

8 tips on negotiating for an RV

My Wife's Negotiation Tips for Buying A RV

By Alan Wiener

If you are like me, you are not comfortable negotiating or haggling over prices. Sorry, it is just not in my nature to do this. You need to do what I do, find another member of your family or a friend who is an expert at negotiating and have them perform this important task for you at the RV shows or dealerships.

In our household, my dear wife is the family's Chief Negotiator. Why? Because she is good at it. I mean really good. When it comes to buying a house, car, RV or major appliances, she is the one that does it. Our whole family is in awe of her haggling abilities.

You have heard the phrase that "you can't get blood from a Turnip." I guarantee you that my wife could get at least a half a gallon of blood from any turnip.

When it is time to make a major purchase in our household, we unleash my wife on the unsuspecting salesperson. I also go along on these purchasing journeys. My main role during these negotiations is to sit next to my wife, keep my mouth shut while smiling and nodding in agreement with whatever she says to the salesperson (I might add that I am excellent at performing this task).

I have literally watched salespeople crumble within a matter of minutes of her beginning the negotiations. At the end of these sessions, the salesperson's eyes are usually glazed over and they have no idea what just hit them.

The end result for us has always been that we have gotten a great discounted price on these major items.

A good example of how good my wife is at negotiating is the purchase of our most recent RV. We took our three kids to one of the RV shows in our area and by the time my wife got done negotiating, we came back with only two kids and a great Class A Motorhome (OK, calm down, it's only a joke - we didn't trade in one of our kids for a motorhome, really we didn't!).

Anyway, who better to give you some tips on negotiating than our family's Chief Negotiator, my wife.

Here are my Wife's 8 Negotiation Tips For Buying A RV.

Negotiation Tip 1: If you are going to have to finance the purchase of the RV, arrange your financing in advance of the actual negotiating. This way you know exactly how much you can spend on your new RV.

Negotiation Tip 2: When you have found the RV make and model you want, just don't buy it from the first dealer you talk to. If you are at one of the RV shows that take place around the U.S. check all of the dealers that are there and see if they also have the same make and model you want. If they do, you can now play one dealer against the other. Especially if they are the type of dealer that says that they will beat anybody else's price.

The more dealers that have your make and model the better. Remember the bigger RV shows will have more dealers.

Negotiation Tip 3: If fuel prices are high when you are ready to buy a RV, don't let that stop you from buying one. It is to your advantage to buy an RV when fuel is high. Why a lot of people let the fuel prices scare them off from buying a RV. That's good for you. With less people in the market to buy an RV, you will find RV dealers more willing to sell you an RV at a lower price, so they don't have to keep it on the lot and pay the holding costs.

Remember the basic concept of Supply and Demand (also known as price and demand) you learned in your economics class in high school (though, if you are like me, you probably can't even remember high school).

To put it in RV terms, when fuel is high, the demand for RVs goes down; with less demand, the RV dealers are going to do everything they can to get rid of those RVs (in other words they will accept less money for them). Depending on what type of RV you are going to buy, the money you save on the purchase price could pay for your fuel for the next couple of years.

Negotiation Tip 4: Before you start negotiating with any RV dealer, you need to do a background check on them. That's right, check them out before you waste your time negotiating with them. Believe it or not there are some unscrupulous (shysters, crooks, thieves or just plain bad) RV dealers out there. Luckily, they are very few and far between.

The best place to check them out is with the Better Business Bureau. Go to the Better Business Bureau Web site and put in the zip code of the dealership and then on the next screen put in their name. The BBB has different rating codes in different states. If they are rated good then you are on the right track. If they have a bad rating, stay far, far away.

Negotiation Tip 5: Be prepared to hear the following statements from the Salespeople at the RV shows or dealerships: "This is our last best and final price on this RV." "The show price we have on this RV is as low as we can go." "We are barely going to make a profit at the price we are giving you." "My sales manager says we can't go any lower." "Because you're nice people, our sales manager decided to give you the best deal." "WOW, I can't believe we actually decided to give you this price." "We have never sold one of these units at the low price we are giving you." "Come on folks, I got eight kids to feed" (sorry, I just had to throw that one in). What do all of these statements mean? They don't mean you are at the lowest price. It means you need to dig in and start negotiating harder.

You may also hear this statement from your salesperson. "The price we are giving you is good for today only." That means, I really want to make a sale today. If they really want to sell you an RV (and they do), you will still be able to get the same price on the same unit within a reasonable amount of time after that day.

Negotiation Tip 6: Treat the salesperson with respect, don't talk down to them, don't berate them, remember they are just doing their job. On the other hand don't get intimidated by them either. They cannot force you to sign anything or buy anything. You have

to remember that when you are buying a RV, you are in the driver's seat. They really want to sell you the RV and you really want to buy it (don't, come out and tell them that you really can't live without this RV) but, the bottom line is you want your price.

Negotiation Tip 7: Be prepared to walk away and not make a deal that day. If you feel that you are not getting the sale price you should, be prepared to pack it in and leave. Sometimes when the sales person actually sees you walking out that door they have an epiphany and can actually get a little better price. If not, continue walking and actually leave. This next part is optional; you can give them your phone number and ask them not to call you unless they can come closer to your price.

Negotiation Tip 8: Most of all be realistic in your expectations. If you are negotiating the purchase of a tent trailer, you cannot expect to get a massive discount. On the other hand if you are looking at a Class A Diesel Pusher, you can rest assured that the dealer has more wiggle room to reduce the price.

That's it. That's how my wife does it. Believe me when I tell you that if you stick to your guns you are going to get an excellent deal on your next RV.

Happy RVing!

About The Author

Alan Wiener and his family have 36years of RVing experience under their belts. They share their knowledge and passion for RVing on Everything-about-rving.com. It's on this Web site where they describe the different types of RVs that are available, provide tips on renting an RV, tips on buying an RV, tips on financing an RV, information on things to see and do while traveling in the USA and Canada. Other topics include how to inspect an RV prior to purchase and they also answer your RVing questions. Click to subscribe to their Everything-about-RVing Blog.