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Top Secrets for Selling a Car Successfully

Do you own an old car? Want to get rid of your old car and purchase a new one? Or, maybe you now want to take public transportation and think that the cash from the sale of your old car could come in handy. Well, whatever reason you may have, your old car has to go.

So what are you going to do with it?

There are several options for you to choose. First, you could donate your old car to charity. Second, you can consider trading it in toward the purchase of a new vehicle. And lastly, you can sell your car by yourself and boost your profit.

If you happen to choose the third choice, then note and understand that selling a car yourself may involve certain risks. Although selling your car yourself can save you a lot more money than a dealer would give you trade-in value for, it is always riskier to sell the car yourself, at the same time. Now the question is, is it worth it? My answer is yes, if and only if you know how to lower your risk factor.

Well, below are some tips for you to consider on how to market your car and at the same time avoid the risks associated with selling it on your own. Consider the following:

Secret #1: *Evaluate Your Personal Circumstances*

To top it all, it is best to evaluate your personal circumstances and the kind of person you are as you decide in selling your used car. Before you sell your car on your own, make sure that you have enough confidence in negotiating with other

people, the buyer. Also make sure that you are ready to entertain phone calls and test drives. Know yourself, that's simply it!

Secret #2: *Know the Market and Arm Yourself with Information*

The first best way to start when planning to sell your car on your own is to know the market you will be dealing with and arm yourself with enough information. You can do this simply by determining how much your old car is worth. Try to ask questions like, *Is your car going to be easy to sell? Is it a hot commodity? Or, will you have multiple offers?* To back up these problems with wise answers, your first step is to check some car ads online.

As you may know, several used car guides like those available at Yahoo! Autos are now available out there on the web. They are no doubt a good place to start for they may help you determine the value of your vehicle by knowing your car's make and model, mileage, as well as a general idea of its current condition. Based on those basic details you gathered, you can easily and quickly secure accurate estimates for how much the dealer in your locality is likely to offer on a trade in. Visiting and examining the used car guides on the web may also help you determine how much you might expect to make by selling your car yourself.

Aside from checking the online used car guides, you can also check the used car price guides that are now commonly available at libraries or book stores. There is also your local newspaper's automotive advertising section for you to check out for similar vehicles. All of these sources will surely help you set a price based on your local market.

Secret #3: *Configure and Advertise Your Car*

Once you know the market, try to configure your car. Know the mileage, condition, options, and even the region in which the car is being sold. Then, advertise your car on bulletin boards, in local papers, and online. Take a few pictures at different angles and write out full details of its performance, features and warranties. Speaking of warranties, note that in order for you to obtain a great sell-value, you need first to obtain an extended warranty for your car before you sell it and offer to transfer ownership to the buyer.

Also, when considering advertising, your used car ad should list the year, the model and body style. To further attract buyers, you might want to include the number of miles, engine size, or the color of your vehicle. However, when writing your car ad, be honest. If possible, avoid flowery phrases and only use words that the prospective buyers will respond to such as *super clean, low mileage, one owner, regular service records, excellent fuel economy*, and a lot more. Stick to these kind of words and note that little words convey a lot. If, for instance, your car has any special features, let the public know about them in your advertisement. So if your car has a car alarm, then state it on the ad. Note that the clearer and more honest your ad is, the less hassle you will have in selling it on your own.

Secret #4: *Flatter Your Car*

First impressions are very important for they are said to last. Given this idea, it's no doubt then that the way your car looks will be the first thing that any potential buyer will notice. As such, it is very vital for you as a seller to give your vehicle a good scrubbing inside and out.

Spend some time polishing your car with a good car wax. Wash, wax and detail your car, and inspect it to make sure that it is mechanically sound and free from any dings, scrapes and dents. As what many successful car sellers would recommend, shovel out all the junk from the inside of the car. Clean the brakes,

tires, wheels, windows (inside and out), and all the mirrored surfaces. Also wipe down the dashboard, the armrests, nooks and crannies, and empty the ashtrays. Or, if you want, have your car cleaned and detailed by a professional detail shop.

Cleaning and detailing your car plays a very important role in selling as having your car cleaned gives you an edge over the other vehicles in the market. As you may realize, an attractive car can justify a higher selling price.

In addition, do not make any major repairs on your vehicle. This is due to the fact that any major mechanical repairs or body work will almost always cost more than the increase in price you'll get for the car. So instead of throwing a lot of money on major repairs, simply be honest and straightforward in your ad for the car. And, once the cleaning and detailing are done, put your maintenance records in a neat folder ready to show interested buyers.

Secret #5: Show Your Car and Respond to Inquiries

You've decided to let your old car go, so when you sell your car always bear in mind that your prospective buyers will also be evaluating you. So to win their interest, you should make a good impression. If possible, make your targets feel comfortable and respond to their inquiries openly.

When your prospective buyers start calling you, be ready to answer their questions. Prepare callers for what to expect when they see the car, and answer their questions honestly over the phone. Understand that you will save yourself a lot of time and hassle making appointments that will not turn into a sale. Thus, make an appointment with each caller for a specific time, rather than allowing them to come sometime at work.

I am talking about appointments here for I have realized that making an appointment when selling a car increases the chances of the buyers showing up.

If it happens that they are late, you don't have to feel obligated to wait for them. So to make everything easy, make sure that you ask for their contact number, preferably a cell phone, and don't be surprised if some of your prospective buyers don't show when it comes with the territory.

It is usual that any potential buyer will want to test drive the car for sale. So ride along with them so you can answer questions. In relation to this, there is a great possibility that they may not know the area, so it is best that you guide them along the test drive route.

Some of the buyers will also want to take the car to a mechanic to have it checked or inspected. So if you already have a report from your mechanic, then this is the right time for them to see it. Remember that in every transaction like selling a car, this is a reasonable request.

Secret #6: Protect Yourself

If, for instance, your prospective buyer wants to go on a test drive by himself, ask to hand on to their driver's license. If he doesn't have one, he shouldn't be driving around in your car. This is pretty practical.

Secret #7: Negotiate Your Best Price

Before you negotiate for the price, be sure that you already know the market and how much your car is worth. Then, if your prospective buyer test drive your car and likes it, expect them to make an offer. However, if their offer is below your asking price, there are two options for you to choose: to hold firm with your asking price, or make a lower counteroffer. Before deciding on these choices, think about your real wants. Consider your answer carefully. If you've decided

either of the two options, try to speak slowly and clearly to avoid misunderstandings.

Perhaps the best way to do when negotiating for your best price is to keep the negotiations between you and your buyer impersonal. You can do this by reaching a win-win price. Aside from that, give the negotiation process some thought ahead of time. This will surely keep you away being caught unprepared when the time comes.

Secret #8: *Be Ready to Handle Complications*

As I've said earlier, selling a car is not an easy task. It involves certain risks and complications, so when you are selling your used car, be ready to handle any complications that may occur. It is usual in this kind of transaction that you might reach an agreement with your prospective buyer that is contingent on performing repair work. This kind of situation may lead to certain misunderstandings between you and your target down the line, so if you can try to avoid this.

But, how to avoid such kind of situation?

Perhaps the best thing to do is to have your car in good running order and know in detail about any repairs necessary. If you don't know much about the condition of your car, ask your mechanics or show the buyer the mechanic report. Always remember that a used car, particularly an old one isn't expected to be perfect, but it still might be useful. So, again, the key here is to be honest in your car ads.

Secret #9: *Finalize the Deal*

Before closing the deal, remember that the laws governing the sale of motor vehicles generally vary from state to state. So be sure to check with the governing agency in your respective state. Well, checking the laws can be done easily these days as many sites handling these laws are now out there available on the web. So try to search them online with the powerful search engines like Google.

Also, when selling your car, it is very necessary to limit your liability. So if someone drives away in the car you just sold and they get in an accident, I am sure that you don't want to be held responsible. The best thing that you can do now is to sign the title over the buyer or provide them with a bill of sale once you have the money from the sale.

Secret #10: *Check the Title Transfer Procedures*

To transfer the car title to the new owner, you should consult with you state department of motor vehicles and determine what requirements you must follow to do the task. Usually, the title transfer procedure starts with signing and dating the title prior to the passing of it to the buyer. The process also involves notifying the department of motor vehicles of the transaction.

However, although given that the department needs to be notified, it is still important to make sure that the department of motor vehicles is properly notified for the car title to be correctly transferred to its new owner. This is very important as this will prevent you from being liable for any accidents once the transfer is complete.

Along with this, remember to contact your insurance agent for the cancellation of your policy on the vehicle you have just sold.

Secret #11: *Take Cash Only*

If your buyer agrees to a purchase, make sure that you always get either cash or a certified check. Do not take any personal check or a payment plan. Also, don't agree to accompany the buyer to get the money. Always note that if the buyer is inclined to buy the vehicle an agreement can be struck to return to the same location at another date to make the exchange. However, if you do not feel comfortable carrying cash, you can always go to the bank with the new buyer and make an electronic transfer.

Secret #12: *After the Sale*

In every sale process, certain unexpected bumps occasionally arise. However, these unexpected bumps will be handled easily if you are dealing with a reasonable target. So, as you are contacted by prospective buyers, simply employ your intuition to evaluate the person. If your intuition tells you that your buyers seem difficult to deal with, shady or pushy, then maybe it's time for you to wait for another buyer. One main fact that prevails here is that with the right person, selling a used car should be uncomplicated and as easy as pie.

So you've learned what to do when selling your used car. It's important to know now that in reality the market for selling used cars is very competitive. Obtaining the best deals can even be a challenging, yet rewarding experience. So, if you are planning to sell your car for whatever reason you may have, be sure to do your homework and be prepared. As what most successful sellers often say, the educated sellers are usually the most successful ones. So educate yourself. That's the main key.

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