



Know the price you're willing to pay

Sie wollen als Frau alleine ein Auto kaufen? Verblüffen Sie den Autoverkäufer mit technischem Know-how, und stehen Sie auch bei Preisverhandlungen eisern Ihren Mann! **medium DS**

One winter evening a few years ago, with temperatures far below zero, my car's engine froze up. I'm not too mechanically minded, so I was quite surprised to learn that you can't simply thaw a frozen engine with a hair dryer or by parking it in a heated garage. No, it seems that when your car's engine freezes up, it's pretty much the end of the road — no pun intended.

The problem had something to do with a hose that had cracked as a result of the cold. Because my car was old and not worth the cost of repairs, I decided it was time to buy a new one. I'd never done this by myself, so I thought it could be a valuable learning experience.

The first thing was to decide what kind of car to buy — and no, women do not pick cars based on color. Fuel efficiency, cheap repairs, and a reasonable price are important. After spending hours reading about cars online, I chose the Toyota RAV4.

Now I needed to find out where to buy it and how much to pay. Again, the internet was a huge help. After finding the lowest price that anyone in the state was willing to offer, I drove to a nearby dealer, ready to pay exactly that price. Car salesmen have a reputation for being slick and for being good at haggling. I decided I was going to be even better.

When I walked into the showroom, a salesman named Andre jumped up. I'm sure he thought this would be a very easy sale. He didn't yet know that I had done my homework and knew how to drive not only a car, but a hard bargain as well. I told Andre that I was interested in a new RAV4 and wanted to buy it that evening. With a big smile, he started putting numbers into his calculator.

"I can tell you're a smart woman, and I like you, so I'm going to give you a really good deal," he said, looking me in the eye. "In fact, it's so good that I can't say it out loud."

He wrote a number on a piece of paper and pushed it across the desk toward me. I put on my look of complete shock.

"What? No way!" I said.

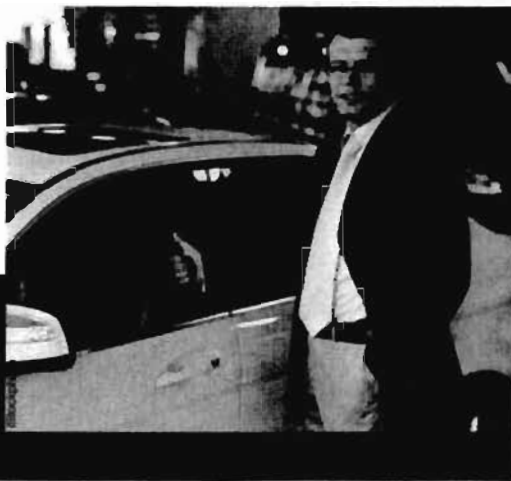
Andre stood up and said he'd have to talk to his manager to see what he could do. When he came back several minutes later, his smile was even bigger. Since it was getting late in the day, his manager had said he could go ahead and lower the price. He reached for the paper and wrote down a new number. I shook my head and again put on my look of shock. "Still no deal," I said.

After this game had gone on for several rounds, Andre was beginning to get a little frustrated. "How can we put you in a new car tonight?" he finally asked. "What price are you willing to pay?"

I looked him in the eye. "It's such a good price that I can't say it out loud," I said calmly as I took the pencil and wrote down my price.

Although there was another discussion or two with the unseen manager, and some complaining about how he couldn't possibly make any money on this deal, Andre finally filled out the papers, and I got my car — at the price I'd wanted to pay.

I got it in the color I wanted, too. There was no way I was going to be seen in that ugly beige car on the lot, even if it meant that Andre had to have a blue one brought in from another part of the state. Some things are worth fighting for.



"I'm sure Andre thought it would be easy to sell a car to a single woman"

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calculator ['kælkjələtɪr]	Taschenrechner
crack [kræk]	reißen, bersten
freeze up ['fri:z 'ʌp]	einfrieren
fuel efficiency ['fju:əl ə,ɪfɪʃns]	niedriger Kraftstoffverbrauch
haggle ['hæɡəl]	feilschen
hard bargain: drive a ~ [ˌhɑ:rd 'bɑ:rgɪn]	knallhart verhandeln
hose [hoʊz]	Schlauch
lot [lə:t] N. Am.	Parkplatz, Hof
mechanically minded [mɪ'kæni:k-li ,maɪndɪd]	technisch begabt
pun [pʌn]	Wortspiel
showroom ['ʃoʊru:m]	Ausstellungsraum
slick [slɪk]	aalglatt, gewieft
thaw sth. [θɔ:]	etw. auftauen
the end of the road [ði ,end əv ðə 'rəʊd]	das Aus