to tell us how he really thinks, how he perceives his business through the radio. My job then is to do the interview. So I sit with a big yellow piece of paper and make notes and ask a million questions. I say to them, ‘Talk to me about your business. Who comes in here? Who is it that buys this product? Who do you want to buy this product? How do you see yourself vis a vis your competition? What makes you better?’ This starts them, and they roll.

“Then comes the really hard part. Now I have to write copy. It’s why most salesmen don’t write it. It’s hard. And the responsibility then really becomes mine. So, how does this further our relationship? In the best sort of way. We’re not dealing with buying them lunch, or flattering them, or telling them about my station. We’re now at this point where I’m helping them in their business. That’s what this is about, is turning them into good clients. You can’t have a good relationship without having a good client. I

like this nitty gritty, let's-work-this-out-together. Because we don't have to worry about whether we like each other. We probably do, because we're talking about his business, and I'm making money on it. We have a relationship; it's kind of been forged in a furnace."

"I think the more creative ideas and the more successes you have with him would be the first and foremost thing that would build a good relationship. The second thing would be detail. Just make sure you cover the bases. Make sure you cross your t's, dot your i's, and all that kind of thing. The third thing is that you have to concentrate on the personal wins. A lot of times I ignore this, but I think it's very important. So you get results and you get personal wins. And you're professional at all times with the details, following up and returning phone calls."

"This goes back to the first question. Getting to know them really, really well. I think that the personal relationships are the most important thing in any selling situation. I don't like to call them gimmicks, but I like to try and find out when their birthday is, when their anniversary is. I send them constant reminders of my station, what I'm selling, and that there is a value in what they're buying. Try and always remember them. Send them personal handwritten notes. I prefer those, as opposed to typewritten. If I know that they like baseball, I'll send them tickets. I usually take care of the people that don't ask more than those who ask. I think that the ones that ask are usually the cheapest, the toughest to sell because they're looking for everything for nothing. I like to take care of the receptionists and secretaries. I can't tell you how many people I've been really nice to who are the so-called little people, and you'd be amazed how many of them are media buyers and directors today. As long as you think of doing your job on a long-term basis. Whether you're really going to be there a year or two, you have to think you're going to be there forever."

"One thing that's important from the beginning is understanding what kind of personality your client has, because every client's different. Some are real directors and they like bottom-line information now. Some are socializers; they like to chat about their family, their kids and their plans for the week-

end. You really have to be adaptable, sincere, and stay yourself. But you have to know what works with that particular client. You try to find out what their needs are, because there are two sets of needs. They've got company goals that they have to produce. But also try to find out their personal wins. People won't trust you right off the bat. You've got to prove that you're worthy of the trust. I really think delivering everything you say you're going to and not making promises that you can't keep. That's a big part of it. I want to make them feel like I'm an unpaid member of their staff.

"We're a country station, so there are certain people who are going to be a better match for our listeners than others. The basic thing that I would look for is that the client has a budget to enable them to do radio properly with enough frequency to make it work. It doesn't do anybody any good if you just take a couple thousand dollars and it doesn't work. Then they hate radio. They say they tried it and it didn't work. Another thing I look for is geographic match—areas where our signal is real strong. I also look at accessibility of the decision-maker who can say 'yes' or 'no,' because again, it's got to be collaborative. If you have to go through so much red tape and everything, it's not the best relationship. And one more important thing is working with someone who appreciates value-added. If you walk in the door and they say, 'Your men 18 to 34 were down this time and my cost-per-point is \$80,' that's not the best place to try to develop and nurture a value-added client."



"I think the key factor is to project my integrity. Again, I go back to the way I work. That's first, learn the client's business; second, present ideas. When I see an article about his business in *The Wall Street Journal* or *Business Week*, I clip it and send it to him. It gives him a message that even when I'm not sitting in his office, 'She thinks about me.' I'm always watching out for him. I don't hesitate to tell a client when I see him on the verge of making a mistake by trying to do something on my station that I know will not work. I think too often we try to be yes-people, and there's no room for that in this business. That's how we get unsuccessful radio advertisers. I stay close to people. I think the key is keeping the service level at such a high degree that they understand how valuable they are to me. Let's enhance the idea of presenting ideas. Anyone can come in with a low enough rate that it becomes desirable and attractive. I think what businesspeople need most are ideas. The only way to come up with an idea that works well with your radio station is for that idea to come from your mind and your knowledge

of your station, because he doesn't know. I think they're really hungry for that."

"One thing, and this is something that comes naturally to me, is selling to each buyer differently. Their personalities are different. Their needs are different and their goals are different. You have to really learn what's important to him or her in the buying process. On my first call on somebody, I'll ask them, 'What makes a good rep to you?' or 'What do you consider important in the buying process?' And I don't just ask them and disregard it; I really do what they say. When you're responding to the buyer and their personality, there's a much, much better response back to you, because you're working with them. Second is customizing packages to their needs, and getting the most for them as well as the most for the station. When I make the first call on somebody, I'll never take in a package that's already done. I'll ask them questions and find out what their goals are. Then I'll put together something that's just for them. And they know when you're not coming in with a package that's the same thing that 50 other sales reps have. It's targeting to exactly what their needs are. Third is to be a listener. I learned this from my parents, and I think it's a wonderful rule to live by: You can't learn anything with your mouth open. It's really true. By being a good listener, the buyer will not only tell you what their goals and their needs are, and the budget, and everything you need to know. If you listen, they'll also tell you how to sell them. I think that being a listener is a very, very big key in being a mega-salesperson. Are you familiar with Ken Greenwood? He's wonderful. And that's part of his philosophy: the profiling, being a very good listener. The buyer will tell you how to sell them. Last would be service. That goes back to being timely, and to delivering what you say you're going to do when you said you were going to do it. And follow-up. I can't say enough about that. That is a very, very big factor. Don't just go in and get the old order, but follow up and call them. 'What are the results that you're getting?' And tracking them."

"I try not to condemn anything that he's done in the past, or anything that he's doing currently. I try to keep a relationship with my clients. I stay in contact with them even if they're not advertising. I certainly don't want to be the kind of rep that goes on social calls just for the heck of it. I try not to do that at all. I always have a purpose when I go in to see them—to bring

them information, or to tell them about something about a competitor that I heard. I've got one client who tells me, 'You treat me like I am your only account. I know you're the top biller over at the radio station. How can you do it? You're always on top of things. You phone me and say, 'I just want to let you know your schedule starts tomorrow. Your first spot is 7:45 in the morning.' I send them 'Thank You' notes. If it's involving an agency, we send them directly to the buyer, the AE, and then also the client. We have another system at the station which I really like, and it involves getting to know the decision-makers. I am the only rep in this town who knows the Executive Committee of McDonald's. They call me up. We're buddies. So I really get to the client, and I do it with the agency's permission. I think that's really important. It has led to a lot more money for me and for the station."

"I think number one is delivering what you promise. You deal with these guys and they don't have time for you to screw up. They'll give you five or 10 minutes each time you're in. You have to come back at the appointed time when you say you're going to come back, and deliver. Too many people say to me, 'All right, I've seen this radio station, this radio station, this radio station, and no one follows up.' That is really one of the things that keeps a relationship strong. Even a guy that I've done business with for a year doesn't have time to waste. And when I say I'm going to bring something, even if it's our second or third ad campaign, if I'm going to have the point of purchase there, I'd better have it. They've got a business to run and I feel like I'm part of it, so I want to deliver. I guess one of the things is bringing good ideas, by knowing their business. I work mostly with food. One thing I do is a monthly newsletter, strictly in food. I get about 10 magazines, from *Progressive Grocer* to *Supermarket News*, *Food Business*, and so on. What I do is go through them and take out anything that I think is worthwhile. It's not what's valuable to them from necessarily an advertising standpoint, but what's valuable for them in a merchandising sense. The newsletter has really helped a lot. It's a lot of work, but it's good."

"I think the strongest thing is having empathy and not patronizing them. I think that's very strong. They build on trust. And whenever I promise them something, I get it done just as fast as I can. They can depend on you. They know it'll get done right, and they have no worries that anything will go

wrong if you're handling it. That is probably one of the biggest strengths you can have. You deal with a lot of people every day. And if they say, 'It may be a little high, but I know the times are all going to be right and I'm not going to have all these problems with my co-op. This person handles all this for me; you've saved him thousands of dollars and a major headache. That's important to these people. That, I think, is a real strong key. Make their job as easy as possible.

"Talking about writing the order. Sometimes, people really want to have their rotation perfect. If I know it's a major problem, I will write an order hour by hour. I'm not hurting the station, because I'm still doing the full rotation in the hours, but it assures me that I've got one in every one of the hours. It takes a little more time, a little more effort. On a co-op situation, you can write it all together, and put the little notes on the side, and hope that it comes out that way. Or you can write them separately, knowing that, say, you have two vendors and that you have a certain co-op. You won't have problems. That's the service. Service is the other thing that's the most important. You take care and service them. Honesty, servicing, trusting you, believing in you. Street sense, it really is. And you get down and take care of that and you never have to worry about the money. It will be there."



"First, we ask a lot of questions. Then we come up with ideas that are creative and innovative, whether it's coming up with a way for an advertiser to use added-value features that are on the station, or whether it's a way to complement a schedule with promotional events, merchandising, or a contest for salespeople. It's just something added that directly affects whatever it is he's trying to pull off. Then, after that, just being persistent with follow-through. And the last thing I would say is being resourceful, whether it's constantly being aware of what's going on in his business, or being resourceful with whatever we have in our goody closet that can help him achieve his goals."

Question 3



How do you work with ongoing clients to get larger orders from them year after year? Tell me the three most effective techniques you use, not only to get more dollars from these clients, but also to get a larger *share* of their ad budget, or even to get new budget dollars from them. What's the number one best technique or practice that you find to get a larger *share* of a client's budget?

"That's not that easy. I have to say when I have, it's been because of a new idea, something creative that they need to sell. Then they'll need to sell with more frequency. A lot of times more dollars have to come from somewhere else, and then that takes going after some vendors, and being creative that way.

"Going after co-op dollars, especially those that are 100 percent, and helping them go after somebody to kick in some money to radio that wouldn't have been there otherwise. Those have probably been my best successes as far as getting additional dollars—trying to persuade them that they need to put more money on your station. I know the TV stations do that a lot with their shares. You try and make them see that they need to spend more money to get higher frequency on your station. If it comes to a fifty-fifty split between you and some other station, to maybe convince them that it needs to be two-thirds/one-third. Using radio calc and trying to work out a plan. It's part of Strata research, and it helps you prove to them that they

need to spend more money on our station and less than the other to get the same kind of frequency.”

“First of all, you have to build a long-term program for people: ‘Here’s what we’re going to do in the next six months, and then six months after that we do something else. What are your problems now?’ I had a client who was taking over a copying company that had been locally owned and operated for years. A big concern out of Los Angeles came in and bought them. The competitors immediately went out and said, ‘Don’t buy from this company because they were bought by this big Los Angeles concern and they fired the service manager. Totally untrue. So the first thing we did was we got on the air using this guy’s voice, and it worked fabulously. We did that for six months. We didn’t even get into the copier products for six months. So we worked down the line and built a program. Then when we got into products I made a very strong case for needing to spend more: ‘We built your image; now we’re going to sell more of the copiers and here’s how it works. I need something from you. Give me a little TV to sell along with the copier or something like that. Here’s what our goals are: You build a program for people, just don’t sell advertising. And then, as you go along, you have to document the success.

“When you start the year, you should get in there early and start discussing what you’re going to do for the year. You remove the whole question of higher budgets altogether. If I lead with that, what’s the response going to be? ‘I don’t want to spend more money.’ We talk about the success of their business: ‘In January of last year you sold \$50,000 in products. You’re going to do \$63,000 this year.’ See how we’re increasing things? It all plays back into what their goals are. One other way I can do that is with additional weeks. ‘Next month, let’s do an additional week. I got an idea for a new kind of sale for you.’ So you have to lead first with the other things that we’ve already talked about, and then come back in with the increase of budget. That’s the last thing we think about.”

“It depends on the client. If I’m working with a client that’s got a small budget, I take whatever dollars are available and I put together something that works and then take them up to the next level by coming up with a more unique idea—an idea that involves more of a commitment, dollar-wise. If you have clients who have the dollars to do something that is really unique, then it’s

a matter of bringing the ideas to the table. Maybe it's something like a sponsorship, using an on-air personality as a spokesperson for their business, and they make an annual commitment to that. It could be something that might even be a very special creative vehicle just for that client. I have a client that we're working with to put something together that would be good programming-wise for the station and is also very relevant for the client to sponsor. It will require probably a six-digit annual commitment. But those types of ideas are the kinds that you can't put a price on because you own that vehicle and no one else can touch it. You get that identity. I think you just have to keep giving your clients reasons why being on your station is an investment in their business. You can also find those dollars through a vendor source. That's important, and many times that person's not aware of it. Or if they're aware of it, it's too much hassle for them. If you can take all the hassle and the work away from them, they'll love you."



"One way is through promotions. By working a schedule, together with an on-air giveaway that gives them a little extra 'bang for their buck,' so to speak. It helps highlight them a little bit more and gives them a better value for the schedule that they're running. That's something that we do for people that are active advertisers.

"Also, by paying close attention to them. If somebody says, 'I'm not going to be doing any advertising until next quarter' and that's two months away, staying in touch with them and making sure they know that you haven't forgotten. Giving them other ideas: 'I just heard about this promotion idea that worked for this jewelry store. Maybe we can tie them in with your clothing store as kind of a cross-promotion.' You keep coming up with different ideas for people, but that's what people want. People want to know that you care about them.

"Service is also important. Just continually going back during the schedule and saying, 'How are things going?' and offering suggestions. A lot of it does just come down to personality and finding that person's hot button."



"Some of this is just probably basic selling, but one way is by not putting everything on the table at once. I know what rate I need to get and often go in higher. They'll say, 'This is too high. What are we working with here?' I'll say, 'This is the best rate I can do for you but I can take it back to my manager. Help me with this. We're both on the same side here. We're trying

to get you a lower rate.' So they feel a kinship. We're both planning and it's legitimate. I do want to get them a good rate. Yet, we have certain goals that we have to meet here at the station. Then they'll say, 'OK. I only have \$20,000 and I was going to give you this much of it. So that means I can't buy this, this, and this station. Then I say, 'What if I can do this on the rate? Then I can take 60 percent of the budget and that will still allow you to buy these two stations. You can leave off one station anyway because we'll reach it.' So a lot of it is just keeping something behind so I have something to offer. So we can be on the same team.


"Some of my biggest coups have been people that were just on every other month, kind of hand to mouth. Now I have them on an annual. To do this you need an idea. They want to see how hard you're going to work for extra dollars. Sometimes they don't even use the idea, but they want you working, scrambling and creating"

"The first step is to become the marketing professional, as I've described. Then you're really at an advantage because what you do, throughout your relationship, is to demonstrate to them the value of your radio station. Throughout this, you're talking about getting high rates. I don't look at it as getting high rates. I look at it as getting what my radio station is worth. It's not high. To me, it's just right where it should be. If the client knows the value and is convinced of the value of the radio station, a lot of times they don't even question the rates. That's the best. They're sold on you and the station. You are the marketing professional. And the station is effective for them with results. I think those are the most important things. Everything works together, but to get more dollars from the client, it's selling them on the value of the radio station. I'm at a station where we only have eight units an hour, so it's very limited inventory, and it's high demand for the station. Those two things combined, and adding to it the results that we get for advertisers, are the reasons why you can get the rates. If I really truly believe that a client's wasting money with three stations and they'd be much more effective using two stations including my own, then I would definitely work to get that person to see the value of going with the two stations rather than the three"

"I deal with this more than anything else. I deal with a lot of large agencies and a lot of the buys come around every year. If I sell the same schedule

every year with inflation and rates going up, I'm falling behind. You've got to increase your share. As simple as this sounds, the first thing you have to do is ask for more business. You have to justify that. The more you advertise, typically, the more results you're going to get. If they're sold on radio, then half my job's done already. Then I just have to pitch 'why' more on my station: 'K-- happens to be a large-reach radio station. Last year was a successful campaign. This year it can be more successful, but part of that formula is reaching more people. You can do that with us. Use us for reach and pull in frequency with other stations.' That has worked for me. In this marketplace, if you establish yourself as a base buy, it's easier to ask for more money. You also have to be creative. You have to come with an idea. It doesn't have to be a promotion, but you have to come with some understanding of your advertiser's business, his business cycle, his customers, the kind of income he's making, and the budget he's using in advertising. I've had success in taking big clients, like the phone company and Citicorp, and getting more money out of these clients. You have to look at what my station has to offer them. Sports is obviously one area. Citicorp didn't approach me. I approached them with a sports special and said, 'Here's a way to reach your target very effectively with very high profile.' It even got over the efficiency problem, because what I was offering them was such a good match that, as efficient-minded as agencies can be, they looked a little past that. They looked at the value, so it allowed me to accomplish a couple of things: to get good rates, and to get additional dollars out of the client.

"The most effective technique for getting a larger share of budget: I think it's continual hammering of the client and/or the agency about the effectiveness of the station. It doesn't happen at point of sale. This is something that happens all through the year. They have their parameters and they have their ways that they're evaluated. The real decisions come from the planners and business owners who oftentimes are difficult people to get to. Those are the people that you have to, over the long haul, convince that your station is effective. You can do this by feeding information, by being a professional, by supplying research, by positioning your station, and by continually updating these buyers and owners. All those things cumulatively add up to proving the effectiveness of your radio station, and that's really the way you're going to get more money out of people. If they believe that your station is working, then they're going to spend more money with you."



“We try to use promotional involvement to garner more dollars from year to year or a larger share of the budget. Again, probe the marketing objectives and find a way for your station to meet those objectives. Perhaps we’re better than our competitor and maybe this is a way to get more new dollars. Aggressive pricing is pretty much what the situation is here. We’ll often-times just take a larger share of the budget because of that. We probably do take more dollars than some of the other guys by virtue of pricing. We’re not real preoccupied with getting our share of dollars because we generally are getting more than our share. Often I fold them into a commercial opportunity that requires them to spend over and above. The best example of this would be an event we have coming up in the summer. It’s going to require a promotional fee, above and beyond airtime. It’s a way to get more money over and above, because we’re not just spiffing a big client and saying, ‘We’re going to give you sponsorship of this event.’ It is going to cost \$5,000 as a promotional fee. It’s probably our most effective way of getting more money—quite a profit center for the radio station.”

“One of the key ways we go about it is from a promotional standpoint, using creative concepts that we can justify from our market share. You can take a client that’s spending \$15–17,000 a month with you and put together a four-to-six-week promotion that ties in our listeners. It’s easy to say, ‘In order to do this right, we need to have X amount of frequency. We’re going to have to have it over a six-week period and so it’s going to cost \$15,000 dollars more.’ They see the value of it. It’s a way of generating more dollars for us and, ideally, for them. Creative concepts are very helpful in doing that. And you can also approach it statistically, because our numbers warrant a majority of a budget. But you have to make sure that it all works together. I don’t think you should ever just present what you need to get the job done and then stop there. I tell my clients, ‘I don’t want your business just for today, tomorrow, or this year. I want it for as long as you’re in business and as long as we are.’ Those are the kind of relationships that I want to have with my clients.”

“One of the things I do best is to increase my clients’ dollars. I work very closely with my clients in order to do that. I’m not out looking for the new guy as much as I am finding someone who’s relatively satisfied with us, and servicing them to death. Proving to them, on an ongoing basis, that we are a good station and it’s worth it to them to shift more dollars over to us. The

technique I use is that I pump them for all year long. I'm always saying, 'This is what we're going to do.' For example, I tell them we have our annual review coming up next month and I want them to know I'm going to ask for a larger share of their budget dollars next month for this reason. I do it verbally. I do it a little bit at a time. By the time I come in and say, 'I want a 20 percent increase,' they know why. I've shared the reasons with them on an ongoing basis. I have one account in particular where I now have probably three times the budget and this is their third year advertising with me. I'm real proud of this because they hated this station when I first came on. The number-one best technique is gaining their trust. What I did for them was to prove that it was worthwhile to advertise with us, not only because of our audience, but because of me. It's a whole lot easier to deal with someone who's intelligent, honest, shows up on time, and picks up the tape, than someone who's flaky."

"You asked for three ways, but I think there's only one. If they think your station is making money for them, that's all you need. There's nothing else. If they felt that every dollar they spent with you was going to make five dollars for them they'd give you every dime they could. And if they don't believe it's a benefit to them—I don't care how many tricks, special packages, hot deals, or promotions you've got—they aren't going to do it. The guy who will buy on that basis is not going to be in business very long. It all comes down to working with the business in such a way that he realizes the strengths and weaknesses of what you're trying to do. And if he makes money he'll keep on buying it. There's only one technique, and that is to work in such a way that the guy understands what you can and can't do, and that you're going to do him some good. I think great service is a big part of that. Follow up: return their phone calls in a hurry, straighten out mistakes in a hurry, be honest with them, and stay in touch, even if they're not on the air. I've never been a believer that any radio station had the right to anything. We've got big numbers but I don't think we've got a right to any share of the budget. We've got a right to as much as we honestly deserve based on how hard we worked to get it, and how much we helped the client to get the job done. If it's 100 per cent, fine. Then we did a good job. If it's 10 percent, I guess we should have done better. But, from a share standpoint, that's a sales manager's technique. It has nothing to do with reality."

“We’re talking about ongoing clients, after some relationship has been built and there is some trust bonding there. The biggest thing is that you’ve proved performance, and if your recommendations in the past have been on target, then their ROI has been outstanding. Secondly, you need to be an idea machine for these people. Anybody can sell radio commercials. I sell more ideas than spots. The spots are just the way of transmitting the idea. The third thing, and this is probably one of my biggest strengths, is that I do cross-promotions. I tie in with non-competing clients and that way I’m stretching the ad dollars of both clients at once, facilitating a bigger response without spending a lot more money. And everybody wins.

“One of the best techniques I use to get a larger share is that I ask for it. That’s really the only way you’re going to get it. You’ve got to ask. That’s the bottom line of any sales job. I can tell you a classic story about a car dealer who started out at a relatively small level. We were running about two weeks a month. We were pulling very well and the results were better than they had expected. We never talked about rates; it was part of a package. In a conversation it came out that ‘it’s amazing how we can track when we’re on the radio by the people walking through here.’ So I said, ‘We need to take more dollars, put it on radio, and run more frequently so that you have more traffic in your showroom.’ And it was like a revelation to these people. ‘Wow! We never thought about that.’ Now these guys are a huge client of the radio station. They’re on 52 weeks a year and it’s working very well. What’s made me successful is that I stay on top of it, obviously, but it’s little things like that—picking up on what somebody says.”



“If they trust you and believe, and if I really believe, that what I’m selling has merit, then I can sell it pretty easily. So one thing that plays an important part in getting a bigger share of the budget is your rate. It certainly isn’t the only part. It goes back to the question just before. If you’ve done a good job for a client in the past and they know that you’re looking out for their best interest and you’ve done your follow through, then they’ll want to work with you again, and they’ll pay the freight. Year after year, it’ll increase. It just seems to do so by osmosis. It really doesn’t. There’s a lot of work that goes into it. It relates to how you get new budgets. A lot of clients in radio now are looking for more than just a radio schedule. If you come up with special things that they can do on an annual basis with your radio station, you can offer those to them with first right of refusal for the next year. So it’s automatic. You’re not only creating business but you’re creating repeat

business for next year. It's also effective to keep track of what their budgets are on a monthly or quarterly basis. Then just going in and asking for a bigger share. It's one of those things that so simple, it's amazing most people don't know it. Go in and ask for it and nine times out of 10 you get it."

"A lot of it is persistence. What I've found is also very good is reminding them what I have done for them in the past. You don't have to hit them over the head with it, but you can go in and review. 'Here's what happened last year. You were very pleased with this, or this worked very well for you. What can we do this year? How can we change it? How can we make business better? Let's look at it. Let's see where we need to advertise a little bit heavier this year. What are your problem areas?' And then being persistent. Just because they tell you that they don't have the money one month does not mean that they won't have it the next month. I don't give up.

"I use a lot of my other skills. I wrote for years and years. I was a copywriter and a creative director. I have several of my key accounts who rely on me to write their copy and to give them advice. One client asked me which station he should be running on to get a certain result. If I feel it's good for him, and will bring in new business, I will advise him on another station. I still get the larger share of the budget because I'm also very honest with him. I value that honesty with them and I think it's been my strength in the long run. It takes a little bit longer sometimes to make the sale, but if they see that you do have their best interest at heart—and I really do—they pay me."

"Again, it goes back to the changing needs—identifying them and having an appropriate solution. One of the ways I do this is I try to be a problem solver. We do team work. If I have a problem, I can go to the team and we'll brainstorm an idea. I'll be able to go back to my client with a lot of different ideas to help him solve his problems. We have a rate card, but I try and tailor a schedule according to their budget and expectations to make it work. Obviously the bottom line is results. They have to see results. I also am able to provide excellent creative and production services because we have excellent services here. That helps me a lot because I can go back with copy or commercials that they like and that hits home as far as what they're trying to do. They have a particular need. It's up to me and my ability as an account manager, using my radio station and all the tools I have, to come up with

plans to meet that need. If I can continue to do that while building the relationship and proving myself as well as my station, I continue to get a good share of the budget, as well as increases over the year, because things always change. It's a matter of staying on top of the changes and being able to maintain appropriate solutions to meet the needs of those changes."

"The biggest thing is that I become a resource to a client. It's not the station that they're working with, it's me. And there's a lot of ways to do that depending on what the client's needs are. The second thing is knowing their needs and constantly finding those out. Their needs can change weekly, depending on what's going on in their business. Those two things are really important. The third thing, which we talked about a little earlier, is really thinking about it before someone tells you what their need is, so you're anticipating what's going to work for this client and bringing in something that they wouldn't expect any other radio rep to bring them. It's not necessarily about radio. Maybe it's something that's going to help in their sales techniques that we've learned in some of our training sessions. I think the biggest thing is that you understand a client doesn't want to just buy advertising; there's some other reason or need for it. And when you're able to fill that need, then the price objection is no longer an issue."

"One thing is to show them that the station is worth it, that the station works. Two, is that I'll always try, other than in first quarter, to give my clients a feeling that my station's in heavy demand. Whenever a client says, 'Can I get on this week?', I usually give them the impression that I'm going to have to check on it. I want them to feel like everyone out there is trying to get on my station. So that when it comes down to annuals, or the next order a couple months down the road, I want them to feel that my station is in great demand, and they're going to have to pay a price for it. Over the course of years, I've managed to do that. I think also it's a matter of service. My clients know that if they place a schedule on my station for whatever price, it's going to run right. They're not going to have to worry about the station bumping their spots. I think all of that comes into play when someone is sitting down figuring out how much a station's worth. There is always a list of stations that you have as a buyer that you're willing to pay a higher price for. Then there's a list of stations that you know will negotiate and come in under whatever your parameters are. The number-one criteria works

through all of these questions. Mine is service. If I can give them good service and if I can show demand for my station, then they give me a larger share. The biggest thing is that you want to show the client that the station is worth it. Each person has a different way of doing that. If it's a direct retail client, then you definitely want to show them results from other clients."

"The first thing you need to know is their selling cycles—when their business occurs. Get them to recognize when my radio station has contributed to the high points of their selling season. Making the client feel like I've given them something extra this year would be one of my techniques. For instance, he may have bought a straight schedule from me last year, and this year I want to enhance that schedule in any number of ways. One might be flexibility in dayparts that he works with. Another may be promotional involvement. Where that's not possible, I find out what other value-added services a client might need. For instance, if he thinks that I'm a good salesperson and that I know my business, I would offer to do seminars for his own sales department. Also to motivate the salespeople when he's doing an ad campaign, and use it as an employee morale campaign as well as one that brings people in the door. Playing the commercial for the salespeople and letting them know when their commercials can be heard. Working with the client's employees as well as the client. That always makes them more willing to spend more money with me.

"Another one where I don't perhaps have the time to build that kind of relationship would be to ask how I could get my unfair share of the ad budget and recognize that it might be my unfair share. That helps you to learn from the client the kinds of problems and the needs that client may have. That's when they start to open up and say, 'Listen, if only you can do this, this, and this for me, I'd be more than willing to give you 100 percent of the budget.' Also, always prepare your client to understand that there has to be rate increases, not just so that he can cut down the number of spots and spend as much with you, but that the relationship has to grow both financially as well as personally. If he knows that he's going to be spending a certain percentage more with me every year, he'll just plan it. And if I am not a coward about discussing that with him from the very beginning, it will just become the natural conclusion for him.

"The best technique, provided that you've done all of your homework and you have some kind of relationship with the client, would be to provide a written proposal that supports a larger ad expenditure on your radio

station. Don't provide dollar alternatives that could allow them to spend less or the same as last year. Just don't include it as an option. But be prepared to support that."

"Try and sell value first and then the schedule second, even if it's someone you've been dealing with a hundred times. Do at least the front of one sheet of paper that says, 'Here's why you should buy my station. Here are the value points other than the schedule that I'm giving you.' Once you have that established, you do that every time. I would recommend never selling rates, but always selling packages. Some buyers are going to be real tough on that and say they don't buy packages, but if you have a good relationship with the person and you've done all of the things that we talked about before, they're going to take your package, make it the base of what they're going to do, and buy everyone else around it. If you just give them rates, then all they're going to do is pick out your best dayparts and you have no say in the matter. So number one is, always go in with a package.

"Number two is to always show why giving you a larger share will benefit the client. One reason would be, 'If you buy more spots on my station you're going to reach X number more of the right people for you.' Another way that I do it is, every time I go in, I try and ask for more. You're not always going to get it, but every time you go in and talk to somebody, you should be asking for something more than the last time you went in. Another way to do it is if your station runs any kind of special packages for special events. Those are great ways to increase your total share for the year. You can create dollars for those special packages. And if you have that relationship established, then it's easier to create those dollars."

"The first thing I do is ask for it. I just ask for it. I'm very fortunate in that I represent a station that is so outstanding, asking for it is easily justified. And doing business with us is a good way to do business. We do have such extensive capabilities that it's easy to justify an additional share of the budget. It's important to show them why it benefits them. If it truly benefits them, then it's not a technique—you've done them a favor. You haven't wasted their money. The single best thing that we can do is to show people what it takes to reach our station audience effectively. And then you look at things like exclusive come and our coverage area. It's easy justification for a larger percentage of the buy. It costs money for agencies and direct accounts to buy

four, five, or six deep. You can show an agency how they can buy two or three deep and still have the same or greater reach and better frequency. One of the things I learned in an agency is when you buy a station you've got to issue paperwork. Every time somebody touches a piece of paper it gets more expensive to handle. You just reduce the number of pieces of paper."

"This goes hand in hand with number two. If you can help them, then they trust in you and believe that you're trying to do what's best for them. You simply ask for more budget, more dollars. You suggest new ways to reach the target audience they need, such as additional scheduling on weekends. I have several clients who use overnights, from midnight to 5:00 a.m. Not because they're thrilled by the numbers, but because I've suggested to them that there's a good audience there. People go fishing bright and early in the morning. A lot of folks stay out and party until 1:00 and these are the folks that buy cars, boats, whatever. Again, asking for more business is one way. For example, a saturation schedule. Instead of doing 20 commercials a week for two weeks, let's do 40 in a four-day period. Let's have a big promotion or event. Then do maintenance schedules. There's many different ways to get them to spend more money. If you can give them results and ideas, and work with them, they'll do it."

"You ask them: 'I want more of a share and how can I get that? What do I have to do?' You find out what their needs are. If it really is cost-per-point, maybe I can, maybe I can't. If it's something else, maybe I can do a promotion or a sponsorship. There might be something that's really special to them that would make it easier for them to buy more. Again, it really goes back to justifying how to do that, and that comes into a lot of research. Giving them qualitative information. I think that one of the keys in selling is to relieve that other party's anxiety. If you can do that, then you'll get them. Service—if they know that you're going to do it for them, then they can give you more. That just happened recently. I developed a very good rapport with a buyer. She had some extra bucks and she said, 'I'll give it to you.' It wasn't like we even deserved it, but she knew that I would do the best I could for her with that money. It's a lot of different things, but I do think that you have to ask for it. I think a lot of people feel uncomfortable about asking for it. Tell them, 'I want more. How can I get it?' You have to go for it. 'This is what I had last time. I want to get more of the budget this time. How can I do that?'

If you've got a good rapport with the buyer, she'll either tell you there's no way or she'll say, 'This is what I need to accomplish my goal.'"

"Ideas. I think ideas will always create budget. Creating ideas, which is more than just selling spots, will help you get a little bit more money or make it a four-station instead of a five-station buy. It happens all the time. In this market, there are not a lot of creative salespeople who really work and go the extra mile. So when you do, you're tapped over and over again to come up with ideas. Creating a budget for a client that is within what they want to spend, but giving them more than just 60 seconds worth of copy—adding just a little extra twist to it. Our Strata that we have helps. You'd be surprised at the small agencies here that don't have any way of working out their efficiencies. We're able to provide them with information. Our consumer market profile is done by Leigh Stowell. I use it in every single presentation that I do, over and over. It's graphic information on the values and lifestyles of the people in the community. No one else takes an individual market and psychographically profiles them. It's right on as far as my conception of this marketplace and their buying habits. When I present the data to people, they just say, 'My gosh, this is so right. I never really thought about it this way.' I use it every day because it makes me money."

"There are several ways you're going to get larger orders which equates to more dollars from an advertiser year after year. One way is rate increases. Another would be getting them involved in promotions which are going to require more dollars year after year. If their advertising is working for them and they are seeing a return, then next year they would like to make more money. That would require a larger investment. If I have an advertiser who has been successful in a given year, then the next year it's not too difficult for me to explain to him that if you're happy with the profits you've made this year and you want to make X percent more, then you have to increase the ad budget. That's pretty logical, and most of my advertisers have had no problems understanding that and agreeing to it."

"To get larger orders you have to do your research and show them different ways to achieve the results they want. Depending on what their goals are,

there are other ways to achieve them. A lot of times you can charge higher rates by showing them how you can fulfill all the specs of their buy with your station and a couple of other stations. And maybe they have never even thought of that. They always think they have to buy six or seven deep, when they only really have to buy four deep, because you can show them a way to do that.”

“Say I’ve had a relationship with a client for a year. At that point in time I’ve already established with him that we are partners, that we solve his problems, and that when I make a commitment, be it verbal or in writing, it’s as good as a written contract. Now, one of the things that I do is constantly remind that client how easy it is to do business with me. I am not a problem in his life; I am a solution. I never bring up my competition in a negative way, but pointing out the strengths of what we provide to him really makes the weaknesses of my competition stand out in his mind. Since I am so easy to do business with, I’ve already created an environment where he wants to spend more of his advertising dollars with me. Now I have to justify that in some way, but he’s already open to it. So, when I’m going in to negotiate a contract or a percentage of the budget, I know that client inside and out. And by that time I’m only taking him a proposal that I know he’s going to be excited about. And basically, every time I deliver a proposal, I increase the percentage of the advertising dollars needed. But, he’s very willing to do that because of everything else that we provide. The added value of what I offer, plus a realistic percentage of increase in advertising dollars, is just a step to get the larger share. It’s just that, basically—the added value. Typically, what I will do, especially in a proposal on a yearly basis, is open that meeting with a recap of what we’ve accomplished in the last year. Once you set the tone of that meeting in regard to all of the successes and then you present a proposal with a higher percentage, it’s a logical decision for them to make. Constantly showing that client added value is an absolute necessity to increase the percentage or added dollars for the next year.”

“I think it all goes back to making it work for the client. Coming up with better ideas and being a better rep than the other people out there. It all comes down to earning a higher return on his investment with our station than he’s getting on other stations.

“They all measure it differently. But if you’re making it work for them, and they’re seeing a profit, and they know people are coming from your station. I had a remote on Saturday. We had a lot of people come in and buy beds. The client called back today and scheduled another one for next month. It’s just making them see we’re getting results for them.”

“One of the things that I do first off is a lot of ‘pre-sell.’ The more that you can call that guy up and say, ‘Listen, I know you don’t have anything going on. I’d just like to stop by!’ Just to come by and chat with that person, you can find out a lot. You’re not going to get any share of something you don’t know exists, so you need to find out what exists. There’s many times where you find out that they have a new product that they don’t advertise. They just don’t know what they’re going to do with it, and maybe there’s a great idea. And that’s a lot of it—coming up with great ideas for people. We can’t just be salespeople—we have to be marketers, and I mean that in every sense of the word. What do you do to make yourself stand out? What do you do to make yourself get your unfair share of the budget? What you do is you become their marketing aide. You’re not just another rep; you help them. I did a buy for somebody and it included our competitor. I even gave them more money than me: ‘You need to spend more money on them to make it work.’ I think it shocked the guy. I got probably about \$1,000 total less than the competitor did for this eight-week flight. If I had left it in his hands, I probably would have gotten a lot less than the other station. I needed to get my unfair share of the money. And that’s how I do that—by becoming a marketer for that person. It is critical to know what their biggest and most important goals are. And then, figuring out how my radio station can help them do that.”

“A lot of the things I was talking about in the first two questions seem to make number three work very naturally for me. Probably the one biggest reason I do so well in sales is I out-service any sales rep in the market. I’m constantly in touch with my clients. That leads to the trust and all that kind of stuff. Generally, they get let down by other stations. I’m always there. I’m consistent and steady for them. Then generally more dollars just develop through rate increases and what have you. One thing would be helping them get success from their ads by forcing them to do a better schedule. So many clients want to go three stations deep with a buy. My computer helps me

a lot in showing them that two stations deep creates a higher frequency, which is the secret to making your campaign successful. Then it forces them to play the game right, and they can see results from their advertising. By getting them to do that one or two times, they generally will turn into a steady client and I'll start taking more of their money. The more results they see, the more investment they put into radio. I'm fortunate in that our station is extremely client oriented, and we do packages all year long where the client gets things back for his money. By doing packages, we lock budgets up for three or four months at a time, and it forces money off other stations if the client wants to strive to reach the prize at the end of the package. There's a second reason we do this, too. People say that it's enticement, but it's not. It forces people to do radio like it should be done—three, four months in a row, and to do it heavy. Then you see the results. So, even though we're giving them something in the end, they're extremely happy because they got results from their advertising and they got this little bonus at the end. If the service is there for them during the whole thing, then they start buying more and more of these packages and the money starts expanding. Pretty soon they're dropping the little stations that aren't so necessary. Along with that, the computer helps me lock budgets up or take more money, even out of other media in the market. By being able to tell my clients about this, show it, and document it, a lot of times we can pull budgets from other media. We have an AM and an FM combo. Oftentimes I can increase budgets by taking someone from FM only over to a combo buy. Also, providing a client with ideas. I have one client and the reason he bought is I brought in this whole series of commercials that I had thought up. He liked the idea so much he ended up on a two-year campaign with us.”



“There is a recurring theme that I'm using again and again, but it's worked for me. It's the consultant sell, and stressing the value of the station. Understanding a client's business is more important than anything else. You get larger orders year after year when you're able to talk about a client's business in his terms and show how your station can work for him. The three or four things that I would do to get a larger share: First of all, always ask for more. Ask him for \$2,500, you're always going to get just \$2,500. So you ask for \$2,500 the first time, then go in a little higher the second time. Talk about various lines. Any business, for the most part, consists of three or four separate things. If it's a car dealership, they have cars, trucks, high-end, low-end, accessories, and service. So, you can create new budget dollars by

talking with them about the various pieces of their business. I talked with a bowling alley owner once, and found out his restaurant did a heck of a breakfast business, but he never advertised that. So just by talking to him I got a higher budget, just because I was talking about different lines and nobody else did. Another thing that I do is stress return. If somebody's having a once-a-year sale, with the best prices, then you can get more money by telling them if they want to fill their store over a two-day period, they've got to make sure a lot of people know about it. They can't spend the same amount of money that they would do for a maintenance schedule. Stress return. They've got to expect to pay more to get more."

"Let's call the first technique the relationship. It's all the things we've talked about before. I want them to think about me in a personal way and not just somebody they can tick off the sheet. Because they really believe that my stations and I have provided something for them. If budgets are being cut, radio always goes first. Newspaper, of course, never goes. I happen to believe that newspaper and radio work brilliantly together, so I want them to use me with the newspaper. Cut the other stations but not mine. So that's number one. The other thing I do with clients that I've got an ongoing budget with is propose new things to them. We'll take a client with a perfectly good budget, a 52-week budget, that goes on year after year. My sales manager taught me to say: 'Let's propose new things to them. Let's propose a baseball sponsorship. Let's propose our college football sponsorship. Let's propose an FM schedule when we only had AM. He's got a big budget; he's putting a bunch of it in TV and newspaper. Let's go for it and see what happens.' Now we have a bigger budget than we used to. You asked for the best technique. I just say, if you know that client well, if you've spent time nurturing the relationship, if you've kept in touch with them, and you simply have become a part of their business life, you're going to get more dollars."

"This is really a challenge, especially if you're talking about somebody who you know is spending tons of money in newspaper and TV and then they give their 7 percent to radio. I think a creative idea could do it. The more results you produce for them, the more they're going to see the value of advertising on your radio station. Also, another way that sometimes works is if the percentage of sales they allocate to advertising is below the industry average. Then you can point that out to them and they may increase their

ad budget. As far as getting more dollars from another radio station, I really don't emphasize that much. You're trying to make sure that their business is going to work. It's not a matter of trying to take money away from other stations. What you're really trying to do is take money away from other mediums, and you do that by simply showing the effectiveness of your medium. And you do that through creative ideas as well as through correct scheduling and things like that. I wish I could say I have a technique that gets me larger shares, but I really don't have one. You've got to strategically put yourself in the position where you're a good resource of information. On the local basis, if you've got somebody and you're trying to increase your share, then you're going to have to bring more to the table—whether it's a better idea, a larger audience, or a special promotion. I do not have a technique that gets me larger shares. I simply try to get all the things in my corner so that it would appear that spending more money on my radio station would make their business succeed better."

"I believe in selling ideas. I think that's the key. Be a little bit different. I believe that I have to sell concepts. I stay away from the numbers because I believe that if you live by the numbers you're going to die by the numbers. We have tremendous numbers, but I try and stay away from them. I think selling ideas, concepts, keeping them informed. They know that I'm a consultant to them. I send them articles, tell them about something I see on television—anything that's going to help them to trust me totally. They know I'm thinking of them and it's not just calling up last minute, needing an order to make a budget or a quota. I think that you have to prove to them that you deserve a larger share based on qualitative as well as quantitative research. I think that you have to justify any larger share. We do have, as I mentioned earlier, quantitative information. We have loads of numbers. But qualitative information like Scarborough reports, anything based on whatever their product is, proves that we reach a larger share of the people that they're trying to reach. Therefore, we should get larger shares of budgets."

"With ongoing clients, you use your results from the year before. If you had successful results the year before, then you have a good case for increasing the budget in that next year. You can ask if there are any new products or new brands. Last year our station got only two of the many brands of a certain product. I know just from working with them closely that they have

separate budgets for each brand. This year we went in and pitched for two additional brands. All this involves just a lot of asking questions, asking for budgets, asking what they're trying to accomplish.

"It just so happens that we don't do promotions with just anybody who says, 'I've got something to give away.' They have to bring something to the table that is good for the station, and the station has to see value in it. But I just happen to have a lot of clients who fit with our station promotionally and who have things that our station wants. Several of my clients are involved with my station's biggest promotions. And I get an increased share of the budget for that. It's based not on the fact that we're giving them extra promos or extra announcements on the air to go with these promotions. It's the fact that it gives them results they can see, whether it's the number of people who come out some place or the number of entries that they get. It gives them tangible results, which is one thing people have trouble with in radio. It also goes back to what I said earlier about prospecting the right kinds of clients. I wouldn't go to our programming department with something that was not going to be good for the station as well. Another way is to take an idea for a new client, and marry it with another client. There's one we're doing right now where we're getting \$30,000 over six weeks, brand-new revenue. Our format competitor in the words of the client was really 'hacked off' that they lost this buy because their ratings are better than ours. The client told me, 'The other station gave me an idea that fit in with what the station had. I just didn't feel like they were willing to put the extra effort in to come up with something that fit our needs.' So that's value-added."



"The key there is service. Making sure that the client gets a cassette of every commercial that runs, if it's not agency-produced. Hand delivering a confirmation order and making sure that he knows when his spots are going to run. Keep abreast of his business. That's also very important, and it sets you apart from all other AEs. Know what's going on in his industry. Read your business publications. So many people make the mistake of not doing that. Know his competitors as much as possible. What are they doing? As far as coming up for additional dollars, look for vendor and co-op dollars. Don't hesitate to get on his case if he's letting dollars go away. They should be spent; that's why they're there. Another thing that I've done successfully is explore and maintain a list of cross-promotion partners. Everybody wants a lot of promotional activity, and most radio stations have great difficulty meeting the needs of all their clients. So if you can tie in Goodyear with

Stop And Go, you've got a nice marriage, and you please two people at one time.

"The number-one best technique is really knowing the client's business. That helps me more than anything, because it tells me what he or she needs."

"I'm a big believer in packaging all dayparts of the station. They may tell me how many points they have a week and what their cost-per-point is, and most of the time they'll tell you budget. If not, you can figure it out with those two things. When you find out the budget, you can package aggressively for that. I use all dayparts of the radio station. If they cherry pick and want drive, they pay a premium. If they want to run at the end of the week, then there's always a premium. Along those same lines, I'll give a rate break, or offer an incentive if somebody will front load, and run early in the week. To a lot of clients, it doesn't really matter. So I package for the large share so that they can't break up the package to make it a smaller share. The other thing is I really try not to sell cost-per-point. I will do it if I'm forced to do it, but I will never meet it. I really 'pre-sell' what makes the station unique. It can be qualitative information, geographic coverage, special programming, sponsorships, personalities, or promotions. The way to get a larger share and higher dollars is to position the station based on what makes it unique. Part of the thing to remember is that the excellent service is part of what makes you more valuable, and why your station should get a bigger share. If you become a professional resource to that person, then you will get a larger share. I also always try to be the base station on a buy. A lot of that, again, is 'pre-sell' and positioning the station. You have to believe in your product and not feel like you should be a secondary station on a buy, but you should be a base station. Another thing about getting a larger share and new dollars, is asking a lot of questions. By doing this there's two things that happen: One is that you uncover the objections of why you might get a smaller share, and answer those. And you'll also gain a much clearer picture of budgets, co-op money, the competitive situation, and short-term and long-term goals. You don't know if you're packaging for the lion's share if you don't know what the budget is. You really have to ask all these questions before you can get a large share of it. It's definitely to develop a strong relationship built on a mutual trust and—exactly what I said before—becoming their professional resource. That's the one most important thing."

“The new budget part has a lot to do with finding unused co-op or vendor dollars. We have a co-op vendor department here. For one of my clients, I just found \$15,000 worth of unused, almost 100 percent co-op. They didn’t even know it existed. It cost him \$300 out of pocket to do it. He was amazed. He said, ‘You find it, you use it.’ And I went through the agency, too, with it. I don’t think a lot of stations look beyond co-op dollars. There are also vendor dollars. There are monies out there if you go, ask, and do all the leg work. Something else is to take a new idea to them. If you want them to get on and do heavier ad schedules with you, think of a good reason for them. It doesn’t have to be a radio station promotion. They can do their own promotion within their own spots. Three years ago a car dealership and I were talking about what could we do. He wanted to promote his trucks. So we did an ugly truck contest. Now we’re on the third annual contest. And the budget has increased. It’s coming up with an idea, a promotion that they can do within their own spot, doing all the leg work, and letting them know that you have earned it. I think that’s most important.

“I put together a lot of people’s buys. I offer to. I’ve even been doing it with some agencies. That way I can keep my rates high, where I know they need to be. And maybe another station can help bring in the whole buy. I think another good technique, which I learned from an Irwin Pollack seminar, is to try to get some of that newspaper money. Take a full-page ad, scale it down some and show them that there’s still room in there for radio. Quite honestly, if you don’t have a full-page ad, if you’ve got some editorial on the page, people might read that page more. So they might see your ad better. We’ve also got a way, through our computer system, to do radio vs. newspaper, and radio vs. TV.”

“It starts with planning from the beginning. For instance: When I met with this client today, I brought them a concept that made sense for their business. Yesterday I met with a client that is a vehicle recovery system, and they’re having trouble getting their system into certain dealerships. So we put together a concept that will get dealers interested. These are just two examples that I’ve had in the past two days, where you try to get in at ground level and plan. A lot of times my budgets are split. I’ll take the majority of the budget, but I do all the work for them. I control that money because I take care of it from the beginning. The ad people, then, are more or less

implementers of decisions that are already made. Secondly, you bring in good ideas that make sense for their business. Just because an idea is beneficial to the radio station doesn't mean it is necessarily beneficial to the client. Number one is planning from the beginning to bring them a good idea that makes sense for them. The other thing, and I guess it sounds simple: Ask for more. And that goes back to value-added selling. 'I bring this, and I bring this.' And I will literally charge people more for the work that I do because it takes more. I feel I deserve more, so I ask for more. Plan with them. Start from the beginning. Don't be at the end of the stick as an implementer. I did a major program for a clothier. We took away an inordinate share of the buy, but we did everything. A lot of times, if you do all the leg work on top of the planning, you'll get more'



"I have a style. I may have a client on the air and I'm just starting with them. What I do at that point is start talking to them about things like: 'Next year, when we do this, I want you to look at this and this.' And after I've done that three or four times, if they haven't said 'no' to me, they're open to it. Then the next step is to make sure I'm in there before budgets are done, in the planning stage. I've already got them ready. When I bring that in, it's no surprise. A lot of times I lay out a whole plan for them for the year, using everything. What I did for one client was take all our sports, and put down everything we had available. I said, 'What of these things do you like?' And they'd say, 'I can tell you what I really don't like.' And I'd cross it off. And I'd say, 'Why don't I go back and put three different plans together for you, in different ranges for next year?' If they haven't fallen over, you know you're in the ball park, but you've already conditioned them. Now I go back and put programs together for them. By that time they usually pick from one of those. Then what happens is my budget's in. They plan for a certain amount of money for the other stations, but not which station gets what. I have basically taken charge of their marketing. If it's in house or they have a buying service, I've effectively done the work. It puts more money on for the agency, because the client's spending more. But they don't have to push them all the time to go on now because it's already set up. And frankly, it really helps the client if the decisions are made, and the plan is made for the year. When I say planning, you start in September for 1990. If you wait, it's over. But you've really done it all the way along. You're checking with them all the way along, and asking them. 'All I want to do is make sure you know what's available on this station.' I've done a lot of long-term business this way. Some

are direct, some are in house, and some are agencies. It's all worked somewhat the same way.

"The biggest thing is to give them an idea that's going to solve their problems. To give you an example, I had a client that loved the idea of being in our sports. We got all done reviewing the possibilities and I said, 'I have to be honest with you. The service in your stores is very poor.' And they said, 'You're not the first one to mention this.' 'Another reason I bring this up is because if you do take this plan, and it doesn't work, you're going to blame us. Something has to be done there.' So, when I put the program together, that is one of the specific things I went after. How could I build store incentive and motivate the workers in the store to get them, as a team, behind what they were advertising? That was the first thing we tackled."



"The first thing would be to have a real clear picture of their marketing plan. And that takes some time. So you know what it is they're up to and what they're looking to do on a long-term basis. Once you get to know a client, they trust you, and you've helped them out. Then, all of a sudden they're willing to let you look a little bit deeper into their business. And that's where we've been able to find extra dollars. Maybe it's with their manufacturers and vendor funds, or key city funds that weren't necessarily going to be spent, that the retailer gets access to. Or, they have co-op in a certain area and they didn't know it. They trusted us enough so we could dive into it for them. Things like that, where you know enough about their marketing plan and they trust you to let you go deeper. The second thing is, sometimes with an annual, once it's booked, and the contract is signed, then the salesperson just lets it run all year and is very seldom in touch with the advertiser. What I've tried to do instead is I'm constantly watching it. What can we do to fine-tune it, to fix it? I try to put them on my calendar to regularly be in touch. And I also keep up on whatever their industry is and feed them information. And by the time that annual comes around, it's not, 'Here she is to get my money one more year.' It's, 'I've seen her all year, and she's helped me out in these extra ways, so of course I'm going to do business with them again.' And when I mean helping out the client and coming up with added value, I don't mean tickets, or silly radio-type things like that. I mean coming up with ways to really help them do whatever it is they want to achieve."

Question 4



Now think about the success you have had in your radio sales career, both financially and in other areas. How do you view the importance of getting high rates as a part of your success?

Do you think getting high rates is:

- a very important factor
- a somewhat important factor
- a not very important factor

in contributing to your success as a sales professional?

- Very Important 65%
- Somewhat Important 32%
- Not Very Important 3%

What is your philosophy about getting high rates?
How do you manage to get high rates when other stations in your market with similar ratings are charging less?

"I think it's a very important factor. I think it's a perceived value. If you see the value in your product, you become a better salesperson. I've worked for radio stations where nobody ever told me about supply and demand or a grid. You just sold. At the last two stations where I've worked I really learned about a very limited inventory. You need to go as high as you can to maximize your own dollars and the station's. If you're giving it away, you

haven't created that adversary relationship with a client. It's one of those things where clients love to hate you. They know that you're expensive, and they also know that you work for them. They also will see the value of working with you as an individual, and it comes down to that perceived value. 'We cost more but we're worth it' is one of the first things I say to people that are working on a cost-per-point. If you're going to compare me on a cost-per-point, I'm going to be higher. I know that going in, but these are the reasons why, and then stress the value.

"Again, it goes to laying out the value. We'll work more. You talk about the services—not only your own services, but about your billing department, your management, your promotion department. I get into the successes and the effectiveness. I sell the fact that we run three commercials per break, while many of our competitors will run five spots. That usually makes a pretty strong point. I talked about the consistencies of format and the organization. When you can sell a consistency that goes back eight or 10 years, and being the top one or two in most of your primary demographics, that's worth something.

"Then the other thing is quality of listeners. We have lots of qualitative stuff, and I try to find things that make the most sense. A lot of reps talk about numbers but don't explain what they mean to retailers. I usually take the time and explain: 'This is cume. This is an average quarter hour. This is what index means.' If somebody from another station comes in and shows their index is number one, that doesn't mean a whole lot if they've got five listeners. Most people are pretty appreciative of that. Some don't care and that's fine. I say, 'Look, I'm going to teach you some things so you can defend yourself.' I try to become somebody they would call if they need some information as opposed to just being another rep.

"When you're trying to justify high rates, which we are constantly doing, you need other things than rankers from Arbitron. A lot of it is qualitative. A lot of it is testimonial. There is nothing better than talking about a client who has had a tremendous success story. I've got a lot of clients who don't care what they're paying. They know it works. They give me a budget, that's it: 'Here, make a schedule. Let me know when I'm running and call me for copy.'

"Results of a station generate results. The only ones who are really asking you your rates are the people grinding you on cost-per-points, and a lot of them don't buy the station. We walk away. We can do it because we tend to be sold out most of the time."

“First of all, internally, from the radio station’s viewpoint, it’s critical. I would say it’s a very important factor. If I’m going to deliver on my promise to be the best that I can, that means getting higher rates—unequivocally. Because there is only so much inventory to go around, and every year the owners want higher and higher projections. So do I. I want to sell more next year than I did this year. The way to do that is to get higher rates.

“My philosophy on rates is that it’s a two-pronged approach. First, what does the station need? Second, take rates out of the picture altogether, because you’re giving all of the stuff that we talked about in questions 1, 2, and 3. That’s more important to the client than rates are. I guess that’s my philosophy. In this market, we have people with higher ratings that are charging less. There are the rare cases when you can’t do anything about it. So you let one buy go by. I had a case like that a month ago with a new media buyer. We let that one go because we couldn’t meet her cost-per-point. I came back in when she had another schedule proposal that she wanted. I came back in with full rates, but I came in with about a 10-page proposal. I did research on Visa, MasterCard, and ATM users. I talked about our new format on the AM station. I took rates out of the picture. I didn’t have time the first time because it was a slam-dunk deal. She was so impressed by it that she gave me a whole schedule through April that she wasn’t even planning to do with me. You walk the first time. Then you come back later and you place the value emphasis on things not connected to rates. But there’s always going to be those people that are going to say, ‘Don’t give me a weather report. Give me lower rates.’ And frankly, there aren’t that many of them.

“With agencies I provide a very, very high level of research. There are a lot of things you do with an agency that you don’t do on a direct level. One is providing tons of research, showing in every way that you can that the station has great value. Anything you can do to make the agency look good to the client. And there are small things: ‘Can I put your client, John Smith, on my mailing list?’ I have a personal mailing list.

“Prove your worth. That’s the key. Again, it goes back to really the first couple of questions. If I have a media buyer, I need to find out where she or he is from, what kind of experience they’ve had, what their temperament is. I need to find out every single person in that agency and learn them by first name basis. It’s the subtle things that really add up.”

“High rates to me are very, very important. It’s not really selling if you sell it too cheap or you’re giving it away. Anybody can do that. It takes skill to be able to sell something at a high rate. I think it also says to the client that what they are investing in has value. There’s a mental perception if something’s free, it’s too cheap. So, in that respect, it is important. I think it protects the client, too, in times of the year when inventory is tight and there’s going to be bumping going on. If somebody’s at a good rate, that’s not going to happen to them. My philosophy is, what good is a cheap rate if it doesn’t run? You’ve done your client a disservice in buying too cheaply. I also think that in getting back to the point about validating my own sales ability. I have a philosophy that both I and the station I work for are worth that. I’m bringing almost 13 years of experience to the table. I think that’s worth something. It’s important.

“The station’s philosophy has always been that they stand by their product, and they believe in the value of it. That filters down from the top. What other stations do by underpricing themselves is force themselves to sell out real early. They’ve almost given us the business. We can even raise rates at that point because there isn’t anywhere else that they can get on the air. I don’t think that other stations realize that. Being an exclusive format doesn’t hurt in getting those high rates. But, we wouldn’t be able to do what we do unless the station did perform for clients. A lot of times the agency tells you to go away because your rates are too high, and then the client dictates that you are on the buy because it works for them. It’s not a question of it’s too expensive—it works.”

“I would say it’s a somewhat important factor because I know if I’m doing a good job for my clients. I think the rates, a lot of times, have a lot to do with ratings. If I know that I’ve been calling people regularly, servicing them well, and their schedules have been working for them, that’s really how I measure my success. The high rates, of course, translate to more commission. That’s something that’s nice to have, but there’s ups and downs in the business. One reason that we use at our station for needing higher dollars per spot is the limited avails. Before that, though, you have to sell people and make sure that they still want to be on the station. If I say, ‘Hey, you better buy now because they’re going fast,’ if they don’t perceive spots on your station as being a good value for them, it’s not going to make much of an impression.

"I look at how people try to sell me things. I use the good things that work for me and make sure that I don't use the bad things. To get the higher rates, I look the guy right in the eye and say, 'I feel that our station's worth it.' It's been working for their business, and as long as they agree that it's been working, that's the bottom line."



"It's very important in that if I sell 10 commercials at this station, I'm going to make a lot more than if I sell them at the number-10 station. So financially, it's very important. The more expensive it is, the less likely you are to get a lot of advertising on. It probably gets back to ignorance. I've never sold another station, but everyone says, 'God, it's so expensive, how do you do this?' To me, this is how much radio costs. I'm not intimidated by the rates at all, so that makes it easier. Most of my list is not agencies. They don't know how much the rates cost. If you can't sell high rates, you're obviously not going to be here very long.

"Proportions of budget are the key because no one is close to us in ratings. It's difficult. Some people don't care how many avails we have and how many other people are selling. They care about their dollar figure and how much they're going to have to pay. What it really gets back to is you're trying to convince them. It's not a rational buy. People don't buy Calvin Klein jeans because they're the most affordable. It's that kind of buy. They know we're huge, and they know we're bigger than life. There's a certain amount of show business that you really need to be playing up. If you haven't done any pre-positioning, and they don't see the value of you being bigger than every other radio station, you're not going to get it.

"In some cases, it's real important that you have to be ready to walk, and you have to have some personal integrity. They have to understand the supply and demand. They might not like it or even care about our inventory situation, but if they're going to deal with us, they do need to understand it. And they do need to understand ways to make the most of it. It can work to their benefit just as well. If they're trying to buy next week, you know they are going to pay top dollar, but presumably something important came up. They might be paying twice as much, but there must be some emergency; otherwise they would have thought of it before. So in selling high rates and quoting someone double what they paid before, you have to think like them, too. And you can't be embarrassed about your rates because other people have found merit in it, otherwise you wouldn't be sold out. There has to be something that makes them need you now."

“I think it’s a very important factor. First of all, I don’t think of it as being high rates. I’m getting the value of my radio station. I’m getting what it’s worth. It’s important because I make more money, and the station makes more money. We have limited inventory, and I know my manager has budgets to meet. If we’re sold out at low rates, she’s not going to hit her budget. And we, as a sales team, have hefty, hefty, budgets to meet. Corporate sets them and that’s it. I only have eight units an hour, so I can’t be sold out at a low rate because I’m not going to hit budget. I think that advertisers would love for the rate to stay the same, but I think that they understand. If they’re a businessperson, they certainly understand the idea of supply and demand. I know that we’re one of the most expensive stations here. We certainly are not the number-one rated station. I do come across objections where a new advertiser you have yet to develop a relationship with will say, ‘God, I hear that you guys are so much more expensive than the number-one guy.’ Depending on the situation there are things that you combat that with. For instance, the number of units again. I have limited inventory. We don’t add any more. And that’s why in creating demand, you’re able to get more than maybe the number-one guy would. Creating a sense of urgency as well. ‘You’ve got to get on now, because with limited inventory, I want to make sure I can clear your schedule.’ Things like that.

“It depends on the situation, but creating demand is very important. The people who are charging less probably aren’t selling them on the station. Doesn’t it make their job a lot easier, though, if a buyer says, ‘OK, the cost-per-point is \$120.’ The Number-one guy says, ‘I can come in at \$110. We’ll definitely get in on the buy.’ That’s not selling at all. Anybody can do that. With a lot of buyers, you’re dealing with people who don’t make the cost-per-point. So going round and round with the buyers is senseless. They have their job to do and that’s it. We always come in a little higher. We just assume if we’re \$20 over the cost-per-point, we’re probably there. We’ve gotten to that point because we deal directly with account supervisors, broadcast supervisors, and the client, who is represented by the agency. A lot of salespeople blame the buyer, but it’s really not the buyer’s fault. The buyer has a job to do. And she is hired in that position because she’s good at getting cost-per-point. So, if you’re dealing with the account people, you really have a huge advantage. They give you information that the buyer’s not going to give you as far as what they plan on doing and what their advertising campaign is going to be for the upcoming year. That’s already been set. Very

few stations do that. I'll be sitting at lunch with somebody, like the account supervisor for Pepsi, and he says to me, 'No other radio reps sit down with me.' They're excited. It takes a lot of work. You have to put it into perspective, though. It's all going to lead up to finally getting the order."

"I think it's very important. High rates are really a function of establishing value. If you pay a nickel for something, it's worth a nickel. If you paid \$280 for something, in your own mind it's worth \$280. And when you're selling something as intrinsic as time, it's very difficult. That air can be worth a lot or it can be worth a little. Psychologically, I think high rates are extremely important because they establish the value of what you're selling. You have to be professional enough to establish that value. But once you do, the rates will follow. It's really a question of establishing that your time is worth more than what you're asking for. Price is something you talk about after you have established the value. Once you establish the value, the price will follow. You won't have a problem getting them.

"Obviously, selling the number-one station in the market is different than selling the number two, three, four, or 10 station. I try to position my station as a 'must' buy, as a marketing vehicle. We have a big signal, so we have a big reach. We are not number-one everywhere, but we certainly show strength in all of the key adult demos. So I can make a very strong case for eliminating this station, or excluding that one, or even adding this station to complement what we can do.

"I would say that the exclusiveness of the format is very important, and the effectiveness of our format. We're a foreground, listener-active radio station. That kind of attentiveness to an advertiser is worth high rates. It's what they're advertising for. It's the exclusiveness of what we offer that positions our station as a 'must' buy and allows us to get higher rates. I'm bold enough in a lot of instances to say, 'Hey, we're worth it. If you have to bring it in at a certain cost-per-point, usually other stations will bring us in because we're the station that's going to deliver the results. It's going to get you the reach and it's going to be an effective station for you.'"

"My feeling is that it is somewhat of an important factor. It takes a great challenge to sell higher rates than the average guy out there. It makes you a better sales professional because of the justification and the accountability that you have to demonstrate. High rates are fine if there's a legitimate value, if your

station is really right for a guy. Maybe it's a bottler, and a bottler and our station are a great marriage. And there's a supply and demand situation that the higher rate dictates. Inventory should always be accessible to everybody. We price on a supply and demand basis. For us, the availability problem is legitimate. We do not have a lot of inventory, eight units an hour in most dayparts and only 12 units an hour morning drive. We're about as mass appeal as it can get in this day of fragmentation radio. So we've got good appeal in the teen and the 18 to 24 demos, and we're very viable for a lot of the 25 to 54 business. Consequently, what it leads to is stress on the inventory. The option is to be sold out and not have anything available. That's not a very good way of doing business, though. When that happens, they just don't call you anymore. I think it's a potential problem, too, in that a lot of clients feel that if you really want to clear it, you can. We never have added avails. When it's sold out, it's sold out. The bottom line in this whole thing is that through pricing we've been able to control that inventory and at least have something available. It may cost more, but it is available. Strong value-added perception and a strong qualitative story also aid in getting the higher rates. We have an impressive collection of success stories. Those are some of the other things that we use to justify. The success story thing really has a big emphasis here. We've had sales contests built around getting success stories. Those are the kinds of things that go beyond the cost-per-point issue in our selling."

"I think that from a business standpoint you need to get the best rate possible for your product because that's just good business. There are no deals. You get what you pay for and that goes back to perceived value. If you've positioned yourself correctly in the mind of your client, they're going to have that perceived value of you. If that's in the right place, then the rate's not going to be a big issue. You get what you pay for. That's why I think you have to do everything you can to create that perceived value of your radio station.

"We get results. We really do. There's not a Saturday remote available through the end of the year. We had to have a policy change because of the demand for our remotes because they get results. That's a very unique situation, and we're just so lucky because there are a lot of really good people here and everybody works together."

“I would say somewhat important, because I think you have to look at the bigger picture. You have to prove to someone that you’re in it for the long haul. For example, when I mentioned the client where I’ve tripled their budget, they have fairly low rates. But the dollars are so large now and I’ve increased their rates, so that psychologically they know that we are worthwhile because everything goes up every year. Every year I increase their rates by at least 15 percent, but in that particular instance it makes more sense to me to get that kind of an increase in their overall budget for the year than to worry about \$5 here or there on their rate. However, I think that high rates build a perception in the media community. Those radio stations that are very rate conscious also have a very good perception. So this is a double-edged sword. I like to get high rates when I can, but I say it’s somewhat important because I feel that you need to be flexible with your clients. If they want to bring your rate down \$10 and give you more money, that makes sense to me to do.”

“Not very important. There’s a reason why you get a high rate and it has nothing to do with the fact that I’m successful in this business. You get the high rates because the client feels you’re successful for them. If a media buyer goes through a cost-per-point analysis, we’re always high. But we can also prove to people that we’ve got a unique format and that we get results. An agency called me with a brand new client. We got 100 percent of the budget. So then the guy calls the client after one week to see how it’s going. The client’s really happy with what’s happening. Client’s happy, so the agency’s happy. Now to the agency, there’s no such thing as too high a rate. So to me there’s no relationship between the rates I get and my success. If I went out and sold a spot for \$1,000—and I do that with sports—what it means is that the client perceives that \$1,000 is well spent.

“Everything has to be a part of it. Here, we’ve got a great product, but if our accounting department can’t get the bills out on time, if our traffic department can’t schedule the spots at the right time, and if the salesperson doesn’t return the phone calls in a timely manner, or doesn’t pick up tapes on time, then you can have the greatest product in the world but it’s not worth the grief of doing business with you. So, where I make a difference in getting a high rate is not only the audience figures and the format, but I try and make it easy to say we are worth paying extra money for because of all these various reasons. I try to present special packages or opportunities or, even more than that, ideas. The value of a great idea is invaluable.

You can't put a price on it. If I'm the only guy that's got this idea, then you tell me if I'm too expensive or not."

"I think it's a very important factor. People don't mind paying as long as they perceive they're getting good value in return. The value is based on a return on their investment, which I don't think is necessarily a reflection on how much your spot rate is. The high rate is important because it allows you the flexibility to be creative with scheduling and to tie in outside promotional things that you may need. If your idea is good, or even great, nobody's even going to ask what the rate is. They'll say, 'Let's do it.' You can charge them anything you want. And has it been successful with me? Yes, because that's the basis of what I do. I put so much added value into the sale that rates aren't really a point of negotiation."

"I'd have to say somewhat important. Rate is a big part of anything. It's going to contribute to your success one way or another. I think getting higher rates really isn't as important as having the people, the station, and the sales effort behind you that gives you the opportunity to really merit the rate. It's somewhat important, but it isn't the most important thing. If you're selling Cadillacs, for example, you know you're getting a bigger rate than you are if you are selling a Volkswagen. The rate really isn't important to the person who's buying the Cadillac because he's looking for something besides rate. How do I get the rate? Based on what I've done for them in the past. I'm not just delivering a schedule one-sheet to them. They never have called to scream at me because a schedule ran wrong or I didn't come to an appointment on time. It's just follow-through, consistency, being in front of them all the time, and constantly coming to them with ideas."

"I think it's very important. I used to think it wasn't when I first started selling. We have the highest rates in the city, and I was very reluctant to go in and do it. My managers kept reminding me of the work I was doing, and that I deserved that high rate. This is the highest-rated station in the city, and I was doing a lot of value-added services for my client. I was worth it, the station was worth it. I think it's a tough fight. I saw a client today who said, 'So, I've heard that you're charging less. Is that true?' I said, 'No, there's

no reason to charge less. Business is wonderful! People tend to spread a lot of rumors about the station, and I just don't bite on it. When anyone asks me how business is, business is always good. And it is. I think you can never apologize for those high rates.

"You have to be able to walk away from someone who is a grinder, as we say. You will lose a few sales, but in the long run you have to maintain rate integrity. And if you start dropping your rate at the first sign of trouble, the vultures get ready to descend. We have good management backing on that."

"I think that getting high rates is very important, because my philosophy is, you get what you pay for. I firmly believe that, and I think that the value of my radio station shows in the results I get for my clients. But, it also shows my expertise in being a problem solver, being able to identify the need, and coming up with a solution to meet that. I go through a lot of work beyond just radio. Through creative, research, and really studying a client's business so that I can help them in the best possible way. It all comes down to their success and their results. They have to see that. They have to be able to see the value in me and my radio station and be willing to pay for that. It comes down to being an investment vs. an expense."

"For me, it's not necessarily getting the highest rate that's important. It's the fact that rate is not an objection. When I'm selling, I hope it doesn't come up. I want to know what their need is and put together something that's going to fill that need. It's very important to get the high rate. Usually when you're getting the high rate, you're getting results or whatever it is that they're looking for. A retail operation wants to get results. Internally, I think high rates are important, but to me the most important thing is not necessarily getting the absolute highest rate. I'd rather get a larger share of the budget and know that whatever I'm doing for the client is making their business better. Other stations operate strictly as radio stations, and we are a marketing company. What we do beyond radio for these clients is incredible. Between research, great creative, the fact that we do a client-needs analysis, the list can go on of things that we do beyond the product to make sure the client gets results. It's well worth paying extra money for those types of things to ensure results."

“I feel it’s very important. The reason I feel it’s very important is because the station that I’m working for has a value and a worth, and I have to be able to go out and portray that to my clients. Certainly I try and get the highest rates on the station, and I manage to succeed on that. There is a worth to my station, and depending on what the demographic is, that may not be worth the highest rate. My biggest philosophy is if you don’t ask for it, you’re not going to get it. ‘Ask for the order’ is the best way to put it. You have at least a 50/50 chance that they’ll take it. Because I believe in my station, I have an energetic way of getting my clients to believe in my station, too. As long as they believe in the worth of the station and that they need to be on the station, then they’ll pay whatever they need to pay for it. Also, I’m real good at packaging. I get the highest rates for my most expensive time periods, and I’m able to talk my clients into buying more fringe time periods that may not have as much worth. But as a package, it works.”

“It’s very important. That’s always a tough one because it seems obvious that if a station has similar ratings to yours, it’s tough to justify why you should be getting more. There’s always a number of factors that influence that. Number one, I think the value and effectiveness of a \$400 commercial is perceived as being higher than a \$100 commercial. That’s just human nature. The respect that comes from believing in your station enough to not sell it down the river. Selling a higher rate also positions me as an obviously successful and influential player in my market. Number one, don’t skirt the issue. Make it very clear to the media buyer that you don’t expect to come in under their cost-per-point goal. Number two, help them to buy your station. Include it, rather than buying around it. Recognize that they can buy around it. The easiest way is to suggest, delicately, that other radio stations can be brought in at a lower cost-per-point in order to fit us in. We don’t all have the same values, so don’t bring us all in at the same cost-per-point.”

“I think high rates are very important, but only in conjunction with share. For instance, if you are in a situation where inventory is very tight, getting a high rate and fewer spots means you’ll still get a good share of the business. But if you’re in a situation where the inventory is not tight, you want

to maximize shares. So maybe you lower the rate a little bit. You're increasing your share by dropping your rate a little. With high rates you're also setting yourself up to lose a little bit of business, but when the inventory's tight you want to lose a little bit of business, too. The other factor with high rates is that they are very important internally because the salespeople who get high rates are the ones who get more perks and pick up better accounts when they become available. How do we manage to come in over the cost-per-point all the time? It's hard to do, and I think the relationships are the determining factor. I think someone is going to be more willing to go over a cost-per-point with you when you've shown them that your station has worked in the past. A couple of techniques that I use are cost-per-prospect, which is based on qualitative research. My rates are higher, but I'm going to have a better cost-per-prospect reached. Another way to massage the numbers is that cost-per-point is always a factor of the time spent listening on a station. So, with a station like mine, which has a high turnover and very high reach, I try and stress cost-per-person reached. You've got to show somebody some results, that your station works. People are willing to pay more for something that works. We do a lot of testimonial letters for direct-response advertising. Even with a client who's not direct-response oriented, if you can show them that somebody got 100 phone calls from doing an ad on your station, then that has a lot of impact. So I think stressing the results is very, very important. I think setting your ground rules and letting them know that you're always going to be more expensive. Again, the relationship makes a big difference there. If someone trusts you and feels that you're working for them, they're going to be willing to pay more for your station than the next one."



"I've been told that we have high rates. I don't think that they're high enough. I have no problems in getting high rates. That's part of what I'm trained to do. They're not high in that we're ripping someone off. They're easily justified, and if other stations could justify theirs as well as we do, we'd all have high rates. When stations allow a cost-per-thousand or cost-per-point war, you sometimes have to walk away from the business. When you do that, you have to have management that backs you up. You don't want to walk away too often. High rates are part of maintaining a healthy radio station. In the long run that benefits everybody, particularly the clients. It lets them know that if the station is making money, then they're going to continue to be first in the marketplace. Advertisers can make a plan. They can count

on you as a station to be there, supplying the same consistency and the same high standards of performance. It's really rate card integrity. There are stations in the market that simply could not justify the rates that we get.

"We walk away from some business. But another station came in, and it's a good station in the market, and they absolutely just gave it away. I guess their management panics or something. Maybe they look too short term. My management looks long term. That's why I'm really fortunate. It gives you the strength to say, 'I'm sorry. I just can't sell to you at that rate.' High rates gave me an income last year that I never thought I'd ever make."

"I was here when our rates were nine and 10 dollars, and now they're anywhere from 70 bucks on up, as avails dictate. I think that's the reason for increased rates. Our present situation is that we're on a grid card, as I'll get to later, based on supply and demand. The retailer understands that. If the demand is high, your rates are high. As the supply increases, then our rates will go down. I think it's very important to get high rates. I think it's somewhat important, and I think it's not very important, because it depends on the situation.

"If I could sell commercials for \$5,000 each, I would love it. But I can't do that. I have to keep within what the market will bear. I think it's important for many reasons. Let's say very important because the higher the rates, the more profit the station makes. Things go well when the station's doing well. I prove the value of the station, and if I have to, I use cost-per-point, cost-per-thousand. Of course the main thing I talk about is the results. You can play with all these numbers all day long and that doesn't mean a thing until somebody walks through your door and buys your product. I don't cut rates. I've had to walk on business. In this industry, it's like the car business. 'I don't care what the sticker price is. What will you sell it to me for?' And it's our own fault. We buy television here and the TV station says, 'The rate is \$50, but we'll give you one free.' So what's the rate? \$25. We try to stay away from that."

"I think it's a somewhat important factor, which my manager would probably kill me for. Each situation is different, and I don't necessarily need the top rate to be successful. If I increase my share and my overall dollars, that may be success. Retail is often different than agency. If I'm going after an 18 to 49 buy, it's a lot different for me than going after a 35 to 54 buy. If

we fit well with the demographic and the product, then I'll go with the high rate. If it's a stretch, I'm not going to kill myself on the high rate. Every situation is different and you have to know the market. Is the market tight or is it open? You really have to know the product, the demographic, and the market. Being a high-turnover station, our average quarter rating is low in comparison, so I'm always up against the fact that our costs are high. What I do is talk about direct response, that we're worth it because we bring results. Right now, we're getting incredibly high rates, because the market's so tight. Even though someone might be undercutting me, I can ask for high rates and get it. And we've been turning away business that's not coming up to snuff. Each situation is somewhat different, but if you haven't done your homework stressing the value of the station from day one, you're never going to prove you're worth it ultimately. Even when I'm working with an agency for years, I am constantly selling the value of the station."

"I think it's a very important factor and is probably the most difficult thing that we have to deal with. We're in a market situation currently where no one is holding firm on rate. We've had to walk away from some very big buys. I really think in the long run it will pay off. I think you go through a period where people think they can buy around you. But it's very difficult to buy around our station in this market, and we are just asking a fair price for our product. I think that the best way to get high rates is to focus on your results. To talk about the buying habits of people, the psychographics and how your station can bring results, and just trying to de-focus the cost-per-spot/cost-per-point. I don't like to get caught up into the cost-per-point game, and I don't very often. Our station has traditionally been the most expensive station in the market. I really don't mind that at all because I think we have a finer product to sell than any other station does. We actually have not been number one in the ratings these last three years, but if you want to talk number one as far as results, we are far and away still the leader. I'm always at a higher cost-per-point than everyone else is in the market. Buyers that know this market never ask me to come in where everyone else comes in."

"Very important. The reason being it's very easy to compute that if I'm working for Station A that sells a spot for \$100 and Station B that sells a spot for \$25, if I sell the same number of commercials on each station, where are the most dollars going to be made for the station and for myself? The poten-

tial to be successful is greater with higher rates. Now, that is only true if the rates that you are getting on your radio station are worth it. I don't talk rates. What I talk are benefits. Why should someone invest in my radio station? Because of the programming, because of the incredible promotions that we do, because we're the only country station in the market. The benefits of our station are such that investing in our station is a very wise move. I don't really talk rates with an advertiser until we get down to the proposal, until I tell him what it's going to take for him to invest in our station in order to achieve the guidelines and the goals we agreed upon."

"The correct answer should always be that it's a very important factor. However, in my case, it's a somewhat important factor. You want to work with the client, not against them. And so I think you have to be real, and it's somewhat important. Ultimately, though, it should be the most important factor.

"My personal philosophy is you should never apologize for wanting to raise your rates or get higher rates. You should always go in feeling very confident and having high esteem for your station. The main way to go about getting high rates is to just offer the whole value concept of the station. Not just myself, but the whole station management, down to traffic, billing, whatever. Just offer the added value. We're trying to sell more than just 60-second spots, but everything that goes along with that—our traffic department that doesn't mess up your spots, our billing is accurate."

"I'm going to preface my answer by stating my viewpoint on how I see my job. This is a business within a business, and it's my business. Within my business, I need to be aware of not only my client's needs but also what's in the best interest of this radio station. Keeping that in mind, I view rates, and high rates, as a very important factor. I believe in the value of my radio station. If I have done my job, my client is already sold on that value. But when it comes right down to rates, I simply negotiate to the point where we haven't even started out a long way apart. In this business, people need to feel like they have gotten you to give up something. I love negotiating with my clients and it's a game, but it's a game that we all play in this business. If we're successful in it, then I have gotten the absolute highest rate that I could possibly get without losing the order. From the minute I meet a client through the entire relationship, I remove myself from being among the crowd of all of my competition. I don't play in that game. It's up to me to establish

the value of my radio station and how I set us apart because we're unique. I very rarely meet a cost-per-point, but not to the point to where my clients feel I'm not flexible. If I have done my job right, they already perceive that the value of this radio station far surpasses my competition anyway. So, I lose very, very, very few orders because of rates. And if I have, then I haven't done my job."

"I think high rates are somewhat important. People want a quality product. They're willing to pay for it. And if they perceive that this radio station is the best, or is a premium advertising medium, they are going to be more willing to pay a higher rate. Separate from the issue of supply and demand, if they see a value in what they're buying and investing in, then it's going to be a lot easier to get a higher rate. But you also work with a variety of clients and you're limited because some businesses simply do not have budgets to be able to pay top dollar. You want to work with them. I have to look at every scenario differently. I would say that getting high rates obviously contributes to my success from a financial standpoint and in evaluating your sales calls. 'I was able to sell that guy \$90,000 worth of advertising.' It keeps you moving forward and you can also share that success story. You can buy radio for \$30 or \$500, and you can buy a car that's \$5,000 or \$45,000. What do you want? So I really try to draw analogies and make it real because radio is so intangible. We talk a lot in our selling techniques about value added. Not only do you get a huge listening audience when you purchase advertising time, but you get a creative department, and a full research and development department. Also, we provide information that is very specific to their industry, whether that's from RAB, from trade publications, or any number of sources. We have an in-house newsletter, so we're constantly informing clients. We also offer opportunities to do surveys for clients and make sure they have an accurate picture of who their customer base is. I don't sell just radio—my job is really a marketer, and I'm here to help your business grow and work with you for the long haul. I really try to get them to think of me as part of their business. It goes back to trust and building a good rapport, which doesn't happen instantaneously. If people say, 'You're so expensive,' I talk about all the value-added aspects that come with such a big corporation. People feel very comfortable being in this environment. They know what they're getting."

"I think that it's somewhat important. My attitude is that there's some things that would deem a high rate, and other things that won't. So people think if there's an agency that's giving you \$400,000 a year, they should get a better rate than a little retailer. But the fact of the matter is that sometimes the agency can afford a higher rate. I am in the business of bringing success to people, and a retailer may need frequency because he's not known. So in his situation, I need to give him a better rate. But there are other people that can afford to pay a higher rate, and the reason is that we will work for them. Not all rating points are created equal. So in that situation, I could charge that person a higher rate because I'm right for them. My personal philosophy is that high rates are very important when the demand is high and the supply is low. In May, the demand for radio is very high. I've only got so much inventory to sell, so a high rate is much more important. I could give somebody a low rate, but if their spots don't run, what have I given them? I've given them a headache. I would rather get a high rate for that person, and guarantee that their commercials are going to run, than tell them that I'm going to give them this unbelievable deal that's going to cost them \$3,000 and \$500 of it runs. My philosophy, in a summary statement, is you get the high rate when: a) it's necessary in order for the spots to run, or b) when the client is so well matched with your radio station that you deserve to get more money."



"I would say it's a somewhat important factor, because there are so many other things that are as critical. In some respects it could be a very important factor. In our market, television news defines, pretty much, what rates you can play with, because there are three local TV stations and they give it away. So it controls very much how we do our rate structuring. We know we can't exceed them and still take budgets. We have a very controlled and very limited inventory, and because of that we're able to keep our rates higher than anyone else in the market. And oftentimes we lose buys because the other stations, in an attempt to get buys from us, will drop a low-ball rate on us. The other stations, when they sell out, they add more commercials. When we sell out, we're sold out. Because of that, and because people want to be on us, we can move the rate up and hold to it, and we get the people."



"I would think that it is somewhat important. My philosophy on getting high rates is that it's always good to get the highest rate you can, but I think it's more important that your rates are justified. Right now, I am at a station where we're higher than everybody else in the market, so I've got to continually say, 'Yes, we're high, but we deliver.' If it's a similar rating situation, then you've got to talk about the quality of the audience."

"Overall, I'd say somewhat important, but I think that there's two answers to it, because I have two clients. Client number one is my management. Client number two are the people who pay those rates. I remember some years ago when I was getting clapped on the back all the time by my management because of the high rates I was getting. And I thought, 'That really feels good.' The other part of the answer, though, is with clients. I can't high rate people all over the place just because I want to get those claps on the back from my management. We settled that problem here. We now work off a rate card that largely has taken our ego out of our rates. It's like television used to be, maybe still is. We operate on a supply and demand basis, and it solved a lot of problems for us. I think the philosophy is, be fair. The rate card has solved the problem. It's simply a matter of, if I have a lot of inventory on weekends, I can sell it to you at a lot lower price. When our ego was there, and we had a fixed rate card, it used to say weekends were this, and a lot of weekends would be unsold.

"We have also learned to be honest here. We tell them how much it costs to run our stations. And we simply point that out to people. I used to think this was a bad technique. Now we say the reason we spend the money on these disc jockeys that cost so much, on carrying college football, and the reason we have to charge you this much, is because we're delivering a lot more customers than other stations."

"As a team player, you certainly want to get higher rates, because higher rates means you use less inventory, and you're more likely to reach your budgets that way. As a person who is an account executive looking after my accounts, higher rates mean very little to me. On the other hand, if the inventory pressure is such that we have to charge higher rates, some small advertisers are going to have to decide whether they can afford to do that, or change their philosophy of advertising. Maybe they'll have to advertise and do sales in the beginning of the week, rather than at the end. So, on the radio station

team-player side, I think it's very, very important, and you have to base it on inventory. On a client side, it depends on the client's needs. If a buyer is buying off of cost-per-point, and she's a technical buyer, then you're not going to win the battle unless you have pre-sold the station, and the buyer understands the value of your radio station. Prior to the decision coming down, you have to make sure that he or she has in mind that your radio station is something that she really needs to buy, and therefore is willing to pay a higher cost-per-point. You get what you pay for, and that's pretty much it."

"I'm not a believer in just getting high rates for high rates' sake. I could say, yes, high rates are very important, definitely important. But not at the cost of turning somebody off, losing business for a year or two because you were arrogant. I think it's all in how you go about it. I think that it is very important, based on supply and demand. You really have to know your client. Usually, if you've done your pre-selling, you don't really have to really worry about high rates; you'll get whatever the market can bear. We can get higher rates and come in at higher cost-per-point because of the credibility of the station, because the station just flat out works. It gives you a good return on your investment. Nobody's going to pay high rates unless it works."

"I think it's a somewhat important factor. High rates, just for the sake of getting high rates, doesn't do anything for me, ego-wise. I think the reason it is important for me as a salesperson is for my credibility, to have rate integrity. You have to be consistent if you're going to maintain credibility. That's my feeling on it being important. When you're in a negotiation, I don't think it's always best to get the most out of that client that you absolutely can, because it's got to be a win/win situation. If you have to leave a little bit on the table, or compromise a little bit to have them feel like they're winning also, I don't think that's bad. You have to maintain rate integrity, but I don't think it's important to just squeeze the last \$5 per spot out of someone, because they have to feel that they're winning also. When I went to work for this station they said, 'It's never going to be easy. We're never going to be as efficient cost-wise as the other stations in the market.' So you really have to concentrate on those clients who do see value in more than just your numbers. A lot of our business is direct. It has been for over four years. When we're talking with direct clients, I don't say, 'Now here's how much morning

drive costs.' You sell a system or a package. It's, 'Let me find out what you need.' Or in some cases, 'What is your budget? Let me come up with a package, an idea.' You present a total cost, not necessarily individual spot rates.

"As far as getting high rates from clients, another important thing can be called covering all the bases or all the buying influences. It's getting to deal with and to know more than just the front person or the buyer who says, 'It costs too much.' When there's more than one person who needs to make the decision, it's real important to get to all of those people, because they all have a different influence on the sale. At the client level, they can then influence the outcome of the buy. You can get higher rates than you might otherwise. It's just getting to know all the buying influences, and not stopping just with the technical buyers. You don't want to make them sound unimportant, but there are other buying influences who can definitely influence the outcome of the sale. That's a big part of the way that we are taught to sell here. You don't just stop at the front door. One good way to do that is to really develop a coach. A coach is someone within that client's organization who can give you information, who wants you to succeed. It's got to be somebody who is, hopefully, partial to your station. A coach has to be somebody who has some influence within that buying organization. Somebody who feels free about giving you information but also someone who has influence and credibility."

"I think it is critical. It presents an image to the businessperson. Really and truly successful people understand that you can't get something of value for nothing, or cheaply. You get what you pay for. You maintain your integrity and stick to your guns. You project an image that says, 'Look, this is valuable. This is something that can work for you, and give you something of value in return.' And you can't steal that. It's absolutely vital as far as I'm concerned. I think a lot of people want to sell inexpensive rates that get rotated, bumped, and preempted. My attitude is, the client really doesn't know what he's getting when you do that. I'm very adamant in not selling that.

"We have an advantage here, because I don't sell my station as a typical radio station. It's an exclusive market. So I have to know my market, and point out to the advertiser or the agency, 'Look, the only way to tap this segment of the market is through my station.' I try not to do it by saying, 'You've got to buy me.' But, 'If this market is important to you, then this is the price that has to be paid to reach this segment of the market.' And then I explain why it's important to his business."

“High rates, in my opinion, are essential. They are an extremely important factor in real success in radio sales. The best way to get the high rates is to believe wholeheartedly in your product. If you believe in your product, and sell what makes you different and what makes your station more valuable, it’s contagious. You really will gain larger shares if you feel like you deserve them. You’ll get higher rates for less spots. There’ll be more inventory to sell. It’s wonderful. The down side of that is you have to be able to walk from the business, and understand that a good deal for the client is not necessarily a good deal for the station. It takes a very strong salesperson to do that, but you will be able to sell it again at higher rates, you really will. It really is part of being a professional salesperson to be able to do that. Another way, I think, to get the high rates is going back to what I said before: timeliness, high service, positioning your station, ongoing ‘pre-selling’ all the time, especially based on what you know their needs are.

“A lot of times, people come in under the cost-per-point, because they think they won’t get bought. Buyers—whether they do it consciously or unconsciously—place a value. You are pricing yourself to what you’re worth. For instance, if you go into a real bargain store, you might not feel as good about a dress as you would if you bought it at some really nice shop where the service and everything else was wonderful!”

“A very important factor. When I get a high rate, it proves to me that I have shown the value of this radio station. It proves to me that I truly sold, that I got my point across. And we’re worth it. I’ve got annual accounts that want an average unit rate of something for the year. I talk to them and say, ‘When I need you to be high on your rates, I’m going to demand it, because I want to protect you.’ I don’t think I have many clients at all that really complain about the rate. I think also you can package a lot of things, too. We have a policy of no ‘no charges.’ I can package things together to use some of the fringe time that may not sell out as quickly on our station.

“I talked about offering to put the buy together. I was working on a buy the other day that was 18 to 49, and I’m pretty much a 25 to 49 station, and I had the highest rate on there. I had all the rates from all the other stations the client gave me. I lowered a couple of other stations a little bit with their rate, and brought the entire buy in where she wanted it. On a station-by-station basis, I probably would have had to lower my rate, but I knew

I couldn't do it. So, I put together that buy. Past success has a lot to do with it. I've had very few accounts that came on once, advertised, and never came back. I think supply and demand helps with rates. We do an avail sheet every week. I don't hesitate to keep it in my notebook and pull it out if I've got someone arguing about the rate, or demanding to get on when I'm 100 percent sold out. I think continuously saying at the beginning of May, 'Let's get it in for June now. It's going to be tight.' And showing them our avail sheet, that there is a demand on my radio station."

"Extremely important. What I do takes time, effort, and money. Everything that you put together has a lot of value to it. A lot of times, I feel that people get tied in with what the market norm is: 'Gee, \$150 is the comfortable average in this market, and that's all I should ask for.' That's bull. If you're doing a good job, and all this work, then you deserve higher rates. It's having pride and self confidence in what you do. My philosophy is, no idea, if they like it that much, is too expensive. They'll find money for it. You do get in a cost-per-point battle with some shops that you'll never win. You keep trying, but you'll never win. That's why new business is where it's at. Instead of getting into the battle zone all the time, if you're calling on enough new advertisers you're going to fall into it less and less. When I am facing it, I sell every feature of the radio station. We've got resources to fall back on to make your spot sound better. We put a ton of money into talent on the radio, which in turn is going to make the station better. We do great promotions, and that's going to highlight your ads. I sell my service. Our station doesn't 'no-charge' It's the first station I've been at that doesn't. It comes back to why should you give something away for free? Newspaper is becoming less and less effective, but it's always been there and probably will be for at least the next 20 years. The point is, they don't give anything away. Why should we?"

"Somewhat important. I feel that rates are only a function of the market, and what the market will bear. I follow pretty much what the station needs. I'm not questioned too often. Probably because of experience, I don't spend a lot of time asking the management, 'Can I have this rate, can I have that rate?' I pretty well know what I can work with. Right now, and this is one of the first times in my sales career that I've seen this, we are totally over-sold. There is such a demand. And we're the highest in town, probably double someone else. Right now they are walking in and buying the most expensive

time periods, which I find really interesting. The rates are high. It's not hard to get the rate when you're in this position.

"The demand on the station helps us get the rate, period. We run double the spot rate any other station in the market does. And because of our news format, we'll run 18 units an hour where most stations run nine to 12 units an hour. We've been consistently number one for 10 years. We've had the same people working here for 10 years. It's the most consistent station in the market, and we have an extremely exclusive audience.

"The rate's important because that's what the company wants to sell it at. This is what they have determined the value is on that 60- or 30-second spot. My job is to back them and get that rate as much as possible. I will let it be my job, but not at the detriment of losing a client. Now I'm not saying I don't walk on a buy, because I will. There's times of the year when I know that I absolutely have to have that rate and there's nothing I can do. They have to understand I'm working for the company, but I'm also working for them. Maybe the rate is very important. Because I do go after that, but it's not the life and death of the job."



"Very important. I think there are two different kinds of advertisers. There are those advertising agencies that have a 22-year-old media buyer who is placing megadollars for clients. All that person is responsible for is to grind those radio stations to get the cost-per-point that they need. We have to have a relationship with the client, and with the hierarchy of the agency. There are definitely always going to be those advertisers in radio. They don't even understand that cost-per-point is a dumb way to buy radio, and it doesn't matter to them. If we want that business, there are going to be some accounts that we're just going to have to meet the cost-per-point on. In those cases, you literally have to make a choice between, do we need that business or can we make it up elsewhere, vs. we're going to hold our rate integrity to the point where we're going to lose some agency business. And then I think there are other advertisers that are more results-oriented. And as long as the radio station is doing what it promises and the client sees results, then I think rates become less of an issue, and we can begin to get what the radio station is worth. The way that we determine our rates is a grid system. You start out on the lower part of the grid, and as your sell-out gets higher, you move up on that grid system. I don't ever have to say to a client, 'The rates are up because of ratings.' I can always say, 'You have our rate card. Here is the position of sell out, and here are the rates that you're going to be

dealing with right now if you're going to be on this station.' And the clients determine that structure. If the demand on the radio station is high, then the rates on the radio station will be higher, and the only person who has the ability to make that go up and down are the clients themselves. That makes me feel comfortable, because it's a slow build. It's consistent, it's reasonable, and it's always for the same reasons. And clients begin to trust that. They understand why our rates are doing what they are, and it's a pleasure to do business that way.

"Some advertisers are just focused on the cost-per-point, and with them we're getting a higher cost-per-point than our competition. In that case, it's either because we've built a relationship or a track record, and we're able to justify it. For an advertiser who doesn't know about cost-per-point, and only knows he's comparing two stations, then they understand. A car dealer can understand if you only have two cars left that are red, and six people want red cars, those red cars are going to be more expensive. The logic of it seems to make sense, yet other stations haven't quite caught on to that logic and aren't doing it that way."

Question 5



Now let's talk about rate cards.
Does your radio station have a rate card?

Yes 83%

No 18%

What role does your rate card play in helping you get top dollar for your spots? What techniques do you use, with or without the rate card, to get the best rates you can? What's your philosophy about how much to use the rate card, and do you depend on a rate card a lot?

"Yes, we have a rate card and it's a good one. Usually our rates are set, especially in prime. There's always some flexibility. You have to keep an eye on the inventory. You try to keep your prime up as much as you can—that's the inventory we're protecting. Probably the real key there is our avail sheet. They'll move up and down the grid. Normally we're working two weeks out. If we've got spots then, you can come down the grid and be flexible. There is a rate card, yet most of our dealing is based on our avail sheet. The rate cards are very confusing, especially for people who are not accustomed to radio.

"I never just take out a rate card. If people ask me for a rate card, I usually slip it into the media kit. Many times I wonder why I even do that. I'm better off just to give them a plan. It's a lot of work to sit down and do that.

“We get avails every day. Every salesperson has different rates. We all know that there’s a level that we should be at for prime time. But everybody has a different way of selling. Maybe I sell more 8:00 to midnight, maybe somebody else uses a lot of Saturday. It’s definitely controlled, but I don’t know what other people are charging. When I look at the avail sheet right now, I can already see that May is selling out. I’m at the top of the card. You have to express to clients that if they don’t pay the rate, they’re not going to get on. So they make that choice. If they’re going to advertise in the peak period, then that’s the rate they’re going to pay. They’ll pay less in January and February.

“I rarely sell rates. I sell packages. I very rarely have the rates printed on the contracts. If the client insists, I do it.”

“Yes, we have a rate card, but it plays no role whatsoever. We have established rates that we know we can get. The rate card gives us an idea of where management wants us to be. When it’s published, it does have some effect on the framework of where you intend to be, say, six months to a year from now. Then you wait for all of the market dynamics to come into play. What we’ve done is set up an unwritten, unspoken, artificial rate bottom. Nobody really talks about it, but we all know that it’s ‘X.’ And if you want to come in lower than that, you better justify it. If I want to shave \$10 off of afternoon drive, I better have evenings and weekends in there because that shows that you’re selling the whole station. And the thing that we need to do is sell the whole station. If I come in and sell 10 prime spots on Thursday, and 10 prime spots on Friday, and I do it at the lowest rate—that artificial bottom that I told you about—I’m serving no one but the client. And I’m not even sure I’m serving the client so well. We de-emphasize rates, so I don’t bring the rate card out. I may include it in the media kit. But I tell them right off the bat, ‘Here’s our rate card, but let me put a proposal together for you.’ So I can set up packaging. They look at the top of the rate card and the first thing they say is, ‘I’m not going to pay \$250.’ ‘Don’t worry about that. I’ll set up a package for you, but I have to be sure to protect that prime inventory of ours.’ It will benefit the station in the long run and me personally. Occasionally I’ll use it to that extent, but not often. I’ve been doing this long enough that I’ve seen the upper pressure on rates. I know about where we are.

“It’s not a formula. We have a flexible system. Two weeks, three weeks, four weeks out, and we have different rates for each week. There are many motivations for higher rates. First and foremost, my projections as a part

of the station's whole projections are very high. Say I have time enough only to service an ongoing base of 25 clients. How am I going to generate \$70,000 income out of those 25 accounts if I constantly let my rates fall through the floor? And how is the station going to generate higher and higher revenues year to year with bargain basement rates? It can't be done. And that plays into how are we as a radio station going to deliver a higher and higher quality product with better personalities, better promotions, better quality sound, without having additional revenues? There are only so many advertisers that I can effectively service. That's a great way to get a higher share of budget, knowing that you're going to push rates up. The point I want to make through all of this is that the rates have to come way down on the list of your personal priorities vis-a-vis your clients. And if you've done everything else that we've talked about, then you can charge higher rates and you make everybody happy, including the client. They're going to be irritated from time to time. 'I can't believe how much I spent on your station.' I've heard that from some of my best clients. But look what I'm giving them. That's what I tell them."



"Yes, we do have a rate card and I think it plays a significant part in getting top rates. At this station, we don't send rate cards out in any media kits. We can't even show it to anyone unless we get a sales manager's signature. So that shows real early that we're in control of our rates and inventory, and we're not here to be order takers. That's not what gets the job done for anybody.

"Another thing that it helps do is set parameters. When I'm going to talk to somebody that's new business, I never put rates on a proposal. I show the number of spots, what the investment is, maybe how many people it's reaching, and how many times it's reaching them. Somebody can very easily take the total investment and divide it by the number of spots to get an average rate. That doesn't tell you, though, if it's going to work for you.

"When you do that, you're in control if you have to go back and negotiate on those rates. The time parameters should be as wide as possible so that you can do that. You should always go in high so that you have room to move around if you need to. We get updates monthly. Or if the inventory is really tight, it might even be weekly. So we know if somebody calls up and says, 'I have to have that. I don't care what it costs,' then it's worth it to them."

“We have rate cards and then we have special packages that we use for new clients, mainly to get their attention more than anything. As far as the rate card, it’s something that’s written down. They can look at it, they can have it, and they can hold it. I can say my manager has set these rates and it just puts an obstacle in front of lowering them. Psychologically, I guess that’s the thing people look at. That’s what they’re charging. That’s the way it is. If I have a case where a client has a predetermined budget amount in mind and has a good idea of what he wants to accomplish, I can take his total budget amount and if that rate ends up being a little bit above our rate card, I’ll say, ‘This is what we will do for you.’ We’ll work with that total budget amount without even bringing out the rate card. I don’t actually show it in most cases. I’ll go in, talk to people and find out what they want—what they want to accomplish and what their goals are. Then I go back and put together a proposal which will contain the rate in it but it won’t have the rate card attached.”

“No, we don’t have a rate card. It just gets back to what you’re trying to accomplish. Our rates go from \$20 to \$600 and that’s what I tell people. The morning drive is more expensive not because it works better but because there is more demand for it. There are ways that you can take advantage of that. Our overnights are \$20. If you’re a Denny’s, there’s real value in taking advantage of that which a bank may not see. What I need to know is what you’re trying to accomplish in order to find what’s best for you. Our rates are updated weekly, and based on our availability. We get avail sheets every day and then every week they’re changed. Sometimes I show them the avail sheets when they don’t understand. ‘Here’s all the zeros. This is why this is happening.’ I don’t ever show a rate card because every day, every week, is different and it doesn’t make any sense to them. When it’s an agency, if they don’t want to buy nighttime, I can’t force them to. I say, ‘Let’s try it with and without. I’ll show you your reach and your frequency and the cost, and then you can choose.’ We don’t have a lot of negotiating power like many stations do. There are 11 of us, plus the national person. I might really feel that my client needs a break. If everyone else feels like that too, you have a real problem. We are very tied in to a rate card. It’s just not something published.”

“We don’t have a rate card. How do I know what to charge? I know where I have to be. The rate is set by management pretty much. I’m expected to get a little higher rate than the norm. Not having a rate card is an advantage at this station because, first of all, when you present someone with a rate card they say, ‘OK, I want this low rate here.’ With the people that do more direct business, it’s better to present an entire schedule than to say, ‘You’re going to pay this much per spot.’ I prefer to say, ‘Let’s put together an entire advertising campaign for you. There will be a final figure that will be your investment.’ And that’s when the relationships come into play. Finding out about their business and all that stuff. I think it’s an advantage not having a rate card. I don’t see any reason for it. As long as I’ve been in sales, I’ve never used a rate card. I’m doing well without it. So I don’t know. If someone’s doing well with it, that’s fine. There are a lot of variables in what you charge. For instance, April through September, the rate is going to be pretty much the same with every client. There’s not going to be a lot of flexibility. It all has to be up there. Flexibility happens in first quarter and that’s about it. Management pretty much sets the rates. Naturally, if there’s a large piece of business and they’re going to place one year of advertising right now, there’s going to be some advantage to that. They can get a little break on the rate. Not a lot, because you still don’t want to tie up inventory at low rates.”



“Yes, we have a rate card. Rate cards really are an enigma. They’re very difficult to deal with. I’m sure that we have the highest rate card in the market. I don’t send out rate cards anymore. I explain to people that the nature of our business is supply and demand. I can’t sell yesterday’s spots tomorrow. Tomorrow’s price is going to be different than today’s. Savvy advertisers know that. You never lead with your lowest price. You know what your manager’s going to accept as the lowest price. People fall into a mode of dealing with their clients at that bottom price. That’s where a rate card can help you. Certainly it can help with new clients who are maybe not regular radio advertisers or don’t know your station that well—establishing that we have a rate card and this is what we’re dealing with. I might be giving you a little bit better deal because you advertise a lot or because it’s a slow time or whatever, but you have to deal from the top down. I think you have to know what your lowest acceptable rate is going in and you have to know when you walk away. You’ll lose the battle, but you might win the war, because you’re going to get that person’s attention. They’re going to know that there’s a point where I just can’t push this person and where they’re not going to do business

with me. So I think that ultimately a rate card serves a very positive purpose. With clients that are regular advertisers, I really don't use it regularly. I try to establish regular rate increases. Cost of business goes up for everyone. That's the only way that I can make my individual goals and the radio station can make its plan on a regular basis."

"We have a rate card. It has several section levels on it and they move up and down, according to supply and demand. The card is not a big tool. It's probably used for a lot of first-time encounters with advertisers, but beyond that, I don't think it's something that a media buyer could put in her folder and refer to. It really takes a phone call. I don't use it a lot. We have it because I think maybe it's more of a statement not to have it. Some people are more comfortable with it. When we do increases, we follow the section levels as they are printed on that card. So there's no 'create a rate' The way that we lower the rate is through bonusing. The reason why we do that is to maintain some consistency."

"Yes, we do. I only use a rate card when I have to. I think that it is much better in a sales situation to have the rate card be as secondary as possible. You can choose to sell numbers and cost-per-point, and there are definitely situations where we have to do that. But I think that if you create an image in your clients' minds that we can make them money because of our market share and because of all the involvements we have in the community, then the job is done by the time you get to talking cost. It all goes back to perceived value. That is real important when you have a rate card like we do in a market this size. Use a rate card when you have to, but I don't think it should be your primary selling tool."

"We don't have a rate card. I put together a package with the suggested schedule. The rates depend on the month, on the quarter. It goes up and down so much that a lot of stations don't publish rate cards anymore. I know what my parameters are in my head. I know what my bottom line is Wednesday, Thursday, Friday, and drive times, and those are fixed. We have sales meetings once a week and we say, 'This week this is what it is. Don't sell below this or die' And it won't go on. They'll refuse it."

"I like rate cards. I wish that radio stations would use them again. I think it would help us maintain our rate integrity. I think that people really believe the written word."

"Yes, we use rate cards. Our rate card establishes both a starting point and ending point depending on the inventory situation. If we have some sponsorships, like a business or traffic report that are priced on the rate card at \$450 apiece and we're sold out for the next two weeks that establishes the value. It's the credibility of anything in print. We're sold out for the next two weeks so there's no reason to sell it for anything less because we've got plenty of people who are buying it for that. We understand that we may be overpriced, in our particular case, for a younger demographic. If we don't have the inventory then it doesn't make any difference. We're going to walk on the business. There's no reason to take or get every buy that comes along.

"I use it a lot, especially with a direct account or somebody who calls in looking for information. I'll tell people, 'You'll find our rate card's the most expensive one in town and here's the reason why.'"

"There is one, but I don't take it with me. It's mostly a guideline for new salespeople. It's not a valuable tool. What I do is put together a whole system, or plan, with a lot of facets built in, and I very rarely break down the cost. I know what the parameters are for the management of this station. I try and look at it from the client's point of view, maximizing their dollars and staying within the guidelines set by the management, to make everything work and make everybody happy."

"Yes, because we do have one that serves as the bare-bones minimum that you can get an order through on. It's a grid. And no, because I think that probably in the last two years I've shown the rate card to three clients.

"I use it as a basis a lot when I'm getting ready to put some kind of a buy together. But nine times out of 10, somebody will ask me, 'Where did you come up with this rate?' I have a tendency to figure out ways that are going to get the best results for a client, stay within his budget, and not scare him too much with the rate. I create their own personal package for

them and it ends up being a lot of averages. But the averages do come from the rate card!”

“Yes, we have one but we do not flash it around a lot. It’s a supply-and-demand rate card. You have to have personal contact with your account executive to get a current rate. The more personal contact you have, the more you trust that person, the more you tend to work with that person.

“We always use the rate card. If they’ve got \$2,000 to spend, you have to use the rate card and schedule it properly so that it will work, stay within their budget, and keep them happy. You have to make it easier for them to buy radio. I try to offer ideas and suggestions. ‘I know you’ve never tried weekends, but let’s try and see what happens.’ I’ve done that with a car dealer and it’s turned out so well for him, he’s done it now for a year. People window shop on Sundays, when nobody’s there to try and sell them anything. Then they’ll go back in on a Monday or Tuesday. It’s cheaper the way our rate card is structured for this client to buy weekends and early week. We helped him in that area, but it’s the results that count.”

“Yes, we have one, but the rate card, as far I’m concerned, has very little to do with what I do. I work very much with direct accounts and on what we call a customer-focused proposal basis. I have a rate card and obviously as an account executive, I have to follow those rates as an individual working for the station. However, that doesn’t mean I actually have to use that rate card because I tailor my schedules according to my client’s needs. And because it’s done in a proposal way and tailored to the specific needs of my client, I find the rate card of very little use other than actual figures.

“It’s totally for my own use. If you can hand anybody a rate card, they can pick their own schedule. Then what do they need me for if I’m sending them my rate card? I have to be a resource for them, or me and my rates mean nothing anyway.”

“Yes, we do and we don’t come off the rate card. There is not really any negotiation. I won’t say, ‘Maybe I can get you a better spot rate.’ It’s really not the card that we sell. It’s not spots that we sell. It’s a bigger thing than that. It’s selling these ideas or what the client needs are. And I keep referring

back to client needs, but it's so important because it's not necessarily advertising. You can find so many clients where when you get into the nitty-gritty of it you can really get away from the rate card with that. I very, very infrequently use a rate card. Unfortunately in some agency situations, it's hard to get away from that. But even when I know I'm in a cost-per-point situation, I try to get away from that and understand what the client's trying to accomplish. Then I write a proposal where I'm suggesting a schedule that's going to work. This is not just a schedule where I can get you a cheap rate. I use my expertise to recommend the best way to use the radio station.

"Again, the rate is not a sales tool. Our sales tools are what we do way beyond when the rate card becomes an issue. I hope that by the time rates become an issue the client is no longer thinking of rates. They're thinking this person is really going to help my business. I can't afford to lose her."

"Yes, but I never use it. I don't because then I'm already setting a price in the client's head. And if I have a higher demand I can't go above that rate card because they already know what my rates are. So I try to sell the station on a supply-and-demand basis and I move within my own grid card. I don't want that client to see the rate card because then I can't get the higher rate. If I can go out and get the maximum for my station and the majority of their money, I'll do it. Basically, I don't use a rate card. I always put them in a package. I believe in selling all of the inventory and in spreading the inventory. If a client calls and asks me for rates I try and ask enough questions to find out if there's any dayparts that they don't want to be in and I try and find out why. I try and sell the worth of our fringe dayparts and then I'll take in a package. I never will take in rates by daypart and let the client package it."

"Yes, we do. It plays a role in helping you get top dollar simply by contrast. For instance, showing your grid—one level of the rate card, then offering a rate that is less than grid one, is perceived as being a buy because it's not the top of the card. In that case, you would actually show the card. No matter what anybody says, most average salespeople are not really working off of their rate card. I think the buyer very quickly gets conditioned to the fact that they could just disregard what that rate card says. I've seen people just rip the rate card up and say, 'OK, let's talk rates.'"

"I will use the rate card to build a package. I will show the rate card and say, 'Of course, depending on the time of year and the daypart, we can work with this card.' I don't try and make the buyer think that card is written in stone because they know that it's not. Even with stations who are very strict, you can still learn to work with a rate card. You can build a package off of a rate card by finding out what dayparts they can use, the time of year, and working with the various grid levels and coming up with an overall average rate that makes the client feel like you really built this package for them."

"Yes, we do. But I don't feel that the rate card really has much of an effect on what we do here. It's very broad. My philosophy is, you have to have your own rate card in your head. You have to say, 'I will not sell my station below this level because I truly feel that it's worth more.' If you're going to be good, it better be well above the lowest number that's on that rate card. You want to be selling what you feel the station is worth. That comes across to the people too. If you can walk in there and effectively and effervescently tell someone that this is the rate you're getting and you feel confident about it, they're going to feel confident about it. I always present packages. I never show the rate card because I never want to sell at the bottom of the card. If I were to show someone the rate card, they're going to see the bottom number and they're all going to want it."

"Yes. I don't use it very often. Our rates are based on pressure on our inventory. We have dayparts that couldn't justify the rate based on numbers but can justify it based on pressure from inventory usage. We move all over the grid. We have basically a new rate card every week.

"We publish a grid card that we do give to some people. If someone asks for it, I don't say 'no.' Instead of a rate card, I ask, 'What is it we're interested in doing here?' What I do on the most part is talk to a client about what needs to be done and then put together a recommendation. Most of the time the recommendation is accepted because I've got the information. Radio's not very tangible. And one of the things I do—and I think this is Chris Lytle's suggestion—that really helps and maybe removes rates specifically as an issue, is I do a little calendar. And it's got seven squares across, one for each day of the week, and five squares under each day to indicate dayparts. And I write the name of the business in a square to indicate how many spots in

that daypart. And down at the bottom I show the total number of spots and the total dollars. They don't ever ask me how much a spot is. It really helps a lot. It's very hard for someone to strike through their own name or the name of their business. It's just real hard for them to say that's too many spots. But if you put together the schedule in their best interest where you've got good reach and good frequency for what needs to be done, you've come in with a good program for them."

"I think it's very, very important. Our particular rate card has five grid levels, with one being the highest. This keeps us from printing new rate cards every two or three weeks, as a lot of stations will do. This is a basic rate card and supply and demand dictates where we are. We're on grid three right now on morning drive. Saturday afternoon we're on grid four. We use it very much. Everything is based on the rate card and if they believe you have integrity with it then you have integrity. If you change it without showing them why and how, they don't believe you have a rate card. I think it's very good. I don't commit rates by memory. I pull out the rate card and I show them right there in black and white. If we do it this way, we could get this rate. It works well with me."

"Yes, we do, but we don't show it to anyone. It's an internal thing. When there's a lot of pressure and we're really tight like we are right now, we will push to get higher rates. The only thing that I will ever try and do with a rate card is to maybe lock in long-term business. I rarely write down rates. I present it like it's supply and demand. I'll show an average spot cost in a package. That's something they can relate to a lot easier than looking at my morning drive, my midday, and my afternoon drive. That's for retail. Some of my retailers are more sophisticated and they do need to see a rate. But, again, it depends on the situation. I'll tell them, 'This is where we are right now. This is where we'll probably be at in a month. If you buy us in the summer, this is where we'll be.' Right now I'm using it to my advantage because you can't get on other stations. We're available, and this is the rate. I don't depend on a rate card at all. Every situation is different and unless it's an ad agency that's very cost-per-point oriented, rates are not always the biggest issue."

“Yes, we have a rate card. But you have to understand that in this market, rate cards mean absolutely nothing at this time. Since 95 percent of the people I deal with are big agencies, they have our rate card, and they understand it. Most of the time the market’s coming at \$30 cost-per-point and I’m trying to come in at \$45 to \$50 cost-per-point. And if I’ve done my job right, ahead of time, I can do that. I think the market has caused that phenomenon in TV and in radio where the rate cards don’t mean anything.

“It’s a tool for me here, internally. I look at it differently, though, because I really feel our station is worth so much more than it’s often sold for. I’m real protective of that. It’s very hard to give a rate lower than what you think you should be giving.”

“No. We don’t have one. What I try to do, especially if I am calling on a new business—direct, or even an agency—is all the fact-finding things. A lot of them will say, ‘Send out a rate card.’ We don’t have one. What I would like to do is find out everything that you’re trying to achieve, your target demo, and so on. I’d like to put together something that I think would benefit you in a better way than just looking at a rate card. When we did have one, I wouldn’t use it. We had a grid system and they would look at the last grid and say, ‘I want that rate.’ And I just always try to put together a schedule that is best to fulfill what they’re trying to achieve.”

“No, we don’t have a rate card. The relationship that I establish with my clients is a partnership. If I went in and showed them a rate card, I would be delivering another message to them than what I want them to understand. And that is that they are special, that their needs are not based on rate. Their needs are based on what kind of results I can deliver for them. And if you have done your job and have determined what their needs are then you package it together and you provide what they need. That’s the added value, the perceived value, the desired value. Then rate is just a minor issue.

“If I can close the deal by verbally agreeing on what we’re doing, that will be my first preference. I write fewer proposals out of this office than I’m sure any other account executive does. That sets me apart from all my

competition, too. I do not believe in all of the fluff. People don't have time to read over that stuff. They go to the back page immediately. The only time that I present a written proposal is if it's a complicated promotion or we're finalizing issues that we have already agreed to verbally and then we put them on paper. But I don't go in, hand a person a proposal with all sorts of fluff, and then read it. Because what does he need me there for? And I can sell better than any written proposal can. The package is all encompassing. Everything I do is catered on an individual basis. Some people need things written and if they do I will do that, but it won't be all the fluff. I respect their intelligence more than that. And by that point in time I've already established the radio station."

"Yes, we do. It works very effectively from a standpoint that it's one piece of concrete information you can walk in with. Most people want to know how much it's going to cost. Bringing a rate card out can be very confusing. So, what I normally do is start off with a blank sheet of paper. In most cases, I will start out with a medium-to-high rate plan and see how it goes. You can always negotiate down, but you can't always negotiate up too successfully. A rate card is important. It helps keep you on track. It also depends upon what supply and demand is like. Right now, it's very tight and if you've got to be on, the only way you can be on is to pay top dollar. It's easier in many ways to command a top rate when supply is minimal and you create an even greater demand. When it's very quiet, you're going to be more flexible and work with clients more because your inventory will allow you to do that."

"We have a rate card, but none of us really use it. We just kind of use it as a guideline, and because people sometimes expect to see a rate card in the media kit. Mostly our rates are based on supply and demand. In our slower months, I try to get my clients a better deal. Of course, in May, June, and July, they have to pay top dollar to get on. So it's just a supply and demand thing. If I used the rate card, it would be for someone purchasing advertising three months down the line.

"Usually I just quote them a rate. I only use the rate card for my personal use. It does go in the media kit, but I never really use it or bring it out to show the client. It's just in there if they want to refer to it."

“Yes, but it’s unpublished. It’s almost like an inventory checklist. I know how sold out we are. Our rates go from grid one up to grid five—grid one being the lowest rate, grid five being the highest rate. If I know we’re only 50 percent sold out in May, which isn’t the case—but I’m using that as an example—I’m going to use grid one, unless I can get away with going higher because there’s inventory. However, right now we’re 98 percent sold out in May, so I’m going to use grid five. So, it’s used as an inventory control for me. I never show it to the client, but I know it by heart. It doesn’t change very often. A rate card is probably good for a year, but we move up and down the grids.”

“Yes, we have one. In a sell-out situation, we go up a grid. We sell right off a rate card. If it’s a particular demo that’s very good for us—say, 25 to 54 year old females—then we can come in higher than on the rate card, because we can justify the cost since the numbers are so good. Other than that, we just follow our rate card. Aside from when we are sold out, I wouldn’t say it plays a huge role in helping get top dollar for our spots. We depend on our rate card 100 percent. The rates that are on there are the rates that we use. The one thing that we will do in negotiating is negotiate dayparts. We may sell our 6:00 a.m. to midnight rate to a bigger advertiser, but give him a 10:00 p.m. cutoff, so he’s paying the same rate as the other guy, but we give him a little edge on the time frame in which we run his commercials. That way, we’re still getting top rates from the big guy, just like we are from the little guy, without having to come down off our rate card. So, it’s more of an inventory control thing than it is a rate card thing.”

“Yes. We are required to use the rate card. We are not allowed to negotiate. You should always use the rate card because it justifies what you’re asking for, right on paper. I use the rate card extensively, and my philosophy would be to use it whenever possible. With first-time clients, it gives you a frame of reference as to what your station is worth. It’s on paper and they can’t argue with it. And as far as not using a rate card, then you appear to be more the pitchman: ‘What do you want to pay?’ I’ve always felt it’s helpful to use different rates for different dayparts, even for weekends. Have a lower

rate for Saturday evenings and a higher rate for Saturday during the day. Especially for people who don't use a lot of radio, it shows them the value of it."

"Yes. The rate card allows us to be much more flexible than it used to. We constantly generate a rate card based on our supply and demand, like television does. It's possible in this age of computers now to know exactly where your inventory is all the time. So, if you've got a lot of inventory left unsold, there's a formula which puts a rate on that. If we had fixed rates you would lose credibility if you told me the price of something was \$100 and then you quickly lowered it to \$40. Now it's on a rate card that way. It's based on how many people are listening and how much inventory we have.

"I can put a proposal together and use all the various rates right off the card, but I wouldn't send this rate card to anybody. It looks very complicated. It's got a rate for every daypart Monday to Sunday, 6:00 a.m. to midnight. Every one of those dayparts has a different rate on it. Then people might just throw it away and say, 'I can't deal with this station.' The key to it was, as one of our sales managers put it, that we've taken our ego out of our rate card. It used to reflect rates just because we thought they should be there. Our mornings should be this much on AM, and this much on FM, because of history. It's not anymore. It's now based on supply and demand."

"Yes, we have a rate card that we call a (Sales Manager's name) grid. She will put these out, saying, 'This is the grid that you're on for these days, and these weeks,' and use it simply as a guideline. I try to explain what the cost of my radio station is to all the advertisers I work with. If they don't give me enough time to be able to utilize the inventory, say 30 days in advance, then they have to pay the top dollar, because other people have bought it. I use the airplane analogy, saying, 'The plane's full and you're trying to fly to Denver this weekend. You know that you get a better deal 30 days in advance. Same thing with our radio station. We get nine seats an hour. We fill them up, we're done. You've got to bump somebody off the plane. That means that you've got to pay for their fare and yours, and that's why you're paying such a high dollar.'

"I use the rate card sometimes to explain to them why a spot on Friday morning may cost more than a spot on Monday morning. But a lot of times

you find, on a local basis, it confuses them. You can explain the plane analogy rather than saying, 'Here's my rate card, here's the inventory pressure, and we're on grid one.'"

"Yes. It's a grid card, which, of course, means your rates change monthly, weekly, and here in May, almost daily. It's a supply and demand thing. Going back to conceptual selling, a rate card is obviously an important factor in rates. But rates at our station are determined by supply and demand. Having the card or not having the card—it's the value of what you get at the station, and intelligent packaging of your most important time periods. I believe in selling reach, so I think you should sell all time periods. Again, I just have never really had a problem with a rate card. It's never gotten in my way. I use it all the time, but unfortunately you have to play games with buyers. You sometimes have to go in with a higher rate to end up where you know you want to be. Let's say, for example, you're selling at \$700 a spot in morning drive. Knowing the type of person that I'm dealing with, I'd go in at \$800, so he thinks he's getting something at \$700. He's getting what he wants, and I'm getting what I want. I can use it to my advantage."

"Yes and no. We have a printed rate card. It's nothing slick, because it changes. If someone absolutely requests one, such as someone from out of town, we'll send them a rate card. However, we really don't hand them out. We have rate guidelines that change. We're really a supply-and-demand radio station. The costs are based a lot on available inventory, and what the demand is in the market at that time, rather than on our ratings. You have to play that game with some agencies. The guidelines that we get are for internal use, because we don't want to emphasize cost-per-spot. We want to emphasize cost for this package, or cost for this idea or this promotion that you're doing. 'What role does your rate card play in helping you get top dollar?' Not a very large one. It really doesn't. We don't use the rate card a lot. It really is amazing. A lot times now, with ongoing customers, they don't even ask what the cost is because we've proven that it works. Initially, if someone's comparing media, they're going to be looking at cost, though."

“No. If you print a rate card, it may be high, it may be low. Buys are not placed on what your rate is. They are more likely placed on either a cost-per-point, or what the market is looking like. Nowadays, I see the trend going more and more toward a supply-and-demand situation. I think that your price should be a reflection of your worth to that particular business. I wouldn't use the same rate for a savings and loan on my radio station, with an adult 25 to 54 demo, as I would for a Coca-Cola. I think publishing a rate card is a waste of paper at most radio stations.

“I try to get as much information as far as the criteria for the buy. I have a list of questions that I ask any time rates are requested. What is the business? What is the target demographic that they're looking for? There's several factors that I look at when I'm putting together the justification of my rates. And I have to factor in how much inventory I have available during the time periods when they want to be on the air. Our rates here can fluctuate, literally, on a daily basis.”

“No, we don't. We've never had a rate card, so my philosophy is that I don't think they're necessary, because I've never compared it with anything else. The way we do it here is that because inventory changes constantly, and sometimes we are sold out and sometimes we are not, the rates change based on the supply and demand. Management will set a floor and a ceiling. It changes all the time. If Saturday starts selling out, the rate goes up. If there's a lot of midday, we may be able to go down a little bit. It changes all the time. We talk about rates at sales meetings, which we have weekly. If we're sold out, the rate goes up. The main thing is to use effective packaging using all dayparts of the station. If somebody has tight parameters, you charge a premium. That changes all the time.”

“Yes, we do, but I don't use a rate card. I don't think I've used it much at all. People do request them, maybe some out-of-towners. But quite honestly, if I send it out and they just put the buy together and I'm not even involved in it—I hate when that happens. Normally, it's a supply-and-demand-type of business. I cannot guarantee that I will be on the same grid tomorrow as I was yesterday. I think that clients like to have something tangible in their hands. They've got the rates written down there on a rate card that's official looking and it serves as a barometer to justify the rates that I may be quoting. I don't work with it that often but I think they also expect one.

“It’s supply and demand mostly. I go in and I ask, ‘What do you want? What do you want to accomplish with this campaign? And let me show you what it’s going to take to do it.’ The avail sheet is great. We do it on a weekly basis. The avail sheet has four weeks on it by daypart and by day, showing you what percentage you’re at. My sales manager just handwrites it every week and passes it out. I had one client, an eye doctor, that did not have a large amount of money. I started thinking, ‘How can we just bang, bang, bang, all over the radio, with not much money?’ I took a look at the avail sheet one day, and on Mondays we were 95 percent sold out, and Wednesday through Friday and Saturday we were 100 percent sold out. So I have three of four clients now that utilize vertical saturation. They take advantage of my Mondays at a lower rate. The eye doctor is on every Monday for eight weeks, and then he goes off for three weeks and then he comes back on. His business has gone crazy, because it works. He’s spending all his money with me and it’s vertical saturation.”

“Yes, we do, but we don’t present our rate card to people. Our stations package a lot. We package dayparts, promotions, and point of sale. We do a lot of value-added things. It’s very hard to just present spots and get bought these days. The rate card really is more for our reference than for anything else. Here are the bottom line rates of what we need to get in order to clear.

“We price based on supply and demand. We have sales meetings three times a week. You have a good feeling of what’s going to clear and what’s not when the management says, ‘I need \$200 to clear in the morning drive. I need \$180 to clear in middays, and \$180 in the afternoon.’ You know where you’re at—if you can get more, great.”

“I use it internally. I know what level I have to be at because of what’s going on at the time. I don’t go above the rate card, because it’s about as high as you want to go anyway. Most people don’t want to ever feel they’re buying off the rate card, so why show it to them? They’re just going to fight you. How you get the high rates, are all the other little things that we’re doing to make it effective for them. I just don’t deal off the rate card.

“Usually, by the time we’ve talked rates, I’ve already sold them and that’s just a technicality. And if it really is something that bothers them, then I’ve got to work and see what other ways I can do it. But that doesn’t happen very often. It’s really very interesting, because you’re asking, ‘How important

are the rates?' I'm finding out through our conversation that they're very important. I do get one of the highest rates on the station, but I don't think about it. It's not the first thing I work with."

"Yes. If we're dealing with an advertiser who is looking at a rate increase from, say, the previous month, then we can show him a rate card with our grid system. We show him that each grid's pricing is based on the sell-out structure of the radio station at that point. And then I can show him another grid that shows each week and each daypart within that week that says what percentage of sell-out position the radio station is in. Then he can compare. Depending on how long they want to advertise, we can do some averaging. But we use it religiously, and try to stay consistent with setting the rate for whatever week we're in, based on that week's sell-out.

"If it's necessary I show them avail sheets. If they're frantic about, 'That's an incredible increase. Why is that?' then we can say, 'That's another good reason to plan ahead vs. just calling me the week before.' Then you can get into strategies to help them get the best rate on the radio station if they do some long-term planning with you. Good for them, good for us. The clients really determine where we are in our rate structure, because the rates are completely determined based on sell out."

Question 6



Now let's talk about the various kinds of support that you get from the management at your radio station in helping you in your sales effort. What are the three or four most important resources your management provides to help you maximize your sales performance? Think about resources like research tools, training, systems, and policies that you find particularly helpful, or just the philosophies your management believes in and practices.

"Obviously, they provide us with lots of research to give us some new angles. Media Audit and Strata would be the two primary things that we're using.

"Another thing that they did last year was put us through sales training at Greenwood Performance. It helps you define somebody's personality traits very quickly to work with them better.

"I'd say their general philosophy here, which is fairly conservative, is a very professional attitude. They expect you to be a professional and they give you the appropriate tools to be the best in the market. They want you to be marketing experts for your clients, and not just peddling the spots. The other thing is that the company is here for the long haul. Here, you look at the history. You know the company's aggressive, looking to expand if anything, and not be taken over by somebody who's not a broadcaster. As I said, I don't always get a first buy, but once I do, I'm in it for the long haul."

“I’ll start with tools, although I don’t think that’s the most important thing for me, personally. We have every imaginable research tool here. We have Arbitron Information-On-Demand (AID), Strata, and Media Audit, which are great research tools. We also have great desks and an excellent phone system. The lighting is fine. There’s a great message center up here. Our mail’s always delivered properly—all the little things that make a big difference. First and foremost, though, is the support staff we have. I’m talking about the sales secretary, who is really a partner. I have to treat her right. The station has provided the right person in that seat. Also an accurate, diligent traffic manager, who’s been here nine years. Those contracts are right, and we have excellent people in the billing department. Our company has the vision and commitment to implement the things that are necessary—to spend the money, whatever the costs are, within reason, to implement that in order to maintain the dominance that we’ve had in the market. They maintain quality in the employee arena as well, and that’s very unusual to be able to do that. Another area that helps me to maximize my sales performance is that management relies on individual effort to help us to formulate our team goal. We come together as a team, but only first through individual effort. Personally, I have a clear commitment to my standards, to my attitude, and to my clients.”

“The ongoing training that our company does is very important. The thing that I benefited the most from was a weekend training session where I actually went away feeling badly about myself, and it motivated me to want to improve and change. It was a two-day seminar with a sister station consisting of presentations that we put together with another person that were videotaped. That can be very revealing. It really has made a difference in how I approach what I do.

“Their attitude is—and it’s almost a snobbish attitude—that the value is there, and we’re worth it. As a salesperson, you have to be aware of the fact that you can’t take that out on the street in an extreme form. You need that belief in your product. If it wasn’t there, it would be difficult to sell. But the product is so good, that’s pretty easy. But that starts from the top.

“The research that the management does on the station to make sure that the product is still quality and responding to what listeners in this market want is real important. And that kind of knowledge is the kind of stuff

that really makes people's ears perk up. That's the kind of stuff they want to know beyond the numbers.

"Another thing that management here has is an uncanny ability to hire very qualified people. I've been very impressed since I've been here with the caliber of people that have been hired. When you get people that are as good as we have here, it really does make you a better achiever if you're surrounded with winners."

"We have, as far as research tools, the Birch rating books and the computer program that goes with it that allows us to print out reach and frequency calculations in putting together proposals. I think we've done a pretty good job of training. I've been a little bit involved in the training of everybody that's come to work here.

"We're all treated like adults and we know what we have to do because we basically pay for ourselves. What we bill is what we make, and it's up to every individual to do the best as far as that's concerned. Although we're put under some pressure, we're not put under a horrendous amount of pressure to where it's going to hamper our sales performance. We know that we're supposed to do the best job we can and we're given a lot of freedom to do that. We have a meeting every morning right now, but it's very short—just basically to get together and keep everybody up-to-date on the news or whatever is going on in the market. Beyond that, we're free to come and go all through the day. Management is there if we need them, but if we don't, we're free to go out and produce as well as we possibly can. I feel like it's almost a family atmosphere, because the station owner is here in town and a lot of us know her on almost a first-name basis. Management pretty much has an open-door policy, and I feel pretty good about that."

"Number one is the ratings. It doesn't get me the sales but I don't think you'd have much without that. Right up there also is the promotion they do for the station. That makes all the difference in the world as far as keeping both the ratings up and putting across a strong image to buyers and heads of businesses. Country has somewhat of a stigma, so it's important to have everything professionally done, as far as our sales brochures and things like that. The collateral material that we bring out is first class. It projects an image that you can trust us. Everything we do here is first-rate. That's important when you're paying those rates. Things run very, very smoothly here. Radio

has the reputation of being very lax, real easy, fun, and laid-back. Frankly, it's not here. That happens to suit me fine. Generally when I turn my tapes in, I don't have to worry. When I turn my traffic orders in, I don't have to worry whether that spot's going to air or whether they're going to miss that spot or it's going in the wrong daypart. We've got weekly sales meetings where we're updated on everything that's going on, and you can take advantage of as much or as little as you want to. The research director can go out on calls with you, and it just all goes into the package. You're not just buying 10 spots, you're buying this whole deal. It's expensive enough so that people think that's what they should be getting."

"We've had a lot of training in sales and communications. A lot of those kinds of courses are really common sense. But training is really important."

"As far as resources like research tools, we recently were provided with Scarborough information, which I found to be extremely useful. It helps out when you're trying to get a larger percentage of the budget or when you're trying to increase the rates. You don't want to rely on it too heavily, but certainly it helps. Our meetings are really valuable. We do a lot of role-playing and that's very helpful. Also, a lot of brainstorming about what sorts of objections you come up against, and how to address them. Our general manager is quite a lady. When she came here we were getting terrible, terrible rates. Her philosophy is that you get what your radio station is worth. 'I don't care if inventory goes unsold. You do not say, 'We're having a sale now.' You get the value of your radio station. We've kept our integrity. We don't 'drop our drawers' in first quarter. We maintain our rates, and if inventory goes unsold, that's fine.' That's how the management is here. And I thoroughly enjoy working for that. I respect that sort of management, and it's important when you're working for a radio station to respect the management philosophy."

"We have a lot of freedom here and we were trained well. Their philosophy is that you're expected as a salesperson, whether you've been here for one year or for five years, to generate new business. That keeps you from getting to be a fat cat. At a radio station as successful as this one, it would be easy to become that way."

"I've worked in a number of different industries and I can really say that this is one of the best environments I've worked in. It comes from the top

down to my direct sales manager. Environment is one of the most important things. It ultimately motivates and keeps people excited and working hard.

“It’s a very professional organization. Radio does have somewhat of a schlocky reputation in a lot of markets. We are positioned as the best, the most professional. If you believe you’re the best, you’re going to portray an image of being the best. Another aspect of that is my direct superior, and how he manages me specifically. I am a person who thrives on doing my own thing without having sales reports every day. Some people need that and some people don’t need that. Our management is able to take each individual and manage them as they need to be managed.

“Motivation here has been very good—not only financial motivation but the motivation to be part of a winning team. Research tools are an extremely important resource that I have available to me that other people don’t. I worked at one radio station that didn’t even subscribe to Arbitron. It’s just another advantage that I can use in a very competitive market to accomplish the goals that I need to accomplish, which are to sell radio time and get good rates.

“Last but not least, training is really important. Having been a salesman for a long time, I’ve been through umpteen sales training sessions. I think they all have merit. There are things that need to be addressed on a regular basis because we forget them. Selling is a skill. The more you practice it, the better you’re going to get. You learn to ask questions, not to be talking all the time. Those are skills that, if you want to be a professional, you have to dedicate yourself to. Our station has provided those. But more than just the selling skills, it’s providing other skills, like negotiating.

“Lastly, they provide training on competitive media by trying to understand what our competitors are doing. It’s all part of the training.”



“There are several tools that they give us. One is research. We’ve been long-term subscribers to Birch. We’re not Arbitron subscribers and, of course, we’ve benefited from the Birch qualitative data as well. We have a very capable sales assistant who can get into that information and really produce some wonderful graphs, charts, and stories. We are supplied with Media Audit information as well. I don’t find that information particularly user-friendly, so we have somebody who really knows how to work it, which is of great benefit.

“In education, there’s a lot of emphasis on seminars and additional sales training. We’re a group of fairly veteran people, but there’s always emphasis on training. That’s a neat thing. I think we’ve done more of that than most

stations. We have a very good, seasoned sales manager. This is a guy who really enabled us to get out there, have the confidence to sell the higher rates, and not get bogged down by what media buyers wanted to tell you you were worth, but to rise above that. He's a guy with a lot of experience and he's a real strong sales manager. It's easy to meet cost-per-point requirements. That eliminates any conflict. I think what he does is make us feel uncomfortable a lot. But it makes you better."

"We're very fortunate because everyone in every capacity at this station, whether it's programming or sales, is definitely supported by our management. I think that's why we have such a good team here. Our sales manager is an extremely gifted man. He is probably one of the best PR people I've ever seen. I mean he is just such a celebrity in this market, himself. He's president of the arts council; he's just into everything. And he sees to it that we have the latest in computer programs for Arbitron and qualitative information. I mean the latest that comes out. He is very, very good about making sure we have those sales tools at our fingertips. And he's got a good attitude about it, too. He wants you to be the best that you can be. We have sales meetings three times a week. When there is a seminar somewhere, he always has information on those and supports any of us to go, whether we've been here one year, two years, or 10 years. If it's something you're interested in, and he feels it's a really good thing, 'Let's go.'"

"I think that one of the most important things that management can do for their salespeople is to maintain sales materials and packages on an ongoing basis that are fresh and ready to go. Salespeople are very busy running in and out and don't have time to rewrite the Bible every single day.

"Another thing that I think is very important is account management. Sales management needs to be aware of where accounts are, where they're going, and who has what account within a sales staff. This particular management is very good at that. We are a radio station that thrives on beer money, concert and movie money, and things like that. They do very well at distributing those evenly. There are stations in town where a sales staff is top heavy in accounts, with one or two account executives having the best accounts and the other ones are starving. I think it's real important that everyone get a fair shake. I think that what management needs to do is realize that experienced salespeople are very valuable and they are there to nurture us.

“The best thing management can do in the future is to continue to cultivate these kinds of people and keep them around. Being good to their people makes a whole lot of sense. Giving them the time off that they need, giving them the rope that they need, and of course they have to do a good job to bring in the dollars.”

“Fast answers, that’s one. If I need an answer, I don’t want a committee meeting on it.

“Research and quality sales information. This relates back to what I talked about before. We’re the top-priced station in town, so any material we send out has to look like number one. Names spelled right, all that. I ask my clients for their business card and that gives me all the correct information. Frankly, by looking at the card, you can tell how big their ego is.

“Another thing I appreciate from management is the realization that mistakes aren’t fatal in this business. Our sales manager had a sign on his desk that said, ‘It’s not brain surgery.’ It’s a fun business, a dynamic business. It’s a business where you can make good things happen for someone else’s business, but it’s not the end of the world, either. Another thing for a sales manager is not to follow my every move. Give me room to work. They’re great with me. We’ve been at it long enough that they know me. I’m known to be responsible for what I’m doing, so the meetings that I have with my managers are not the ones that go, ‘What did you do here?’”

“We’re very big on counselor selling systems, so there is a great deal of training that we’ve had. I consider all the training things we’ve had as tools in my tool box and I use bits and pieces of all of the different things that they’ve taught us when necessary. We’ve had a whole thing on marketing warfare, on counselor selling, and on personality trait themes. But little bits and pieces of each one of those blended together make it work. Also, we have an excellent support team here. I do a lot of co-op and I have a great billing department. Affidavits are exact, always. If I need duplicates sent, all I have to do on our order forms is put my code on there. If I’m working with a group of nine or 10 motorcycle dealers, for example, and the billing needs to be split up among all of them, they will do that for me. One of my strengths is co-op. I have it down to a science. We have very good inventory management. This is a busy radio station, but we have a real good system for keeping a close eye on how the avail situation is because we run a fixed unit

load. That can be troublesome when you're trying to put something creative together for somebody and you don't have the time slots that you need to make it effective."

"The important resources are, first, thinking in terms of tools, Strata and Media Audit, because I do like to do a lot of research and figure things out for my clients. And we have a local research thing here called Target, which gives me a lot of information that I can use to bring to my client. It just gives me a little more credibility. It makes me able to present something to a client with a background and a sense to why I'm presenting what I'm presenting. So those kinds of things, as far as tools, are important.

"As to the philosophy of the station, one of the things that helps me a lot is the fact that both radio stations are very, very active in the community. Because the company has that philosophy, that helps me an awful lot because it helps the station to be successful. It also points out to our clients that we believe in what we're doing, we know what we're doing, and we'll work for you, too. I've never been at a station before where they let you out of the corral so much. If you have a good idea, present it, talk about it, and then everybody else expands on the idea. It's a very open atmosphere.

"We have regular training sessions, where a couple of times a year stations get together, all the salespeople, and we learn something new. We go over the old things too. It really keeps you fresh. The one that stands out in my mind most from last year was the negotiation seminar that we did. We learn all these wonderful customer focus things and the things I've been talking about recently. A lot of the things that we're taught are not just sales focused. They are but they aren't. Most of the things you can apply to your whole life. It's a well-rounded way of educating a person, not just for sales or radio, but educating a person. They play on our thirst for knowledge and wanting to learn more and wanting to be really good.

"The first thing I noticed as far as philosophically is that they believe in you as a person. They have a lot of confidence in the people that work for them. You don't have to come running back to a manager every time you have a thought and you want to try something with a client. Your belief and trust are enough that you can do those things and not worry about it. That really makes a big difference for me. When people trust you and have that confidence in you and let you be your own little manager, it just keeps getting better and better. That makes it a real fun place to be and that helps your attitude when you walk into a client's office."

“The number-one most important thing that this station has given to me is the training. It is the best in the industry. I could go and work for IBM and Xerox with this type of training, it’s so similar. I feed on it. I love to learn something new. That has been so important. It’s done a lot for my own personal self-worth. When you feel better about your own person, you can go out and put a much better face forward to the world. I’ve learned so much in three years. The funny thing now is I’m testing myself. I’ve been asked to do a few speeches before marketing groups. My immediate reaction is, ‘No, I can’t do this.’ But they’ve given me that courage, where I think two years ago or three years ago I would have not done it. Now I will go out and do it.

“I think we’re outstanding in research. We do primary research for our clients. We’re one of the few stations in the country that does this. It’s new revenue for the company. Now I can say, ‘I can look that up for you. I can see what’s going on in this industry today.’ I’m working with a couple of new agencies right now. They originally were saying, ‘We’re not at that point yet for advertising.’ I brought up my research department and found what they’ve been looking for—information on this specific industry. They’ve been going to the library and wasting a lot of time. That’s got me a couple of appointments in the past two weeks. So that’s been extremely helpful.

“We have wonderful systems. We have a three-person creative department that no one else can offer. This is a good tool for us. I work within the food industry. I’ve been specializing. I targeted that particular industry because it’s a growth area. I’ve been educating myself a lot in that industry, and my management was very supportive. I joined the Grocery Manufacturers Association to make contacts and I sent away for publications. I don’t have a big travel budget, but I was able to go visit a client’s plant. Again, that’s added value. The fact that my managers support me is extremely important.”

“In my own words, the philosophies that we follow are that we’re customer focused, empathetic, problem solvers. That just goes back to identifying the client’s needs and being able to provide a solution to meet them. My management here and their guidance are very important to me. I haven’t been in the business very long, and they’ve been in the business for many years, so their experiences and their guidance have helped me a great deal. There’s

continuous training all the time, and that helps me grow and become better so I can help my clients better. We also have excellent research and creative departments, and the production services are very good. It's a system and everything has to work together as smoothly as possible. Not everything's perfect. I have my problems like everybody else, but I really believe that it has to be a network where everybody is backing up everybody for the one focus, which is the client. We're all working toward meeting that client's goals so they continue to use the station, which is the main artery of everything we do. You have to believe in it."

"The first thing I think we do here is empowerment. I run my accounts; my managers don't. I make decisions for my accounts because I'm the one who has to live with the decisions. I really appreciate an atmosphere like that because no one's getting involved unless I ask for it. And when I ask for it, they're there to help me. This is what I tell my clients: 'I've been here working with you all year long and I'm not going to bring my sales manager in to negotiate the buy or something.' I think that's really important. We have meetings Tuesdays and Thursday afternoons, and it's one person's meeting every week. When you have a problem with an account we sit down with the entire group, all the salespeople, and brainstorm together a way we might improve the situation. And then we report back to the group on how it worked. Maybe what one person is going through is very similar to what you're going through with your own account. I think that's been very helpful. You can say, 'I have this problem. I need to sit down with a group of you.' And we'll go and grab a lunch or whatever and just say, 'What can I do?' That really helps. Our whole philosophy is that we sell based on clients' needs and finding out what those are. I think that's an incredible way to sell. It's much easier. You're not out there fighting this cost-per-point battle. I think that's great. It comes from the top down here."

"Since I just left a station not too long ago because of this very reason, this is very easy for me to answer. Number one: my station provides almost all of the research tools available to salespeople out there, from computerized graphic proposals to all of the qualitative that we need, to one-sheets that you can put into a proposal. Number two: my management backs me up on, so far, everything that I've done and/or said—whatever rates I've set, whatever promotions that I try and put together, whatever policies I set with

clients. And last, but certainly not least, is that they leave us alone. They believe that we're professional enough that they aren't looking over your shoulder setting rates and policies for you. They give you a guideline and they let you run with it. They realize that you have the knowledge, and they have faith enough that you won't go out and promise something that the station can't do. I think those are probably the three. They basically leave you alone and they let you do what you've been hired to do."

"I think a lot of stations provide research tools, sales support systems, and formal training. The two most important things that my management provides for me are, number one, flexibility, because they trust me to do the right thing for the radio station, and, number two, responsibility, because they trust me to do the right thing for the radio station. It has helped me to work with clients in a way where I can make them feel that filling their needs is the goal of this radio station. That's why we exist here—to help them. The philosophy of this radio station's management is, 'The client is always right,' and to treat them like they're worth a million bucks, even if it's the smallest order. The other would be our management's willingness to be flexible where problems may arise. We have a research department that we're putting our all into right now that's really a great support to the sales department. We have a formal sales training program that goes for the rookies as well as the seasoned salespeople. The station does everything it can to take as much of the daily paperwork and routine stuff out of the hands of the salespeople by providing sales support people to do it for us. That leaves us freer to do a good job for the client."

"The first thing I'd like to mention is a policy issue or a personal sales philosophy of our sales management here. They set the ground rules. And then they pretty much let us run with it. They give us a lot of leeway as far as packaging, promotions, and putting things together for our clients, which gives us autonomy and credibility out there in the market. People know that if they make a deal with the salesperson, nine times out of 10 it's going to fly with the sales manager. As long as you're performing, as long as you're bringing in new business, and you're making your budgets, or close to them, they pretty much let us run with things. I appreciate that as a salesperson very much. I don't think any good salesperson responds to constant harassment. That's one policy that I think is good as far as our sales management goes."

“They give very good training as far as sales in general. We all go through the Greenwood training system. It gives you very good basics for dealing with not only the people that you call on, but internally at the station. I think it gives you just a good basis for dealing with people overall.

“They have a very good computer system and very good research information. We used to have a research director but don’t anymore. But the way it’s evolved, we pretty much can get anything we need ourselves.

“Our continuity and programming departments are very, very strict. That can be construed in two ways. Sometimes it hurts you, but I think in the long run it really helps. It helps keep the product on air very consistent.

“The station spends a tremendous amount of money on keeping the station visible. They spend a lot of money in television, billboards and everything else along those lines. The station that I work for has been in business for 25 years, and its position is well known. When I call someone up and say I’m with this station, it’s easier to get in the door. Sometimes the battle is just getting in the door, and having that name really helps you do that.”



“I think that the overall philosophy of my company is probably the single biggest source of support or strength that I have. We really are different. Our training is superb. Our company spends an incredible amount of money on training. They want us to be better. It is continuing education. They have a philosophy that I get to manage my strengths and they’ll help me manage my weaknesses. We know what I do well and we know what I don’t do well. So they help me do the things that I don’t do well. My managers see themselves as support personnel. We do have a structured system. I do a strategic account management worksheet and I indicate every week where accounts are in terms of development. I do projections. It’s also entrepreneurial. My sales manager goes out in the field with me all day, once every two weeks, which is great. He’s just a wonderful people person, so it’s great to have him on calls, and in between client visits just to talk with him about what’s going on.

“It’s a good, strong, open-door policy. They want us to be entrepreneurial. But yet there are checks and balances. We have more resources, more research than any other facility in this city. We have Simmons, Birch, Media Audit, and Arbitron. Just all kinds of tools at our disposal. It’s an excellent company. The company has an attitude about really identifying and satisfying customer needs profitably—that’s profitably for them and profitably for us. They consider ongoing training and research tools as investments. That’s

just part of what it takes to do business successfully and to set ourselves apart.”

“I think we’re very fortunate here in our station. I really can’t think of any tool that we’ve asked for, that we need, that we’ve been refused. The one I use the most is, of course, the research information, like Arbitron, which we have available on computer. We have cross-track qualitative information available. We have Birch available and we have the Griffin Report, very soon to be on computer. We are constantly involved weekly in training, including video tapes and programs such as Goldsmith and Jason Jennings. RAB information is very helpful. I can’t think of any tool that I need that I don’t have, and this has a lot to do with the high rates we were talking about. The station makes money, so they put it back in and give the folks what they need. This is very impressive to our clients. We have agencies that depend on us to give them recommendations for a buy, because we have the equipment to do it, pop it out, and fax it to them.

“We’re a limited-load station. I’ve had to walk on business because we’re sold out. We’re not going to increase the number of commercials. The clients understand that if we do that we’re going to run off the listeners. That’s a good reason to get a higher rate.”

“They have invested a lot of money in a lot of research tools. I use them a lot for major pitches, and even minor ones. Sometimes a buyer will call up and say, ‘I’ve got this buy.’ I’ll say, ‘I’d really like to show you some stuff.’ Sometimes I’m the only one who’s shown them qualitative information. It makes the difference when someone says, ‘That was an interesting piece of information that you gave me. Nobody else showed me something like that.’ Or, ‘Nobody took the time to do that information.’ That really maximizes performance. We’ve got some great tools and I think that is reflective of a management that is very supportive. Recently they hired someone who I think has been wonderful. It’s not really research; it’s a person that does everything—has worked with us in research and is now working with us on co-op and to bounce things off of. That person put together basic pitches on airline, on financial, on automotive, on beer, on soft drinks, and so on. Sometimes you get calls saying, ‘I need something on this within the next two days.’ This has been a wonderful thing because we’ve got some valuable information that is in the computer. Most of the time there’s a lot more

flexibility here than I've had in the past. Supporting your salespeople is the most important thing. I had sales managers who were destructive, who would tear people down, and it doesn't work for me. The thing that they've been striving to do is have more of a team effort than we've ever had here. That's been real important because we share information more. We've even done cooperative calls, when one person has a real specialty in one area, and you bring them in with you. In an indirect way, that is a lot of support from management. Picking the right people to be team players with you is so important."

"When I made a determination about three years ago that I wanted to go into broadcast sales, I knew from all the markets I've done business with that there were only maybe five stations in the whole western United States that I was even interested in going to work for. I knew this company for almost 20 years. The training that we receive here is incredible. I really believe this, having had the opportunity to meet almost all the sales reps in this market. No station comes close to what we have to offer on our eight-person sales team as far as training. We do intense training courses three mornings every week where we role-play, videotape, and we have to actually do a sales presentation to the top banana here at the company. That, combined with the data that we have—which is so superior to anyone else's—such as Strata makes me very confident. Not only in myself, but in every other person on this team. We function as marketing consultants and, fortunately, almost all of us have marketing backgrounds. When my general sales manager came to this market a year and a half ago and replaced virtually everyone on the sales staff, he went out looking for marketing consultants. And it's very obvious to the agencies in town that we have more to offer than just selling spots. We use Robin Brummet's Focus Selling Program. I've been here a year and a half, and this is my third time going through that course. Now we are teaching it, as salespeople, and we're doing it three mornings a week. I've been to countless seminars, like Tom Hopkins and local marketing people here. Next weekend they're sending all of us to a Norman Vincent Peale seminar. Unless you're a company like this one, you can't really afford to send your people to these types of things. Anything we want to do, providing it's legitimate training, they'll pay for."

"The account representatives at my radio station have virtually everything

they need to be successful. We have all the rating services: Arbitron, Birch, and Birch Qualitative. We listen to Norm Goldsmith seminar tapes every Thursday. We have constant promotions that our advertisers can become involved in. We have information from the RAB as well as incentives for individual people for their performance. At this station, we are given everything from cash and exotic trips to prizes and recognition. It's just everything under the sun that the management and owners of this radio station give their people for doing a good job. Consequently, everyone here is successful because we have virtually every type of resource that one would need in order to be successful in radio. I can't think of anything that we don't have that we would need to do our jobs."

"Our management really does believe in a lot of training and research. And as far as sales training, it's really good. We've used only the top-notch sales training people—the Xerox training course, and Ken Greenwood seminars. We have a lot of refresher courses. It's just like a doctor going to medical conventions to keep up on things. And our management firmly believes in doing that. We recently started plugging our station as 'the research source,' and did we get the calls coming in! That's another thing about the added value. If you need anything, any kind of information, we will try our hardest to get it for you—Arbitron AID information as well as any other kind of qualitative information for a target demo. We can always get it, and people call us for it. I mean top agencies. We have a lot of research pieces that people find are very clean and easy to understand. That's a key there, too. And we also have Tapscan, which I love. The management philosophy here is one of the best. They really try to help us, and are constantly asking us what do we need to make our job easier, better. We have a great support staff, too."

"Probably one of the biggest and most important things that I have available to me at this radio station is what this radio station was built on. And that is: Great people make great radio. That's what I come back to. We are a family, and we care about this business, and we have fun doing it. That creates an environment where the world has no limits for me. It's not only the surroundings but the people that I work with and the support group of people that really do their jobs well. We have had a lot of the training that's available. If I request something, certain areas that I feel the sales team could benefit

from, this company is extremely supportive in regards to providing that training.

“This radio station is based around ‘great people make great radio,’ and even though this is an extremely competitive business, we are not competitive in a negative way within this building. We help and support each other. We share ideas and concepts. The concept and training of ‘let’s work together on this and we’ll all win’ is really pursued in what we do and how we make a difference in this marketplace. So the training is pretty consistent. Another thing in regard to the support of the radio station that makes me very effective is that I establish with my clients that I am not just an account executive. I am not just someone that goes to pick up tapes. I am a decision maker, and if they want to do business with the station they do business with me. I can operate that way because I truly know my boundaries and my flexibilities. I know what all of my tools are. I don’t have to go back to the radio station to ask my sales manager something before I close the deal. I know the parameters from my management, and if I did not have that I would not be nearly as effective as I am. Another thing that I think is really important is that we believe that what makes this radio station different is that it’s all based on integrity, both personal and business. Once you have established integrity with the people you do business with, rates are no longer an issue that you wrestle over. That’s why cost-per-point is no longer a number-one concern. You get to an agreement where everyone wins.”



“First of all, I go back to our research department, which I mentioned earlier. That’s probably a number-one tool that management provides. I find that critical. You can’t simply walk out there and expect people to buy advertising. Competition is stiff, and we talked about rates already. So you’ve got to be a marketer and not simply a radio salesperson. Research helps you to be an on-going resource. I feel that has helped me grow as a salesperson. Secondly, I would say that in sales there are strict procedures in terms of being on time, attending meetings, and being accountable for collections on all your accounts. But there’s also an awful lot of what I would call free space and independence, which is an important factor and another ingredient to success. We know what our responsibilities are here as salespeople, and what we’re expected to do above and beyond the call of duty. Flexibility is an important factor. Management here is also very accessible. That’s kind of like a comfort zone—knowing that there are resources available, whether you choose to use them frequently or infrequently. A big aspect

on this station that is very important is ongoing training, be it seminars or bringing in a speaker. We've had a weekend retreat in the fall for the salespeople where we go off site overnight and have some fun, but also have work sessions. You've heard a lot of it before, but in this industry you need that constant reinforcement. Those resources are available to us here. Management is very aggressive in motivating us, instilling in us that we deserve the business that's out there. We can help businesses. Why can we afford to say that without being cocky and obnoxious? Because we can share numerous success stories from advertisers. If you have a management team that continues to give you a shot of adrenaline on an ongoing basis, that helps you as an individual to rise to the challenge. So, there's constant pressure. But I think that when you're in sales, you can predict your own future. And if you're willing to work hard, you're going to be happier in the long run, financially and emotionally."

"We have a very strong promotional department. And that helps. We also have very strong programming, and a lot of research goes into that. They supply us with state-of-the-art software for the ratings, putting schedules together, and that sort of thing. And we also have an ongoing training meeting once a week. Last year they sent us to a Ken Greenwood seminar in California so that you can better know your client, put them in the personality categories, and know better how to deal with them.

"The philosophy is just always to be the best. They're very supportive. This is not a cheap radio station. They put money into making it fun for the listeners. Their philosophy is to make it fun for the listeners so they'll listen, and listen for a long time. It's not just, 'Get to be number one and then relax.' It's, 'Get to be number one, and then get more audience.' It goes back to helping the advertisers, because if we have a strong radio station, they're going to get stronger results when they advertise with us."

"For the most part, the management is pretty supportive. Our management doesn't beat you up. They have an awful lot of experience. All combined, we've got 45 years of experience between our three sales managers. That makes a big difference. They have a lot of knowledge of the clients and that helps a lot. I also think that we have probably one of the most creative management staffs anywhere. They're creative in that they'll think of different ways to simply make us stand out in a presentation. What can we do to make

ourselves different? The whole company is just big on training. We spend a lot of time on training. We do a program that's a three-day seminar—Thursday, Friday, and Saturday—in a hotel. It's all business for three days, teaching you market specifics, format specifics, and how to sell your format in your market. We use Greenwood Research. We subscribe to MART, which is brand new. We have Strata, and have had several courses in Strata training, including using the graphics. I think it's almost too much training, but I have to say that it's very helpful, because they're big on making us the best salespeople that we can possibly be.”

“I can't talk enough about this computer system they got for us. The programs that we buy are Tapscan and Strata. We favor Tapscan much more. We can run things off for customers that you just wouldn't believe. When the book comes out, we do these rankers right off the computer, and we're first on the streets with this information, organized. It's great information for them to have, and it doesn't favor any one station. The computer is definitely one of the biggest things that they provide for us. That helps me get to people and give them fast and complete information. In some cases, we do computer runs, and it will distribute the money for the stations that you want to use, and will determine cost-per-point and gross rating points. Most buyers have to sit down and manually do that. The second thing is that we have a sales meeting every single morning, for half an hour. The sales manager gives us a piece of literature every day to take with us and read. It keeps you really in touch with the market, with what other clients are doing, success stories, and all that kind of stuff. If there's a good book out they buy it and get copies out to all of us. The third thing is that they put the customer first. That helps so much when you're a salesperson, because you don't have to fight for things here. It's critical that the customer be made number one, and so many companies don't give you that. And then, the last thing is support and availability. They want us to grow and expand our income, and they take pride in that. Under my former management, if you started getting successful, they'd take your big accounts from you. Some people can't handle watching people under them be successful, and here they just thrive on it. There's a lot of support and encouragement, and they're available to you. Our owner is even constantly in touch with us. It's nice to know they're behind you. If you make a mistake, you can go to them and say, 'I made a mistake,' and then we all work together and hope you learn from it.”

“I think there are a variety of things that the management here does that are very helpful. The first is some type of a sales assistant, someone to type proposals for you. We have a computer that will help us in our presentations, things like that. There’s a great deal of paperwork that has got to be done, and you need some type of help for that. So, I think that that’s the first thing. Our station also has Tapscan, a computer program dealing with ratings that’s very helpful. It not only helps you be a little more educated in what you’re suggesting, but it helps the clients understand what they’re getting. So, that would be the second thing. The RAB is helpful. Every station should belong to the RAB, because there’s so much information they can give you to find out about clients’ businesses. The third thing that I have found to be worthwhile is some type of short-term bonus system, so that your total pay and rewards don’t come just from that commission check at the end of the month. Here, you can put together as many proposals as you want, but the people who put in more proposals get money for it. It’s short-term gratification. Because sometimes commissions can seem like a long ways down the road, especially for people just starting out. Finally, one philosophy that is helpful is an ongoing program where your account list evolves. Turning accounts is very important. When you turn an account, you’re giving it to somebody who really thinks they can get them on the air. It helps me, my co-worker, and best of all, helps management, because accounts are always evolving. That keeps it fresh. It’s like major league baseball. You play 162 games a year, and it gets stale if you don’t keep it fresh.”

“I’m very proud of the management of this station, and it has made all of us a lot of money. They believe in hiring the best people they can find. They do extensive interviewing. I’ve never seen an interview process like this. It includes letting all of the sales staff interview them, one on one. They let you run your own business. They hired you for a particular set of attributes and they let you do it. When you think about it, it’s the only way that makes any sense. It’s just absolutely amazing to me that more people haven’t figured it out. Number two: they’re always available to you when you need them. These are supremely confident managers and they believe that there’s a solution for every problem. We have the best systems here. They don’t spare spending money on research and on computers. We always have everything first and bigger. This is part of our philosophy. Go into the market, have

more of everything, and let people know it, so they can call us. We're saying, 'Call us. Let us know if we can help you.' We have the stuff first. For example, we had psychographic information first in town. And now all the stations have it, which has kind of diluted that. So we have to think of the next thing. 'Be there first with the best' is our management's philosophy. Don't nickel and dime things. And that's a very comfortable umbrella to work under for a salesperson. You know whatever it takes, we're going to do it."

"Our company is a great training company as a whole. They do a great job. The most recent and most successful one has been Strategic Selling. It's taught by Paul Anavic, and that was superb—a very good program. We have really everything that we need here, as far as computer printouts, fax machines, all the tools that are a necessity. The philosophy, which I like, is to be client focused, and to make sure those clients' needs are being met. I think those things are real important. My philosophies are their philosophies because they've taught them to me. I have a lot of faith in my sales manager and the things that she's done for me. And they give me an opportunity to grow and to learn about the station so that I have better product knowledge. I've kind of taken all this for granted. I've got everything that I need to do the job and get it done."

"Training is a big, big thing. They do company-wide training, as well as internal station training, on various subjects. We've had station sessions on qualitative research to give us other tools, rather than just straight ratings, like Arbitron and Birch. And of course there's the ongoing training. We have refresher courses at least once a year. I've never worked for a station that puts as much emphasis on training salespeople as this company does. As far as the research tools, we're getting more and more of those all the time. One thing that I've noticed that they do is explain why we need to get high rates, instead of the sales manager just putting out a sheet saying, 'OK, we're raising the rates,' and making all the salespeople grumble. That really makes it hard to explain to your client why you're raising the rates. They always make us aware, and a part of the process. That way you buy into it. It's just like when you believe in the station you're selling, it's a lot easier and you're more enthusiastic. When you agree with the reason for your rates, it's a whole lot easier to convince your clients. Also, they believe in rate integrity. Pricing policies are pretty consistent."

“Research tools, and of course Arbitron and Birch along with qualitative. The ratings are good, and I like to have them, but give me more qualitative data. That is key. Also, research on the client’s business. Simmons—as far as I’m concerned, I don’t know how you function without it. Trade publications are also very helpful. Our station knows our high indexing categories, and we subscribe to those trade publications so that it keeps us informed. And when we see articles we can clip them and send them out. We also have something that each salesperson has to do that we call a ‘maven sales meeting.’ That’s where we look at a category of business and we become an expert. We interview businesses. We talk to managers, and we find out everything we need to know about that person’s business. We then present it in the sales meeting, and maintain a complete file on it at the station. So we can look at almost any category of business and, for example, find out what their profit margins are. We become a little more of an expert in the client’s eyes when we go in to make a presentation.

“This is about the fourth radio station that I’ve worked for in the past nine years, and I feel like I jumped from kindergarten to college when I came here, because it’s viewed as not just a typical radio station. We are a medium that serves an exclusive market segment. You consider in your own mind, being a black medium, we have to justify the value of our station probably twice as hard as other radio stations. We have to be sharper, we have to be tougher. It’s made me learn more about business and about medium selling than anything I’ve ever done. It’s certainly a growth opportunity.”

“Number one is excellent inventory management, and they’re very good at it. They very, very carefully watch those avails and price them accordingly all the time. We also have thorough and consistent research on the market. They really respond to market changes and needs as far as programming. In addition to that, we have excellent research tools. We have all the RAB information on hand, the instant background, and RAB co-op. We have International Demographics, which is extremely helpful, and all the qualitative information in the market. It’s used almost as much as the Arbitron. In fact, we use it on a daily basis. We have very rate-aggressive management, which is helpful. That’s where most of us get our philosophies. The other thing is they have incentive programs to reward overachievers. There’s an override at the end of the year. There’s a higher commission rate for the first

order on new business. Depending on the month, there might be a highest-rate contest, or one for the most new business on the radio station. A lot of times there are trips, and these are team trips. It's a station goal, and it'll be something like budget plus X percent. So that's a real incentive here. We have the most updated computer resource material, which is really nice. We also have a lot of sales trainers that come into the station.

"One of the strongest things is that everybody here is so high on the station. It helps you to believe in the product if everybody around you does, too. It's contagious. They're a wonderful company and they put a lot of emphasis on individuals. They definitely have a strong belief in me, which helps me to sell the station."

"Little things, like the avail sheet. Our sales manager is constantly passing around *Ad Week*, *Ad Age*, and *American Demographics*. We have a lot of tools here. We have an excellent computer system. We have a sales assistant, which is very important. She is very much an equal part of our system here. We have an open-door policy here with all my management. We communicate verbally very well. The Arbitron Overviews that we offer quarterly, I think, are very important. I think it's really great that our general manager wants us to go out there and meet those clients that are with the agencies. We also have another new policy: if your client switches agencies, and you have a relationship directly with the client, you can follow that account to the other agency. It is an incentive to get to know your clients. We have an excellent owner. They offer us a lot. We can tell that they really care about us as people"

"I hate systems, but they're incredibly important. Systems for processing orders, for communicating from department to department, from the personality on the air to the sales department to the continuity department to the traffic department—that's incredibly important. We have systems in house to better expedite things, but we don't have systems restricting your particular freedom. I don't have to call in every hour. I call in for my messages. I don't have call reports and I don't give weekly summaries. I did a year-long projection on where my money's going to fall. That's the kind of planning I do, my year-long goals, and that's it. The management trusts me and others enough to say, 'All right. That's a great goal.' And they give us the freedom to do it. We get treated like adults there. Having the proper tools all comes

from management. If they're not supporting you, you're not going to be able to get done what needs to be done. Research materials and things like that are important. I put together individual presentations for people because I'm asking for a lot of money. Having that research shores up your position on why you should get so much money. I like Morris and Abraham Group because I think they're outstanding. In-house training is real important, and our sales managers do that. They always try to analyze the market, our competitors, different industries, and go over radio facts. You need guidelines and management."

"Our Media Market Index research is very important. Does it get us a lot of buys, per se? I think it gets them to start thinking in different ways. Here, we have assistants that work with us—strong backup. We have resources that are very valuable. Plus, there's a lot of training that goes on. I can't be specific, but there's constant training. The strongest point about this station is the discipline. A lot of people fight it. We are winners and have been winners since the beginning. And that's the only way you can do it. Every company that wins has to have discipline. We are here between 7:15 and 7:30 a.m.; we leave around 5:30. It's a long day, compared to most people. They demand consistency in our daily routine, and that consistency and discipline instill a real strong work ethic. It's a high-intensity group. They hire such strong individuals that probably our biggest weakness is trying to get together as a close, intimate group. It's like children. Give them discipline, and I promise you they're going to have respect. I believe in that. I think that people feel much more cared for and wanted. And the professionalism. Dress is very important here. How you take care of yourself is very important. People here believe that they are winners and they're working with a winning team, and that's what makes it. I've been to other places, and this is one of the best companies."

"When I was a rookie, the most important thing was personalized training—learning more about radio, how to talk to clients and ask questions, and how to take that information and turn it into a proposal that was really going to help them. I think for someone that is first getting into the business, that is absolutely crucial. It doesn't matter if you have all the tools in the world if you don't understand how to go out there and speak the common man's language and help them do what they need to do. If management wants you

to be a service-oriented account executive, and to be very client focused, those are things that you have to teach. I've been doing this for a while, and the things that are most important now, from my management, are, first of all, just the back-up, in terms of being resourceful and being there when my clients need help and I'm not around. Having the tools—whether it's a media kit, merchandising opportunities, or the promotional people that help you pull off these extra things. The other thing that's so important is for management to be honest and fair. That spills over into how account executives operate and into the clients' understanding that 'these people always tell me the truth.' All the things that we do that create trust. The last thing is that I appreciate my management giving me the flexibility to go out and do creative and unique things for my clients."

