



## Member's Corner

### I volunteered and learned a lot about me!

by Steve Grossman, CPMR

Former IHRA President & Chairman

Here we are at Labor Day, the home stretch of 2003. I hope your efforts have made this year good for you. Our industry, as well as others, has to labor more to stay even. It is just the way it is.

Each year we are, hopefully, able to add to our warehouse of knowledge to be better prepared for what comes ahead.

Later this month I will be attending The Keystone Conference in Tampa, Florida. This is the rep conference being run by MANA, ERA and NEMRA that is also open to all IHRA members. We have mentioned it multiple times in this monthly newsletter.

I am attending for two reasons. I enjoy learning from my fellow reps; even though many who attend these events are in different industries. Most of our experiences compliment each other. The second reason is that I will earn CEU's, Continuing Educational Units that keep my CPMR designation current.

I was looking forward to just being a regular participant and enjoying the 3 days of seminars and presentations. A little over a week ago I got a call from the conference programmers asking me if I would be part of a panel to discuss "Re-inventing Your Rep Firm." Without really thinking about it I said sure. As they say, be careful about volunteering.

First, I thought I would be presenting to a small group, I found out it would be the full conference of over 200 people. Second, I thought I would have two weeks to develop my presentation. Due to the late nature, I had two or three days. Third, they requested a biographical profile of my business career and myself; I have

*continued on page 2*

## Better Repping

### Turn your sales force into a winning sales team

by Jack A. Berman, Sales Management Consultant

"Coaching" is the difference, and you are a natural for it!

Representatives are facing big changes. They are struggling! Many customers are going out of business, reducing purchases and driving for lower prices. The old ways may not work anymore. We need new thinking, creativity and improvement.

All industries are looking for new ideas, and one of the hottest tools to excite top management is coaching. They are hiring coaches from the field of psychology to develop their people and help them achieve new plateaus of human skills. By revitalizing their efforts, they are achieving greater productivity.

Coaching is made for reps. Salespeople are like professional athletes: Competition is the life blood for both. They win or lose. When salespeople get orders, they win and the competitors lose. When salespeople lose orders, competitors win. As in sports, the best coaches have the best teams.

First, recognize that you have a sales team, not a sales force.

"To force" is defined as "to compel, press, drive, impose or thrust importunately, or inexorably." Picture trying to use force! "To sell" is defined as "to influence acceptance for; induce to make a purchase; achieve satisfactory sales."

"Team" is defined as "a number of persons associated together in work or activity."

When principals choose a representative, they look at leadership and at the sales team that will be selling their lines. It is natural for good representatives to be good coaches. Coaches are managers, players, teachers and motivators. That describes representatives.

What do you have to do to be a good coach with a winning sales team?

First, be aware that you are a coach!

The "winningest" coach in sports is the great basketball coach, Johnny Wooden. He says that it is vital for all coaches to take a personal interest in each of their players and devote themselves to their personal development.

How do you do it?

- Personally help your salespeople define their individual goals.
- Provide the structure for them to reach their goals.
- Give them direction.
- Give them encouragement.
- Help them by monitoring their progress.

Wooden emphasizes that the key to winning is preparation, and when

*continued on page 2*

## Steve Grossman (from page 1)

never really done one. Lastly, I needed this all put on a Power Point presentation, which I am not proficient in at all. So I asked the people who asked me to volunteer to help, and they worked overtime to get the job done, too.

I mention all of this not to get your sympathies, but to share with you what a learning experience it has turned into. I have been in this game of buying and selling for a little over 30 years and have never stood back and taken a look at the territory I have covered. Simply, since graduating from college, I have been a buyer, started 4 different rep firms, been part owner of a clock company that went bust, taken post graduate classes, achieved my CPMR and have kept it current, am a charter member of IHRA, officer of IHRA, and a few other things.

I have three wall plaques:

*"Don't try to change the wind, change your sails;"*

*"Be wholly trustworthy but not wholly trusting;"* and,

*"The Caribou Move, one foot in front of the other."*

These to me kind of summarizes what it is to be a successful rep.

I have broken down my short presentation into three areas:

1. Realize or sense things are not the same.
2. What are you going to do about it?
3. Build your action plan.

If the presentation is well received, I'll try to include it in next month's newsletter.

In closing, I suggest you take a few minutes and put your Bio on paper, it will probably amaze you how far you have come to survive in our industry. Also take a few minutes to review where your firm is and is it positioned for stability, growth, or does it keep slipping backwards?

Next time I will do my best to share what I have learned at Keystone, so more of you will take the time and invest in yourself and your future.

Steve Grossman, CPMR, Steman4@aol.com

---

## Better Repping (from page 1)

you prepare properly for a game, the game takes care of itself. When salespeople prepare properly for customer calls, it helps them to take control of the call and make things happen. A simple call organizer can make the biggest difference in any call!

Athletic coaches do have a big advantage over rep coaches - they can watch their players in action. Rep coaches can only learn what is happening by seeing how the call was prepared and what happened. Call organizers make that information easily available.

Caution: Don't confuse sales coaching with sales training. Coaching has many distinct advantages for you:

- You are not a sales trainer. You are a natural coach. You teach by sharing your "been there, done that" wisdom with your salespeople.
- Sales training usually refers to

teaching new salespeople how to sell. Sales coaching is directed to the entire team.

- Sales training usually ends when the training is over. Sales coaching is ongoing - like coaching a sports team.

- Do your coaching at sales meetings, on calls with your salespeople, in the car, at lunch, on the golf course, at breakfast wherever and whenever.

- Good coaches always bring in new ideas that make the team more productive, professional, and keep them thinking.

Your principals want their lines to be in the foreground, not in the background! Good coaches must satisfy them all and can do that better when their sales teams are alert and ready.

There are excellent aids to coaching available from MRERF. I also invite you to take a free tour of my Web site, [bermaninformation.com](http://bermaninformation.com).

*Jack A. Berman is a faculty member of the CPMR Program, an ERA Hall of Fame member, author of "Synergistic Selling for the 21st Century," and heads Berman Information Services Inc., which conducts surveys of reps and manufacturers and e-mails selling tips every two weeks. He has been a manufacturer, a rep and a sales trainer.*

*Visit his Web site at [www.bermaninformation.com](http://www.bermaninformation.com)*

### IMPORTANT REMINDERS ••• Mark your calendars!!!

1. The 2004 International Home & Housewares Show is Saturday, Sunday, Monday, March 20, 21, 22, 2004 at McCormick Place, Chicago, Illinois.
2. IHRA's Annual Membership Breakfast & Program is Sunday, March 21, 2004 7 - 9:00 AM • Room S101B • McCormick Place South

# Here are the results from our recent survey of products IHRA members sell or are prepared to sell. How do you compare?

## Major Categories - 247 Members

Bakeware .....	60%
Closet & Storage .....	55%
Cookware .....	66%
Decorative Accessories .....	42%
Furniture / RTA .....	37%
Gadgets & Cutlery .....	68%
Giftwares .....	55%
Hardware .....	57%
Housewares .....	91%
Small Electrics .....	54%
Table Top .....	57%
Textiles .....	36%

## Product-Specific, 107 Respondents Categories Listed Alphabetically

Albums .....	16%
Auto Cleaners .....	14%
Bath .....	39%
BBQ.....	53%
Beverageware .....	43%
Books .....	10%
Candles .....	46%
Cameras.....	8%
Candy .....	16%
Christmas .....	50%
Cleaning .....	44%
Clocks .....	37%
Coasters .....	19%
Collectables .....	9%
Computer Software .....	7%
Consumer Electronics .....	20%
Craft Storage.....	12%
Dinnerware .....	55%
Electrical .....	21%
Flatware .....	46%
Floorcare .....	26%
Framed Art .....	23%
Furniture .....	43%
Garage Storage.....	32%
General Merchandise.....	50%
Gourmet Food.....	23%
Halloween .....	33%
Health & Beauty .....	27%
Home Security .....	11%
Household Cleaners .....	34%
Juvenile .....	22%
Kitchen Cabinet/Drawer Storage.....	29%
Lamps .....	21%
Laundry .....	34%
Lawn & Garden .....	52%
Lighting .....	22%
Lumber & By-Products Raw Materials..	7%
Medical .....	7%
Microwave Ovens.....	11%
Mirrors .....	19%
Napkin Holders.....	17%
Novelty .....	18%
Office .....	23%
Oral Irrigators .....	7%
Organic & Natural Food .....	5%
Outdoor & Indoor .....	28%
Party Goods.....	24%

Personal Care.....	41%
Pet Supplies .....	28%
Photo .....	11%
Picture Frames.....	29%
Placemats .....	33%
Plastics .....	42%
Plastic Storage Totes/Bins .....	50%
Power Toothbrushes .....	14%
Refrigerators .....	6%
Safety.....	13%
Salt & Pepper Shakers .....	33%
School Supplies.....	23%
Scrapbooks .....	10%
Seasonal Furniture .....	39%
Seasonal Outdoor .....	46%
Serving Bowls/Platters .....	43%
Sewing Notions.....	6%
Shower/Bath Caddies .....	28%
Sinkware .....	24%
Snacks .....	12%
Software .....	7%
Sporting Goods.....	19%
Stationery .....	21%
Tablecloths .....	23%
Toiletry Products .....	14%
Tools .....	19%
Toys .....	27%
Trays .....	22%
Video & Pre-recorded Tapes & CDs ...	12%
Wall Decor .....	19%
Washers.....	2%
Water Coolers.....	8%

## Product/Category by %

Housewares .....	91%
Gadgets & Cutlery .....	68%
Cookware .....	66%
Bakeware .....	60%
Hardware .....	57%
Table Top .....	57%
Closet & Storage .....	55%
Giftwares .....	55%
Dinnerware .....	55%
Small Electrics .....	54%
BBQ.....	53%
Lawn & Garden .....	52%
Christmas .....	50%
General Merchandise.....	50%
Plastic Storage Totes/Bins .....	50%
Candles .....	46%
Flatware.....	46%
Seasonal Outdoor .....	46%
Cleaning .....	44%
Beverageware .....	43%
Furniture .....	43%
Serving Bowls/Platters .....	43%
Decorative Accessories .....	42%
Plastics .....	42%
Personal Care.....	41%
Bath .....	39%
Seasonal Furniture .....	39%
Furniture / RTA .....	37%
Clocks .....	37%

Textiles .....	36%
Household Cleaners .....	34%
Laundry .....	34%
Halloween .....	33%
Placemats .....	33%
Salt & Pepper Shakers .....	33%
Garage Storage.....	32%
Kitchen Cabinet/Drawer Storage.....	29%
Picture Frames.....	29%
Outdoor & Indoor .....	28%
Pet Supplies .....	28%
Shower/Bath Caddies .....	28%
Health & Beauty .....	27%
Toys .....	27%
Floorcare .....	26%
Party Goods .....	24%
Sinkware .....	24%
Framed Art .....	23%
Gourmet Food.....	23%
Office .....	23%
School Supplies.....	23%
Tablecloths .....	23%
Juvenile .....	22%
Lighting .....	22%
Trays .....	22%
Electrical .....	21%
Lamps .....	21%
Stationery.....	21%
Consumer Electronics .....	20%
Coasters .....	19%
Mirrors .....	19%
Sporting Goods.....	19%
Tools.....	19%
Wall Decor .....	19%
Novelty .....	18%
Napkin Holders.....	17%
Albums .....	16%
Candy .....	16%
Auto Cleaners .....	14%
Power Toothbrushes .....	14%
Toiletry Products .....	14%
Safety.....	13%
Craft Storage.....	12%
Snacks .....	12%
Video & Pre-recorded Tapes & CDs ...	12%
Home Security .....	11%
Microwave Ovens.....	11%
Photo .....	11%
Books .....	10%
Scrapbooks .....	10%
Collectables .....	9%
Cameras.....	8%
Water Coolers .....	8%
Computer Software .....	7%
Lumber & By-Products Raw Materials..	7%
Medical .....	7%
Oral Irrigators .....	7%
Software .....	7%
Refrigerators .....	6%
Sewing Notions.....	6%
Organic & Natural Food .....	5%
Washers.....	2%

## 2003 / 2004 INDUSTRY CALENDAR OF EVENTS

### September

Natural Products Expo East  
September 04 - 07, 2003  
Washington, DC

ASD/AMD Variety Merchandise Show  
September 6 - 9, 2003  
New York, NY

Philadelphia Candy Show  
September 07, 2003 - September 09, 2003  
Philadelphia, PA

Fall Chicago Gift & Home Market  
September 12, 2003 - September 14, 2003  
Chicago, IL

NASCORE Coffee & Tea Trade Show  
September 12, 2003 - September 14, 2003  
Portland, OR

Atlanta Gourmet Show & Fall Gift & Accessories Market  
September 13, 2003 - September 15, 2003  
Atlanta, GA

New York Home & Textiles Show  
September 19, 2003 - September 22, 2003  
New York, NY

Dallas International Gift & Home Show  
September 20, 2003 - September 22, 2003  
Dallas, TX

Fall Gift & Home Furnishings Market  
September 28, 2003 - September 30, 2003  
Los Angeles, CA

### October

Atlanta Gourmet Show and Gift & Accessories Market  
October 13, 2003 - October 16, 2003  
Atlanta, GA

Coffee Fest Seattle  
October 24, 2003 - October 26, 2003  
Seattle, WA

New York Fall Tabletop Market at 41 Madison  
October 25, 2003 - October 30, 2003  
New York, NY

### November

Anchorage Holiday Food & Gift Festival  
November 7, 2003 - November 9, 2003  
Anchorage, AK

International Hotel/Motel & Restaurant Show  
November 08, 2003 - November 11, 2003  
New York, NY

Int'l SHOPA Show  
November 11, 2003 - November 13, 2003  
Atlanta, GA

### December

Americas Food and Beverage Trade Show  
and Conference  
December 03, 2003 - December 04, 2003  
Miami, FL

### January

Orlando Gift Show  
January 04, 2004 - January 06, 2004  
Orlando, FL

Atlanta International Gift & Home Furnishings Market  
January 06, 2004 - January 15, 2004  
Atlanta, GA

The Gift Fair in Atlanta  
January 09, 2004 - January 12, 2004  
Atlanta, GA

Portland Gift & Accessories Show  
January 10, 2004 - January 13, 2004  
Portland, OR

Philadelphia Candy Show  
January 11, 2004 - January 13, 2004  
Valley Forge, PA

Dallas International Gift & Home Accessories Market  
January 14, 2004 - January 21, 2004  
Dallas, TX

California Gift Show  
January 17, 2004 - January 20, 2004  
Los Angeles, CA

Toronto International Gift Fair  
January 23, 2004 - January 26, 2004  
Toronto, Canada

CGTA Canadian Gift & Tableware Show  
January 25, 2004 - January 29, 2004  
Toronto, Canada

Washington Gift Show  
January 25, 2004 - January 28, 2004  
Chantilly, VA

New York Gift & Housewares Show  
January 31, 2004 - February 05, 2004  
New York, NY

New York Gift Show at 41 Madison  
January 31, 2004 - February 04, 2004  
New York, NY

**Manufacturers:  
Are You Looking for Well-Qualified,  
Performance-Committed, Field Sales  
Professionals?**

*Find them quickly, easily and  
cost-effectively with IHRA's two  
exclusive marketing services . . .*

**The IHRA Locator**

A directory of field sales professionals  
by territories covered, type of products  
handled, type of customers sold to/through  
and complete details about their companies.

**Instant *HOT* Lines**

A onetime eMail or fax that  
provides immediate information  
on *your line, only*, to reps in  
specific territories or throughout the world

**Call IHRA at (800) 315-7430  
eMail: [info@ihra.org](mailto:info@ihra.org)  
[www.ihra.org](http://www.ihra.org)**

**The *REPorter*®**

is published  
monthly for

**INTERNATIONAL HOUSEWARES  
REPRESENTATIVES ASSOCIATION**

175 N. Harbor Drive  
Suite 1712  
Chicago, IL 60601  
(312) 240-0822  
Fax: (312) 240-1005  
eMail: [info@ihra.org](mailto:info@ihra.org)  
Web: [www.ihra.org](http://www.ihra.org)

Statements of fact and/or opinion  
are the responsibility of the  
authors alone and do not imply an  
opinion of the officers or members of IHRA.

**2003 / 2004 IHRA Officers, Directors & Staff  
Officers**

*Chairman:* Donna Peake  
*President:* Jim Adams  
*President-Elect:* James Ayotte

**Senior Vice Presidents**

*Industry & Membership:* David Silberstein  
*Legal & Education:* David Friedman  
*Fiscal:* Kent Kulovitz  
*Delegate to MRERF & AMRA:* Steve Grossman, CPMR  
*Executive Director:* William M. Weiner

**Directors**

Jeanmarie Bettencourt  
Mark Glotter  
Bob Kroll  
Mark Levy  
Richard Spitaletta

**Past Chairs**

John M. Clampitt  
Steve Grossman, CPMR  
Jay L. Cohen  
Tom Rooney  
Peter Bang-Knudsen

**Staff**

*Administrative Assistant:* Stephanie Baron  
*Financial Director:* Myra Weiner

**Home • Housewares • Hardware  
Multiple-Line, Field Sales Professional:**

If you're not a member of IHRA, you  
owe it to yourself to join the organization  
that is your voice in the industry and the  
manufacturers' resource for finding  
**Well-Qualified, Performance-Committed,  
Field Sales Professionals.**

For complete information and  
an application, contact:



INTERNATIONAL HOUSEWARES  
REPRESENTATIVES ASSOCIATION

175 N. Harbor Drive • Suite 1712  
Chicago, Illinois 60601  
(800) 315-7430  
Fax (312) 240-1005  
[info@ihra.org](mailto:info@ihra.org) • [www.ihra.org](http://www.ihra.org)