“Nobody can tell me anything about pool paint!”

That’s just what I told this pool paint salesman. It didn’t take long for him to irritate me — no longer than it took for me to see that he knew a lot more than I did. That always irritates me.

Even when I don’t know much about a subject, (such as pool paint) I like to have a man make me feel I know at least as much about it as he does. I don’t like people acting like they could tell me something new.

This fellow was talking about how to get the surface of the pool ready for painting, when to paint, and all about different types of paint, etc.

That stuff about types of paint really brought out my best sneer. I’ve never heard such silly stuff. He told me I could change from one brand of paint to another, but the type had to stay the same. You know, rubber over rubber, epoxy over epoxy, vinyl over vinyl. He said I would have to use the same paint type that is now on the pool or I’d court trouble.

That, of course, was a challenge. Nobody can challenge me and find me backing away. I asked him if he knew what type was on my pool. He told me it was a chlorinated rubber-base type — a very good one, too. I asked him if he made chlorinated rubber-base paint. He said his company made all types.

I asked him what other types. When he came to epoxy, I said: “That’s it! That’s what I want.” Everybody knows how wonderful epoxy is! On TV you watch them stick a truck fast to a crane with a drop of epoxy. That’s the stuff I want!
I wanted epoxy. I got epoxy! What made me madder than a hornet at that know-it-all salesman was that he was right! Epoxy over the rubber type did what he said it would! He said that paints are chemicals and changing types of rugged swimming pool paints was like mixing the wrong chemicals together.

My pool looked like a tattered battle flag!

Naturally, I couldn't suffer the humiliation of calling him in again. Something would have burst inside of me if he'd said — or ever thought — “What did I tell you?”

My problem now was to get a reasonable, friendly paint man in. Someone with a little understanding who could bring the pool back to where it was when it was painted with the rubber-type paint. Looking at the pool, I knew I needed a miracle. And I found it — or rather it found me. Tin's mousy, little guy stopped in as I was working around the putting clock. He was sympathetic and cringed like no one ever cringed as I glared at him in telling my story about the wiseacre salesman. I began to feel better fast. He ran his hand gently over the pool, broke off a few chunks of loose paint and sniffed them. He looked up at me and told me with righteous indignation that I had every right to feel outraged!

I asked him how about this type compatibility business. He told me I was too smart to be fooled by that line. Sure, with ordinary paints you had to use the same type for repainting as you had on the pool.

But his company was years ahead of the rest of the industry. He had a paint that was the result of scientific testing in outer space. It was so good it would go over any type of paint. He didn't care what was on the pool now.

I found out why he didn't care when I tried to locate him after his miracle coating gave me insomnia! Of course, he couldn't be found. All night long I could hear chunks of it clunking to the bottom of the pool!

That insomnia did something for me though. It opened my eyes. It put me in the mood to listen, too. It's a sign of bigness, of character, to admit you've been wrong. I called in that know-it-all salesman.

Well, he wasn't really a know-it-all. You know how you get worked up and say things that you don't really mean. This fellow was a nice guy when you got to know him. He was genuinely sorry when he told me the only thing I could do was sandblast and make a fresh start.

I took his advice and brought his rubber-base paint. After all it had done a fine job before. Now I have a pool that lets people know I do things right!

What type of paint will I use when I repaint? There won't be any type-changing again — and no miracles! I know pool paint now. I should. I paid enough for my lessons!

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