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I N T E R O F F I C E M E M O R A N D U M
C O R M T S A L L - I N - 1 S Y S T E M

Date: 5-Apr-1989 04:07pm EDT
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TO: See Below

Subject: SELLING PHILOSOPHY

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I. THE DIGITAL SELLING

There are two extremes in selling philosophy. First of all, there is the old, traditional Digital approach where all our efforts were aimed toward serving and helping the customer. We refused to take an order if it was wrong for the customer. We were patient when they didn't buy, and we were patient and helpful after they did buy.

There was trust between management and the sales person. When there were changes to be made, the sales person adapted quickly and easily. Forecasts were not overly time consuming, but there was little fear in telling what was really going on. There was good, competitive information because of free flow of information between management, product lines, and the sales people.

Our philosophy of measurement was very simple. We felt that goals and measurements were primarily of importance to the individual sales person. Secondly, they were important so they could compare themselves with their peers, and thirdly, they were important to management.

Above all, the sales people were technically competent so that they could truly help with the customer's problem. They understood the corporate product strategy, and, as they presented products to the customers, they learned more and more of the detail of our products.

The customers trusted us and accepted us as part of their own organization and developed great loyalty to Digital.

II. THE OTHER WAY OF SELLING

The modern way of selling is expounded on as many video

cassettes on the subject as there are video cassettes on exercise programs. The modern way of selling pushes boldness, persistence, cleverness, a little trickery, and no technical knowledge.

Account control implies, in two words, all of the modern philosophy of selling.

Measurements are used to pressure, intimidate, and instill fear in the sales person. The reward system implies no trust that the sales people will motivate themselves to do what is correct, and the rewards are delivered with little sense of appreciation for the work done because the rewards are mathematical and not the result of true appreciation.

The modern way of selling uses a large amount of overhead, a large number of groups that develop all kinds of red tape, and sales programs with all kinds of threats and promises.

III. DIGITAL'S NEW PHILOSOPHY

I think it's time that Digital formally develop a selling philosophy in which we put things in correct order. Maybe we should have a committee that reviews the alternatives and comes up with a simple statement that we can put on every sales person's desk. Maybe if we pick the modern approach of selling, we should just put a little plaque that says, "Big Brother is watching you", but if we pick a more complex and somewhat abstract way, the philosophy should be one which strives to help the customer and strives for excellence.

There is a lot to learn from IBM about the new way. Francis G. Rodgers' book on The IBM Way really teaches how successful he was with insincerity and trickery, but there are positive things to learn from IBM in the way they support the customer after the sale has been made and, therefore, have very consistent and significant continuing sales.

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