

# Helping us Help you

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A five point strategy for selling your surplus machinery more quickly and at a fair price

Believe it or not (and many of you may take issue with me on this point) most machinery dealers are really good people who are serious about their business. We have worked for years to develop relationships with shippers and riggers; through trial and error we have seen what advertising attempts work and what ones do not. We have been on the receiving end of every blunt comment about machine appearance and value. And contrary to what I have actually been told -- we are not used car dealers spending endless nights wondering how we can roll back the mileage on that '75 Chevy Caprice just to make it appear more valuable. We like our business, we know our business and we like doing it well. Yes, we are in business to make a profit and so are you. So a win-win situation is always preferred by both parties.

What is a win-win situation? This is just my opinion, but I believe others will agree: Seeing the machine for its true condition, knowing all the options and capabilities, and getting the deal done without too much heal-dragging-negotiations so that machine shops can go back to the business of cutting parts and making money.

Does the above sound right? If so, read on.

**Here are five suggestions** that I always make when I am presented with machinery a customer wants me to broker for them. My conviction is that the five suggestions below enable most situations to be win-win for both seller and buyer, since it efficiently presents the buyer with the information they need to make a decision and it presents the seller with a check in their hand for the machine they just sold.

1. **Clean the machine.** I just sold an Okuma Cadet LNC-8. Great machine. Low use, and cutting quality parts. It had largely sat unused for the last 6 months and had therefore gathered some surface rust. It looked like a boat anchor. No one would touch it. I told the seller that everyone objected to the lathe because of its abused presentation. He was offended, said it was in great shape and only surface rust. I asked him to prove it. The next day I received photos of a machine whose turret, way covers and chuck looked shiny and brand new. Once it was cleaned up ONLY THEN could you really tell the true value and quality of the machine. The machine sold quickly.
2. **Be realistic.** Far too often sellers think their machine is worth its weight in gold. They start out asking for the moon, hang on to that unrealistic price for too long, reject every offer that comes up and six months later are so desperate to sell they take an unreasonably LOW price just to move it. It pays to be realistic up front. Buyers are ready to buy in today's market, not the past or the future.

3. **Be responsive.** Those in decision making positions at metal working shops make the decision to buy a used machine for three different reasons: a) it's cheaper than new – and that's all they can budget for, b) for shop programming integrity, they need to find the vintage and control that mirrors the other machines on their floor, or c) they need something immediately and simply can't wait for new delivery. So if you're selling – help us help you by getting us the information we are requesting in an efficient manner so that these buyers don't go elsewhere. It's not just a competitive market for used machinery dealers – it's also competitive for you, the machinery owner. Other machine shops and dealers may have the same machine and if they respond first, your machine will still be sitting on your shop floor.
4. **Know what you got.** Rarely will someone simply buy a machine because it has the right model number on the front panel. ALMOST ALWAYS I have found that the buyer needs to confirm every option on it (does it have coolant thru spindle, fourth axis, C-axis, conversational programming, IGF, probe – these things and more, “Inquiring Minds want to know”). Does everything work? Is anything missing? Many times a buyer has to make a quick decision and will pass on a machine if an option is not listed. They will assume it does not have that capability and will continue searching for one that does. If a detailed list of options and capabilities is known up front, then the right buyer can be found more quickly.
5. **It's all about History.** Information that typically closes a deal includes the following (I'm not making this stuff up, it really makes a difference): **a)** hours of operation/cutting hours (even a guess on # of shifts) **b.)** metals cut on machine **c.)** repair history **d.)** Tolerances held. No machine operator or dealer will ever guarantee tolerances, but it gives a buyer an idea of quality if you can at least suggest the tolerances that you were holding on your last batch of parts. I have sold machines purely based on hours of use. This stuff matters.

The above is not a guarantee that your machine will sell over night, or that it will sell at all. Selling your machine is a combination of right buyer, right machine, right information and right price. But it is a road map that I have found helpful and necessary when representing machines for resale.

So help us help you in moving your surplus machinery. Help us help you free up valuable floor space, create cash flow, and get back to the business of cutting parts and making money.

If you would like to talk about your surplus machinery, call or email today. We work for you and hope the above information is helpful.

Sincerely,

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