

## **SHOPPING FOR NEW WHEELS CAN MAKE A MAN HOSTILE**

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I have just gone through what to me is one of the most unpleasant decisions in life. It is shopping for a motor vehicle.

H.L. Mencken coined the phrase, "There is no underestimating the intelligence of the American public." The automotive sales industry is well aware of the truth in this adage. In fact, the whole business seems to be predicated on that premise. You may include me as a perpetual victim along with the rest of my fellow Americans.

I reluctantly digress from my usual subject matter to address this issue while it is still fresh in my mind. Every time I have to arrive at a decision to purchase another vehicle I end up in a foul mood. To begin with, I just hate to spend thousands of dollars for anything. I am never sure that I am making the right decision. In spite of several transactions over the years, I still am not convinced I am qualified to make the right decision. Many unwise decisions of the past have done nothing to persuade me otherwise.

It's not that I am unaware of the pitfalls I am about to encounter; it's that I am under the misguided impression I have learned to counter them. When the time comes I sally forth convinced there is no way I will be entangled in the inevitable sales web.

I have had every ploy known to man penetrated on me when it comes to auto sales, and they have all worked. The first time around I accepted it as part of the learning experience. You have no intention of being sucked into the same scheme again.

I started out with all of my past unpleasant experiences firmly implanted in my mind, convinced there was no way I would relieve the horrors of the past. Everything was perfect; it was a beautiful spring day and with my past knowledge to guide me, at long last buying a vehicle would be a pleasant experience.

To make a long story short, after a sixty-mile drive, I was storming out of the dealership in less than five minutes flat. It was a new record for me and my well-made plans were scattered behind me as I headed for home.

My return home brought me to another establishment that had not as yet had an opportunity to fortify my distrust of auto salesmen. The man was good. He kept me

hanging for at least two before I realized I was had one more time. The same old tired trade tactics had wasted both of our time.

I like auto salesmen; in fact, I feel sorry for anyone who obviously feels they have to resort to such limits to sell a car.

As usual, I ended up trading without feeling my intelligence had been insulted, satisfied we had both made a fair transaction.

The whole episode reminded me of a great story about my wife's Uncle Arlo and Aunt Avis, 90 and 80 years old respectively. Uncle Arlo had been dickering for what seemed like hours with the salesman over their last auto. Aunt Avis finalized the deal while Uncle Arlo was in the bathroom. She wrote out a check for the new car.