

“...A must-read for any new retail radio rep who wants to hit the streets running and start making sales immediately...”

YOU CAN SELL AIR!



The VibeMaster Tells You How

Jeff Siegel

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© 1999 **PUBLISH ONE**
P.O. Box 911
Citrus Heights, CA 95611

Design/Cover: John Cotter/The Cotter Media Group
Illustrations: John Tessler/Lunia Blue Graphics

First Edition: August 1999

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ISBN 0-9672137-0-3

Dedication

This book is dedicated to Gail Lee Farber, a very special lady who believes that everyone can accomplish their dreams. Gail always says, “You can learn, grow, and accomplish even your far-away dreams.” And to you, Gail, I thank you for all your support, caring, hard work, and encouragement in helping me obtain my far-away dreams.



Acknowledgments

You Can Sell Air would not have been written without the influence of my first sales manager Edward Hoyt, Jr. (April 1979) who first saw my love of music and my energy and enthusiasm to sell commercial radio advertising. I also acknowledge the various radio companies that helped me build my expertise in retail radio sales over the past twenty years, including KSJO-FM, KOME-FM, and presently MIX 106.5 KEZR-FM, all located in San Jose, California.

I also give special thanks to Ed Krampf, vice-president and general manager of K-BIG/KLAC Los Angeles. It was Ed, when he was the general manager of KUFX in San Jose, California, who saw my unique selling abilities and allowed me to run with them. Also special thanks to Greg “Ike” Isenhardt, president of Eisenhardt Media and Marketing in Denver, Colorado, my local sales manager who ran the streets with me accomplishing retail radio success.

Appreciation is given also to the former staff of KOME (San Jose, CA) including Jim Hardy, Rich Kahn, Nick Marnell, Dave Wohlman, the late Dayton Phillips, Justin Wittmayer, Ron Nenni, Jay Taylor, Robin Rockwell, and Bill Shadorf.

My gratitude also goes to the present staff of CBS’s MIX 106.5 KEZR. It is here that I am implementing my retail program and seeing the training unfold as we develop our new NTR (non-traditional revenue) department. Thank you Retail Sales Manager Phil D’Angelo. Also thank you Josh Mednick, Jim Murphy (Program Director), and Vice-

President and General Manager, Joe Armao, who endorsed my handbook by making it mandatory reading for every new account executive that we hire. Thanks also to my six senior account executives: Kristi Willard, Adrienne Adriani, Michelle Oroz, Rebecca Campos, Aaron Blas, and Lyn Johnson, Lyn's Promotional staff, as well as the rest of our great sales support team. Your commitment to success is contagious!

Finally, special thanks to Carol Murray of *The Lexia Institute*. Carol convinced me not only that I can write, but that I must write. Thank you, too, John Cotter of *The Cotter Media Group* for seeing me through this from start to finish. John has been dedicated to my success for many years and helped me achieve this primer. Thanks again, John.

Foreword

The VibeMaster *King of Retail Radio*

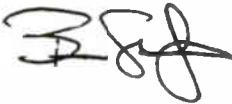
I was a young man—twenty-three years old to be exact. I was eager and determined to break into the world of radio. After a long and somewhat drawn out process of interviews I finally landed what at that time was considered my first radio *gig*. A phone book, telephone, desk—and I was off to the races. In three months I would either be on my radio way or on my way to Kinko’s to make more copies of my resume. Sitting in my seat in the far left corner of the sales pit I heard three words that I will never forget, “What’s doin’, kid?”

“Are you talking to me?” I thought. “Wow, this is my chance. I have an opportunity to speak to the senior, most respected account executive in the market, Jeff Siegel.” The people on the streets called Jeff the Pope, the Rabbi of San Jose radio, and the *VibeMaster*. Jeff owned the streets. He knew everyone and still does. Fortunately, I was smart enough to realize Jeff was The Man, and The Man was going to be the one to school me in radio sales.

“Get your jacket; we’re taking a ride,” explained Jeff. This was the beginning of my real education in the competitive world of radio. I had the equivalent of a Harvard professor in retail radio at my finger tips; I was determined to be his best student. During that first ride that lasted hours, Jeff gave me a broad orientation about our radio station from sales to programming, the market

competition, and the right questions to ask retail business owners. Jeff was my first mentor in radio, and I wasn't going to let go. *You* have the same opportunity.

So, if you have decided that retail radio sales is the career for you, then pay close attention to this little book. In it the *VibeMaster* will teach you how to become a great radio sales rep. He can do for you what he's done for me: Just five years after taking that first ride with Jeff I became a successful sales manager for a Number One FM radio station in the country's fourth largest market.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Bill Shadorf', with a stylized, cursive script.

Bill Shadorf

- Bill listened and experienced how to deliver radio retail results, and quickly achieved his own remarkable success as Sales Manager of San Francisco's K101 AM/FM and KABL/AM.

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Introduction

This primer is for any person full of energy and enthusiasm who wants to learn how to sell radio advertising time. You love radio. So, Welcome Aboard! You've just been hired.

The *VibeMaster* will teach you how to become a great radio sales rep. He will discuss how to get the most out of your radio station's orientation and what you can learn from each of the key department heads and other sales personnel. He will show you how to put your energy to work prospecting and how to nail those crucial sales appointments.

The *VibeMaster* will explain how to handle good and bad retail situations. He will teach you about servicing new and existing radio accounts and even how to revive bad debt accounts. He'll show you how to deal with small retail advertising agencies that sign up your retail accounts and how to work with them to build positive relationships.

The many down-to-earth basic rules and tips described in this little book by the *VibeMaster* guarantees success for you.

Chapter One

Learn Everything You Need to Know About Your New Radio Station

Getting off to a good start means listening and learning.

Here's what you need to know:

To learn everything you need to know about your new radio station, you need to meet *all* the players, from the general manager to the office staff, including fellow Account Executives. This will help you know how the game is played inside and out. Here come The Players.

- Bring your yellow pad.
- Take notes.
- Ask questions.



The Players

The General Manager

Your general manager will probably begin by giving you information and background about the ownership and history of the radio station, as well as what city your radio is licensed to, its format (music, news, talk, rock and roll, oldies, contemporary hit radio, adult contemporary, country, etc.), dial position, disk jockey information, station hours, and pertinent Federal Communication Commission laws that govern all radio. The general manager will probably tell you the wattage and antenna site of your radio station, and he'll review the complete cycle of the sale procedures. Pay close attention.

The Business Manager

In the business department, the business manager will explain how you should obtain, keep and maintain all your paperwork in order. He'll discuss billing and collection procedures, as well as charge-backs on advertising clients who do not pay within ninety days. Charge-backs are customers who lose money for you! Charge-backs are commissions earned that a sales rep will lose if the balance due is not paid within 90 days, generally. The business manager will also explain in detail how to use the client master files.

The Sales Coordinator (Administrator)

As more and more radio stations provide individual account executives with computers to write their own sales proposals, the role of the Sales Coordinator will be different than it has been in recent decades. The Sales Coordinator will explain the flow of paperwork and procedures of your radio station and for preparing your correspondence. Give your Sales Coordinator enough time to help you prepare your media kits and finalize your proposals. This person helps you get the job done. Develop a good working relationship with this person. A well thought out proposal adds dollars to your monthly billing. **Proposals equal dollars.** See Appendix for a sample written proposal that includes all the details that you discuss with your retailer to achieve your mutual objectives.

See Appendix A for sample of sales proposal



The Program Director

From the program director you will learn your radio station's complete story from A to Z, the rationale for the station's selection of music, its choice of promotions, information about the DJs on-air background, delivery, and what sets your radio station apart from all the others. The program director can also explain how the Arbitron survey rating system works.

The Promotion Director

The promotion director will discuss the station's promotional philosophies, what events the radio station plans to attend, as well as what marketing vehicles (outdoor billboards, bus ads, direct mail, contesting, on-street visibility, television commercials, etc.), call letters, dial position, and any significant positioning statements they want to express. Promotion is the heart and soul of your

radio station. If you know who the station promotes to, you will know the type of clients to target for sales.

The Traffic and Continuity Director

The traffic and continuity director will teach you how to write a correct sales contract and show you how it is entered into the computer. You will see how it looks on the commercial log and where your client's commercials actually run on the air. You will also learn how to fill out a *continuity* form. This form provides the traffic director with the start and end date of your client's on-air contract and the commercial or commercials to rotate during their on-air flight schedule.

A radio on-air flight schedule is the amount of air time a client buys to get his message delivered to a particular listening audience (in other words, when the client wants his commercials to be aired). Example: "I'd like to start my advertising the week of Monday, February 9, through Sunday, February 15, from 6:00 am through 8:00 pm." That time period is called an *on-air flight*.

Now with your basic orientation behind you, it's time to focus on and master your sales *style*, meaning how you are going to pitch and then close your station's valuable clients.

The General Sales Manager and Sales Staff

The general sales manager and sales staff have a lot to say. Now that you've learned everything you need to know about your radio station, it's time to meet the general sales manager and each individual sales executive from the most senior sales person to the newest and see how each one sells radio air time. Here is what they will probably tell you:

1. Know your product. Your product *is* your radio station. Know it inside and out. Learn its features and special programs as well as its identification statements.
2. Learn everything that you can about the demographics (statistical characteristics of a listening audience that includes age and gender) and psychographics (qualitative profiles that can be further defined by income, education, life-style activities, and consumer habits) of your own radio station listener, as well as the demographics and psychographics of the market your radio station is operating in, commonly known as the Metro Survey Area or Metro.
3. Learn everything that you can about the competing radio stations in your market area.
4. Learn everything you can about the competing media, such as who advertises on billboards, in the Sunday newspapers, in magazines, and on television and cable tv stations in the market.

5. Learn everything you need to know about prospecting new business leads and about developing and closing new business. When you can bring in new clients, you are on your way to a successful career in radio sales.



Chapter Two

Now It's Time to Get Down to Business

The first stage of developing your client list is *prospecting*. How well you prospect new clients will determine how successful you will be.

Prospecting

The *VibeMaster* cannot emphasize strongly enough how important good prospecting is. It's the heart and soul of a successful sales career. New business equals higher commissions and greater respect from management! This is the time to put your energy to work for you. You've worked hard to get here.

To learn everything you need to know about prospecting, heed the following:

Drive the Streets Looking for Grand Openings and New Construction Sites

Drive the main arteries and thoroughfares of the county in which your radio station is licensed, i.e., your Metro. Be focused on Grand Openings and new construction sites. Look for businesses that reflect your radio station's demographics. Those retailers will be easier to close because their new stores will mimic your radio station's targeted listener audience. New store owners have extra Grand Opening dollars to spend on promotions. When driving the streets, you will also find new construction sites. Make sure to stop and talk to the construction workers to find out what they know about which new business or

businesses will be renting spaces once construction is completed. Ask for the phone number of the real estate broker management team or people who will rent the spaces.

Take a Walk Through the Yellow Pages

When you take a walk through the yellow pages, be sure to look for ads that mimic the categories of retail that best suit your radio station's demographics.

Surf the Web

Use today's latest technology to find a wealth of information on local, regional, national and international business — it's all just a mouse-click away! Utilize any of the major Internet search engines (Yahoo, Excite, Lycos) to find leads, contact names and phone numbers. Another great place to look for new business is in competing stations' web sites. See who their sponsors are and how they are reaching the vast market of online junkies. The VibeMaster also suggests you use the Internet as an educational tool to research and learn about business categories before the first call. Nothing is more impressive than an AE who's taken the time to do his/her homework!

Scour the Daily and Sunday Newspapers

Again, as you prospect by scouring newspapers, mimic the categories of retail that best suit your radio station's demographics. For example, *category* prospecting includes automotive with new and used cars, stores such as jewelry, stereo, active life-style clothing, and health and beauty stores as well as gyms, events, concerts, restaurants, music clubs, etc.

To exemplify category selling, if your radio station targets a 25-49 female listener and you are out driving the streets prospecting new business, when you come across a retail store selling young women's sweaters, the light bulb should come on. You should recognize that that store mimics your radio station's targeted listening audience and is a good new business prospect. That is what good category selling is all about.



Jeff's Rule: The easiest and most direct way to close new business leads is to apply category prospecting and selling.

Constantly Monitor the Other Stations in Your Market

To monitor other radio stations, ask yourself, What radio stations are the advertisers buying, or in other words, Who's buying what from whom?

Meet and Greet the Retail Community

As my first sales manager, Ed Hoyt, Jr., often said to me and I say to you, "Go out and run for mayor." Meet and greet the retail community. Introduce yourself to retailers and ask what types of businesses they own, operate, or work for. Request their business cards and always give them yours. Then ask, "Would it be okay if I called you at a later time to learn more about your business?" This is your first experience in developing new retail relationships. Good job!

Eat, Drink, and Schmooz the Mixers

(Mixers are business community gatherings where you can pick up a lot of good leads from a variety of different retail merchants and suppliers.) Be sure to attend a lot of mixers, and encourage your management to join all the chambers of commerce in your Metro Area.

Ask for Referrals from Your Successful Clients

One of the best ways to develop potential prospects is through a credible referral. Referral sources include friends, family, clients, places you do business, other media reps and reps from non-competing industries.

Dress for Success.

Your appearance is important? Your clients buy you! Don't let your attire detract from your presentations.

Now that you have driven the streets, taken a walk through the yellow pages, explored your radio station's web site, scoured the daily and Sunday newspapers, started monitoring other radio stations, and are eating, drinking, and schmoozing the mixers to meet and greet your retail community, while being dressed for success, it's time to do something with your stockpile of leads. When you have approximately 10 to 20 good targeted leads, you can make that important first call and get an appointment with a retailer, owner, or decision-maker.



Jeff's Rule: Learn to ask questions; don't be afraid to ask. If you don't ask, you won't learn. If you don't learn, you can't succeed.



That First Call

Pick up the phone and say, “Hello, my name is Jeff and I’m with KXXX/ WXXX radio station. May I please speak to the person or persons in charge of making your advertising decisions? Is the owner in?” Once your question is answered, say, “Thank you.”



Jeff’s Rule: In a retail store situation, nine times out of ten, the owner makes the advertising decisions. Be sure to get the appointment with the owner or owners.

If the owner is in, you will usually be put on hold. Gather and focus your thoughts so you can close that first appointment. The key is setting up that first appointment.

Let's Play Out the Scenario

Our decision maker, a busy retailer, comes to the phone and you say, "Hi, my name is Jeff and I'm with KXXX/WXXX radio. I'd like to set up an appointment to speak with you about your radio advertising. I'd like you to consider including my station in your advertising or media mix." (A media mix is when a client puts together an advertising budget and plans to get his advertising message across to a targeted listening audience. For example, a retailer wants to advertise his products with a \$10,000 monthly budget. The retailer decides to buy radio, bus advertising, and a daily and Sunday newspaper. This is a media mix.) "I will be in your area next Tuesday. What would be a convenient time for you?"

"Tuesday would be fine. How about four o'clock?"
Congratulations! You've closed your first appointment.

What to Do When You're Turned Down

I couldn't get the client to commit to an appointment on the phone. Now what? Don't let your new prospect get away. Tell the retailer you will be in his or her area anyway, and you'll drop in because you'd like to see the layout of the store and specifically who his major manufacturers are. Conclude the conversation on a positive and courteous note by saying, "I look forward to meeting you. Thanks for taking my call."

Plan to drop in to see the new prospect's location. Here's a good opportunity to become familiar with your new prospect's merchandise. What is she or he selling? How busy is the store? How many sales clerks are there? Is there anything unusual going on here? Get the feeling for the place. Address a counter person by saying, "Hi, I'm Jeff

from KXXX/WXXX radio station and I'd like to speak to your store owner."

Wow! Opportunity knocks! Your timing is good. Sue, the owner, just walked in. Know what you want to say. Be prepared to ask about Sue's store. In other words, ask how Sue's business is doing. Also be prepared to present your radio station precisely and concisely. Be ready to answer all of Sue's questions as well. If you can't answer all the questions then, at least write them down and make sure you get back to Sue with your answers. Also, always be prepared to sell your radio station on the spot.

Sue is now standing right in front of you saying, "I have five minutes. Tell me why I should buy your radio station." When that situation happens, proceed with lots of energy and enthusiasm to sell your station. Again, try to find out as much as you can about Sue's business. Finding out about Sue's business will give you crucial information for closing this sale.

Or, if Sue doesn't have the time right then, get her to agree to an appointment now that she's looking you in the eye. Good job. You got the appointment.



Jeff's Rule: Always be ready to present and close new clients. Never be without a broadcast calendar, a notepad, a calculator, and a positive attitude with energy and enthusiasm.



“Oh my god...an advertising agency just picked up my new retail client. Now what do I do?”

In prospecting new business, you just might run into the following situation. You find a new lead, and you call for the appointment. Mr. Retailer says he can see you next Thursday at 3 o'clock.

It's now Thursday at three and you're facing Mr. Retailer in the flesh. He says he would like to do business with your radio station, but he has just signed up with a small advertising agency. He'd like you to work directly with the new agency. Now you call the account rep or buyer at the Jones Advertising Agency, to make an appointment. The agency rep turns out to be well acquainted with your radio station. As a matter of fact, he actually worked for the station five years ago.

It's at this point that most new sales reps might think that they just hit an automatic close. Be careful here! Big MISTAKE if you think this is going to be a slam-dunk order.

Let's play out what really might happen: Over the next two weeks you work out the retailer's schedule with Jones Advertising for \$2,500. You feel real confident, get excited, go back to the radio station, and hype up the potential sale to your fellow sales reps. You feel great. You're thinking this is a slam-dunk. Be extra careful because it probably won't turn out as you expected. The agency rep from the Jones Agency phones you and wants a better deal for the client. You go back to your manager and he agrees after considerable discussion to give you a better deal. You write up the new contract.

Just ten days before the on-air start date, you are still not exactly getting the go-ahead from Jones Advertising, although Jones Advertising is hopeful that the retail client will keep the revised contract and start on the air as scheduled. At this point a warning red light should begin to flash because you begin to feel that you might have to go back to your general sales manager again to revise or even cancel the contract. You're right, red faced rep! It looks as if you've screwed up. Every rep does, but learn from your errors and take steps so it won't happen again. If you had followed the VibeMaster's next rule, it would not have happened.



Jeff's Rule: Never assume an automatic close. Otherwise, you'll be a red-faced rep.



What Went Wrong Here and What Should You Have Done to Prevent It from Happening?

1. You should have done your homework. You should have checked the history of the retail client to see if he had a previous on-air track record with your radio station. You allowed Jones Advertising to lead you.
2. You should have dropped in to see the retailer in his store again. You should have asked the retailer to introduce you to his new agency with a

recommendation to put your station on the buy. You missed a big opportunity to develop a relationship with the retailer. You never know, tomorrow the retailer might drop Jones Advertising and you would be out of the sales loop because you were never in.

3. You didn't ask the tough questions of yourself or up front with Jones Advertising, such as:

- What do you really know about this retailer's advertising record?
- Is his word good?
- Is his commitment good? Or has history shown he is a flake?
- How long has Jones Advertising had the account?
- Who is responsible for paying the radio station's invoice? Remember, advertising agencies receive a 15% commission for the job they do. Your radio station receives 85% of the commission; therefore, whose account is it, really? Never walk away from *your* retail client.
- You didn't ask yourself if this was a sure thing, or if Jones was trying to grind you down to get a better deal to close the retailer. Make sure you always ask the tough questions up front. Then you won't be a red faced rep.
- Learn to think before you act.

- Do your homework.
- Size up every situation thoroughly.
- Take your time.
- Be careful.
- Especially ask more experienced reps, as well as others at the station, how they would handle this situation and other difficult situations. Ask what they know about the agency rep at Jones Advertising who worked at the radio station five years ago.



Jeff's Rule: Always keep the retailer as your client. Never walk away from a retail client. Never give total control to a retail advertising agency.

If you follow the rules for prospecting, you will close new business. Closing new retail business will give your sales manager confidence in you and your ability to service existing on-air accounts.

Once you've arrived in the sales manager's eyes, you've *arrived!* Now that the sales manager has seen that you can prospect and close new retail business, she or he will have the confidence in you to allow you to service an existing on-air account. This may be your first shot at a real radio client—this is your big opportunity to do the job and be a success!



Chapter Three

Servicing Your Accounts

Servicing an existing account is like prospecting. First you have to research the master account file for the history of the client—especially the payment history. Then you want to get in front of the client, so make an appointment to stop by and get acquainted with your client's store.



Jeff's Rule: A face-to-face appointment gives you and your radio station a big advantage. GET IN FRONT OF THE CLIENT.

Servicing existing clients also entails many weekly responsibilities. Once you've done your homework at your radio station, it is time to contact the client by phone. The first telephone call is essential. Like prospecting, you want to get the appointment. Then you want to drop into the client's location to see for yourself what your new client's store is all about. Here's what you need to know.

Your Retailers Products

New radio dollars are in front of you, so check out your retailer's products. When you are looking around your retailer's store checking out what products they carry, make sure you write down the main or targeted products you see

on the shelves. If you're not sure from looking, then ask what the store's main targeted products are. Also ask what manufacturers your retailer has good relationships with.

Getting Extra Dollars from Manufacturers and Retailers

Good relationships between retailers and manufacturers mean that the manufacturers will invest in your retailers. That is how you go about finding new radio dollars.

Research all co-op and manufacturing dollars for your retailer. Meet and talk to these players, the manufacturers, to find out what type of incentive programs they offer. The reason behind this is that besides the normal co-op percentage the retailer will get from the manufacturer (usually 2 to 10 % of goods ordered by quarter or by calendar year), your manufacturer will also have a completely separate budget to spend on that specific geographic region. Big extra dollar potential here! So, read your clients' needs. Then, go back to your manager at the radio station and put a completely different package together for the manufacturer. When you do this you have potentially opened a huge profit center for your radio station. Spend a lot of time learning to do this and you will become a very successful seller.

That Essential First Call

When you phone, first ask if you called at a convenient time. You want your client's full attention and you don't want him or her to feel bothered or pressured. If yes, get to the point of your call, quickly. Here's an example of what you might say:

“Hi, I'm Jeff from KXXX/WXXX radio station, and I've been assigned your account.” (You might ask some

of the following questions) “How’s business?...Did you have a busy weekend?...Did you listen to your radio commercial?” Listen carefully to the responses—not just to the words, but also to the tone. In brief, read the conversation carefully. List any and all objections stated by the client. You will need to address these at a later time. Overcoming a client’s objections will make it easier for you to close the business. You will be one step closer to closing new business. In turn, this means you have done your homework well and learned everything you can about the market and your radio station.

Continue with, “I’ll be in your area next week to drop off some goodies (decals, movie passes, discount lunch coupons, tickets, or other items that all reps should be sure to obtain from their promotion manager’s *prize* closet), and I would like to sit down and review our past success and discuss next month’s radio advertising budget.” Once you’ve gotten the okay to drop by, set the time and date for the appointment with your new client.



Jeff’s Rule: Really listen to your clients’ words and tone. If you understand their needs, you will be able to deliver successful results. Read your clients’ needs. Read your clients’ conversations. Read your client!



A Typical Existing Account Scenario

Good News Scenario

Retail Example: Steve and Julie's Stereo Store

Although the retailers used in the following typical existing account scenario are stereo store owners, what happens with them is applicable in most retail category selling. Imagine your own retailers as you read about Steve and Julie.

Steve and his wife, Julie, are the owners of a local stereo store who are doing well and buy KXXX/WXXX radio station two weeks per month. In checking the files, you note that Julie and Steve have been talking about expanding

to a second location. If this is true, you want to be sure that you expand with them. Here's a typical scenario that works with owners like Julie and Steve.

When any retailer plans to expand with a new item to his or her store or by adding a new department or section or adding new locations, there are BIG opportunities and BIG dollars here.



Jeff's Rule: Always grow and expand with your retailer. This will give you lots to talk about.

You arrive at Steve and Julie's store and check right away to see if they have time to see you. They know that you're bringing goodies such as caps, t-shirts, coffee mugs, pencils, pens, decals, movie passes, compact discs of what the radio station is playing, and key chains; therefore, they usually are happy to see you. Goodies are very important, even if they're not expensive. They are good relationship builders. Julie invites you into the office. You sit down and immediately take the opportunity to see what kind of people Julie and Steve are and what interests they have. From just looking around you quickly learn a lot about this couple. You note on the walls photographs that show them with their family skiing. You see golf bags in the corner and a picture of Steve being awarded a prize at a local golf tournament.

You do a little chit-chat about things you know this couple is interested in. Chit-chat is really important. It's what establishes, enhances, and maintains rapport and trust. Chit-chat goes something like this:

“How's it going? Did you watch the Game? Especially that last play at the end of the fourth quarter?...Oh, yeah, before I forget, how'd your golf tournament go?...Great!” or “too bad, better luck next time. What a good looking family. Do any of your kids play school sports?”

After chit-chat, you now feel you can get down to business comfortably. You've made it easy for the clients to open up and talk. They will be more open and honest when it's time to talk business. Time will be saved too.



Jeff's Rule: Chit-chat is really important. It's what establishes, enhances, and maintains rapport and trust.

Now ask about their advertising plans: “Did the last radio schedule you bought on our station produce results?...You mentioned you will be opening a new location. Great!...Where will your next location be?...How large a store?...Will you carry the same kind of merchandise?...Will you add a new stereo line?...Who will be your competition?... (Of course, you will already have researched their competition in case Steve and Julie haven't.)...When will you open the new location?” ...Do as much fact-finding as you can.



Jeff's Rule: Do as much fact-finding as you can. The more you know about your client's business, the easier you will be able to get them on the radio.

Finally, move into the tough part of your meeting with Steve and Julie. Ask, "How did last month's radio schedule work for you?" **This is one of the most important questions you can ask. This is when you find out what their expectations are from your radio station.** If their expectations are unrealistic or too high, it's your job to explain how radio really works and what their expectations *should* be. What you are working toward at this point is an agreement that is satisfactory to both of you.

The following is how Gregory "Ike" Isenhardt, a real strong retail radio and advertising closer, describes the pre-sell:

"Here's a quick synopsis of how to handle the pre-selling of an account before the on-air schedule starts: Pre-selling on how advertising works. Don't expect miracles. You want the retailer to understand that advertising, whether it be print, radio, tv, direct mail, is not a magic wand that influences customers to your doors."

"You want the retailer to understand that through advertising you are creating brand equity—which simply means that everyday customers are moving closer and

closer to the bull's eye—which means at some point they're ready to purchase a product. Consequently, if you keep your name and the ultimate selling points of your business in front of the customer, when the time comes to purchase, top-of-mind awareness will kick in to generate traffic. At this point, the media mix has done its job and it's then the responsibility of the retail sales department in your business to close the sale. Advertising can only bring them to the door!"

You must clarify the agreement with Julie and Steve several times with radio examples, so that both can move forward and plan a realistic advertising schedule with realistic results. Be sure to not only explain and clarify every detail, but also use paper and pencil to graphically support what you are saying. Do not rush. Give your clients time to absorb what you are saying. Often new reps lose their sales right here: They don't take enough time talking and explaining to their retailers before saying, for example, "So, Julie and Steve, if your advertising on KXXX/WXXX radio station brought you three to five new customers a week or approximately 20 to 25 new customers per month, could we come to an agreement that my radio station is successful in making your cash register ring and in delivering realistic results?"



Jeff's Rule: Always come to an agreement with your retailer on what realistic results are for the retailer's success.

Then continue, “Should we go with the same plan or a different one?” Now listen carefully to what Steve and Julie have to say.

Again, it’s always important to hear what the client has to say and for the client to know that he or she is being heard. Steve or Julie might respond by saying, “Yes, it did okay, but not what we really expected. We’re hoping that with a second store we can do better.” During this conversation, you, the sales rep, should already be developing in your mind a new advertising plan for long-term success.

First, you will want to offer some ideas and explain the reasons behind your thinking. It is essential to make everything as clear as possible. In this case you might say, “Julie and Steve, the reason why I went so heavy on the morning drive is that my morning show dominates the 18 - 34 year old market, and your typical stereo store customers are also 18 to 34 year olds. But, I’ve also been thinking about a great idea that should draw a lot of attention to your Grand Opening.” Retailers are always looking for good ideas. The fastest way to close a deal is to have plenty of good ideas and to be able to present them clearly.



Jeff’s Rule: The fastest way to close a deal is to have plenty of good ideas and to be able to present them clearly.

At this point what a sales rep is doing is laying the groundwork for his or her clients to buy your radio station and feel good about it. To do this Steve and Julie have to trust their rep and what their rep is telling him or her. Trust is the key to a good relationship with the clients, their rep, the radio station, and the clients' overall success.



Jeff's Rule: The most important element with a retail client is to build trust between rep and client.

You now might say, "Julie and Steve, let's put some thoughts into a Grand Opening on-air promotion." They are now listening intently. "What if we get XYZ Stereos, one of your long-time manufacturers, to donate a free stereo. Through your radio commercials we will invite my listeners to stop by your new store and enter to win the top prize, a fly-away to Seattle for a rock concert, with limo, hotel, and dinner after the concert, all included. Steve and Julie, that's why I want to run those evening spots, when most of the 18 - 34s are listening. Plus, we just added a special feature on Sunday nights. I'll include you as a sponsor during our promotion" (commonly known as On Air Added Value).



Jeff's Rule: Remember, make sure your promotional ideas mimic your retailers' demographics and psychographics. Know your retailers' customers and know your retailers' manufacturer representatives. Ask for a list of the phone numbers of all their important manufacturer representatives.

If Steve and Julie like your plan, you should get back to your office to write up the proposal as soon as possible. Then it's important to get back to Julie or Steve within forty-eight hours with a written proposal offering them the same schedule at the same rate for the next 90 days, plus the Grand Opening promotion with all its details. Let them hear the spec spot that you have developed for the Grand Opening commercial. You should go over the plan together, and if Steve and Julie like the plan they might say, "We will call the manufacturer's rep for stereos tomorrow to set up a meeting." Togetherness is important, so you should add, "I'll be happy to make the appointment for you."



Jeff's Rule: Make sure you get back to your client with a detailed written proposal and spec spot no later than 48 hours, and continue to work out the details of the radio plan together.

As the sales rep leaves the retail clients, heading back to the radio station smiling, he or she should be reviewing how to sell his/her promotional ideas to the promotional director, program director, and sales manager, so the promotion can be approved for Julie and Steve's Grand Opening. **Approval by the promotion committee means big bucks for the sales rep. Be forewarned: It's sometimes harder to sell your own station than it is to sell the client.** Think this through and plan it carefully.

Once the promotion committee approves the sales promotion for Julie and Steve, and the sales manager approves the radio schedule, it's time to put together and present the final proposal. Make sure to include in the written proposal some additional ideas on copy points for the 60 second commercial. In working with Julie and Steve to develop their copy points, remember, no matter what details Julie and Steve want in their radio copy, they must clearly state their offer to their customers with several good reasons for why the customer should buy. For example, they should include in their 60 second commercial the sales price of their car stereos and their selling point that installation is *free*. It is also important to include name and location, name and location, name and location.



Jeff's Rule: In a 60-second commercial, name and location should be announced a minimum of three or four times, if not more.

Again, quoting Ike Isenhart:

“Another issue that is often overlooked in dealing with retailers is the quality and substance of their on-air copy. All too many times a retailer will state, ‘I have superior customer service.’ Well, today, everyone makes this claim. It has become a very overused statement. Work hand in hand with your retailer to identify what makes his or her business different. Add substance to the copy. If you have a strong call to action (a price point, warranty guarantee, etc.), a very simple but well-crafted radio commercial can work wonders.”

Now you must return to your clients, Steve and Julie, and go over the proposal in detail. Use all the skills you have to get them motivated and excited with a good sound plan for success.

When Steve and Julie say, “It sounds great. Let’s do it,” you’ve completed the first step to success in having them as long-term valuable clients. Now you need to work out all the details. Job well done!



A Typical Existing Account Scenario

Bad News Scenario

Retail Example: Joe's Jewelry Store

You worked hard; you put a radio plan together for Joe's jewelry store that aired last week. Your expectations are high. You feel good. Now's the time to call Joe, "Joe, how did your radio ad work? Did you have a busy weekend?"

Joe says, "Jeff what happened? I had a terrible weekend. Sales were slow."

This is a crucial point in a new rep's career: Do not overreact! Instead say, "Joe, can you see me this afternoon?" If Joe responds positively, say, "Good, I'll see you in a couple of hours so we can discuss the situation. Don't worry, Joe. We'll work it out together. We will figure out what went wrong."

Later the same day at Joe's store, say, "Joe, good to see you." Then ask the tough questions that include at least the following two really important ones:

1. Joe, how many customers would you normally close during a week's business?
2. How many did you close last week?

Keeping in mind Jeff's Rule: Always come to an agreement with your retailer on what realistic results are for the retailer's success. The answers to the above questions will give you a good idea of Joe's expectations and why, in Joe's mind, the radio schedule did not work.

After Joe gives you his answers, continue positively, “Joe, let’s listen to the ad again. Let’s make sure we mentioned the name and location enough times and your store hours. Let’s compare the different ads you ran in the newspaper (or any other medium Joe used). Let’s see if our sale items had a good enough selling price to drive business. Let’s check the other jewelry store ads for the week. Maybe they were priced better with a wider selection. Joe, let’s look together. Also, let’s get your manufacturer’s reps on the phone to check pricing for the area.”

As stated before, manufacturing representatives are very important to the success of any retailer and any radio rep. These reps represent the companies that make up your retailer store’s inventories. If your manufacturer gives your retailer a certain percentage of products bought toward advertising, here’s how it works. Let’s say your retailer sells jewelry and buys \$100,000 worth of jewelry from the manufacturer. Here is where the retailer could earn an additional 2 percent of the buy toward radio advertising. That’s why it’s so important to get the manufacturer’s rep in the loop. Those extra dollars that you get from the manufacturer mean more radio commercials (frequency) per schedule. More radio commercials (frequency) mean more potential customers will hear your ads.



Jeff’s Rule: Go out of your way to meet all your clients’ important manufacturing reps. In the long run, if you can tap into those extra dollars, you can generate big sales for your retailer and your radio station.

By being with Joe under these circumstances and working through problems together by providing positive alternatives and solutions, a partnership of trust and success is being built. Joe sees that you really care about his business and success. You can move full speed ahead working out the details for Joe's future advertising plans.



Jeff's Rule: Always work closely with the client to build trust. Trust establishes long-term relationships and makes for happy clients.

You leave Joe on a hopeful note and return to the radio station to put together a revised plan for success. This time you will take much more time to develop a workable comprehensive plan. When it's completed, it's time to go back to Joe's store and present the new advertising radio plan. Good job!

Other Areas for Potential Dollars and Seeing a Challenge for What It Is:

Non-Active Bad Debt Accounts

As a new account executive, besides prospecting, your manager will likely give you a pile of folders of non-active and bad debt accounts. He or she will be watching closely to see if you are capable of turning them around. Don't think of this task as drudgery. Opportunity awaits you. It's your chance to break through. It's the challenge you have been waiting for.

Selling an advertiser doesn't always run smoothly. For example, you have to know what to do when your manager gives you a bad debt account. As always, begin by doing your homework by finding out the following:

- How long was the client on the air?
- How late were his or her payments usually?
- What were all the reasons and problems this client had with your radio station? Why did he default? In the files check notes and other correspondence that could explain what went wrong. It is important to check with the business manager, too, to see what insights he or she might have.
- Check with the sales manager and other sales reps as well to see if they can shed any new light on this problem account.

Once you've gathered up all the information, schedule another appointment with the client. Use all the skills you've learned for good prospecting and account servicing to deal with this problem account. For example, if your client resists scheduling an appointment, then say you'll be in the neighborhood that week and you'll drop in.

When you do meet up with the bad-debt guy, remember, he's feeling guilty so he'll likely attack you verbally. Be prepared to be snarled at. Let the client know that you are very sorry that he or she had trouble with your station. Explain to the client that if you're given another chance, you know you can turn the situation around and give business a boost. Be optimistic. Act confidently. Be prepared for the client to do a bit more venting. Remain cool and, again, ask your client to give you and the radio station another chance. Offer some different advertising plans and some added value on-air features. Most of the time a problem client will give you the opportunity to try again. Clients want their business to succeed, and since they used radio before to promote their business, they're likely to do it again with the right kind of persuasion. Be the right kind of persuasion by being a trustworthy rep. Clients only buy from sellers they trust.



Jeff's Rule: Be prepared to be snarled at, but know that most of the time problem clients will give you the opportunity to try again once you have gained their trust.

Learning is a never ending process. From what you've learned so far from the *VibeMaster*, here are some extra tips that restate some of Jeff's Rules:

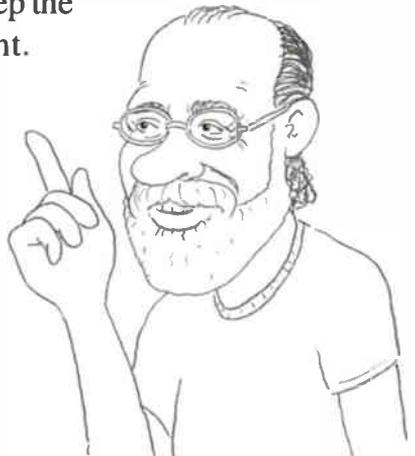
- Develop a good business relationship with clients.
- Demonstrate that you care about their business.
- Follow through on each detail from start to finish.
- Service your accounts thoroughly and consistently.
- Collect money on time.

In Review

If you learn the basic rules and tips set forth in *You Can Sell Air*, you are walking Jeff's roadway to success. Get the most out of these rules and tips beginning with good orientation. Do your homework thoroughly. Put your energy to work prospecting. Nail those crucial sales appointments. Ask the tough questions. Visualize and role play clients' wishes and objections in good and bad retail situations. Learn from experienced sellers how they've been successful. Above all, use common sense and build trust as you proceed logically and become a confident new account executive with a long, rewarding career in retail radio sales.

One More Time for Jeff's Rules:

- Jeff's Rule: The easiest and most direct way to close new business leads is to apply category prospecting and selling.
- Jeff's Rule: Learn to ask questions; don't be afraid to ask. If you don't ask, you won't learn. If you don't learn, you can't succeed.
- Jeff's Rule: In a retail store situation, nine times out of ten or more, the owner makes the advertising decisions. Be sure to get the appointment with the owner or owners.
- Jeff's Rule: Always be ready to present and close new clients. Never be without a broadcast calendar, a notepad, a calculator, and a positive attitude with energy and enthusiasm.
- Jeff's Rule: Never assume an automatic close. Otherwise, you'll be a red-faced rep.
- Jeff's Rule: Always keep the retailer as *your* client. Never walk away from a retail client. Never give total control to a retail advertising agency.



- **Jeff's Rule:** A face-to-face appointment gives you and your radio station a big advantage. **GET IN FRONT OF THE CLIENT.**
- **Jeff's Rule:** Really listen to your clients' words and tone. If you understand their needs, you will be able to deliver successful results. Read your clients' needs; read your clients' conversation. Read your client!
- **Jeff's Rule:** Always grow and expand with your retailer. This will give you lots to talk about.
- **Jeff's Rule:** Chit-chat is really important. It's what establishes, enhances, and maintains rapport and trust.
- **Jeff's Rule:** Do as much fact-finding as you can. The more you know about your client's business, the easier you will be able to get them on the radio.
- **Jeff's Rule:** Always come to an agreement with your retailer on what realistic results are for the retailer's success.
- **Jeff's Rule:** The fastest way to close a deal is to have plenty of good ideas and to be able to present them clearly.
- **Jeff's Rule:** The most important element with a retail client is to build trust between rep and client.

- **Jeff's Rule:** Remember, make sure your promotional ideas mimic your retailers' demographics and psychographics. Know your retailers' customers and know your retailers' manufacturer representatives. Ask for a list of the phone numbers of all their important manufacturer representatives.
- **Jeff's Rule:** Make sure you get back to your client with a detailed written proposal and spec spot no later than 48 hours, and continue to work out the details of the radio plan together.
- **Jeff's Rule:** In a 60 second commercial, name and location should be announced a minimum of three or four times, if not more.
- **Jeff's Rule:** Go out of your way to meet all your clients' important manufacturing reps. In the long run, if you can tap into those extra dollars, you can generate big sales for your retailer and your radio station.
- **Jeff's Rule:** Always work closely with the client to build trust. Trust establishes long-term relationships and makes for happy clients.
- **Jeff's Rule:** Be prepared to be snarled at, but know that most of the time problem clients will give you the opportunity to try again once you have gained their trust.

Conclusion

Now that you have read *You Can Sell Air*, you know what the *VibeMaster* knows: The key to success in radio sales depends on how you get the job done. This will require both skill and common sense. Start building your career and reputation NOW, and do it with the many blessings and best wishes from the *VibeMaster*, Jeff.

Glossary of Terms

1. **Added Value:** Usually a free, on-air feature that a sales rep will include in his or her sales proposal to help close the deal.
2. **Arbitron:** The most widely-accepted method of surveying and rating audience listening habits in individual markets (also known as the Metro Survey Area).
3. **Bad Debt Accounts:** Inactive accounts with unpaid balances from previous on-air air schedules.
4. **Category Prospecting:** Seeking advertisers with products or services of interest to your target audience.
5. **Charge-backs:** Commissions earned that the salesperson will generally lose if the balance due is not paid by the client within 90 days.
6. **Continuity Form:** The form you complete to notify the traffic director of start and stop dates, and commercial or commercials to rotate during the contract period.
7. **Co-op:** The amount of dollars retailers receive from manufacturers toward the on-air flight schedule.
8. **Deejay:** disc jockey or DJ—commonly known today as an on-air personality.

9. **Demographics:** Statistical characteristics of a listening audience that can include age and gender
10. **Frequency:** How often a commercial airs during the radio flight schedule.
11. **KXXX/WXXX:** With KXXX, the K denotes how all radio stations are listed west of the Mississippi; with WXXX, the W denotes how all the radio stations are listed east of the Mississippi.
12. **Media Mix:** The combination of advertising mediums that an advertiser uses in a specific campaign (for example, an advertiser might use radio, tv, bus signs and billboards to advertise his product or service).
13. **Metro Survey Area:** The primary reporting area for local radio (for example, the metro survey area for San Jose, California would be Santa Clara County, not just the city of San Jose).
14. **Psychographics:** Qualitative profiles that can be further defined by income, education, life-style activities, and consumer habits.
15. **Radio Flight Schedule:** The amount of air time a client buys to get his message delivered to that particular listening audience (in other words, when the client wants his commercials to be aired).
16. **Spec Spot:** The spec spot is a sample commercial produced by the radio station to give the potential client an idea of what his final commercial might sound like.

Appendix A

Sales Proposal

A written proposal will have all the details that you discussed with your retailer to achieve their advertising objectives.

Cover Sheet

Presented To: Client's Name

Presented By: Your name and position

Date:

Feature/Advantage/Benefit Sheet

"KXXX/WXXX has a "win-win" promotional department which will assist you in creating promotions that increase awareness and traffic at (retailer's name).

Demographic Rankers

(see Arbitron book)

Psychographics or Qualitative Sheet

Suggested Schedule on a Reach & Frequency Sheet

Closing or Summary Sheet

KXXX/WXXX and (retailer's name) come together to build a winning team in (year), moving product off the shelf and making the cash register ring!

Order Form

To order additional copies of

You Can Sell Air

we can be reached in the following ways:

•email us at: sellair@imageinkprint.com

•www.thevibemaster.com

•Send check or M/O to:

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Total payment enclosed \$ _____

Ship to:

Name _____

Company _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Telephone _____

About the Author

Jeff Siegel began retail radio sales in 1979 at KSJO FM in San Jose, California. Right off the bat, Jeff broke retail sales records. Within a matter of a



few short years his natural sales ability and sincere respect for his customers brought unsurpassed success. This also contributed to bringing San Jose radio on par with the new, hot, exciting Silicon Valley high-tech explosion.

By 1986, Jeff moved up to become one of the most respected senior account executives at San Jose's KOME, owned by Infinity Broadcasting. He worked with local and larger regional accounts. Then, in 1988, KSJO enticed Jeff back to become general sales manager.

From there he went to work selling regional airtime at Shadow Broadcasting, one of Northern California's traffic networks owned by Bechtel Corporation. Again, Jeff achieved remarkable successes. In 1991, Jeff saw another opportunity

when the Disney Family purchased KUFX in San Jose. It was there that Jeff really honed his sales skills and was finally allowed to "run with them"

and reach an even higher level of sales and marketing successes, moving manufacturers' products off the shelves. In 1993, Jeff rejoined KOME FM, owned by CBS Radio, because he saw the potential with the new alternative rock format unfolding, including selling Howard Stern in morning drive in the San Francisco Bay Area. In just two short years, Jeff achieved such sales successes that KOME climbed to the number two regional billing station.

Currently Jeff is working with CBS's KEZR FM radio in San Jose. He is sales manager and still looking forward to new challenges. One of them has been writing this retail radio handbook for aspiring radio sales reps everywhere.

"I'm making this book mandatory reading for every new account executive that we hire..."

*Joe Armao
Vice-President and General Manager
KBAY/KEZR, San Jose, CA*

YOU CAN SELL AIR!



"I would urge that any rookie or even seasoned pro read and digest what Jeff Siegel has to say about selling radio on the streets. This is simply a marvelous book that has been long overdue in the radio industry.

*Gregory "Ike" Isenhardt
President, Isenhardt Media and Marketing, Denver, CO*

"The VibeMaster casts the most realistic look at basic radio sales I have ever seen. This book is a must for the first-time radio account executive, and should become the Bible for any radio seller who brands himself or herself as a retail maven."

*Ed Krampf
Vice President and General Manager, KBIG/KLAC, Los Angeles, CA*

"In this book, the VibeMaster will teach you how to become a great radio sales rep. He can do for you what he's done for me. Just 5 years after taking that first ride with Jeff, I have become a successful Sales Manager for a number-one FM radio station in San Francisco, the country's fourth largest market..."

*Bill Shadorf
Sales Manager, K101 AM/FM, KABL AM, San Francisco, CA*

ISBN 0-9672137-0-3



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