

Can You Speak Dealerspeak?

by : Gil Van Over

Riding on the rental car shuttle to the airport the other day, I overheard a Bavarian family of four chatting about something in their native language. I understood a few words.

On that same shuttle was a couple schmoozing each other in that romantic language normally reserved for the Rhone. I understood a few words.

Amongst this melting pot of human communications, I receive a text from my son. “Yo pops i dont gotta wrk that wknd of the bengals game is ther ne way u can get 2 xtra tix 4 jen n i?” I understood a few words.

We all seem to speak languages that not everyone understands. Dealerspeak is a language all to itself that can raise the eyebrows of your state regulators. The Florida attorney general is already on record stating such.

Example

A friend of mine, an attorney who also does compliance work, shared a story with me not long ago. She surveyed a number of her friends, none of which are in the car business, with a simple question.

“As you are negotiating the price of a vehicle, if the dealer wrote WAC on the paper he asked you to sign agreeing to the price, what do you think WAC means?”

Her group of reasonably intelligent friends overwhelmingly responded, “That means the car comes ‘with air conditioning’.”

I would venture to say that very few people outside of the car business would know that you intended to say ‘with approved credit’.

Perceptions and reality

As I write this, an NBA referee just pled guilty for betting on NBA games. The league is very concerned that the public just does not trust the product it is putting on the court; that the public does not trust that the games aren’t fixed. This thought is always in the back of my mind watching any game or sport where a horrible call is made. I always wonder if the ref or umpire has an ulterior motive.

Similarly, a few athletes hopped up on steroids taint the good names and reputations of the vast, vast majority of athletes in the same profession who compete without the aid of performance-enhancing drugs.

I won’t even get into a Dennis Miller-type rant about politicians or talk show hosts or ambulance chasers.

Unfortunately, many of the consumers feel the same way about car dealerships. A few bad characters have tainted the good names of the vast, vast majority of hard working, honest practitioners who are just trying to make an honest living. Next month is sweeps month. I guarantee you that some local television station somewhere in the country is going to run an expose on the nefarious activities of a rogue car

dealership and paint the rest of the industry with a broad brush of contempt.

In part, continuing to use dealerspeak while negotiating deals helps to perpetrate the perception that car dealers have something to hide.

What you can do

- Beseitigen Sie dealerspeak beim Verhandeln über Ihre Abkommen.
- Éliminez le dealerspeak tout en négociant vos affaires.
- Dnt dubltalk when sale cars.
- Eliminate dealerspeak while negotiating your deals.
- Forget plus plus plus.
- Eliminate WAC and OAC
- Spell out 'vehicle theft registration' instead of using the acronym VTR.
- Eradicate A/R. Disclose the rebate.
- Turn CPO into certified pre-owned.

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