

# Fire it up!

*Git-R-Done!*

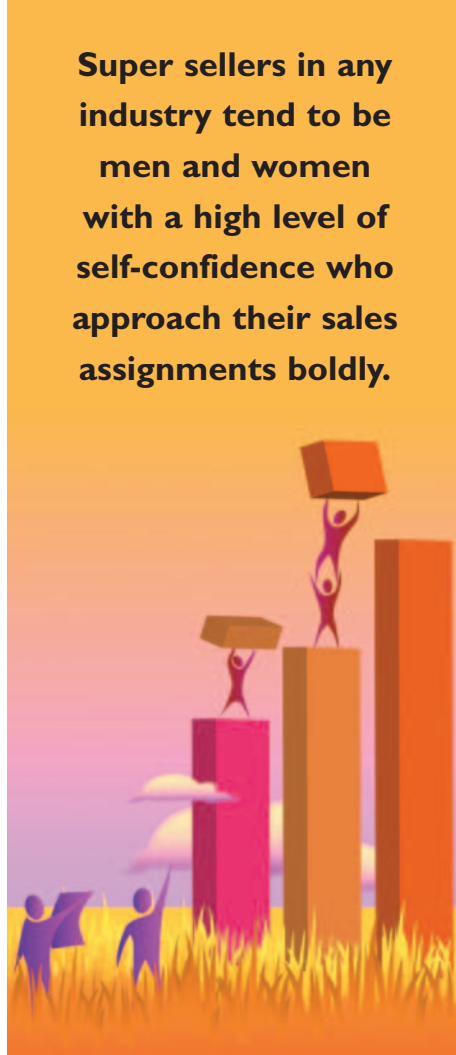
BY BRUCE CARTER

**W**ith most fire equipment distributors, few things can have more of a positive and immediate impact on “the numbers” than the regular and profitable sale of new equipment. Referring neither to the large quantity/low margin equipment sales made to construction contractors, nor the wholesaling of equipment to smaller competitors. It is not those once-in-a-lifetime sales made to a regional utility company that we are discussing here either. We are talking instead about that sale of one or two pieces of fire equipment every field representative in our industry has the opportunity of making at nearly every account he services.

Successful sales and service technicians view each and every service stop as yet another opportunity to provide a service and a product that may quite literally avert a disaster or save a life. The very best ones, the real heavy hitters in our industry are masters at selling new fire equipment. The pros exhibit certain qualities and characteristics and use specific techniques to maximize their effectiveness when it comes to selling fire equipment. Here are three of them.

**Eagle Eyes:** Removing the blinders and looking—really looking—at each facility being serviced for areas where new equipment may be needed is certainly a required first step. Fire equipment frequently gets lost, damaged, destroyed or stolen. It eventually is simply going to wear out. Extinguishers can be inappropriately matched with the intended hazard. Facilities grow and expand, making additional equipment necessary. The opportunity to legitimately provide customers with

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additional equipment is almost everywhere if service people will simply make a consistent habit of looking carefully for it every chance they get. Even when there is no legitimate need for new equipment at the customer’s business location, he still owns a car and a home or perhaps a summer cottage, motor home or boat!

**Know Your Stuff:** Customers want to deal with representatives who are confident—confident in themselves, the advice they give and in the recommen-

dations they make. When it comes to protection from fire, customers are understandably uneasy with a wishy-washy, timid and milquetoast sales approach. Super sellers in any industry tend to be men and women with a high level of self-confidence who approach their sales assignments boldly and with confidence.

One develops confidence by becoming thoroughly knowledgeable. Knowledge comes best from experience, study and homework. Top equipment sales people have done their homework. They have studied and learned the codes and standards of the locale they work in as well as the features and benefits of the products they sell. The customer’s comfort level is increased when he deals with a knowledgeable and confident representative and as a result, more likely than not, he buys.

**I’ll just go ahead...** In the selling process, after the customer has been made aware of the need for a new piece of equipment, has been told specifically what new equipment is required, and has been given the price, the savvy seller will simply assume the sale at this point. Four of the most powerful and almost magical words in the fire equipment sales (or any sales for that matter) are “I’ll just go ahead...” The pros tell them what they are going to do.

Ineffective sales people must constantly be reminded that it is they who are the experts in the fire protection arena, not their customers. In reality, customers do not want to be asked, “Well, what do you think?” They do not want to hear, “Well, do you think you might want it?” No, the customer

expects the fire protection professional to take charge and be the industry expert he is being paid to be. Customers want their fire protection providers to tell them what they need, provide a fair price, then go ahead and do it. In the words of a popular comedian, buyers want the sales person to just go ahead and "GIT-R-DONE!"

The best fire equipment sales people are excellent at their jobs because they have mastered a few simple and proven techniques. They understand that success requires a solid knowledge of the product, the discipline to search thoroughly and consistently for sales opportunities, to take decisive sales action. ▽

Bruce is excited to announce to all of his NAFED friends that he has entered into the world of sales training, motivational speaking, and consulting on a full time basis effective November 1st, 2006.



For information on how Bruce can help your organization reach it's sales and profit goals, contact him through his website or simply contact him directly at (513) 772-3778. Go to [www.nafiresales.com](http://www.nafiresales.com) to sign up for Bruce's Fire Protection Sales Tip of the Month!

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**NAFED appreciates your contribution!**