

Sales meeting remarks
July 2, 1998
"Mercury Rising"

Good evening.

The theme of our meeting is "Mercury Rising". That's a good way to sum up the past year, and what we're expecting for the year ahead.

We're not at the top of the hill. No one is. But we have climbed farther up that hill than anyone else, and we continue the journey.

We recognize that the Japanese manufacturers are coming after us. Especially Honda. But we're not about to let anyone overtake us. The challenge they present is stirring us to reach new heights.

Our sales and service performance has been outstanding. Year to date, sales are up ten percent over 1997.

We HAVE achieved a lot. Now we need to continue those efforts.

Some people like to debate whether the glass is half full, or half empty. In this business, you have to focus on the positive, so our glass is definitely half full.

More importantly, we're going to FILL the glass -- with success.

Dynamic industries require dynamic people -- people who know how to make change an ally, not an enemy.

How do we do that?

The answer is not just a matter of harder selling. The answer lies BEYOND selling. We need to do more than simply supply products and services.

It's a matter of account management.

Today our business success is based on long-term customer satisfaction -- building loyalty that lasts, even when circumstances change.

It's much more than simply selling outboards. Today you have an exciting new challenge. You're not just a District Account Manager or a Technical Service Manager. You are your dealer's Account Manager for all aspects of his business with Mercury Marine.

That's a new CHALLENGE, but it's also an exciting OPPORTUNITY. You can become much more valuable to your dealer by working with him as a business partner. Helping him be more successful.

In return you're helping yourself and Mercury Marine.

One aspect of account management is a focus on Parts and Accessories.

P & A sales are critical to our company. And to you, because the profit potential is higher. Instead of concentrating solely on selling outboards, you need to take a balanced approach and include P & A as part of your sales effort with every dealer.

Make sure your dealers understand that there IS a difference with genuine Mercury Precision parts and accessories.

To help drive that message home, we're supporting your efforts with the new Genuine Mercury Precision Parts campaign. (*More about this could go here.*)

To make account management successful, each of you will need a crucial quality -- Organization.

This year, more than ever, it will be essential that you are organized and able to accomplish all the tasks being asked of you as professionals.

In basic terms, it means that to stay successful, you need to be a valuable partner to your dealers, and to Mercury Marine.

With the increased emphasis we're placing on account management, success is going to take a lot more than peddling a few products and then moving on to the next dealer.

You need to be truly MANAGING your accounts. You've got to be organized. You can't just walk into a dealership and try to sell more outboards.

You need to work with the dealer and learn how you can help him manage his business.

What are his goals for future business?

How can Mercury Marine help him reach his goals?

Know the product. Know the services. Know the programs.

When your dealer sees that you are "retail competent", he's going to trust you more, and rely on you to help him make the right decisions.

Retail competency is a critical component of the success you and your dealers will have in the future.

Understanding the dynamic of retail marketing and merchandising is something that each of you needs to accept as a personal goal.

WE need you -- and your DEALERS need you -- to be retail experts. Help them understand how they should be taking their products to market.

For example, make sure they know how to take advantage of our retail promotions, so they can put the full strength of our marketing tools to work for them.

Make sure they understand the Connections direct mail program. It offers immense potential for dealers -- when it's used correctly. Too many of them don't understand how to use it.

Connections is a very flexible program, that can be used in many different ways.

But the truth is, most dealers are not experts when it comes to using direct mail. We don't expect them to be.

They need YOUR help and guidance to figure out the best way to make it work for their business.

That's your job -- to help your dealers with their retail competency. Let's not waste any of the potential we have to help make our dealers be successful.

By making yourself the best possible partner for your dealers, you're going to help yourself.

There's a saying that goes: "If you give others what they need, they'll give you what you need." Well, that's true for your dealers, and it's also true when it comes to the way we compensate you.

Performance will be rewarded.

We've enhanced the compensation program to reflect the increasing importance of account management.

(What else do you wish to say about compensation?)

To be successful in the coming year, you need to take personal responsibility for your success.

Another way of saying that is: Don't let outside circumstances take charge of you.

We are each responsible for our own outcomes. Do you believe that?

If you DO believe that, you will never look at yourself as a victim of circumstance.

The IBBI litigation is a good example of what I'm talking about.

Even though there's been a judgment against Brunswick in one court, Brunswick is going to appeal. This is an issue the lawyers will continue to wage for some time to come.

Meanwhile, life -- and business -- goes on. We continue doing business with the boat companies represented by IBBI. In fact, we're doing GOOD business with them.

The point is, as a sales force, we simply cannot waste time worrying about the outcome of things over which we have no control.

Our job is to focus on our goals, and execute as a team.

Even though you are ultimately responsible for your success -- you are by no means in this alone.

Mercury Marine offers you the best support mechanism in the industry.

We're here to back you up, and do whatever we can to help high performance leaders like you achieve success.

Yes, Mercury IS rising. Our brand names are stronger than ever, and our business signs are all pointing upward.

Our challenge is to avoid getting caught on a plateau -- getting trapped in our own comfort.

As we start the new model year, we're entering a new era -- including new, focused management at the top -- and stronger relationships with our dealers.

It's true that we have challenges ahead.

But that's what will spur us on to reach new heights.

As Mercury's front line, it's up to you to make it happen.

Thank you.

#