

Raymmar Tirado



Sales Li(f)e

Exposing the truth about sales
and the world around you

SALES LI(F)E

The Truth About Sales and The
World Around You

Raymmar Tirado

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FIRST EDITION

Designed by Raymmar Tirado

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Dedicated to everyone out there trying to make a difference in a world where being different is discouraged, and to my Mom who, by being different has made all the difference in my life.

“To follow the path that others have laid before you is a reasonable course of action. Therefore all progress is made by unreasonable men.”

- Steve Jobs -

1. NOT JUST ANOTHER LI(F)E

Let me start out by telling you that I am not an expert in anything and this book is not based on any tangible scientific data. Society might actually have you believe that I am an “uneducated college drop-out who will probably amount to nothing.” I didn’t know what I wanted to be when I was 18 and part of me still doesn’t know what I want to be when I grow up. What I do know is that I love life and people, and for the last 12 years I have ridden this roller coaster called “life” with my eyes wide open, observing and documenting everything around me.

This book is heavily biased. It is biased because we are all biased. Every human forms the basis for how his or her life will play out through the process of living it, but the beliefs that define us are always evolving. My experiences have shown me that no matter how different we are and how different our biases, we still respond similarly to certain provocations (triggers) and that no one person is immune to all of them. They are present all around us and people use them to influence your world all the time. Understanding them can give you the ability to defend against them. Let me be clear here: you are constantly being sold on something. You either learn to accept it and deflect it, or you get swallowed by it. You will quickly learn that everything in life is a sale. A sale is just a short-term relationship, and life is made up of short-and long-term relationships.

It is that easy. The end. Okay, not really the end, but I wanted to make sure you understand that before we move forward.

This book is not strictly a sales book, although I will reference sales many times throughout the work. By the end of the book, if you can take it, you will discover that everything in life is a sale. Whether you make a living at it

or not, life is all about learning to sell one of four things: a product, an idea, a service, or your time. No matter the situation, the profession or the people, everything you experience in life is a sale. Once you understand that, then you can begin to understand how the world influences you and be more informed when you make decisions or determine your direction.

Throughout the course of this book, you will get to know me fairly well, but you will get to know yourself even better. I will make you question your purpose and hopefully help you find direction in a world that often has none. Don't be afraid to challenge what you read in this book. My view cannot be your view otherwise it wouldn't be mine, right? What I *will* ask you to do is to keep an open mind and to consider the examples I share with you through your own eyes and life experiences, and to see if they aren't things you encounter in daily life or that affect your world every day.

MEET THE THEORY

You may not think you are in sales. You may not go to work and sell for a living, but everything you do in life is a sale: either you sell your idea, your knowledge or your product, but you do sell something. If you can realize this early you can use, to your advantage, basic sales principles to help affect the outcome of nearly every situation you encounter. Every company out there is using these same principles to make you their buyer; why not turn the tables and give yourself a competitive advantage over them? By learning and recognizing these principles you will have the upper hand in any future argument, negotiation or purchase you make from that point forward.

Pretty much everything we do on a daily basis is done systematically: marketing, sales, manufacturing, etc. Pay attention as you experience the world around you. Consider the way every restaurant runs, from the second you walk in to the minute you walk out. Much of what you experience throughout the day is pre-planned, thought-out and constantly adjusted to be more systematic and efficient than before. My way, his way, which way

works best? Who sells the most? Which one is better?

Think about a restaurant chain like Chipotle. When you walk in to their store you are greeted by someone who asks what type of food container you would like to eat out of (taco, burrito, salad, bowl) and then a series of other people who ask what you want inside of your food container. Down the line you go until you get to the register where someone has already punched in your order and is waiting for your form of payment before you even get your wallet out. Half of the time the register operator knows the price before it gets punched in to the screen as they are frequently completing a repetitive task as part of their daily existence.

Every step of the process optimized, planned, monitored and tweaked over time to deliver a burrito assembly machine pumping out over a million dollars in revenue per location. Even down to how they cook, season and prep the food at each location. each process broken down, simplified, and maximized for productivity and efficiency.

Chipotle has found the most efficient way to sell burritos as a meal and exploited the systematic nature of our society to provide a delicious product to the world. They have taken the concept of an assembly line to heart and given each member such a specific routine that they can't help but do it right. Every companies strives to do this. To optimize their sales process so effectively that replication becomes easy and duplication becomes the only viable option. Companies are not the only people who use systems and basic human nature to establish systems for productivity. Systems are an integral part of the human experience because they allow us to do things without thought. Systems can be broad or specific but they have to be definitive in their approach. They are not to be relied on implicitly but more as a system for accountability. By the end of the book you will be able to dissect the very systems that make up your life through the process by which they are formed and exerted over you.

The one thing that no one tells you is that *they are all the same*! Almost every system, at its core, can be broken down to a basic set of instinctual situations in which humans generally respond in the same way. That is the basic premise of why systems work. With this knowledge, you can begin to understand how to tailor your use of the principles to lead the average person, or, better yet, your target audience, to the desired result.

Corporations do it daily in their marketing and advertising, politicians do it in their speeches, and you do it every day when you pick up your toothbrush from the same spot you left it the night before. Why? Quite simply, because it works! Humans are creatures of habit, and when we find a routine that works for us, we instinctively continue to do it that way. For years, companies have been developing their sales strategies in order to capitalize on these behaviors and reactions. Now, I am passing that information on to you in a simple yet insightful way to put you in the best position to come out on top in everything you do.

The following pages describe my interpretation of why people do what they do, how to interact with those reactions, and how developing these skills can benefit your life. What you won't find in these pages are scam tactics, cheats, and slick tricks to help you make more money, manipulate people, or give you a short cut to success. You can only expect to get out of this book as much as you allow it to get into you.

If you are in sales, then this book will help you be a better salesperson. If you don't think you are in sales, then your first lesson starts now. The sooner you realize that life breaks down into a consecutive sequence of sales, in one way or another, the quicker you can understand the value of learning these principles. All I ask is that you pay attention as the days pass and see if you can't find a situation in your day that doesn't somehow relate to these basic principles. As you become more familiar with the principles you will recognize the situations more and more in life and how your response can best serve the situation.

After all, that is the key: if your response to the situation is the most logical, then more often than not people will follow your lead. Luckily, if you don't feel like you are a leader, know that leadership can be taught. **Leadership is not something you say: it's something you do.** If you approach the principles with an open mind and commit to recognizing their prevalence in your everyday life you will often see how implementing them appropriately will help you achieve all of your goals and often so much more.

WHY SHOULD YOU LISTEN TO ME?

You shouldn't just listen to me: you need to observe for yourself. Today, tomorrow, as you go through every day of your life, notice how often these principles present themselves. Your ability to recognize them and to use them strategically will give you an edge in this highly systemized world. It works every day, whether you notice or not, so learn to see it and understand it in order to take full advantage of it in your life.

I have spent a lot of time over the course of my life breaking down those observations, wondering what if I had said this or done that. Noticing reactions and interactions. Visual cues, verbal cues, understanding and making notes about what to try next time and what to avoid. Over time my arsenal of understanding was overflowing and I started to understand trends and behaviors in the way things that I was doing would interact the people around me.

Solving problems has always been a gift of mine. Breaking down every day events to their simplest form gives you a different view of how to handle them. You can even say that my life became an experiment of testing, pushing, prodding and poking those around me in order to understand their trigger points and how I was affecting them. Every interaction hyper analyzed and second-guessed with experiences broken down to their core components in an effort to find their deepest meaning.

It started out by always thinking of that perfect thing to say after an argument or sales pitch. You know, that perfect line you think of just after you walk away that would have made all the difference in presenting your case. I started wondering what I might be able to do to ensure that I was always prepared to give my best performance. To make sure that I had my best stuff available at all times. As I started taking notes and as I began accumulating more and more experiences I began to notice patterns in what was happening around me. Whether the situation was personal or professional, I soon noticed that the end result could have been more positively affected had I recognized and influenced key indicators early on.

It is for this reason that I decided to write this book, I wanted to help people make more sales; but even more than that, I wanted to show people the power of understanding humans, trigger points, impulses, and the power of building and nurturing relationships.

The following chapters will clearly outline those basic principles, reveal how to recognize them, and explain how to influence them. It's not rocket science; my most significant challenge may be explaining its simplicity in a way that not only makes sense but that gives you what you need to use them in your everyday life.

My quest then comes, not from helping you understand them, but empowering you to embrace them and use them to make yourself better. "At what", you ask? That part will be up to you.

WHY YOU SHOULDN'T READ THIS BOOK

I know; you're probably thinking, *what kind of idiot opens up his book by telling you to put it down before you get to any of the good stuff?* I just thought I'd give you fair warning that by continuing on you will begin to question your surroundings, the world, and the people that fill it. You will discover that you are living in a world of systems where everything and everyone has an agenda, even you have an agenda (ALWAYS!), and that

knowing the “why’s” and “how’s” of that system can help you succeed in it.

The world around you is designed to eat you alive (that doesn’t mean you have to let it) and it’s been that way from the beginning of our universe to this moment in time. Whether you believe in a religious beginning or Darwinian type evolution, our current condition can be blamed only on our own human nature. We are living in a world controlled by political correctness, over-reaching governments, financial crises and ignorance. We have become complaisant. We are taught every day how we should live our lives, do our work, spend our money and have our fun. We have become a trend-following, fit-in society content with living in ignorance.

This book is intended to remove the self-imposed blinders we wear around in our lives. Do we take the red pill or the blue pill? Just like Neo in the Matrix, you have to decide whether to keep living within the status quo of an unachievable ideological society or do you admit reality, look it in the eyes and understand that in order to make a difference you have to be willing to be different. If you aren’t ready to take off the blinders and do something better with your life then you probably shouldn’t read this book, but if you are, continue on and brace yourself; it’s about to get real.

EVERYTHING IN LIFE IS A SALE

Every situation in your life can be broken down into the sale or purchase of one of four things: always- either buying or selling, your time, an idea, a product or a service every time you interact with another person. Consider this: your job is the sale of your time to your employer. You work and he pays you. Your friend that wants to hang out this weekend is selling you on the idea of a good time and he is planning on compensating you for your time with time of his own. Investing time into a financial product is no scarier than investing your time in people.

You may not lose your savings account or your house, but a broken heart and the devastation of disappointment can be equally painful. As soon as

you can understand that all of your interactions in life can be broken down to different parts of the sales process then you can start to influence the outcome of all of your interactions in your favor and achieve anything you want to in life.

Imagine eliminating the fear associated with buying your next car or negotiating a home loan. Remove the intimidation of dealing with a pushy sales person, angry boss, upset customer, or even with an argumentative friend. By understanding that the world and the people around you are always trying to sell you something, you can learn to counter their sales by using the same methods they use against you. As you will find out, some of this stuff happens instinctively. This book can teach you how to level the playing field in all aspects of your life. Your relationships will get stronger, your confidence will increase and your outlook on life will change.

If you can keep an open mind through the chapters of this book I will show you examples of real-life situations and how they break down in the sales process. Every chapter of this book will cover a different part of how sales and life are connected and they will show you how to implement specific techniques to help you use them in your life to accomplish your goals.

MAYBE I AM A LITTLE SELFISH. SO WHAT?

There is nothing wrong with being selfish. It's the extent of that selfishness that gets us in to trouble. As humans we are programmed to put ourselves first. Why shouldn't I want to be best version of myself that I can be? Why should we feel bad for achieving success? Our natural tendencies to be our own number one give us the confidence and desire to work hard for our goals and dreams.

Don't ever let anyone make you feel bad for succeeding at something. Don't let the world beat you up for working harder than the dummy who always skipped class or the co-worker who let you do all the work and then got mad when you took all the credit. When it comes to humans, there are those that

would have you believe we are all supposed to be equal.

Somehow as a society, we have become okay with striving for average. We are taught not to hurt other people's feelings and watch what we say so as not to offend those around us. People have become so immersed in the complexity of political correctness that it is impossible to have an honest discussion without worrying about provoking someone. Well, when are we going to get mad at the people who get mad at *us* for speaking our mind, and for being honest and blunt and for letting them know that participations trophies were invented by losers. There are no participation ribbons in life and pretending otherwise is a disservice to yourself and to the world around you.

I am offended by the thought that we would ever tell someone that they are not capable of making a difference, and that through hard work and determination they can be successful and overcome any adversity. If I am selfish because I empower people to do better in their lives, then I am ok with that. If I am selfish because I demand that people ask more of themselves, then call me guilty. All that leaves me thinking is, "Maybe I am a little selfish. So what?"

FINAL DISCLAIMER

That being said, I am not encouraging you to be a jerk. I am not giving you this information for you to take advantage of the people around you. I am asking that you take an open-minded approach to interacting with the people in your life, and see if I am wrong. Tell me that the things in this book are not apparent in your everyday life.

If you do absorb the principles in this book you will gain immense superpowers: power over people and their decision-making process, power over relationships, and power over people who think they are more powerful than you. All I ask is that you use your powers for good instead of evil.

“I hated every minute of training, but I said, ‘Don’t quit. Suffer now and live the rest of your life as a champion.’”

- Muhammad Ali -

2. IT STARTS WITH THE INTRODUCTION

Every situation has a beginning, a catalyst, an idea; something that gets the ball rolling and sets the scene and tone for everything that happens after. Many sales systems refer to it differently, but we will simply call it “the Introduction.”

The introduction encompasses everything that happens in the very beginning of every sale, including the first impression. As I describe the different principles of my theory you will have to look less at the dictionary definitions of words and instead focus on the concept behinds them.

You may be thinking, “How can you call it an introduction if I already know the person?” Here again I am not talking about an introduction in the traditional definition; I use it to reference the beginning of that specific interaction. If you are meeting someone for the first time, then the introduction will be your starting point. If it is a situation involving someone you already know, then the introduction could be when you bring up a new idea or suggestion. It could also mark the moment when you finally get to present your idea, product, or service to someone who you might know but to whom you have not gotten a chance to make your pitch.

Don’t get me wrong, the first impression and the introduction are not one in the same. The first impression can only be made once, but the introduction can be made many times. Think about a journalist pitching story ideas to an editor or a kid trying to talk his parents into buying him the newest video game. They already know each other, they have done this dance before, and yet there is always a specific *beginning* for each of these interactions.

There is a clear beginning to each relational situation we encounter in our everyday lives. We will be discussing a number of similar situations and how

you can properly prepare for and optimize your introduction every time. Some will be more difficult to pinpoint than the others, but as you get better at breaking down the concepts of this system you will understand the value of a solid introduction for each situation.

... **General Tip - Influential short term relationships**

Much of my theory is based around building relationships. A sale is just the culmination of a mutually beneficial relationship where one thing of value is exchanged for another thing of value. A former mentor of mine once told me that relationships doesn't have to be permanent to be effective. Proven by my placing of the word "former" in front of "mentor" yet I retain many of his insights to this day. Remember this as you read on about getting started and developing relationships. Recognizing the value of short- and long-term relationships early on will make you doubly as effective in implementing the principles.

A friend once told me that you should never leave the house without looking your best. Convention states that a statement like this shows that this person is vain and only cares about how they look, but what if we throw convention out the window, break this down according to my theory, and see if we can't help you understand why an introduction is so important.

The basic concept behind not leaving the house looking your best would lead people to believe that you are interested in looking good, right? Consider your audience. Are you heading to school, a meeting, or maybe even a date?

We already know that first impressions are important, but have you ever questioned why they are so important? There are a bunch of statistics and articles online that will tell you exactly why a first impression is so important,

but none of that really matters. What *does* matter is that you know they matter, that they cannot be undone, and that they can set the tone for everything that happens after.

People have a tendency to formulate an opinion in the first moments of meeting someone. Fair or not, it is what we do. Looking good comes from feeling good and feeling good comes from believing in yourself. I shouldn't have to tell you how to dress or that you should dress for the situation in order to make a good impression, so let us instead focus more on the behavioral aspect of first impressions.

A sincere smile will get you much further than that designer shirt you spent way too much money on. Don't get me wrong, I like a nice shirt as much as the next guy but there are people out there making sales in thrift store suits and there are also people wearing Armani that couldn't close a book (close is a sales term for making a sale. We will discuss that later). Looking your best has more to do with your self-confidence than with what you are wearing. The way you carry yourself and how you present yourself have more to do with first impressions than most people think, and as we will discuss later in this book, non-verbal communication is a huge part of how we interact with other people.

Looking good is always great. Having nice clothes, being well-groomed, and having fresh breath are all important, but they really aren't going to make or break a sale for you (trust me, I have seen some ugly salespeople). On the other hand, your confidence, enthusiasm, eye contact and how you use them *will* affect potential sales, so you should learn how to use them properly. Even if they don't immediately help you make a sale (which I wouldn't believe), they will help you feel better about yourself, and that in itself would be a victory.

HOW TO SAY, WHAT YOU SAY

I know you might not be a believer yet but try, just for just a moment, to

consider that everything we do in life is a sale. If you can believe this, then at some point we have to begin to sell ourselves and our ideas.

Whether it be a sales person explaining why their product is better than the competition, or a parent trying to get their child to eat their veggies, it all comes down to “the pitch”. This is where it gets interesting and where we will talk about another basic human impulse and how to be sure that your pitch, whatever it may be, is effective in stimulating those impulses.

First we start out by breaking down impulse. What is it? It could be that feeling you get when you really want something or feel so strongly about something that you set aside your inhibitions and just act; or, it may be a moment of creative inspiration. It could stem from personal gain, monetary savings or emotional rewards. Whatever it is, learning how to understand and build impulse in others is one of the fundamental principles of this entire theory. Your ability to build relationships and therefore sell people is directly tied to your ability to effectively build impulse and what we will refer to later as *sales stimulus*.

There are many sales books out there that will tell you to follow their (insert number of steps here) program to get to a sale. They would have you believe that only by following their path can you lead someone down the road of a sale. The truth is that there is no magical number of steps to any sale. There are a few things that take place in every sales transaction, but they don't happen on a schedule, and there is no road-map to making more sales.

Some sales are more complex than others and therefore require a longer incubation period (sales cycle), but others are simple and might only incorporate a few of the principles. No matter what you are selling, complex or simple, you must clearly paint a picture with your words and actions of what it is you are trying to do so people will follow your lead.

...

General Tip - What is a sales cycle?

*A sales cycle refers to the amount of time that passes from the **introduction** to the **buying decision**. A sales cycle can vary depending on the product or industry. For example a sales cycle in the insurance industry can be anywhere from a few months to a few years, depending on the length of the insurance policy and when it comes up for renewal. Some sales cycles-like buying a car-can be considerably shorter.*

Through my observations in many sales and non-sales situations, delivering your message comes down to what I like to call a “perfect pitch.” This doesn’t mean you have to have a script to follow robotically or that you memorize a certain sequence of words in order to effectively make a sales; It means you have the ability to clearly present your ideas and to improvise and adapt to the situation.

While having a script can be extremely beneficial for practicing your sales pitch, it has no relation to your “perfect pitch.” A perfect pitch demands many things, not the least of which is confidence.

If you are confident in what you are talking about, then you can truly present a convincing argument of why someone should buy your idea or product. Without confidence you will have a hard time convincing anyone to do what you want. Why would anyone believe in you if you don’t believe in yourself first?

Don’t worry if you find yourself short-changed in the self-confidence department. Confidence happens to be a side effect of combining the principles of this book in to one comprehensive theory on how to interact with others in life.

SO WHAT ELSE MAKES UP A PERFECT PITCH?

Like other aspects of the sales process, *control*, *direction* and *purpose* are key principles to success. This continues to be the case in developing your perfect pitch.

Consider your potential sale as a road. Your goal is to take the person to whom you are selling from point “A” to point “B.” Think about the perfect pitch as being the easiest logical path to get someone from your point “A” to point “B.”

Think of it as if you were driving to and from somewhere familiar. You can determine, usually instinctively, the best way to get to your destination based on past experiences, trial and error, and other information. If you practice your pitch (drive the same route to and from work) you will inevitably find the most effective way to get your pitch across and become more effective at making sales.

The problem is that while most people have to drive to and from work every day, they usually don’t have to practice the art of making sales (unless you are in sales of course), so these concepts are largely foreign to them. The purpose of this book is to get you to understand that you do a lot of these things on a daily basis without ever understanding the “what” or “why” behind your natural systematic approach. Hopefully, by helping more people understand the parallels between life and sales I can help empower a new world of relationship-based sales interactions where you do not fear the salespeople because you are just as familiar with their sales tactics as the sales guys trying to use them on you.

DEVELOPING THE PERFECT PITCH

Look me in the eye when we talk! Nothing bothers me more than looking someone in the eyes only to have them avoid my eye contact. It makes you look weak and insecure. From the first moment I meet you I am looking for

honesty, empathy, attentiveness, and many other non-verbal keys that give me clues as to how the conversation should proceed. Are you looking at me sternly or smiling back? Are you looking at my eyes or are you looking at your computer? Maybe you are looking at the smart phone or tablet on your desk, with a message that is obviously more important than the person standing right in front of you. It is okay to let the phone ring; I assure you, you are not that important. Sincerity and effective listening skills are vital to building meaningful short- and long-term relationships.

My eyes present my confidence and extend non-visual cues to the other parties involved in the sale. I let them know I am here with a purpose. Whether it's a conversation with your kids or walking into the bosses' office, you can establish your presence without saying a word, by holding your head high, smiling sincerely and making solid eye contact. Not convinced? Think back to when you were a kid and mom shot you that death look. Tell me you did not know exactly what that meant in that moment without a need for her to say a word.

These observations dictate whether I speak quickly or whether I can take my time explaining the details. Some people are fast-paced and others are slower, and determining this early on dictates how well you communicate with them. Sometimes I can tell I'm not going to get a chance to speak at all. Like I mentioned before, listening is the key to understanding: if you cannot listen then, you will never understand.

When you do talk, know what you are talking about. In order to have a perfect pitch you need to be able to convey your message convincingly. Just like driving to and from work, this gets better with repetition. Eventually your pitch will become part of you. This means that you need to be confident in what you are selling as well as knowing everything about whatever it is you are selling. If you are selling an idea, then it has to be developed and thought-out. If you are selling a product, then you better believe in it or you have no shot at developing your perfect pitch.

In any sales effort, the perfect pitch just means the ability to paint the clearest picture possible in the most simplistic way. Presenting yourself verbally, physically and emotionally in tune is all part of developing your perfect pitch. As with many of the other principles in this book, you can only develop this skill through practicing it regularly.

Think about the following situations. After reading each one, take a moment to break down what is happening and what you think the key indicators are in each situation. Then, consider what they may have in common. Think about what separates them and why one approach might be more effective than the other.

Example a: It's your first day walking into a new school. You don't know anyone and your family is new to town. You scan the room, looking at all the new faces, nervous about who your new friends or enemies might be. You timidly take a seat in the classroom. The kids in the class who all know each other whisper as you walk by. Maybe a few snigger because something about you is different. Nothing major, but something seems different. At lunch you sit alone, waiting for someone to approach you.

Example b: It's your first day at a new job in the computer programming department of a large company. The manager is showing you around the office, but there are so many people it's actually a little intimidating: you have a lot of names to remember and just as many new policies to learn. You know it's polite to smile, so you do, but not especially confidently though because there is a group of your new co-workers chatting and looking at you from across the room. You sit at your desk and stare at your computer, anxious for a task so you can be busy and not awkward. You might make small talk on your way to the bathroom but after the obligatory "how you doing?" you look at the ground and, not quite sure what to say next, you walk alone back to your desk.

Example c: A newly-hired CEO comes out to the sales floor. He walks to the middle of the room with his head held high, scanning the room and making

eye contact with everyone who looks his way. When he gets to the center he addresses the entire room confidently and authoritatively. He knows what he is going to say; in fact, he probably rehearsed it, though it doesn't sound forced, and he paints a clear picture of his vision for the company to the sales staff. The employees can't help but pay attention to him because he is so charismatic. For some reason, you feel like he is talking directly to you. When he is finished he doesn't even have to say so, you just know it's time to get back to work because, well, you just know.

Which situation best describes the way you carry yourself in a new situation? Are you the kid, the new employee, or the CEO? Why? What differentiates them? Other than the obvious that is. Once you take away age, experience, and setting, you start seeing behaviors. We want to break the examples down to their most basic forms of human interaction to expose the roots of why people do what they do.

The biggest difference between each example is the individual behavior and mindset before entering the situation. The new student does not have this training, (possibly due to age) but how do the popular kids in the classroom understand these principles instinctively? Think back to the "cool kids" in your school. How did they act? The guy starting a new job is maybe a little anxious and hesitant in new situations. He is comfortable enough to get by but has no real confidence. However, the CEO approached the situation confidently. His training has taught him that people trust confidence and that people will follow those who express leadership through both verbal and non-verbal communication.

Some people think that a salesperson is a scam artist, someone who charms and scams their way in to your head forcing you to do what they want. This is true to a certain extent but since life is a long series of sales then you would have to think that we are all scam artists and charmers. I disagree wholeheartedly with that premise. There are scam artists out there pretending to be sales people but there are also those of us, the majority of us, who want to do right by the people we sell to.

I cannot stop people from trying to take advantage of you by influencing your behaviors with their sales prowess. There are those who practice the arts of manipulation in order to get people to do whatever they want. The only thing I can do is open your eyes to what is taking place, help you realize the process and hopefully empower you to level the playing field.

WHY THE PITCH MATTERS

So, now you understand the basic fact that a person's perception of you is based on how you perceive yourself. All of the best introductions begin in your head. There is a reason why self-help books are so popular: they play on all the principles we are discussing. They influence your natural response as a human to specific stimulants. My approach is different, because you don't have to change your life to implement any of them. It doesn't take years or even months to see results and you probably do most of it already: you just don't know it. Here, I am giving everything a name, explaining the principles, helping you understand why they work, and detailing how to use them in your favor.

"Practice makes perfect!" How many times have you heard that? Practicing entails repetition. When you do something over and over, you get better at it; so, if you are not getting better, you need to change the way you practice. You need to know what you want your end result to be, otherwise you will never be able to tell if you are making progress.

The most simple yet over-looked aspect of practice is not *if* you get better, but *why*. Through effective practice, you gain confidence in what you do as you develop the necessary skills to do it. Without developing that confidence, you cannot progress in your learning. This is why positive reinforcement works so well and is an effective leadership skill. Think about the popular and confident people you know. Are they confident because they are popular, or are they popular because they are confident?

Coming into a new situation with confidence, like the CEO, takes practice. One thing the CEO has more practice doing is meeting people. Because he is comfortable meeting people individually, he can more effectively address a group or speak in a public setting. In order to develop this confidence you must also practice meeting people. Many of my principles will take you outside of your comfort zone: this is a good thing.

People naturally fear rejection and that is why they shy away from reaching beyond their comfort zone. If you are really looking to take a step forward and truly absorb the principles, you will need to introspectively review the way you have done things in the past and build up the confidence to do them better in the future. Believe me when I say that your comfort zone will expand to encompass anything you put in it; that is, do anything long enough, and it will *become* comfortable over time, even if it wasn't at first.

Introduce yourself to someone new every chance you get. People are interesting, so take pleasure in getting to know them. Doing this regularly helps you build relationships because people will realize that you are an effective listener. As you gain confidence in your introduction, challenge yourself in a public setting. Introduce yourself and speak briefly at a networking event, speak at a parent-teacher association meeting or offer to give that presentation at work you shied away from last week. Commit to doing this for 30 days. We all learn at different paces, so it might take you longer than someone else. This doesn't mean that you are not developing, but don't use your slow development as an excuse to give up. If anything, it should motivate you to increase your efforts in building your confidence. I promise you that if you put in the time, you will get better.

As you meet people and develop your confidence techniques, you will begin to realize a change in the way people perceive you. You will make more friends, your relationships will strengthen, and you will feel deeper fulfillment in any number of situations.

However, do not mistake confidence for arrogance. Be sure not to become overbearing and intrusive as you develop your skills. There is an entire section later on covering body language and non-verbal communications. At this point, just remember to be observant and don't push it too far. If you're unsure if you're stepping over the line, don't worry: people will definitely let you know if you are crossing any boundaries.

Along with your confidence you have to be sure to show enthusiasm in what you are doing. Do you know any people whom you perceive to be confident that come across as boring? I doubt it. Often they are charismatic and fun to be around. Such confidence can even be contagious. If you are confident, then you can believe in yourself, your product or whatever it is you're selling. Confidence naturally leads to enthusiasm as your focus changes from convincing yourself that what you are doing is the right thing to convincing others.

Example:

A school teacher walks in to a classroom and instructs the class: "Pull out your textbooks and turn to chapter three. You have thirty minutes to read the chapter, and then you will have a quiz on the material." The teacher then sits down and demands silence from the class as she grades the test they took yesterday.

Across the hall another teacher addresses her students. "Today we are going to learn about the Civil War." The teacher discusses the material in chapter three. She addresses the key points and prompts the students that notes would be good because some of the information she is highlighting might be on a pop quiz. "Now class, please turn to chapter three in your books. Who would like to read out loud?" The students read the chapter out loud with the teacher scanning the class to be sure that all are following along all the while interrupting to emphasize key sentences and topics of interest. At the end of the class both teachers give the same quiz to their students.

Which class will score higher on the test?

What you probably inferred from the example is that the second teacher would have had better results. Why did you come to that conclusion? In the example I presented the second teacher as more confident about the material as well as being enthusiastic in getting the class involved. She appears to be more attentive so you perceived her as such. You wouldn't have to stretch far to make the conclusion that the students of the second teacher enjoy class more as well. There will be plenty of discussion throughout this book regarding attitude and its effect on others but just know that confidence and enthusiasm will always encourage a positive attitude in others.

I told you earlier that everything in life was a consecutive series of sales. This is a perfect example of how your confidence and enthusiasm helps you implement the principles in those sales throughout the day. From the example above you might also infer that the second teacher is more fulfilled with her job.

Your attitude and the way you carry yourself is just as important to those around you as it is yourself. The CEO has years of experience (practice) so his confidence comes naturally. To fully implement the principles of this book you have to think like an athlete. You have to practice your sport, meticulously preparing for every possibility, training your body and mind to react instinctively on game day, you have to practice the principles of sales, confidence and perfecting your pitch in order to wrap it all up in to a game winning performance. It has to be second nature or it will never be as effective as you want it to be. If you hesitate or if you doubt yourself then you will surely miss out on many sales and many opportunities in life in general.

“Question with boldness even the existence of a God; because, if there be one, he must more approve of the homage of reason, than that of blind-folded fear.”

- Thomas Jefferson -

3. QUESTION EVERYTHING

Throughout the book you'll see a reoccurring theme when it comes to asking questions. Learning the proper way to structure and deliver a question is one of the most important principles in this theory and will lay the foundation for much of what is to come in the following chapters. Why do you think that is? Why is it so important to know what the other person is thinking before you start spewing your sales pitch all over the place? Why is the phrasing of your question so important? What have you noticed about the last four sentences that might have caught your attention? Do you have any idea why asking questions is so important?

If you have not caught on yet, by asking questions you can control the direction of a conversation. It can give you information about the buyer and will always give you clues and cues as to how to tailor your pitch. The answers to your questions (assuming you are asking the right ones) will give you insight on how to build impulse in whatever it is that you are selling. By learning to ask the right questions you can maintain control over your interactions as well as become more effective at making your sales.

Questions can also help you understand the true desire behind someone's intentions. If a stranger asks you to jump in their car you wouldn't just jump in without asking a few questions would you? You would instinctively want to know about their intentions for getting you in their car. You would ask questions like "Where are we going?" and "Why should I go with you?" The answers to these questions would determine if they sell you on getting into their car or not. If you think about it, by asking questions about why this person wants you in their car you are taking control of your decision-making process as well as protecting yourself. If you can see the value in that line of thinking then I would challenge you to start asking more questions in your

everyday life. You will be amazed at the power you can wield with a properly placed question.

ARE ALL QUESTIONS THE SAME?

There are a few different types of questions that you can ask. There are open-ended questions, closed-ended questions, leading questions, rhetorical questions, et cetera. Knowing how to use the different type of questions in different situations will allow you to get the most information from the seller or buyer in that specific situation. It is easy to misuse and overuse your questioning, so be sure to use this technique in moderation until you become a question ninja!

You want to make sure you are not coming on too strong and making the other person feel like you are interrogating them. Your purpose is to draw out specific answers or lead them to the answers you want to hear or already know the answers to. If you are looking for information or details you have to learn how to ask open-ended questions. Open-ended questions are very broad. They allow the person answering to elaborate and explain their answer whereas a closed-ended question should have a one-word answer. Yes-or-no questions are good examples of a closed-ended question, whereas an open-ended question would be something like, “How was your day today?”.

Using a combination of open- and closed-ended questions will give you the best chance of achieving the desired result in the conversation. Many times you will want to use closed-ended questions to build positive reinforcement through the course of your directional questioning. By asking a series of questions to which you know the buyer will have a positive response you will instill confidence for the buyer in their decision making process. Finding the ideal balance between closed- and open-ended questions will be the key to proper directional questioning principles.

Don't think for a second, that just because you ask an open-ended question that the other person is going to give you all the information you want. You have to be ready to follow up with questions to take the other party in a specific direction. In the example above, asking how their day was might get you a short response like "Oh, it was okay," when you were really looking for more specific information about their day at work, a big project, or any number of other things.

If questioning is important, then the questions you ask and how you ask them are equally as important. Be specific with your questions and try to structure them so that they all lead up to your desired destination.

In our example above, let's pretend that the person asking the question is a college student who is talking to a female classmate. He has a huge crush on her and has been mustering up the courage to ask her on a date. If all he asks her is how her day went then there is little directional influence on the conversation and he is leaving the door wide open, only for her to slam it shut. He also runs the risk of her turning his open-ended question into a closed-ended question with a one word answer like "Fine" or "Good."

If he were to ask her "What are you doing after class?", however, she would be forced to engage in the conversation and is less likely to respond with a one-word answer. By structuring the question this way, he accomplishes a few different things. First he finds out if she has plans or not after class. This allows him to eliminate the objection of her telling him she is busy later on if he does decide to ask her out or stops him from asking her out if she does have plans. Either way, Romeo gets actionable information and gives the conversation direction. The question could also give Romeo insight into her personal interests, which opens the door for more dialogue.

There are a wide variety of directions for the conversation to head after framing the question like this. Without her knowing, Romeo has taken control of the conversation by simply changing the structure of his question. The differences are subtle but unmistakable in their effects. Let's continue

with our example of Romeo and see where the conversation takes us. The girl (Juliet) tells Romeo that she is headed to work out after class and then to grab a drink with some friends. When Romeo asked her something specific and reduced the possibility of her answering in a manner he would find undesirable, he gave himself a higher probability of getting to his end goal: a date.

Romeo now has the opening he needs to get into some deeper questioning. He can direct the conversation to her workout or to her trip to the bar later on that evening. Since his goal is to get her out on a date, he ought to direct the conversation to her night out with her friends, as it would present the most opportunities to discover information in line with his objective. What would you ask next? Where they are going might be your first thought, but it is a closed-ended question and an easy out for her to cut off the conversation with a one word response. For example, she could simply give you the name of the bar and deflect the conversation. Instead, Romeo should ask something like, “What’s the occasion?”

Either of the two examples would give Romeo a key piece of information, but one question helps him get to his goal more than the other. By this point Romeo is probably getting cues from Juliet letting him know how interested she is in the conversation. The specifics of body language will be covered later on, but always be aware of people and their reactions to your questions. They will almost always tell you more with their body than they will with their words.

Asking “What is the occasion?” gives Romeo the most opportunity to continue the conversation (sales process) in the direction he is trying to take it. She could reply with any number of answers at this point as opposed to our first suggestion (“Where are you going?”), which could make it easier for her to bail out on the conversation. *Always* assume people will give you an answer opposite of what you want to hear when given the opportunity. By asking specific questions you can direct the conversation towards the answers you want to hear as opposed to leaving yourself at the mercy of

the person answering your questions. Maybe Juliet is going out to celebrate a friend's birthday, help make a girlfriend feel better, or maybe there is no specific reason at all.

By giving himself options in his questioning, Romeo make it easier to steer the conversation. If he had simply asked where she was going he would have potentially gotten the name of the place they were going, but not much more. He would have had to work harder to find a common interest with just the name of the bar as opposed to any number of answers she would likely give by asking what the occasion for the outing is.

Asking questions this way is not natural. It is something that *must* be practiced. You don't grow up looking for ways to manipulate conversations; it's not a natural thought process. It may defy your inner sensibility at first, but once you see it in action and learn the principle of proper questioning you will wonder how you have gone so long without this basic skill. I have found it amazing to see this principle in action in my own life and know that you can too by implementing it and practicing it in your everyday conversations.

CONTROLLING THE CONVERSATION

Up until this point I have been explaining the basics of formatting your questions and the different types of questions as well as giving you some practical applications of these principles in action. In this chapter I will develop the concept further and give you some tips on controlling conversations and regaining control after losing it during the conversation/sales process.

Taking Control: People often negatively associate these words. Misguided as this may be it is based on natural expectations stemming from previous experiences. Think about the times have you heard someone say "Control yourself!" or "You better get a handle on this situation." Was the context surrounding those statements particularly pleasant? Probably not, but this is not the control I am talking about.

I am talking about taking control in your conversations. Taking control in conversations and in sales situations (human interactions) comes not from manipulating or manhandling people but in asking the right questions to take them down the road you want at the pace you want and ultimately arriving at the destination of your choosing.

I once worked with this guy – let's call him Houdini – who was the most amazing salesperson I have ever met. It seemed like he closed every sale that came his way and he was making more money than anyone else on the sales floor. He had a way of telling people what they were going to do instead of asking them what they wanted to do. We would often pull our chairs around the back of his cubicle in order to listen as he talked to his potential buyers at the car dealership where we worked.

Often times we would have to cover our mouths to avoid from laughing out loud or gasping at what had just been said. We would sit there in disbelief, and marvel at his ability to take control of anyone, in any situation at any time. None of us ever felt confident enough to say the things he did and we wondered if anyone else in the dealership or the country for that matter could get away with some of the things he said to his customers. We would then sit there in further disbelief as he pulled out the paperwork and wrote up another order. None of us could figure out how this guy, who seemingly did all the wrong things (because he did not follow the exact system we had all been trained to use) still made more sales than all of us.

It was not until long after I had left that job and moved out of state that I realized he was just using one of the basic sales principles. He was taking control of every customer that gave him the opportunity to do so.

It also seemed that he got more opportunities than any of us ever did. Was this a coincidence as well? How did he do it? Was he just a natural? In a sense, he *was* a natural, but he got that way through practice. My friend Houdini had been selling cars for a lot longer than me and he was confident in his ability to take a potential car shopper down the path to a sale. After

all, don't people come to a dealership to buy a car? I've never once said to myself, "You know, I should go hang out at the car dealership today. Yeah, that sounds good. Let's go spend time at the car dealership with all the pushy salespeople." People hate going to car dealerships. They hate the salespeople and their pushy tactics. People usually hate to be sold on anything but when it happens they often admire the person who was so effectively able to stimulate their impulses and take control of their buying decisions.

Have you ever been in a situation in which you had no intention of buying anything, and then you end up with two? Where someone "suckered" you in to buying something you hadn't otherwise planned on buying? As you walk away you think to yourself "that son of a bitch" but then you smile and somehow begin to admire their ability to take control of you so effectively. You wonder to yourself, "How did that happen? That guy was good!" Truth is, he just practices these principles more than you do. With practice you could use some of these same skills in your life. In fact, you will run in to this situation less and less as you become more familiar with recognizing and practicing these principles.

My friend Houdini recognized the principle of taking control and, through practice, understood that each person who came on to the car lot was a potential buyer; so, he did everything he could to take them from a shopper to a buyer. He was confident in his ability to do just that and knew that, given an opportunity, he would know the right questions to ask and the right things to say in order to appeal to the basic impulses to which we are all (humans) susceptible.

The thing I admired most about Houdini was his ability to always have the right question for any situation. It seemed like he was never thrown off by any comment or objection the buyer might have made. They were all handled in the same way: coolly, calmly, and effectively. He always had the right questions to steer the conversation in the desired direction. Someone might ask how much a certain feature cost on a car and, instead of answering the

question directly, he would dig in and find out exactly what the person really wanted. Instead of answering the question with the price of that particular feature, he would ask how much they valued that specific option, or how much they would be willing to pay for it.

At the time, I wasn't sure why he wouldn't just answer the question and move on; I hadn't yet understood that by spinning the question he was better addressing the actual concerns of the customer. He was also determining whether their question was a valid objection or if there was something else building within the buyer that might prove to be a larger hurdle if ignored or looked over early on in the sales process.

By asking about the price of an option, the customer could be looking to accomplish many things. Is he actually interested in adding that option? Is the option too expensive, and if so, could it be removed? It could be the option is something the customer is really excited about, and he is just trying to justify the expense.

If you assume to know what the customer is thinking in this situation by directly answering his question, you risk losing control of the situation. What if Houdini had answered the question and told the customer that the option was \$2,500? Who knows? He was that good after all and might have still made the sale but by asking how important the option was, he was able to understand what the customer was truly asking: the customer wanted the navigation package but wasn't really interested in a couple other items that were included in the package.

Knowing that the package came together and could not be separated, Houdini was able to adapt his pitch to focus on the benefits of the package as opposed to spending any time dwelling on something the customer had no interest in. He spent time building value based on impulse instead of diminishing value by reducing the price of the vehicle. Houdini made the sale and hardly even gave the customer a discount on the car. A lesser salesperson would have immediately tried to reduce the price of the options

package or begun to sell the other options in the package with no chance of knowing what the customer's true objection was.

Houdini had a knack for this but I now realize that getting in control and staying in control is just like confidence. It is a skill that can be developed with practice, and gaining confidence in your ability to take control makes it that much easier to be in and maintain control of almost any situation.

I often suggest people learn to answer questions with questions. It is a difficult task to master but I promise if you try it and give it some time to develop as a skill you will learn quite a bit more about the people you interact with and they might even think you care a little more than you do which is almost always a good thing. Some people will get annoyed, some people won't understand what you are doing and think you are crazy but give it a try anyway.

The reason this bothers people is because it exposes them. Think about a psychiatrist and his patient. Is the patient going to tell the doctor everything he needs to know in order to make an accurate evaluation? Not a chance. In order for the doctor to make a truly accurate assessment they would need to ask the right questions in order to uncover whatever it is they are looking for inside your head. I will say that doctors have it a little tougher than most of the sales interactions that you might run in to. If they skip a question someone could die or get hurt whereas if we forget a question, well, maybe we lose a sale. Better luck next time.

Doctors are really no different from salespeople in many ways. They learn for a long time, refine their specialty, gain confidence in their abilities, and develop them with time and experience. As sales people or people in general, we could learn a lot from the concept of perpetual practice, as opposed to thinking that we can stop learning or adapting our skills in life, work or relationships, and still grow and succeed. I know it is a very simplistic way of looking at things but, like I said, that's why it works.

CONVERSATIONAL GPS

The next step in controlling your conversation is direction. Do you know where you are headed? I don't mean literally as in north or south but figuratively as in do you know what the expected outcome looks like? If you do not begin with the end in mind then you will have a very hard time recognizing it when you get there. You must always begin with the end in mind or run the risk of walking right past it without ever even noticing. In the example from the last chapter the end result for Romeo would be scoring a date with Juliet. I showed you how phrasing the questions was important but direction is just as vital.

Many people in sales have a keen ability to talk themselves right out of a sale and never recognize why or understand what went wrong. If life is one big sale then you can't afford to miss many sales solely based on lacking direction and vision. There are enough things in this world that attempt to derail you on a daily basis, and your own mind shouldn't be one of them. Being observant and recognizing some basic principles will do wonders in helping you in your sales life. Let's get back in the driver's seat here and determine what direction might mean to you.

What are you trying to accomplish? That is the question you have to ask yourself in every sales situation. If you are running your clothes to get them dry-cleaned, then your goal is quite apparent. Get to the dry cleaner, drop off your laundry and find out when it will be available for pick up. It is simple to see the direction of a menial task like this one but what if it is a little more complex situation?

Back to Romeo and the girl of his dreams. He has met her before, but not for long. His conversations are always short and sometimes a little awkward. She knows his name but probably doesn't give him much thought because up until this point he hasn't given her a reason to. He sits next to her in class, thinking *What I will say? How will she respond? Will it go well? What if it doesn't?* He wonders what it would be like to be next to her talking

effortlessly about whatever she wanted. No preparation necessary, you know, just like the movies. Unfortunately for Romeo, life is not scripted.

When Romeo gets over Juliet's intimidating beauty and realizes she is still, in fact, a woman (a human), he can start to clearly prepare himself by controlling the controllable. He cannot force her to like him but he can give her every reason to. She doesn't know he is funny but he can make her laugh. She doesn't even know he likes her but she soon will.

As he sits next to her he determines that nothing short of a date with this woman will be an acceptable outcome. This is a good step. Now he has direction. Now he can begin to tailor his pitch towards accomplishing that goal. We know that he can't just say to her "Let's go on a date tomorrow. Here's my number; hit me up so we can set it up." That would never work because there is no relationship established yet. He has to get started, beginning with his introduction and then, whether it be for minutes, hours, or days, work his way to the pitch.

Romeo makes his introduction confidently and ask questions that help him get to his end goal of getting a date. He stays in control asking all the right questions leading her down a road to which he alone knows the route.

This is the same concept behind visualizing your dreams and it is quite a powerful tool. Learning to visualize your end result, goal or dreams can help you make them a reality by giving you a solid benchmark to aim for. It is impossible to take a step towards a goal when you have no idea what your goal looks like, or even in what direction to look for your goal. Questions and controlling conversations work similarly.

Romeo's goal has lead him to a point where he can begin to figure out out what Juliet likes to do and where she likes to eat, where she works, and (most importantly) whether or not she is in a relationship. Romeo should not directly ask her if she has a boyfriend, but instead ask if her boyfriend will be coming out with them tonight. Assuming she is available would

seem aggressive, but by assuming that she has a boyfriend Romeo takes the pressure off of her and allows her to either inform him that either her boyfriend will or will not be attending, or that she does not have a boyfriend.

While I have no intention of teaching you how to improve your dating life it would be foolish to say that getting to know these principles won't help you in almost every aspect of your life, even picking up girls. In the previous example I just wanted to point out the fact that being in control and having direction are a big part of developing your sales ability. By knowing your end result and asking questions specifically tailored to get you the answers you are looking for you can make many everyday situations more manageable.

As with a lot of what I talk about in this book, I am not giving you a play-by-play manual on how to live life or make sales, I am only trying to increase your self-awareness and get you to start looking for examples of these principles in your every-day life. Your success in implementing them will not come from learning about how sales relates to your daily interactions through the pages of this book. It will come from recognizing all of the principals in your life and learning to break down all of your interactions on your own in order to gain a deeper understanding of how and why life really is one big sale. This book is about getting you to pay attention to what is happening around you, not only at the surface but what basic interactions are taking place behind the scenes and how can you more effectively use them to reach your goals, influence people and make more sales.

PRACTICE WHAT I PREACH

Some people are naturally good at controlling a conversation but for the rest of us there are a few simple things that we can do to make it a little easier. By responding to a question with another question you easily turn the conversation in a direction that you can control. This is the true art of taking control. Learning how to deflect a question with a question is something that requires a considerable amount of practice. on the next page is a game you can do as either a team-building game or as a sales training tool.

By practicing these skills, controlling conversations will become second nature. This is an instance where it will be vital to only use your powers for good. There will be many times where you should not be in complete control of a conversation. Don't try to control every conversation you have because it won't always work and you will start losing relationships. None of the principles in this book are fail-safe. They are not intended to give you manipulative powers over the people you interact with in life. They are intended to help you make sales and be prepared for those instances in life when you come across someone who is trying to use their powers for evil against you.

GET CREATIVE

Take some creative liberties with this game and watch how people get excited about it and have fun developing their questioning skills. It can be fun to do a bull ring or king of questions version where there is someone in the middle and they rotate around the circle as the questions rotate from one person to the next, always alternating clockwise around the circle. The questions go between someone from the exterior circle and the person in the middle. The game continues until the person in the middle stumbles and breaks one of the rules. The person who asked the question to stump the person in the middle then gets to move in to the middle of the circle.

GAME RULES

1. **Take a group (you need an even number of people), and pair them off into two rows facing each other.**
2. **Explain that anyone who breaks one of the rules will be eliminated.**
3. **You pick one side to start and have them ask the other side a question.**
4. **The person opposite of them then has to respond with a question related to the initial question without repeating it.**
5. **The response must be prompt. No stalling during responses.**
6. **You must stay on topic. No bouncing around or just asking random questions.**
7. **If you answer a question you are eliminated. Even if you transition directly in to another question.** example: “Where did you go for lunch?” “That pizzeria on the corner, why, where did you go to lunch?” Although you end with a question, you are eliminated for having answered the question first.
8. **The questions continue back and forth fluidly until one person either fails to ask a question or answers a question from the other party.**
9. **Once someone has been eliminated in each of the pairings, re-draw the lines and have them face off again. Repeat this step until one person remains.**

“If you accept the expectations of others, especially negative ones, then you never will change the outcome.”

- Michael Jordan -

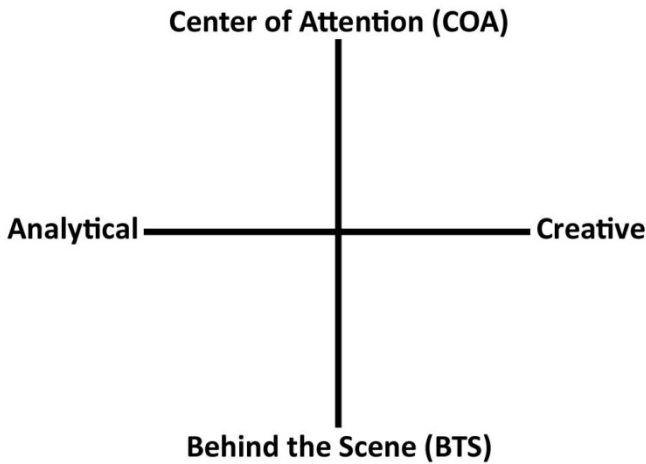
4. PERSONALITY DISORDER

Now that you have a firm grasp on controlling the conversation and purposeful questioning, we will dive in to reading people and understanding the personality differences you may face while dealing with any person you encounter. You may be surprised to learn that although we are all different in our eccentricities or quirks, we share many similarities between our core traits. Break our personalities down to their fundamental aspects and you find that we all fall into distinct personality corridors. These traits define our desire to learn, drive our motivation to succeed, and control how we interact with those around us.

Now, remember I am no medical professional; I don't have a PhD or any formal schooling on this topic. All I have are my observations and experiences in dealing with people in life and in a career of sales. In my experience I find that people fall somewhere on a gradient on two of four two axes: a horizontal axis between Analytical on the left and Creative on the right and a vertical axis with Center of Attention (COA) on the top and Behind the Scene (BTS) on the bottom. By determining a point on each line, starting from 0 (the center of the graph) and 10 (the furthest point on each arm of the graph), you can create a basic personality profile for yourself as well for the people involved in any of your sales efforts.

There are clearly many possible variations within this chart, but by recognizing the key traits you can understand your buyer's decision-making process as well as his thought process and use your knowledge of these traits to your advantage. Take some time to read over the traits and consider which ones you recognize as your own and which ones pertain to those around you. By understanding the behaviors associated with each of the traits you can better position yourself in your sales efforts. When you can

tailor your perfect pitch to account for the buyer’s specific personality you will give yourself the best opportunity to make every sale.



Center of Attention (COA): This person likes to be right in the middle of everything. They crave attention and the approval of others. They enjoy their successes and although they may not admit it, want to be publicly recognized for them. This person is typically funny and very outgoing. They like to have people around them, but may not have a lot of friends. They are comfortable being in the spotlight and often thrive in it, as they feel the need to show off. In fact, the lack of a spotlight can lead to lower levels of production. These people are performers and are highly motivated to succeed, making them excellent at working under stress. They need to be in control of the situation and have a difficult time following the lead of others, especially if that leader is another COA. The center of attention is often selfish but not necessarily intentionally or with malice. Their desire to shine often blinds them from the feelings and concerns of those around them and their desire for the spotlight often overcomes their desire to fit in. They are fiercely loyal and protective of those they find important in their life. The center

of attention does not shy away from confrontation and is eager for an opportunity to stand his ground whether defending his ideas or his behavior. He tends to think his approach is the best to any situation and is quick to take the lead in group settings. The Center of Attention is usually a chameleon, as he is able to adapt to his surroundings and make others feel comfortable talking or interacting with him.

Behind the Scenes (BTS): This person is more introverted and shy, often looking to do their job without being in the public eye. He likes to be recognized for his efforts, but would prefer such recognition be done out of the spotlight as opposed to in it. People who fall in this category can be funny and outgoing as well but typically only with whom they already feel comfortable . A BTS-type person is less inclined to reach out to new people regularly but care dearly for those who are close to him. Because of his desire to stay out of the spotlight, the person in this category typically performs worse when under stress and can become uncomfortable when put on the spot. He is fine being by himself and can work well in a quiet environment without needing the constant interaction of other people. He is a good team member and can usually play along well with others however, people will often mistake his quietness for weakness, which can be offensive to the BTS person. He is more likely to go along with the flow even if he considers his idea to be superior. He desires to fit in more than the Center of Attention, so he often keeps his critiques to himself or shares them with others he considers close. He is a good listener and typically has many friends because people can relate to him and easily trust him. He typically shies away from confrontation and often keeps his anger bottled up, leading to random moments of uncharacteristic emotional release.

Creative: Creative personalities are always looking for something new. They are typically not very patient and can wear easily on the nerves of those around them. They are constantly looking for change in their surroundings and have a problem with long-term commitments. The

creative type is very impulsive and often makes decision based entirely on his gut response as opposed to a methodical or detailed approach. The creative person likes to have new experiences in his life, so he is more open to trying new things than most. Creative people are good at justifying or rationalizing their decisions to themselves and others to feel better about the decision they just made. People who fall in to the creative category are also gifted at seeing the big picture. They are able to visualize many ideas at once and solve problems effectively since they are not constrained by “inside-the-box” thinking. They have an ability to look at a problem from every angle and suggest solutions with ideas that might otherwise have been neglected. Rules are more like guidelines for the creative person, as he will push the boundaries of any restrictions in an effort to express his thoughts and visions. They are often artistic, but this is not always the case as they sometimes find other ways of unleashing their creativity. They are always looking for and considering new ways to do things and come up with many ideas, so they do not develop an overwhelming attachment to most of them leaving them to be less affected by the fear of rejection. Why would you fear rejection if in your mind the next idea is always as good if not better than the last? The creative person often deals better with critique than he does with compliments and likes to know the true opinions of his peers.

Analytical: This person is very detail-oriented and methodical. Think of an engineer or an accountant. People who are analytical need order in their lives and are most comfortable when they feel in control of their surroundings. They like to have all of the details before making a decision and often take a considerable amount of time before making a decision. The analytical person does well with structure and commitment, as he feels comfortable with the status quo and avoids change when possible. These people typically feel more at ease when handling one project at a time since they devote all of their efforts to accomplishing the task at hand. Since they desire structure they usually respect rules and boundaries better than a COA and sometimes look

down on the creative types for “skirting the system”. Since they are so invested in accomplishing individual tasks or finishing the job at hand they are not able to see the big picture so clearly. They like structure and fall back on what they know or what has worked in the past to solve problems. They have solid critical thinking skills but prefer “what works” as opposed to the unknown. They do not like a changing environment and are less prone to be adventurous or spontaneous since they prefer structure to the feeling of anything unfamiliar. The analytical personality craves validation for his accomplishments and hates being wrong since he devotes so much of his attention to the task at hand.

After reading the personality traits, you probably realized most of us cross over into many of the different personality types. The key is to be able to pick up on the dominant traits an individual exhibits, as these will allow you to adapt your perfect pitch to the buyer. Consider how this could be used within your workplace. By recognizing these traits you can use them strategically instead of getting mad at someone for not matching up with your personality type.

Look critically and objectively at your own personality and it probably falls in a maximum of two of the four traits I just discussed. Either you are a creative center of attention, analytical center of attention, creative behind the scenes or analytical behind the scene and any number of possible variations within the dimensions of the graph. There is nothing wrong with falling in either of the categories, as a solid variety of people is necessary for a group to function optimally: they cover each other’s weaknesses. You simply need to become efficient at determining a person’s personality type quickly in order to be the most effective (sales) person you can be.

When you start pairing the personality traits and playing with the mixtures from each of the four major groups you will start to see vast differences in people and the way they interact. Keep in mind that the traits can vary with your environment and mood: a person who may be a creative center of attention on a good day may swing into an analytical behind-the-scenes

when he becomes moody, and vice versa. Start to pay close attention to the people around you and the people you come in to contact with on a regular basis. By recognizing the behaviors and patterns in the people you know you make it easier to recognize those key behaviors and actions in others.

TRUST ME, IT MATTERS

Why does it matter? Sales is all about relationships and you are not going to sell much of anything if you can't develop meaningful long- or short-term relationships. In the next chapter, I will discuss building relationships at length; for now, know relationships are the key to all sales, and your ability to read the personality of the people to whom you are trying to sell is vitally important. Personality matching is less important to making sales when it comes to short-term relationships (although it is useful to adapt your communication style based on personality) but it is still important to understand your buyer in order to be successful.

Since this is not a book about developing romantic relationships, I won't go in to too much detail about the balance of personalities in those types of relationships. Just keep in mind that online dating companies are not popping up all over the place for no reason. They work because they are able to analyze your personality in order to match it with someone who is compatible. How do they know you are compatible? Because they have taken what I am trying to explain to you in a few pages and made a science out of it. They ask you a million questions (again with the questions) with the understanding that certain people mesh better and that you can maximize those relationships by flagging key indicators and pairing people based on those results.

Companies are actually using assessments like this more and more to understand the personalities of all their employees and how they interact, what their strength and weaknesses are, and are beginning to learn how to adapt the workplace in order to maximize efficiency. Companies have long

used assessments like this for pre-employment screening and I would be surprised if there was a salesperson out there who hadn't taken at least one in-depth personality assessment. They all use different terms to describe the quadrants and personality types but it all boils down to the same principles.

I have had many different relationships in my life and have failed in some and succeeded in others. If I look at my failures as well as my successes I can start to see why I got the end results that I did. My personality is overwhelmingly Creative/COA so I need to remember that I can be abrasive and impulsive. I know my weaknesses and I also know that when it comes to relationships I have to be careful who I match up with especially if it is a long-term relationship I am hoping to build. I need to match up with someone who has some of the opposite personality traits in order to balance me out but they need to be similar enough to keep us aligned in our outlook on the relationship.

It would be difficult for me to have a long-term emotional relationship with someone who is a Creative/COA as our personalities would clash. You know how "opposites attract?" Consider the relationships in your life. Are your closest friends similar in personality as you or are they opposite in many aspects of their personality? This does not mean that you cannot have relationships with people of similar personality, simply that you probably already make these connections naturally and subconsciously.

If I know my basic personality type and am in the process of making a sale I can recognize those same traits in the person I am trying to sell to and avoid the trigger points where the two personalities might clash. Since I am a COA and am selling to another COA then I have to understand that in order to make the sale I will have to mimic a BTS type personality at times in order to not directly clash with the person I am trying to sell. I do not want to maintain my COA posturing throughout the sale as it can create tension and will work against me in this interaction.

Similarly if the person is analytical and I approach them with my creative

personality fully exposed I can run the risk of alienating my buyer by not giving them the detail they are looking for. I need to understand that they are an analytical buyer and determine what they are looking for specifically, by asking the right questions, in order to give them the information they desire to make a buying decision. Conversely, if there were an analytical personality trying to sell me something they would have to be careful to not give me more detail than I need in order to make a buying decision as well as painting a clear enough big picture to keep me interested in their pitch.

Learning to read people and their personalities will be vital in using all manners of communication in your sales efforts. Just keep in mind that there are considerably more variances and nuances in personalities than I could ever cover in this small chapter. I am not trying to get you interested in a career in psychology; I am trying to show you the big picture when it comes to people and their interactions. I am trying to show you that no matter how hard people try to set themselves apart, we are all mostly the same. Our bodies were all built from the same blueprints and our minds all process information similarly. Since we are all human, understanding the fundamental similarities can help you make sales by targeting the basic way we interact and increase your efficiency in making sales.

ADDICTIVE PERSONALITY

Now that we understand a little bit about different personalities let's jump into another aspect of personalities. People are flawed! I'm sure you know this, but how often do you think about it? We are all addicts in one way or another. By nature we are programmed to do things that make us feel good; thus, we look for things in life that make us feel good. Whether the addiction is success, ice cream, or drugs, happiness or hopelessness, every person has some form of it in his life.

Don't think of my use of the word addiction as being negative (not always, at least); I only want you to understand that it's there and it can blind even the

most successful amongst us, resulting in failures in both communication and relationships. Just like relationships, addictions do not have to be long term to cause damage in your life. Think about a new love in your life. Maybe you are so addicted to spending time with that person that you neglect other parts of your life. Maybe you skip class or a day at work just to be with them and convince yourself that it is no big deal because it feels good at the time and there are no immediate consequences for your action.

Maybe your addiction is your work; maybe you have become so wrapped up in your career that you are neglecting your family or those who are close to you. Once again, you do not necessarily neglect the people around you on purpose, and you are able to justify it by telling yourself you are providing for the family. But consider the damage you might be causing through neglect that no amount of money could fix. Don't think that just because your addiction is not illegal that it is not capable of hurting those around you. Just like the drug or alcohol addict, anyone with an unchecked addiction will lie and rationalize whatever it takes to get their "fix." A truly addicted person will become an expert in sales if only to sell the people around them on the idea that their addiction is not a real problem.

I have noticed in my life that almost everyone around them has their quirks, routines, and addictions. People need their escapes and sometimes those things are just distractions in our everyday life, but once in a while people can let them take over, and these addictions can *become* their lives. Addictions are all the same: they start off with something that makes you feel good and eventually take over your entire existence. Over time your addiction become your routine before becoming nigh impossible to remove from your life. Eventually you find yourself looking back on your life wondering where you lost control.

An addiction can be as simple as relying on a "system" to make a sale. As we discussed earlier in the book, there is no system to making sales. There are things that you can do to increase your odds of making a sale and there are systems that help you take a buyer down the road to a sale, but there

is no magic system that works *every time*. If you allow a system to become your addiction you might miss out on trying something new that could help you develop your skills further. Just be aware of falling into routines and becoming reliant upon any particular system. Systems are good to have, but they can also be mind-numbing and can allow others to take advantage of you.

You might be thinking about how this has anything to do with sales at this point. If you let it, an addiction will ruin your ability to effectively make sales. Since it can take complete control of your life, and we have already admitted that life *is* sales then you must understand that there are many external influences that can ruin our ability to lead a happy life, cripple our ability to be effective sales people, and place tremendous strain on existing relationships. People in all of the key personality traits are susceptible to addiction and you rarely see it sneaking up on you. Just know we are all at risk of falling prey to our own simplistic human desire to feel good.

CAN'T WE ALL JUST GET ALONG?

So, there are abrasive personalities and submissive personalities. Some of us are creative and love to express ourselves while others like to see all the details before making any kind of decision. At this point you have to be asking yourself “How do I use this information to make sales?” How can you take the little I have given you about personalities and integrate it in to your perfect pitch? Just like everything I have talked about and will continue to talk about, you must open your eyes to the world around you and the people in it. It is intended to get you to pay attention to your relationships and your interactions in order for you to develop the skills needed to effectively communicate and sell yourself better.

By having a little bit of a head start in understanding the people around you, you can begin to develop your relationships and perfect pitch in order to achieve maximum results in all of your endeavors. Is there someone in your

life who has an admirable ability to make people feel comfortable? Maybe you have a friend that seems to be able to talk to anybody, anywhere, about anything. Observe their specific behaviors and see what you can mimic in order to develop your skills and try new things in your own life. Practice stretching the boundaries of your comfort zone: try to do something that challenges your natural personality and see how it goes. By learning to be comfortable and by practicing the uncomfortable you can begin to shape your personality and increase the opportunities for success in life.

“Put your heart, mind, and soul into even your smallest acts. This is the secret of success.”

- Swami Sivananda -

5. BUILDING RELATIONSHIPS

The basic principle of building relationships is that you must be genuine about their construction in order for them to be successful. We already mentioned that a relationship does not have to be permanent in order to be successful, but that doesn't mean you should use people or manipulate them in order to get to your goals.

A relationship is built by the establishment of dialogue and the creation of personal bonds between two people. What is the difference between your best friend and your friends at work? What about the differences between immediate family and more distant family? It all boils down to knowledge. What you know about someone is often a key indicator of your relationship with that person. As we open up to people and give them more access to who we really are inside we further develop those bonds and strengthen our relationships.

I am not talking about what gossip you heard about Joe and Sally at the company Christmas party last year, I'm talking about truly knowing someone. Let us examine a long-term friendship in my life as an example. Now I do not claim to be the best friend in the world and I will be the first to admit my weakness when it comes to maintaining friendships, but I do have a few amazing friendships that I often wish I could duplicate. I am not sure what I did to deserve good friends like these, but looking at the relationships and breaking them down has given me some insight on the principles of building good relationships as well as how to best avoid destroying them along the way.

My best friend in the world currently lives more than a thousand miles away, yet we maintain a relationship like none I have ever had to date. I do not

talk to him every day or even once a week any more, but I always know he is there for me and I am always there for him. Think about the relationships in your life that are like this. Do you have any? How were they established?

In my case, we met in college. We were both in design school together and we used to spend countless hours together, working on our design projects and critiquing each other's artwork. I remember listening to music late into the night and well into the morning as we missed yet another night of sleep, worried about presenting our best work possible the next day in class. During those times, we talked a lot and got to know quite a bit about each other. We both asked questions and learned more and more about what made each of us, us.

We built a strong friendship in school, but it was not until we lived 1200 miles away from each other that we realized how close we really were. After leaving school, I moved back to Ohio and eventually ended up in Florida while he stayed in Michigan. We probably only visited each other a few times a year. We chatted on the phone occasionally and kept up-to-date with life in general, but on those visits we were inseparable. Like those childhood moments camping out with your best friend, we would sit all night on the lanai of my Florida townhouse, smoking cigarettes and solving the problems of the world.

From politics to art, from women to money, we discussed everything in such detail and honesty that sometimes I wondered if I was sharing too much. Other times we would get lost in the conversation and allow our ideology to bring us to a shouting match at three in the morning with no regard for the sleeping neighbors around us. On paper there are probably more reasons against us being friends, but for some reason we just click.

Now, I haven't told you about my best friend for you to see how great our relationship is. In fact, I left out a lot of information about our relationship in order to dive in to the principles of building relationships in more detail. In truth, we have been through quite a bit together and I trust him with my life.

After reading my description of our friendship, can you pick out what the key principles are to forming meaningful relationships?

None of the principles I will mention in the following paragraphs should be new to you. If you haven't figured some of this stuff out on your own then you might need to be reading a different book right now. Like I said before, the principles I am discussing take place all around you, all the time. I am only showing you their interplay and how recognizing and influencing them can help you better determine the outcome of your day-to-day interactions.

Building relationships comes down to communication, honesty, sincerity, empathy, and silence.

The end.

Not really, but those values are all you need to know about building meaningful relationships. Well, okay, not *all* you need to know, but these are the core principles of relationship building; their implementation is up to you. It is up to *you* to put them into practice in your everyday life. I will talk briefly on each principle and then bring them all together, as they rarely operate independently of each other. Later on in the book we will dive in and develop the principles of communication further to include verbal and non-verbal communication, but for now we will focus on the basics of communication as it relates to building relationships.

Society doesn't teach us to communicate effectively any more. Notice I said "effectively," as people communicate more now as opposed to any other time in our past. It's the *manner* in which we communicate that creates the problem. People would rather send a text than pick up the phone, or would rather read an update on Facebook than ask how your day went. I am guilty of this myself in many ways. I text and use Facebook and there is nothing wrong with that, but developing good communication skills is an integral part of building relationships. Since making sales depends on building long- and short-term relationships, and since everything in life is a sale, building

effective relationships is an integral part of life.

Learning to communicate with all types of people is important. The most overlooked key to communication is listening. People are naturally selfish and like talking about themselves, whether it is because we like to hear our own voice or because we feel our reason for talking is more important than the people around us. We like talking about ourselves. After all, we are often the most important person in our own world, right? This is not always a bad thing, but to communicate effectively you need to care more about what others have to say than whatever it is you want to share. When you can learn to set that selfishness aside in order to listen to others effectively, then you will be one step closer to communicating effectively.

As I describe each of the other principles of building relationships, keep in mind that effectively integrating them is the key to good communication. As I said earlier, they are rarely found independent of each other, but I want to emphasize key aspects of each principle.

Honesty: You will have no relationship worth talking about if you cannot be honest with people. Trust is everything in a relationship and the only way to earn trust is by being honest. This does not mean telling everyone everything about you, but it does mean opening up and making yourself vulnerable to people on occasion.

This also means being upfront with people and letting them know when something is bothering you. Have you ever ruined a relationship over something you did not know was bothering either of you? Have you ever held something back from someone because he was your friend and you were worried about how he might have reacted? Maybe it was something he did or something he said, but either way you kept it in and over time you slowly drifted apart. Maybe you lost a friend and could never figure out why this person stopped talking to you or hanging out with you. Have you ever been in trouble for something that you did not even know you had done wrong? Come on, be honest; married men,

haven't you ever heard this from your wife? "You should know why I'm mad! if I have to tell you, you just don't get it."

Without making all the wives in the world mad at me, let me get to my point about why these situations occur. People often hold back because of the fear that confronting a friend with a problem or issue you are having will hurt the relationship when in fact not sharing could be the real cause of a problem relationship. Wouldn't you like to know if someone you considered a friend had certain thoughts about you that they weren't sharing with you? Maybe they think you interrupt too much or talk too loudly. Wouldn't knowing either of these things prompt you to be more considerate in the future and allow you to deal with the situation if, in fact, it is an issue, as opposed to suppressing the frustration every time the situation presents itself and straining or ruining the relationship?

Sincerity: If we are communicating honestly, then sincerity should be a natural response. The people you have relationships with long to know if something about them is bothering you, just like you want to hear from them if anything you do bothers them. The key to not overstepping boundaries is the maintenance of sincerity. I am not telling you to start nit-picking all of your friends, but if there is truly something that they do that affects your perception of them, then you owe it to them to bring it to their attention.

When you know that someone has your best interests in mind, you are more receptive to his criticism as opposed to that of someone you may not know as well. As in my example, my best friend *is* my best friend because I can tell him anything, good or bad, and he understands the intentions behind my comments are sincere and not made in jest. On the other hand, I understand I am not in control of this person's behavior and I have to be willing to back down if I offend him or if he tells me that I am out of line. Because of my sincerity, my comments will be taken to

heart and I need to be aware that they can be taken more personally because of this.

Empathy: The ability to understand someone's feelings is invaluable. If your relationship has open lines of honest and sincere communication, then empathy becomes easier. I did not say "easy," because it is never easy to get in someone's mind and understand his thoughts. Your efforts to do so should be unending and sometimes done in private. Understanding another person's point of view away from the situation allows you to consider both sides of the issue at hand and helps you go a long way towards building stronger relationships.

My friend from college is unable to bend his fingers at the joint closest to his knuckles. All he can bend are the tips of his fingers, a birth defect which he has adapted amazingly. I noticed this early on in our relationship but was too scared to ask about it, as I could see he was self conscious about it and I did not feel I knew him well enough to approach the issue. One day I approached the topic and we talked about it briefly. He explained the situation and we moved on. I understood and appreciated his honesty and the fact that we had gotten a chance to talk about it.

Later that night I started thinking about it again and could not get over the fact that his whole life he had gone without the ability to bend his fingers in a way that most all of us take for granted. As I worked on my homework for the night, I wondered what it would be like to not be able to bend my fingers like that. I taped my fingers up at the joints so I would only be able to bend my fingertips. I didn't think about it too deeply that night but it was incredibly difficult for me to accomplish many of the simple tasks I could easily do with full dexterity of my fingers.

I told my friend about my little experiment and we joked about it a bit. I didn't find out until years later during a conversation re-living prior memories that my little experiment had a deeper impact on him and

our relationship. He told me that he rarely talked about his fingers let alone having someone tape theirs up in order to experience the feeling of dealing with the defect for themselves. It had touched him that I sincerely wanted to know what it felt like and that I hadn't just asked because he looked different while holding a pencil. I was sincere and wanted to understand his situation. My empathy helped strengthen our relationship. Since I had been honest about my curiosity we were able to share a moment and bond on a topic that he probably has still not discussed openly with more than a handful of people in his life.

Silence: Sometimes the strongest moments in a relationship are the ones where no words are exchanged. Romantic moments and large negotiations alike, there is always room for a well-placed moment of silence. Silence can mean so many things and one of the best parts of this principle is that it is often totally up to the other person to interpret the meaning of your silence, which is a huge tool in influencing the outcome of certain situations.

There is a saying in sales that most salespeople know but rarely implement: whoever speaks first after the closing statement loses. This means that silence is a valuable tool because of the discomfort it creates in a sales situation. The same awkwardness you feel accompanied by the impulse to speak is being felt by the other person as well. We will discuss it in more detail later on in the book but for right now know that it is often good to sit back and see how the other person responds to the silence. Just remember, you know it is coming and they don't, which puts you in control.

Now that you have a firm grasp on the principles of building relationships, let us look deeper into the implementation of those principles on a more short-term basis and with regard to sales. Remember, short-term relationships can be just as important as long-term relationships because relationships do not have to be permanent to be effective. I'm not talking about your

wild nights at the bar here either, although many of these principles are interchangeable in a variety of settings. I am only focused on the short-term relationships we build to help us make sales outside of the nightclub setting.

We have focused on the individual principles of building relationships and a little about putting them all together, but let's take it one step further and tie it into the other major principles we have discussed so far. Like everything else up to this point, building relationships requires practice, which leads to what? If you said confidence, then pat yourself on the back as you are, in fact, keeping pace. So, as you practice building relationships, it will become second nature to you, and take note as to whether or not it has a positive effect on all aspects of your life. Who doesn't like a good friend and an even better listener?

How do you practice building relationships? All you have to do is evaluate your current relationships and see where you can implement some of the principles discussed so far. If I asked your friends, would they say you are a good listener? Do you empathize well, or are you selfish and stubborn much like my natural tendencies drive me to be unless I consciously make the effort to adapt?

You should practice developing new relationships. Short- and long-term relationships can be developed every day. Where do you get your coffee in the morning? Do you know the name of the person who gets it for you? What about the receptionist at work? What do you know about her? The key to practicing building relationships is getting to know everyone with whom you interact on a regular basis. Network with the people you know and then look for more people to with whom to network. You never know who is going to lead you to that next introduction that changes your life. Maybe they know someone at that company you are trying to land as your next big account, or maybe their friend is a business owner looking for employees while you sit around looking for work. The more exposure you can get, the more likely you are to meet someone who can help you accomplish your goals.

The sooner people find out you are honest and sincere, the sooner they open up to you. Why do you think some psychiatrists are able to charge considerably more for their time than others? Is it the education? Maybe, but I would be willing to bet that it is primarily due to their effectiveness in listening and solving problems. We humans have a natural instinct to pay more for things we perceive to be better. If your skills are notably more effective than someone else, you can charge more for your time.

How do people find out you are better than the rest? By building relationships with the people you interact with. Not only do people love to talk about themselves, they love to discuss people who have had an impact in their lives. Get good at building relationships and people will start talking positively about you. Conversely, if you are bad at relationships people will learn quickly to keep their distance. They are actually twice as likely to talk about the impression you left in their life if it was negative as opposed to positive. Be sure you use the principles of relationship building outlined in this book in a genuine and sincere manner. You will be exposed quickly if all your relationships are based on personal gain and selfish intentions. Your intent while building relationships should be to give as much as you receive from the relationship.

BACK TO THE BEGINNING

Let's go back to the introduction. We have shown that you must express sincerity and honesty as well as a genuine interest in what the other party has to say. We have let them give us all of the ammunition we will need later on when we go in for the close. Remember, up until this point your goal should be asking questions and simplifying the situation to its root. If you are doing most of the talking, then you are holding back your sales process as well as restricting your efforts to build relationships. Remember to focus on the perfect pitch and dig for the true meaning of any questions or objections you might be getting.

Let's assume for this next example that you are in a professional sales environment and you have spent the last few months trying to land an appointment with a huge prospect. You finally got an opportunity to get in and see the decision maker, and this is your one chance to come in guns blazing and knock their socks off. What you do not know is that immediately following your appointment they are meeting with someone from your largest competitor, someone who has been in the business a lot longer than you and who is *very* good at what they do. I will outline both meetings and then we will break down their use of the principles and their effectiveness.

Your meeting: You walk in early, as you respect the client's time and are prepared. You are confident because you have practiced for this moment, although you do not have a lot of experience with this size account. As you come in you smile and greet the prospect and begin chatting about anything other than business. You ask questions and find out about his company, such as what they do, how they do it, etc. You discuss as much as you can about the business, because you are loading your gun with bullets that will be useful later on in the sales process. After understanding the prospect and his company, you lay out what you can do for him and how your services will benefit his company. You answer his questions honestly, and the sincerity in your voice lets them know you are there to do the best thing for their business. The meeting wraps up and you stand, shake hands, and turn to leave.

The competition: He gets to the meeting just in the nick of time because he was at another important meeting right before it with another large client. He is confident because he has other large accounts and experience with this type of customer. He is also arrogant because he assumes to know what the client is looking for. After a few pleasantries your competitor begins telling the prospect what their insurance needs are and how his firm will always be there for them. He knows what the company has been in the past, but does not take the time to find out what they are trying to become. His only clue came from their new website he checked out last night between dinner and

football. He asks very few questions because he has done this before and assures the prospect that they are in good hands. He wraps up the meeting and he stands, shakes hands, and turns to leave.

Which of the two meetings went better? If you were the prospect, which of the salesmen would you feel more confident in trusting your account to? If you have learned anything so far then you should know what I am going to say as the answer to the first question. By this point I am sure you are already simplifying everything and understanding that with the information I have given you there is no way of knowing which of the meetings went better in the prospects eyes. You should now start to look only for things you can be certain of and then analyze the rest of the situation by focusing on the principles and their interaction in generating a desired result.

In the first situation the salesperson walked in and right from the introduction made an effort to get to know the prospect, the company, and the company's intentions. Both salespeople were confident, but for different reasons. In the first example, the salesperson had little experience with large accounts and had to practice the situation in order to have confidence in his performance. The second salesperson had confidence because of similar experiences in the past but did little to practice the situation so his confidence came off as slightly arrogant.

The first salesman asked questions and gathered information about what the prospect was trying to accomplish, as opposed to the second salesman, who assumed to know what the business needed and told the prospect what he was going to do for them. Both salesmen were confident in the representation of their product but only one was based on what the client was actually looking for.

You may not be able to determine which of the two salespeople was successful in their pitch but considering I was one of the two I can tell you exactly how it turned out. I was in my second year in property and casualty insurance sales and it had taken me more than six months to land this

meeting. The competition was the incumbent agent and he had taken the account for granted over the years. My approach using the basic principles I am outlining for you had a deep impact on the prospects decision to choose my company over the competitor.

As the prospect company had grown over the years, their insurance premium had skyrocketed and the incumbent agent was just sitting back and enjoying the large commissions. Don't get me wrong, there is nothing wrong with enjoying large commissions but the problem with large commissions is that someone out there always wants a piece of yours. The incumbent agent had failed to maintain his relationship with the business owner and had lost his sincerity in acting in the client's best interest. Nothing I did in this situation was different than what the other agent *could* have done; he just forgot the value in doing it.

...

This happens all the time in relationships. We have all been guilty of taking a relationship for granted. We assume someone will always be there for us because they have been there in the past, so we stop doing everything we did to build the relationship in the first place. We stop acting in the best interest of the other person and start acting only with our own self-interest in mind, which inevitably leads to the deterioration of the relationship. Sometimes it takes losing the relationship to remind you of its value. If you can focus on maintaining the relationship over time by never forgetting the value of each relationship, then you can have many more effective business and personal relationships.

Once again I bring up an example of a personal situation not as an attempt to gloat about a large account, but to show that relationships are vital to the sales process and we already know life is all about making sales. I did not approach the account thinking there was no way I could land it because it was so big. I just figured out what the best thing was for the client, let them know how I was going to do that for them, and executed my word.

Don't be intimidated in your dealings with people or businesses you perceive to be larger than you can handle. Persistence and tenacity are vital to making good impressions with this type of buyer, but they are still humans after all. They are still susceptible to everything we are covering in this book and often appreciate it when someone deals with them straight up. Much like the beautiful woman who all the guys are scared to talk to, they have been used to people staying out of their way because of their status, so it is refreshing when someone challenges them. Assuming that challenge is non-confrontational and based on solid ideas. As long as your approach is sincere and in their best interest, you can get them to listen and build a relationship with them. These may take longer than other relationships, but they are also extremely rewarding. Whether it is a large account or the girl of your dreams, you should know that building that relationship is never out of your reach.

“Continuous effort - not strength or intelligence -
is the key to unlocking our potential.”

- Winston Churchill -

6. PROSPECTING

Just as with controlling the conversation and asking questions, the key to prospecting is *direction*. Now, those of you who are in sales understand the term prospecting to mean the efforts you make in order to generate as many opportunities as possible to make a sale. Sometimes it involves mailing letters, making phone calls, or even knocking on doors. For those of you who are not in sales as a career, your prospecting is not necessarily the same as those who are in sales. While the salesperson might be out looking for leads in order to sell their widget, you might need to prospect in other ways. Maybe you are looking for a job or a new significant other. Either way, the rules of prospecting apply in the same fashion.

No matter what you are prospecting for, you need to be sure that your efforts are effective. When I was in insurance sales, I used to call my prospects and tell them that I was following up with information that I had sent them about our risk management services. Even though I had not actually mailed them anything, it allowed me to sound like I was supposed to be speaking with the person for whom I was calling, which helped me get past the gatekeeper. Instead of wasting money sending marketing material to everyone under the sun, I would first determine a person's interest level, establish a line of communication, and then send them the relevant marketing materials.

General Tip - What is a Prospect?

A Prospect is someone who you have determined to be a viable candidate for you to approach to make a sale. Properly identifying and qualifying your potential sales opportunities is what prospecting is all about.

Prospecting

I am not advocating lying as part of your prospecting efforts, but I am encouraging you to be creative with it. I had found from my experience that most people either hadn't opened the information I had sent them or, if they did, it just got tossed aside. After months of realizing the information I was sending was not really doing anything for me, I decided to stop sending out the marketing material and to instead use it as a tactic on the phone, which I found to be much more effective. It saved me printing and postage costs and never created an issue; once the person indicated they were interested, I would send the material out for them to review. You have to figure out what works for you, but if it gets you in front of a potential buyer and does not break the law (or ethical boundaries), then I say give it a shot.

That is what prospecting is after all: giving yourself as many opportunities to make a sale as possible. Prospecting should be direct and targeted. In order to have direction in your prospecting, you have to determine who it is you need to get in front of in order to make a sale. If you are in sales, then you determine your target market for the specific product you are buying. In your everyday life, it becomes a little more difficult because you are not always selling the same product. Since there is variation in what you are selling, your prospecting needs to be flexible as well.

General Tip - What is a Prospect Pipeline?

Why is prospecting important? Well, if you don't have anyone to sell to, then you can't make any sales! A "Prospect Pipeline" is a term used in sales to refer to your workflow of potential sales opportunities or "Prospects". Keeping a full pipeline is a major part of being successful in sales. You can't take your full pipeline for granted; working on keeping the pipeline full has to be a major part of your sales efforts, and if you ignore it, you will quickly pay the price.

PRIME YOUR PIPELINE

When I first started in Insurance sales, I was eager to hit the ground running and start making sales. I'd spent a lot of time in the classroom learning the ins and outs of insurance and was eager to get out and use what I'd learned. In those early days, all I did was mail out marketing materials and make phone calls trying to set meetings with potential customers (prospects). Insurance has a long sales cycle, considering that most policies only renew once a year and it can take months of information gathering and underwriting in order to make a sale. My efforts eventually paid off and I started having small successes which lead to larger successes as I made sale after sale.

Eventually I became so overwhelmed working the accounts I was trying to sell that I began neglecting my overall prospecting efforts. I was sending less letters, making less phone calls, and knocking on less doors. Since I was making sales and bringing in revenue for the agency, no one questioned what I was doing, or, in this instance, not doing. I was new to sales, so I didn't know better, and because there was no official sales management structure in place at the agency, my lackluster prospecting continued until eventually all of my activity slowed to a screeching halt. Now, considering the length of the sales cycle in insurance, this presented a huge problem. I had to somehow find new clients quickly and find a way to keep the sales coming in or risk losing a job in which I was just beginning to find traction.

Many sales people fall in to this trap. It's like a sales roller coaster. You prospect hard, creating momentum in your sales efforts, start making sales, but then your prospecting efforts drop off and your sales drop off too so you start prospecting hard again in order to regain momentum. It will eventually become an endless cycle unless you learn to maintain a consistent level of focus on prospecting at all times.

I promise this is a lesson you want to let someone else teach you as opposed to learning on your own. You do not want to be in the same situation I found myself in when I had to scramble in order to find new prospects. I

had committed the ultimate sales suicide by cutting off my flow of potential customers and found myself in a desperate state, and there is nothing worse than a desperate salesperson. While developing your perfect pitch and observing how life and sales interact on a regular basis, make sure you always allow time for effective prospecting.

WALK AWAY POWER

Always having a full pipeline gives you what we call “walk-away power” in the sales world. As I mentioned in the last paragraph, a desperate salesperson is a terrible salesperson. People can smell desperation a mile away and it is extremely unbecoming of anyone trying to make a sale. In order to avoid this situation you need to have walk-away power. If you know that you have the ability to walk away from any sale at any time without it affecting your income or lifestyle, then you might have walk-away power. The only way to achieve this is through effective prospecting and knowing that there is another opportunity waiting for you if the present one does not work out. As you can imagine, walk-away power, gives you great control in a sales situation because it gives you leverage over the buyer. If you can convincingly convey to the buyer that they need to buy your product more than you need to sell it, then you are putting yourself in a position of control and giving yourself true power over the buyer.

In my early days as an insurance salesman, I had totally removed any aspect of walk away power from my sales process and was in need of any buyer who would listen to my pitch. Because of this I had to deal with accounts that I would not have typically dealt with because I had no other option. I lost control not only of the sales situations themselves (since I needed the buyer to buy) but also of my ability to choose my customers as I had no other options. This can be detrimental to any sale, as we all know that having the right type of buyers in our life is important to long-term success.

Having walk-away power in your life is just as important in day-to-day living as it is to the sales process. Walk-away power in any negotiation is critical in giving you the upper hand. As we have already discussed, it gives you control over the interaction as well as control over the type of people to whom you sell, but it is most effective when used during a negotiation. If you truly have walk-away power then you should be at ease during the negotiation process because your success is not dependent on making that specific sale. You might really want to land a specific client or make a really big sale, but having the mindset and freedom to walk away at any time will give you the strength to sell those accounts more effectively by allowing you to be yourself and not come off as needy or desperate during the sales process.

Imagine a negotiation where you can stick to your guns because you know the buyer needs your product more than you need to sell it. Think of buying a car. One of the things that drives car salesmen crazy is when the buyer gets up to leave (threatening to leave is just as effective as long as you are willing to do it if necessary). You have to go into this type of negotiation willing to play their game. You know they are going to hit you high and then slowly bring you down to a price that both parties can agree on. If you have done your due diligence as a shopper then you should know what you are looking for and what you are willing to spend. You, of course, have to be reasonable (they probably are not going to lose money just to sell you a car but I have seen that happen), but if you are informed and willing to walk away, you can always swing the control back in your favor.

The people with whom I used to hate negotiating were the ones who were never bothered by anything. The guys who would come in and agree with everything you said and then just say no when I asked for the sale. They seemed content to let me do my thing and play along, but when it came time for me to close the deal they simply said “no.” I don’t want to get into objections or how to handle them at this point (there’s a chapter on objections later on), but it is hard to overcome objections if the buyer simply agrees with you. Since the buyer knew the price at which he could buy the

car (it's all available online, people!) then he had no reason to get upset or offended when I came at him with the first offer, which is always sky-high. He didn't even get offended at subsequent offers as we slowly worked towards what he was willing to spend.

At one point the guy did grow a little bothered because he thought we were wasting his time. He knew what he wanted to pay for the car and we just wouldn't match his number. He ended up walking out of the dealership and leaving me at my desk wondering what to do next. My manager screamed at me for letting the guy leave without talking to him first and I tried to explain, unsuccessfully, that the guy just got up and left. The manager was mad and desperate to make a sale because it was the end of the month and he had a bonus riding on total volume for the month.

Later that night, it was a Saturday, all of the sales people were called into the manager's office and told to call anyone with whom we were close to making a deal and to get them back in the door. They would take any deal they could in an attempt to make their sales goal. I called my guy from earlier that day and told him we would sell him the car for what he wanted and the guy told me that he had gone to another dealer and bought the same car already for exactly what he wanted to pay.

Of course my manager was mad, and I'm not sure if we ended up hitting the quota for the month, but it showed me how having control is important in all sales situations. I had not yet learned the value of having walk-away power at this point in my sales career. It was a simple negotiating tool that, in this situation, was used by the buyer against the seller; it showed me either party can use it, and that learning how to use it is just as important as having it.

Another example of walk-away power common in relationships can be found during a break-up or while chasing a romantic interest. Often, one person has the ability to walk away or pretend to be less interested than the other person, which subsequently drives the other person to want them

even more. Try it the next time you get dumped or turned down. Play it cool, walk away and act like it doesn't bother you and watch how your attitude drives the other person insane. Once you take away someone's ability to affect your emotions and decision-making processes, you regain control of the situation.

This is not to say that you should be a dick about it or that it will work perfectly every time, and it certainly does not mean that it will ever be easy to sit there with your poker face trying to pretend like what they just did doesn't impact you, especially if it is a break-up. Just like the other principles in this book, you have to just understand the concept and then decide where and when to use it in order to make the sale. You won't use all these skills, all the time. It will be up to you to know them and determine whether or not they are appropriate for the situation.

You can't just tell the other party that you have walk-away power either: you have to *show* them. The ability to project walk-away power comes with practice and confidence. You will know when you truly have it, and then you can learn to fake it when you don't. By understanding walk-away power you can learn to hide any desperation or eagerness in your everyday sales situations.

BUT I'M NOT IN SALES

I get it. You might think that, because you are not in sales, prospecting is not very relevant in your life, but you would be greatly mistaken. Life is a series of sales, and in order to be successful in sales you need to prospect. Since you are not a sales professional, the things you prospect for are going to be different, but all the principles of effective prospecting are still important. Imagine if you are on the job hunt or doing something that is not your desired line of work. Wouldn't it behoove you to get yourself in front of as many companies as possible in order to land your next job? Why do you think online job search engines and social networks like LinkedIn are so

popular? It is because they increase the ability of businesses and job seekers alike to prospect for their desired buyers. In the case of the unemployed, they are prospecting for employers, while the employer is spending their time prospecting for qualified job candidates.

Consider another example: buying a home. Would you just pick one out and buy it with no information about the price, location or amenities? Wouldn't it be more logical to look at as many properties as possible in order to give yourself the best chance at finding the house that fit your needs?

Maybe you are trying to find that someone special in your life, the person that you hope to spend the rest of your life with. I once had a friend tell me that he was not interested in dating and that if God wanted him to get married God would put the right person in his life. I couldn't help but laugh inside, though I managed to keep a straight face as I looked at him. Being as I am divorced I understand better than most the importance of compatibility in a relationship. I understand faith but I don't think that's quite how God works. You still have to go out and interact with and expose yourself to members of the opposite sex and then God can work his magic, but you can't expect me to believe that God is sitting around playing matchmaker and dropping girls in to the laps of single men or vice versa.

Just like if we were selling a widget, we are essentially selling ourselves when we try to meet members of the opposite sex. We need to increase our opportunities to sell ourselves by getting in front of as many people as we can in an attempt to find the right person.

I don't mean to tell you to go out and ask everyone you see on a date, I am simply saying that putting yourself in front of as many buyers as possible is the only way to be effective at sales, no matter what you are selling. You need to be willing to put yourself out there in order to get the desired results. Otherwise you might end up like my friend and either die lonely or marry the first girl you meet, believing she had been sent by God.

NETWORK-KING

Now that you understand what prospecting is and why it's important, let's talk about how to prospect effectively and how to get yourself in front of the right kind of buyers. Are people who are successful in life that way because they are well-connected, or are they well-connected because they are successful? Think about the people in your life who you perceive as powerful or successful. Do they know a lot of people? Do they always seem to have an answer for you or a go-to for every situation? It is no coincidence that the people who spend time meeting a lot of other people are successful; it is because they allow themselves the opportunity to meet as many possible buyers as possible that their influence, power and success grows.

Don't take this the wrong way: I'm not telling you to go out and meet every person you see on the street, just that you should make a conscious effort to network with the people around you. In a sales career you would find your target market segment, develop a leads list, and begin your sales efforts from there. There are companies that sell information just for this purpose, but I personally prefer to build my network organically through effective networking.

There are many networking groups with the sole purpose of creating a setting where people with similar intent come together to network. They have them at bars and museums, restaurants, banks, churches, and on and on; sometimes they're expensive; other times, they're free to attend. Sometimes, you'll need to be a member or to have an invitation, but mostly you just have to show up. If you are gaining any confidence from reading this book and practicing these principles, then you should be reaching out and talking to new people in your life! These networking events are the perfect place to practice all of your new-found sales skills and the best part is that people expect to be approached at these things. These events are great, low-risk opportunities to practice everything we are covering in this book.

However, networking does not have to be scheduled or organized, and often-times it's a chance effort to connect with a stranger that leads to an unexpected yet meaningful relationship. You can find an opportunity to network in almost everything you do during the course of your average day. Most of us do things other than work and sleep, so we find ourselves in public places with some regularity. In those places you can find opportunities to connect with people and network with them in an attempt to increase your exposure base. Maybe you talk to the guy you see in the gym every day or find out what the guy who plays on your softball team does for a living.

Sometimes people tell me they are embarrassed to be out with me because I talk to everyone. Sometimes it is just an attempt to start a conversation or express my comedic side with a joke, but often I am making an effort to meet someone new that might be able to help me accomplish one of my many goals. I am a firm believer in having dreams and goals as well as sharing them with others. It is also important to include the people you care about in your dreams and goals. It is a great motivator and involving others in your dreams and goals encourages people to do a couple things. First, it pushes them to think about their dreams and to develop them further which is a good place to start. Secondly, if people know your dreams and goals, then they will be more willing to help you achieve them.

Networking for the non-sales professional should be carefree and enjoyable. All networking should be, for that matter. Don't try to sell people right away. Trying to get in to your sales pitch too early can ruin the opportunity. Networking should include high-level communications about what you are trying to accomplish in a more general sense. You are trying to make a sale here, but the sale you are trying to make is to get to the next step in your sales process. Think of it as piquing their interest or teasing them more than trying to make a sale per se. If you are looking for a significant other then maybe landing a date is the small sale that you can make while networking, whereas a career salesperson might want to try to set a time to talk about their product or company in more detail. Either way, remember

that networking should be low-pressure and that people hate to be sold on the spot; so, take it easy and you will be network-king before you know it.

“The biggest problem with communication is the illusion that it has taken place.”

- George Bernard Shaw -

7. COMMUNICATION

Every artist has their own style of expressing their artistic abilities. As salespeople we have to understand that our art form often comes through our ability to paint a picture with our words. People who get into sales as a career usually have a history of being smooth talkers and instinctively understand the principles I am outlining.

I mentioned earlier that I went to an art school for college. It was a design school in Detroit, Michigan, that specializes in automotive design. I thought I wanted to be a car designer, but couldn't get used to the idea of sitting in a cubicle and drawing all day for a living. There were a few other reasons why I did not continue my course of study at the school but it did help me realize that art could be taught and that with enough practice you can get good at drawing, painting, or pretty much anything you want.

I was never the best artist but I was good. I have always been skilled artistically but I quickly found out that there were other people with way more art skills than I would ever have. That is, until I realized how to unleash my true creativity in a completely different art form. I could visualize the things I wanted to draw; I just had a hard time putting them on paper so that other people could see my ideas. I worked hard at the skill though and through the year developed my skills dramatically. By the end of my first year the progress I had made in my sketching and rendering abilities was amazing. I would spend countless nights working through the night and long into the morning in an attempt to develop my skills of visual communication, or "viscom." An artist paints with his hands; I paint with my words.

Art is effective when it evokes thought and emotion in the minds of those who see it. The same is true of a good salesperson. Since life is one big series

of sales, we should all desire to develop our “verbal art” skills to their fullest potential. In order to effectively communicate your idea to someone, you have to make it easy to comprehend and thought-provoking in order for them to not only understand it but to embrace it as well. By developing the verbal artist inside you, you will become more adept at making the sales you want when you need them most.

However, communication is not just done with words; our body language involves hand gestures, facial expressions, and body positioning, as well as many other factors. In order to be effective with your verbal art, you have to learn to observe every aspect of a the sales situation as well as the buyer and roll all of those observations in to your perfect pitch.

WATCH ME TALK

People often “tell” us non-verbally if they are interested in what we are selling long before they actually tell us. The ability to recognize these non-verbal communication signals is important in building relationships, creating stimulus, and being an effective listener. If you don’t realize that the person you are selling to has no interest in listening to you but they are too kind to say so, you run the risk of really putting them off by continuing to push your agenda. People have a hard time saying “no,” so this is especially important if it is an existing relationship that you value.

Oftentimes a buyer will express his disinterest in what you are selling non-verbally because he does not want to offend you. The great thing about having the ability to recognize when someone is not fully invested is that you can change your pitch in order to increase their interest in what you are selling. As we discussed when talking about personalities, some people are all about the details and some people want the bullet point breakdown. If you confuse the two, you will not be an effective verbal artist because your art will not interest them. If instead you recognize what kind of buyer you’re dealing with, then you can tailor your words to his buying style in order to

create the sales stimulus needed to close the deal.

Finding out what type of buying style someone has is not as difficult as it seems. With a little practice you will learn to pick up on subtle clues that the buyer will give you while talking that will allow you to adapt your approach on the fly.

You can “mirror the buyer” to be confident that you are at least close to their same level of interest in your product or idea. By “mirroring the buyer,” I mean to mimic their intensity, demeanor, body positioning, etc. Pay attention to every detail all the way down to how they are sitting. Are they moving their hands when they talk? Do they speak loudly or softly? These are all things to be observing in every sales situation.

If someone is talking quickly and hurriedly, then you also need to talk quickly and make them understand you are not wasting their time by being there. If someone is being aggressive and bold in their posturing, then you need to match their emotions in order to let them know that you are not going to be pushed around. If they are sitting back or forward in their chair you need to notice and mirror their position. Forward means they are listening actively and are interested in what you are saying; back means they are just taking it all in and considering what you are saying a little more deeply. If you sit forward while they sit back it can be perceived as too aggressive and turn the buyer off. If you sit back and they are forward you can lose their interest by not showing the same level of involvement in the conversation.

Are they nodding their head up and down or side to side? This doesn't mean anything in regards to whether you make the sale or not, but it will usually show you if they are on the same page as you. If you get a positive head nod during a part of your sale where you were looking for a positive response then you are on the right track. However, if you get a negative response during that same point it should be cause for alarm, as the buyer is not buying your pitch. You can be suggestive in your communication in the same way. By nodding your head in agreement you will often see the

buyer mimic your head movements, which can be a great sign that the buyer is following right along with what you are selling. This form of non-verbal communication is used all the time. Look for it next time you are in a sales setting. Is the salesperson trying to get you to agree with her? I bet she's nodding their head while she does it.

In order to be an effective communicator you need to recognize all of these signs during the course of a conversation and to be able to react instinctively in order to stay one step ahead of the buyer. I assure you that with enough practice, these skills will come naturally, but early on in their implementation you may be uncomfortable using all of them at once. You may feel overwhelmed if you try to pay attention to everything at once and then you run the risk of focusing so much on the nonverbal cues that you miss hearing what the buyer is telling you. This is worse than not picking up on the nonverbal cues, as effective listening is just as important as understanding his nonverbal communication.

LISTEN UP

Developing your listening skills is probably the most valuable thing you can do in order to be better at sales and in life. As we mentioned before, you have to set your own self-interest aside -just for a moment- and understand exactly what the buyer is telling you. Once you recognize what that is, then you can more effectively sell your product or idea. It does you no good attempting to sell something to a person who has no interest in buying, no matter how good you are at sales.

Most poor listeners fall in to one of four different categories. Read the description of each and then try and figure out which one you may fall into. By recognizing the different types of listening styles you can avoid those behaviors as you build relationships. Knowing the different styles also helps you overcome them as you engage a buyer. We all fall into one of these categories to some extent, but it is possible to fall into many of the categories

during our interactions throughout our lives.

Arrogance: These people have no qualms in informing you that you are wasting their time. They resist eye contact and may appear distant during the conversation. They act like they are better than you and often come across as bored during their conversations. They think they are more important than you because of status or title and treat you as such.

Interrupt: These people never lets you finish a sentence. They always assume what you are going to say and jump in to finish your thoughts for you. They have no problem explaining why you are wrong, and they are right.

Singular: These people focus on one thing you said and do not take the entire conversation in context. They sit back waiting for you to finish but all they really address is that one thing that stuck out to them, regardless of whether or not that was the main point in your conversation.

I'm Better: (My least favorite) These people always have a story better than yours: they have a situation in which they did exactly what you're talking about, but they did it *bigger or better or more often*. This type of listener can't wait for you to finish so that they can tell you about their similar, superior story.

Do any of these hit close to home? Think about the people who you converse with on a regular basis, do they fall in to one of those categories? Which one are you? The majority of the time we fall into a single category, but often we find ourselves dabbling in each of them throughout our conversations. If reading any of those descriptions made you feel uncomfortable about your listening skills, don't be alarmed. When I first heard those, I was shocked as I discovered that at one point or another I had been all four, and to this day I make a conscious effort while listening to others to stay away from any of those negative habits.

When listening you have to understand that people simply want you to listen. Most of the time, there is no agenda behind what they are telling you; it is just healthy and natural for them to want to get things off their chest. We often find ourselves trying to solve everyone else's problems when we listen to them. We interrupt with suggestions or with a fix when all the other person really wants you to listen and let them vent for a bit.

As your listening skills develop, try and notice the benefits being a good listener contributes to your relationships. When people trust you and feel comfortable talking to you, you will have an easier time building effective relationships. Think about someone you know who gossips all the time. They listen to your stories, but only because they want to tell everyone else about your problems and shortcomings. They don't really care about your situation or respect your privacy and next thing you know something that you entrusted to them has spread like wildfire. Do you know anyone like this? I would be willing to bet that the gossip lives quite a difficult life. They must have a hard time making true friendships, because they do not practice any of the principles we have discussed in communicating or building lasting, meaningful relationships.

ATTENTION IS FREE

"Paying attention to your surroundings and the things that happen through the course of your day is one of the most important thing you can do to develop your communications skills."

By being alert to your surroundings you can pick up on distractions, body language, areas of common interest and many other things that will help you spark up a conversation with anyone anywhere. It is vitally important to be observant in order to be an effective communicator.

Paying attention gives you an advantage in a sales situation because it gives you more ammo for your sales gun. During the introduction phase of any sales process, it is especially important to pay attention so you don't miss a

subtle clue in the early phases of the sales process, where you could most risk alienating your buyer or turning them off from your sales effort.

I once walked in to an attorney's office and, as I often did, decided to use a comedic icebreaker to open up the conversation. I am known for using "off-the-wall" ice breakers; I believe they, as opposed to something cheesy like "How 'bout that weather, eh?" are subsequently more effective in stirring interest in the buyer. You have to be careful, though, as I quickly learned: I told the secretary I was with the IRS and was there for their scheduled audit. She proceeded to freak and, when I told her I was just kidding, she promptly kicked me out. As it turned out, they were tax lawyers, and a surprise audit from the IRS was no laughing matter to them.

Now, I pride myself on being extremely observant, but obviously I was a little off in this situation as I didn't notice any of their logoed material or brochures that would have been good indicators to steer clear of that particular icebreaker. The most embarrassing part of the entire situation was that I had a trainee with me, and it was definitely not a good example to set for the new employee.

Ever since that encounter, I have been like a hawk any time I walk in to a new environment. I look around for items of interest or things that I might recognize or have in common with the business. Remember, people love talking about themselves. I have found that the easiest icebreaker is to find something in your surroundings or conversation that has a personal tie to the person you are trying to talk to and ask the right questions about it.

I always find that it is easy to get more time out of people in a sales setting if you get them talking about themselves or something they are interested in. It is easy to become distracted and forget all about the possibility of being sold to when the conversation seems to revolve around your personal interests. However, corny lines and disingenuous conversations abound in the world of sales so be sure you are not coming off as the typical sleaze-ball salesperson.

Paying attention is not just important for breaking the ice or starting conversation: you need to be attentive to *adapt* and truly perfect your pitch. You never know what you might learn from someone by just listening to what she might say. I mean, honestly listening. Pay attention to every situation in life, whether you are driving in unfamiliar territory or you are walking down a dark street. You never know when the idiot in front of you is going to slam on their brakes, or when the guy next to you, who doesn't realize he has a car (you!) in his blind spot, is going to change lanes.

There is also nothing more frustrating to a buyer than a sales person who does not pay attention to specifics through the sales process. Trust me, you do not want to tune out at the wrong time during a conversation only to find out you missed something vital to the sale itself. There aren't many ways you can lose credibility faster than having the buyer repeat himself or, worse yet, make him feel like you are not paying attention. Think back to the introduction section where we talked about developing the perfect pitch. Paying attention is a big part of perfecting your pitch. Making your buyer feel like he is the most important person in the room is a great way to increase your odds of closing the sale.

“If opportunity doesn’t knock, build a door.”

- Milton Berle -

8. WHY PEOPLE BUY

If our goal is to understand that life is all about making a series of small sales on an ongoing basis, then our end result is to get people to buy whatever it is we are selling. No matter what you sell, the process relies on the same impulsive responses to which we humans react instinctively. If you are keeping up with the principles to this point, you should find yourself consistently able to put yourself in front of people who are, at the very least, willing to listen to what you have to say, which is a relatively strong foundation for setting up a sale, but without the ability to create **impulse** or **desire** for what you are selling, it will all be for nothing.

If you cannot get people to want to listen to what you have to say, you will be incapable of effectively building relationships and making sales. You might eventually find yourself living a lonely life wondering what went wrong. Maybe you are feeling a little lonely now and this information is hitting a little close to home. If you find yourself lonely on a regular basis, ask yourself, “Are people rejecting *me*, or *my ideas*?” Knowing your buyer is vital to making sales; if you are not making sales, then you either need to change your buyers, or change your pitch. Sometimes you even have to do a little of both.

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Up until now, I have been laying a foundation to put you in a position to implement all of the principles you are learning in an effective manner. Now I will teach you that for every sale you make, you have to sell yourself *twice*. Most of what we have covered so far should help with the first sale, which is getting the other person to listen to you. The second sale is achieved by creating stimulus for the person to buy whatever it is you are actually

selling. Once you have your audience, not only do you need to maintain the relationship, but you must also focus on adapting and perfecting your pitch by creating impulse in whatever it is you are selling.

People buy for two basic reasons: necessity or desire. Knowing whether your potential buyer is buying out of want or out of need is as important as knowing his personality and understanding his body language, as his reasons for buying will dictate which of the sales stimuli you use in each situation. Although their reason for buying is unique in regard to tailoring your pitch, you will find that the techniques used to create impulse throughout the sale are the same. The only thing that varies is the emphasis placed on each stimulus through the process of making the sale.

STIMULATING, ISN'T IT?

Many things stimulate people to buy. The following terms will be used throughout this chapter to describe certain methods of building impulse. Once you have a firm understanding of the concepts used to build impulse, we will discuss practicable applications of the theory to further enhance your ability to have an effect on the sales in your life.

Association: This term is used to describe a situation where you **associate** the buyer, in one way or another, with the product or idea, whether by tying it to a personal relationship of theirs or to their personal life or situation. You have often heard of the phrase “keeping up with the Joneses.” This is an association tactic used commonly in sales systems and marketing tactics across the world. Whether it’s a large corporation or a Hollywood movie, association is one of the most powerful tools used in our everyday interactions in order to increase buyer impulse.

Here is how it works: You see an athlete, a celebrity, or some other person you admire using a certain product or performing a specific task and you feel an impulse to mimic their actions in an attempt to be more

like them in a fashion not dissimilar to the people who watch an episode of Jersey Shore on MTV, and next thing you know they, along with the whole world, are trying to “beat up the beat” and “fist pump” at the dance clubs. Such sales techniques prey on our natural desire to fit in and associate ourselves with those whom we hold in high regard. More specifically, it triggers our social desire to fit in and can even lead us to abandon our sensibilities for the feeling of acceptance amongst our peers. Peer pressure, anyone?

Our desire to fit in is based purely on what we perceive as “normal.” When a company or individual associates their product to what you think is normal, then you are impulsively inclined to gravitate towards it. The pull of what may otherwise be irrational behavior is difficult to resist because of our natural desire to be liked and feel like part of the team: to feel like we fit in. Learning how association tactics work and having the ability to defend against them, or even to dissociate yourself from wanting or needing to “fit in,” can be one of the most freeing experiences in your life. I promise it will change your life.

Take-Away: The take-away is the most forceful of the sales stimulus. It is often used to create impulse and create urgency by setting a deadline in a sales process or interaction. A lot of companies use the take away by offering an item for a specified price but “for a limited time only!” After the allotted time the price increases, therefore urging you to buy the item sooner than you might have wanted to.

It is intended to urge a decision on the spot and is the most dangerous tactic in some sales. An ultimatum is a perfect example of a take away in action: “If you do not take out the trash, you do not get your allowance.” What does this statement instill in the buyer? It creates urgency to accomplish a task in order to get an allowance. Even though the parent is giving the kid money, it is the child who is the buyer. The parent is selling the kid on doing his chores. A bribe can be a take-away tactic

but, much like a bribe, you run the risk of destroying your entire sales process by using it at the wrong time. You have to ensure that you have complete control over the buyer. If you use it too early, you might offend him or cause him to call your bluff, in which case you have to be willing to walk away with your tail between your legs or back off, and risk giving up all control over the sales process.

Think of it like this: you have been talking to a girl for a long time, and there has been some back-and-forth for a while, but you are looking for more. You want a stronger level of commitment, so you tell her that she either needs to commit or you are done with her. In this situation, you truly have to be ready to walk away if she says “get lost.” If instead you try and use the take-away without having been 100% confident in your decision to go through with it, you run the risk of killing your credibility and weakening your negotiating position with that person forever.

Parents make this mistake all the time when dealing with their kids. Imagine if a kid gets into trouble and her parents tell her, “You are grounded for a week!” But, a day later she’s out, hanging with friends with no further repercussions. You have now diminished your authority and credibility and have indicated to your child that your threats of consequences have very little conviction and will lead to increasing levels of disrespect and disregard for your authority.

The take away is one of the most volatile tactics to build impulse because of this. You must treat it as a ticking time bomb and become confident in your use of the tactic or forever risk killing your credibility with all of your future buyers.

Indifference: Indifference and the take-away, have a few things in common, but are entirely different concepts. Indifference is a subtle tactic used to reduce skepticism and fear from the buyer by making them think that there is no pressure to buy. It is used to reassure the buyer that they are making a sound decision by minimizing the focus

on the decision making process itself. Indifference can also be used to create a bit of reverse psychology in order to increase impulse through your sales process. The key is to learn how to manage your expression of indifference through a sales situation. Too little and it can come off as disingenuous; too much can cause the buyer to lose interest in the process entirely.

A guilt trip is a common use of indifference in an everyday situation. Imagine your spouse saying to you “Sure, go out with the guys. I’ll just clean this place up myself.” Although she is communicating one thing, her intentions are focused on achieving the opposite result. (Didn’t I tell you life was all sales?) In this example, the wife is using indifference by telling her husband that it is okay to go out while she is actually trying to get the point across that he better not leave her there to clean up the house on her own. Her indifference puts the pressure on the husband to make the right decision while maintaining control over the situation. Whether or not the husband decides to stay is up to him, but you bet your ass he is sleeping on the couch if he decides to go out anyway.

You might think being passive aggressive and acting indifferent are synonymous but indifference, much like a guilt trip is a onetime use situation where people who are passive aggressive are typically defending themselves from confrontation. This is not to say that there are not crossovers but I wanted to make sure to differentiate between the two. One is an ongoing behavior which might affect the sales situation where the other is a tool used specifically in a sales situation in order to advance the sales process.

Using indifference is a great at building impulse because you can use it to make yourself appear like less of a salesperson. If you communicate to the buyer that it makes no difference to you whether they buy or not, you can gain a strong advantage over the buyer. We talked about walk-away power already, but pairing walk away power with the proper amount of indifference is one of the most powerful sales tactics you

can have in your arsenal. This is vital to helping the buyer feel like they are the one making the decision entirely on their own. Indifference is versatile as well as it can be used either by itself or in conjunction with any of the other sales stimuli.

Now we get to the good stuff. I have talked about not using these principles negatively or for selfish gain but let's be honest, it is almost impossible to ignore the fact that by understanding all of these principles you will start to find opportunities to implement them in your everyday interactions with the people around you. I mean, I just told you that a bribe is an example of a sales tactic you probably use every day (not the bribe, the sales principle). You just hadn't known it was a part of every sales system until now. You hadn't the power to understand your ability to manipulate the impulses of others like others manipulate your impulses daily, until now. It is hard to understand these things and not get frustrated at their implementation in so many aspects of your life so again, I encourage you to be sure you are using your newfound powers for good, not evil.

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We have just been observing people's behavior and responses to certain situations and loading your metaphorical sales gun with bullets as we climb the stimulus scale to the tipping point. These bullets of information in your sales arsenal will help you implement the proper sales stimulus at the right time in order to affect the outcome of any sale. By being observant, you have confidently built a relationship with your buyer and are now ready to use those powers to take control of the situation and direct the buyer to your end result.

Every sales pitch, perfect or otherwise, uses some form of sales stimulus in order to build impulse for their product. Remember we have accepted the premise that life is a consecutive series of small sales, so you have to understand that your daily interactions can be affected by using the sales skills you are learning in this book.

For an example of a real-life scenario, let's say a husband is trying to convince his wife that they need a new TV. While discussing it with her he might bring up the neighbor's television or her best friend's television, which she loves. He might even point out to her that she had made a comment about enjoying a comparable television resolution while watching her favorite show the last time they were over at the neighbor's house for dinner. By reassuring her that she will benefit from the situation while associating it with previous comments she has made, he involves her in the buying process, but he is clearly controlling the conversation and therefore the sales process.

By "associating" the TV (which is the idea he is selling) to people and places in his wife's life he creates an impulse urging her to agree to the new purchase. By personalizing his pitch on this manner he is more likely to connect with his wife as opposed to boring her to death with technical information about the TV; thus, by understanding his wife's impulse triggers he was able to effectively use a sales stimulus to "sell" her on getting the new TV.

Maybe he didn't do enough in the above example to impulse his wife to her tipping point, so let's drop a little more impulse on her and get this man his new television. The tipping point is the level at which enough impulse has been built to get the buyer to jump off the cliff and in to the full control of the seller. Understanding that he needs to build more impulse, the husband uses a little indifference on his wife to push her closer to the tipping point. By telling her the store will offer them 90 days same as cash the husband might remove the stress of having to pay for such a large purchase all at once. He might also tell her that there is a 30-day return policy on the TV so he removes the pressure of her making a decision on the spot. After all, if she changes her mind, he assures her he will bring the TV right back and it wouldn't have cost them a dime.

What the husband knows, along with all the big box stores, is that once that TV gets into their living room it's not going back to the store unless it is defective. A lot of companies use this tactic knowing all they are worried about is getting their product into your hands and into your home. They

know that once that happens, the odds of you returning the product reduce dramatically. By allowing you to associate the product with your everyday life, they essentially make you sell the product to yourself. After you have the product in your possession, begin to use it, and enjoy it, they assume that you will ultimately find a way to keep it.

This is the same reason car dealerships always pressure you into test driving the car before negotiating a price and might even let you take the car home with you overnight. They know that you will take ownership of the car by driving it or seeing it in your driveway and therefore make it easier for them to get you to sign the contract. It becomes infinitely more difficult for them to sell you something that you have not driven or experienced because you have no emotional attachment to the product, making it difficult for them to trigger your impulses. Worst case scenario, they hope that you won't want to go through the trouble of returning the product; returning purchases become a hassle, so the path of least resistance becomes keeping it.

Have you ever not been satisfied with something you bought only to live with it because of the hassle of returning it? How about the quality of food from a restaurant? Ever been unhappy with a meal, but refused to send it back because it might create conflict? Companies count on this. They expect you to react this way. Are there any other situations that you can think of through the course of your average week that you can tie to one of these principles? The most effective (sales)people understand that knowing their audience and being flexible with their pitch affords them the most opportunities to make sales on a regular basis. Understanding all of the sales stimuli will give you a better understanding on how to use them individually or together to make more sales.

“Look within. Within is the fountain of good, and it will ever bubble up, if thou wilt ever dig.

- Marcus Aurelius -

9. THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN FLYING OR FALLING

There is a term in aviation that is used when referring to the pitch of the airplane. Funnily enough, that term is “attitude.” By adjusting the airplane’s *attitude* you can determine whether the plane is climbing (flying) or dropping (falling). The same can be said about the attitude of a salesperson.

Your state of mind is as much a part of your sales process as any of the principles we have discussed so far. Now, I am not a mental health professional, so don’t take anything I say as medical advice; the only experience I have in dealing with psychology are the situations I have lived through personally. I have, however, spent a lot of time breaking down and trying to understand those experiences in order to use that information throughout other parts of my life.

The conclusion that I have come to is that when I have a positive outlook on things, they tend to go well, and when I don’t, the opposite is true. I am not telling you that positive thinking alone will solve all of your problems; I am only saying that having a positive attitude instills confidence in yourself as well as in those around you, which makes it easier to accomplish whatever it is you are working towards. Your attitude is one of the few things you can control in every situation regardless, of any other factors. If you choose to look for the silver lining, then you will find it. Conversely, if you spend all of your time thinking about reasons why you can’t do something, then you often give up without even giving yourself a chance to succeed. You may miss out on an amazing experience because you fear potential failure, as opposed to understanding that there might be something positive you can draw from the experience, even in the face of failure.

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It is easy to find excuses in life for everything that goes wrong. I am more self-critical about being personally accountable for my actions than I am about anything else. If you can learn to hold yourself accountable and to stay positive in spite of failure, you will feel better about yourself. By removing the self-imposed excuses and barriers, you give yourself a real opportunity to get out of your own way and succeed at whatever it is you are trying to accomplish, sales or otherwise. We always look for someone else to blame for our shortcomings and can develop a victimized mentality with the belief that the world is out to get us.

The truth is that, more often than not, we become our biggest roadblock to success. If you realized how little time people actually spend talking about you, you can move past your concerns about what you think they are saying. Why give other people that level of control over your life? Why live every day worried about what the world thinks of you? Be confident in your convictions and know you are putting forth the best you that you know how to be and forget about what anyone else thinks about you. When you achieve this level of freedom, you will see the world change around you.

You will begin to live comfortably in your own skin and you will be able to approach every situation feeling good about what you are doing and therefore be more effective in doing it. Maintaining a positive attitude is hard to do because of everything I have just talked about. We have all of these influences in our lives and voices in our heads telling us we are failures or we are not good enough, but over time we can train those voices to become our biggest cheerleaders. We can convert the negative to a positive and truly empower ourselves to do something amazing.

Do you have someone in your life who is always happy? Smiling all day long and enjoying every bit of life, as far as you can tell? How do you feel when you interact with this person? Do you feel better when you talk to them? Do they make you want to be happier yourself? So, what is holding you back? You could be that person in the lives of so many by making the simple decision to maintain a positive attitude no matter the situation.

SOMETIMES YOU FAKE IT

Like everything, it takes time to develop the skill of maintaining your positive attitude. I used to have this job I despised. I loved the people with whom I worked and I enjoyed doing what I was doing, but the business was not for me. I worked more than 60 hours most weeks and was not making anywhere near the money I thought I deserved based on my job performance and the time I was investing in the company. The one thing that kept me coming to work long after I decided the job was not for me were some of my coworkers. Their attitudes were always positive and I loved being around them. They showed me I can directly influence the life of those around me by keeping a positive attitude and persevering through adversity. We were there for each other in that sense after a while. If one of us were having a bad day another person would be there to pick him up. The bonds I built through this job were my true compensation for what otherwise might have been a very unfulfilling professional experience.

I did eventually leave that job, but not after learning this valuable lesson. For a while there, my goal at that company was to pass on that same positive attitude to others inside the company just as my coworkers had done for me. I learned that it did me no good to go in and be negative because either way I still had to do my job. I still had to talk to everyone and perform my job duties. I had already decided I was going to stick it out there for a while longer so I decided I would do it with a smile on my face.

Have you ever heard the term “fake it to make it”? Depending on the situation, it can mean you “act as if” until you figure out what “if” is. In this case, it meant that even when I didn’t feel like it I would put on my happy face and maintain a positive attitude until it got to the point that it happened naturally for me.

I still use what I learned at that job about keeping a positive attitude to trying to influence those around me to do the same. This is important in all sales settings as your attitude will always affect your buyers and their states of

mind. Often times the perception of success is as powerful as success itself, if only temporarily. I am not telling you to lie or pretend to be something you are not. Only that projecting confidence and success helps remove doubt from the mind of a buyer.

WINNERS ALWAYS LOSE FIRST

Do you know anyone who is successful in life that has not experienced failure? There will always be exceptions to the rule but for the most part, people who are successful in life do it through determination and hard work. The ability to accept and learn from your failures will determine your ability to succeed in sales and, by extension, life. If you think you are exempt from failure or that you can escape it in life, then you have another thing coming. Don't believe me? Just wait, it will come and more likely than not, it will hit you when you least expect it. It definitely won't happen on your terms and it likely won't be something you see coming. It is important to know how to fail with honor and integrity and to learn how to pick yourself up, dust yourself off, jump back on your horse and get back in the race. I often tell people in life that it is more important to be a determined jockey than a powerful thoroughbred horse. You can almost always find a great horse but winning jockey's are few and far between.

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Think back to little league sports, when the coach would demonstrate that winning and losing gracefully is a facet of good sportsmanship. No one likes getting his face rubbed in his failures, so why would you think that rubbing someone's face in his would be acceptable? Like sports, life is full of wins and losses. How you handle losing is far more important than how you celebrate the wins. I won't say that I enjoy failure, but I always seem to learn more from failing than I ever do from success. I don't know about you but I am the kind of guy that has to figure things out for myself - even if it means learning things the hard way.

The key to being successful in sales is using your failures to help you refine your perfect pitch and relationship building skills. Every “no” you get is just that much closer to the next “yes.” It’s good in any situation to rehash your loss to understand what it is you might have done differently to affect the outcome in your favor. This is where you will really learn to adapt the principles to your everyday life. By replaying the sales situation and working through it in your head, you can think about what you could have said or done differently in order to achieve the desired outcome. By understanding and committing that information to memory, you give yourself a better chance at success the next time a similar situation arises. Overcoming objections is a prime example of how losing can help you win. As you hear more and more objections, you learn how to more effectively handle them as they present themselves as opposed to letting them stunt your sales effort.

The worst job I ever had was a sales job at a so-called “marketing agency” where my primary responsibility was to sell office supplies door-to-door while trying to build a sales team, train members of my team, interview new candidates and meet my sales quota. I despise the experience so much that I refer to the business model as “sweatshop sales” in honor of their tedious work setting. The day would start out with a “RAH-RAH” meeting at the office, where we practiced our sales pitch, worked on product knowledge, and did some role-playing to overcome objections. After all that we would head out to the “field” (wherever my territory was at the time) and go door-to-door trying to sell staplers, pens, paper, printers, toner, desks and any number of other items in our thousand-page catalog.

If you want to learn how to deal with failure and rejection, get a job doing commission-only, business-to-business sales. The repetition of going from door-to-door is ideal practice for everything we discuss in this book. You learn how to develop short-term relationships, and it is imperative to have a perfect pitch. Remember, people hate to be sold, so imagine how much they hate when you walk into someone’s place of business and interrupt his day to sell him something he already buys somewhere else. Talk about

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failure! I used to get thrown out, cussed at, yelled at and even got the cops called on me.

Rejection was a daily occurrence, but if I didn't make my sales, I didn't make any money (heck, even when I did make sales, I barely made any money). If I would have let all the angry gate-keepers or rejections affect my attitude, I never would have made my quota. As I said before, every "no" I received brought me one step closer to my next sale.

Maintaining a positive outlook on this type of experience is the only way to be consistently successful in sales. Imagine where we would be if we, as a society, gave up when people told us "no" or if we quit after every failure. Think about Thomas Edison and the light bulb. How many times did he fail before finding the right material to use? He failed thousands of times, and when he finally got it right, he didn't complain about the number of times he failed; he talked about discovering thousands of ways not to make a light bulb.

Maintaining a positive attitude, even if you have to fake it every once in a while, helps boost your confidence and affects the people around you. As with all strong leaders, the energy you can provide for your team helps elevate all of the members of the team and increases their overall performance. In addition to keeping a positive attitude through your losses, you must be persistent in your efforts to overcome them. If you allow the "no's" or a particularly bad experience to dictate your efforts in future situations, you exponentially diminish your possibilities for future success.

DON'T BACK DOWN

I used to sell property and casualty insurance in southwest Florida. I remember that, after I got licensed, I was supposed to find a niche for my prospecting efforts and develop a marketing strategy to target businesses within that niche. I picked professional liability after some quick success in that line of business and put together a prospect list of companies that

I wanted to approach about reviewing their insurance. There was one account I set my eyes on: a large multi-location diagnostics facility with a large property and casualty exposure that would not only challenge my ability as a new insurance agent, but would land me a huge commission if I actually landed the account.

I started by mailing them a lead letter and following up with a phone call where I was repeatedly transferred to voicemail. I continued to call for weeks, until I finally got the decision-maker on the phone. He just gave me objections and stall tactics, telling me he was busy and asking me to call him back later to discuss their insurance program. It got to the point that the partners of the agency suggested I take them off my prospect list, but I was determined to keep calling with the hopes that I would eventually get my meeting with the CFO. I was confident that if I could just get my foot in the door, I had a chance to make a huge sale and land my first large account for the agency.

After months of getting put off, I called and again asked to speak with the CFO, who had been ignoring me for the better part of a year. The response I got was that he was no longer working at the company and that I was speaking with the person who would be taking over his responsibilities. Not skipping a beat, I proceeded to tell her that I had been talking to the former CFO about reviewing their insurance program and offering them competitive options for their risk management needs. I didn't lie to her, as I *had* talked to him about it, but I didn't really see the need to tell her that I had never gotten further than rescheduling the phone call with him. As it turned out, their insurance was on her list of things to review, as it seemed her predecessor had not looked for competitive quotes in a number of years. It also turned out that their policy was expiring soon and its renewal date was only a few months away. She wanted to meet with me as soon as possible so we could get the review process started and gather all of the underwriting information we would need to quote the account.

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After the initial meeting, I got a look at how big the account actually was, and I learned that it had *definitely* been neglected. Needless to say, after more than a year of trying to get in the door, I wrote the biggest account I've ever had in the second year of my insurance career. It was a huge victory (and commission), but only because I refused to give up on my efforts to develop that relationship. Had I listened to other people in my office or even given in to the frustration of constant delays by the decision-maker, I never would have been able to land that account. I later found out that the former CFO was friends with the agent who had been handling the account before I took over, and that is why he wouldn't meet with me.

Persistence and determination paid off in this situation just as they continue to do for me in other aspects of my life. I have always been stubborn when it comes to accepting "no" for an answer. Maybe that is what makes me good at sales. I implore you to be just as persistent in pursuing your goals, no matter towards what or whom you are working, and I assure you; your efforts will pay off in the end.

“Develop success from failures. Discouragement and failure are two of the surest stepping stones to success.”

- Dale Carnegie -

10. THE CLOSE

At this point you have to be connecting the dots. If you are absorbing the principles in this book, then you are analyzing several recent situations in your head right now. You are recognizing the value of relationships, and you're noticing how the sales stimuli affects all of them. You are wondering if you could have done something different in each of those situations to have affected the outcome. If you feel you are ready to find out specifically how you could have affected those outcomes, then you might want to read on. And, oh yeah, grab a pen and take some notes!

After all this practice, I have to imagine that by now you are pretty good at getting people to listen to your pitch. Hopefully that means that you are effectively listening to your buyers as well. As you learn to recognize the sales principles in your everyday life, you will become more and more familiar and comfortable using them to your advantage. By incorporating a few of the other principles as well as what you have learned so far you will soon become a master at sales, relationships, and life in general.

Before we move forward we have to move backward for just a second: back to building relationships and, more importantly, back to listening. I talked about it in a previous chapter, and I am sure you will see it again before you finish reading the last chapter. If you are the one doing all of the talking, it likely means you are not making any sales. Bottom line: the best salespeople are great listeners.

Think of a sale as a valuable object inside a safe. In order to get into the safe, you have to know the combination. The buyer has the combination and, as a salesperson, it becomes your job to get the combination from the buyer. The buyer, trying to protect their valuables, is not going to give up the combina-

tion easily. Your questions are your lock picks and you have to learn to use them to crack the combination without the buyer noticing what you're doing. I don't mean you should lie or deceive the buyer to make your sale (that is why salespeople get a bad rap and why people get hurt in relationships), I just mean that you have to be tactical with your questioning.

Do you hate sales people? Why? Is it because they are cheesy? Do they always say exactly what you think they will say? Do you fear they are trying to be smooth and trick you into doing something? Do you see the value in being specific but strategic in your questioning and quietly cracking the combination to the safe (we don't want them to get suspicious)? Well, then how do you do that? How do you sell without "selling?" With direction, of course, haven't you been listening?

...

"Only ask open-ended questions!" If you're in sales, I'm sure you've heard this over and over. If you're not in sales, then don't worry about it. It's not true; not always, at least. Open-ended questions are good and you should practice asking them. As we discussed before, an open-ended question allows the buyer an opportunity to talk and to explain his answer. "Remember Romeo and his questioning tactics?". If you are using the questions properly, you will be able to listen and take information that will help you later on in the sale.

More important than asking an open-ended question is asking questions that lead your buyer in a specific direction. Going back to developing your perfect pitch, we want to be sure that both the seller and buyer are heading in the same direction. By making sure your questions lead the buyer in the direction of your objective, you can begin to build impulse and start to push the buyer towards the tipping point. To ask a question with direction, you need to know where you are trying to take the buyer, which entails going back to beginning with the end in mind.

Closed-ended questions get a bad rap in sales, but that reputation is undeserved. Closed-ended questions are a very important part of the sales process, because they make it easy to direct your conversation. Asking questions that lead to positive responses from the buyer, closed or otherwise, can be a great tool in working your way to a sale. Closed-ended questions allow you to ask a series of them to build affirmation in the eyes of the buyer. For example: If I ask several questions back-to-back that I know will get the buyer saying “Yes,” I can build a positive idea with everything we have discussed up to that point in the sales process. Getting the buyer to agree with you through a string of quick, closed-ended questions is a powerful tool in reaffirming their confidence in their decision to permit you to continue on your sales path.

Remember this when asking questions: in sales, when you ask a question that *can* result in a negative answer, it almost always *will* result in a negative answer. You have to be comfortable asking questions that you feel confident will get you a positive response. Asking a question and getting a negative response at the wrong point of the sales process can be devastating and difficult to overcome. Negative responses from the buyer will kill sales momentum, so avoid it at all cost. It is okay for the buyer to object, but you want to handle objections at the right point in the sales process. If the buyer is consistently objecting or responding with negative answers to your questions, you might need to reconsider your needs assessment and whether your pitch was as perfect as you thought.

RECOGNIZING THE SIGNS

I am not talking about signs in the same sense as road signs. Typically, non-verbal cues are not as obvious, but they do become easier to spot as you get better at recognizing and implementing these principles. Something as simple as a smile can be a sales signal. The buyer nodding his head in agreement, asking questions, and looking at you intently are positive signs during a sales process. You have to become good at reading people and tim-

ing your closing statement on your observations.

Texas Hold'em is a very popular poker game these days. Imagine, if you will, that you are playing a poker game with a couple different people. On your left is a professional poker player, and to your right is a friend who knows the game but just plays recreationally. They both understand the odds and betting structure, but for some reason the pro always seems to know when to bet and when to fold. Your neighbor talks a lot and tries to make small talk with the him, but the pro just stares ahead with a straight face as cool as the other side of your pillow. What separates the two players?

The pro is watching your friend intently. He is looking for clues to your friend's betting patterns by observing such signals as his speech patterns and mannerisms. He is trying to spot any indication he can to figure out what kind of cards your friend is holding. With his experience (practice), he has become adept at picking up on even the slightest tell, and this gives him an advantage in each hand. When you ask questions, you are looking for the buyer's tell; you are looking for little clues that tell you that you are heading in the right direction.

Get good at reading body language. A good percentage of communication is nonverbal, so you need to pay attention not only to what your buyer is saying, but how he is saying it. Is he looking you in the eye or staring right past you? Does he seem excited? Is he interested in what you're telling him? Is he smiling? Is he hospitable? These are all indicators that the person is heading in the right direction which we already know is key to leading them to the close.

However, sales signals *can* be deceptive. Just because a customer is showing signs of being impulsed to buy doesn't mean you jump right in for the close. If you are doing things properly to this point, you should be *slowly* pushing your buyer towards the tipping point. Recognizing sales signs and recognizing the tipping point are one and the same, but spotting them like this does not come naturally and, like everything else in the book, requires **dedication**

and **practice**. Sales people regularly take the buyer right past the tipping point by talking too much, overcomplicating the situation, and not listening properly. To do so would be a waste of your hard work.

I remember that when I was doing my door-to-door office supplies sales, people would ask to come into the field with me to watch how I talked and interacted with people. I had learned from Houdini and other mentors in my life that building short-term relationships was more important than “selling” anything. Because of this, I would have more success than other people in the field who either followed the script robotically or relied on “the sales system” to close their sales.

Often times, I would let them go in and make the introductions, knowing I could almost always salvage a situation or jump in and save the sale if necessary. There were times where the trainee or observer would want to keep talking to the buyer without recognizing the closing signals and I would jump in, pull out an order form and close the sale for them. It was almost always the same response after we made the sale and walked on to the next business.

“How did you do that?” they would ask, and I would try to explain these concepts to them and help them realize that this was probably happening to them on a regular basis. They were either not confident enough to ask for the sale or didn’t recognize the opportunity to do so when it presented itself because they were too busy doing all of the talking and being a “sales-person” instead of understanding all of the cues and principles I am trying to lay out for you.

CONTROL THE CLOSE

We talked briefly about taking control and what it means in a sale (life). In order to make sales consistently, you need to take control at the right time. We know that taking control does not mean manhandling the buyer, but directing them on the path to the close. The key to taking control is twofold:

You need to ask questions with direction and use strong statements in your pitch.

Doubt words signify a lack of confidence in what you are saying. “What can I do for you today?” is an example of a weak statement, while “What I am going to do for you today-” is a strong statement. In your head, they might be the same thing, but the latter statement instills confidence and puts you in control whereas the former shows weakness in your pitch. Using the phrase “What I am going to do for you” as opposed to asking “What can I do for you?” tells the buyer that you are in control by subtly indicating that you already have their permission to act as opposed to waiting for their approval.

People are brought up to be kind, so we use words like “maybe” and “possibly,” but these words instill doubt at a subconscious level. If you show doubt, you lose confidence, and by now you know how important confidence is in making a sale.

I keep talking about this not being a book about improving your dating life, but so many dating situations parallel sales that it is hard for me not to connect them in my examples. They are relationships, after all, and relationships are necessary to make sales, so it would make sense that improving your ability to do one well would positively impact your ability to do the other. Consider the two different approaches below, where Romeo follows up with Juliet after he got her phone number after class yesterday. Juliet was only slightly interested, and he is not sure she really wants to go out. She gave him her phone number, but hesitated. It was only his confidence and humor that got her to agree in the end. He said he would call her the next day to set up dinner after she mentioned that she liked Italian food.

Approach #1: “Hey, how you doing? Just thought I’d call and see about setting up dinner. I was wondering if you were free tonight. I thought we might go to that new place over by the mall.”

Approach #2: “Hey, how you doing? I just wanted to make sure we were still

on for dinner tonight. I thought we could try that new Italian place by the mall.”

Now, Approach #1 sounds pretty harmless right? What a gentleman! The only problem is that Romeo never gives himself credit for his first sale – remember, the one after class, when he got her number! Come on, keep up! Remember that all sales typically consist of making two sales: The first to get in front of the buyer and the second to sell your time, product, service or idea.

Juliet became a buyer when she agreed to his idea of getting her phone number. He needs to have confidence that she *did* in fact give him her number and should be expecting his call. This is where taking control comes into play. Assuming the outcome after properly setting up the close pressures the buyer to move in the direction you are leading them or to contradict himself by turning in the other direction.

By asking if she is free that night, he makes it easy for her to back out or come up with an excuse. In Approach #2, Romeo assumes she is planning on going to dinner with him and then takes control by telling her about his plans on checking out that new restaurant.

There is no way to know what the outcome of the phone call was, but I am sure you agree that it would have been more difficult for Juliet to back out of the second situation. By taking control and directing the conversation Romeo puts Juliet in the uncomfortable position of having to say no in order to back out. He makes her feel she already said yes by giving her phone number, so in most instances she will agree to the date. People have a hard time saying “no” when put in situations like these, because they feel obligated to follow through on their initial commitment, regardless of how small it might have been. Romeo did not manipulate her; he simply directed the conversation where he wanted it to go. He is simply allowing her an opportunity to get to know him before she makes a decision regarding whether or not she wants to pay for more time with him with some time of her own.

In Approach #2, Romeo also uses association by mentioning the Italian restaurant. If you read carefully as I set up the example, you noticed Juliet loves Italian food, which is why Romeo asked her to dinner. By mentioning the new Italian restaurant, he creates impulse by associating his pitch with her affinity for that type of food. Now, instead of just an opportunity to get to know him further, she can also enjoy a meal at a new restaurant that serves a type of food she likes. Giving a buyer more reasons to say “yes” as opposed to “no” is *always* good thing. Remember the power of positive affirmation. At the very least, Juliet gets a great meal and Romeo gets a chance to win her over. She might never go out with Romeo again, but at this point he has done all he can to give himself a chance to get a second date.

Taking control is as much about your non-verbal communication as it is about your questioning and choice of words. If Romeo is not confident in the way he speaks with her over the phone, then what he says becomes irrelevant. Using a lot of “um”s, “and”s, or any other stall words is an indication that you do not have a perfect pitch. “Like,” “whatever,” and “you know” are other stall words people frequently use in conversations that can take away from other people perceiving them as confident. Practice recognizing these words in your conversations and make a conscious effort to eliminate them entirely. By mentally acknowledging them, you realize how often you say them and this knowledge will help you remove them from your vocabulary over time.

Taking control takes time and practice. Don’t be discouraged if you don’t pick it up right away. It will all start making more sense as you continue learning and observing through the course of everyday interactions.

DON’T FORGET TO ASK! (FOR THE SALE, THAT IS)

Although fairly self-explanatory, the closing statement is a very integral part of making the sale. The closing statement is the part of your pitch where you finally ask for the sale: the point where you decide the buyer is close

enough to the tipping point that you feel it is time to ask them to buy; the point where you stop talking, pull out the paperwork and write the order; or, in the case of Romeo, pulling out the phone and asking Juliet for her phone number.

Learning to recognize the proper moment to ask for the close is important because, if you pass that point in the sales process, it becomes increasingly difficult to get the buyer back to that point. This is where most people screw up by talking too much, whether by rambling on and on or by overselling the buyer.

So many people are great at getting all the way to this point and then come up short when it comes to asking for the sale. Why? Because they don't practice it enough and it feels uncomfortable. You have to consider the wording of your closing statement as much as you do the questions you ask to get there. Understanding when to make a closing statement is as important as what you say when you make it.

If you have a perfect pitch then everything you have done up to this point has built impulse in the buyer and brought them right up to the tipping point. You have asked all the right questions, and gotten all of the information you need to get the buyer to commit. You have built your short-term or long-term relationship to the point where you have a strong rapport with your buyer and you have recognized a number of closing signals. Now all you have to do is take control and confidently make your closing statement to the buyer.

While making your way to the closing statement, keep an eye out for an opportunity to offer a choice, a question that would elicit a response other than a "yes" or "no," in your statement. By introducing a third, positive option, you increase your odds of getting the desired result from the buyer. Imagine leaving the chiropractor and you are standing at the checkout. Which of the following statements by the receptionist would be more effective in getting people to set up future appointments?

#1: "Would you like to set up your next appointment now or call us to set it up?"

#2: "Which day next week works best for your next visit, Tuesday or Wednesday?"

How many times have you heard the first option? Both questions are professional and courteous, but the second statement is strong, takes control, and leads the buyer in a direction to help set the appointment more than the other. There are only two possible responses to the first scenario: To choose either the first option, to set up the appointment then, or the second, to call back later. If people choose the second option, they are less likely to remember to call back at all, thus decreasing the office's total amount of potential patients.

In the second scenario, there were two options presented to the patient along with the implied third option (saying "no"), which has been strategically left out in order to increase the closing percentage. By changing the basic sentence structure you have increased the percentage of desirable outcomes from 50% to 66%; that is, two of the three options are optimal outcomes.

The customer could easily still say no, but you have made it just a bit harder for her to do so and therefore have increased the likelihood that you will get the answer you are looking for. Maybe Tuesday or Wednesday doesn't work for her, but by structuring your statement this way, you make it appear to the customer that one day next week is the only option. Instead of saying no, she may end up suggesting another day that works for her. Again, these are subtle changes in the way you structure your closing statements and they won't necessarily work all of the time, but implementing them will increase your overall closing ratio.

Get creative with your closing statements. Don't just ask for the sale; present your close so that it becomes the only option. A true indicator of a perfect

pitch is a close that comes naturally. Your entire pitch should be leading the buyer to this point. You should be in control, and asking for the sale should be a natural expectation of the buyer.

Your wording at this point is your key to making the sale. Remember that instilling confidence in the buyer will help push him past the tipping point. Ask a series of quick, closed-ended questions at this point to reaffirm everything they have told you is a great way to use your newfound questioning skills. After asking the questions, you can reassure the buyer by regurgitating their answer: For example, “Based on what you told me,” or “What I am going to do for you today is,” are a couple of closing statements that remind the buyer that he has agreed with you up to this point. It puts you in control while removing the pressure from the buyer. He stops worrying whether or not he is being hustled and realizes that you may be selling something of value, which makes the close easier to accept. If you implement the principles properly and effectively, then your close becomes easier. If you are building sales impulse and recognizing your closing signals, there should be no reason for you not to be confident when asking for the sale.

If you are not doing all of those things, then asking for the close can be an awkward process. Sure, even a blind squirrel finds a nut once in a while, but in order to truly become an effective salesperson and a consistent closer you have to keep everything you have learned up to this point on your mind at all times. It has to become habitual. Building impulse and reading the buyer should be second nature as you practice these skills so that going in for the close becomes the only logical option. Some people, like Houdini, get so good at doing this that sometimes the buyer doesn’t even wait for you to ask for the close. Sometimes, if you work at it enough, the buyer will close the sale himself.

HANDLING OBJECTIONS

Sales rarely end with asking for the close. More often than not, the buyer will have an objection or two that you need to handle before you can com-

plete the transaction. Objections can come in a variety of forms and, if your profession is not sales, it can be difficult to know how to effectively overcome them. Salespeople spend a lot of time rehearsing common objections relevant to their specific sales process, so they are comfortable dealing with those objections. If we are talking about scenarios in life beyond sales, many of the objections we get are going to be spontaneous and new to us.

The more practice you have making closing statements, the more you will hear different types of objections to them. However, objections are not a bad thing. A lot of people mistake an objection for the buyer telling you “no.” Often, the buyer just doesn’t have enough information in order to make a decision. When I hear an objection, it means I have not done my job properly or presented my idea clearly enough to the buyer. It is an indicator that I skipped something or need to work harder in impulsing the buyer to get to the tipping point. It *is* possible to have a perfect pitch and still get objections, so don’t assume that getting a few objections means you are not progressing towards a perfect pitch. Objections are a common occurrence in any sales situation. Understanding and handling objections must become second nature in order to effectively move past them.

Let’s take away any negative association you might have in your mind about what an objection is. To handle them, you have view them as positive feedback. If someone is objecting, then that means he is listening, and if he is listening, you have an opportunity to influence his decision with our sales principles. The following principles demonstrate how to reflect, reject and re-direct an objection, and they will be paramount in making any sale you come across.

Reflect: Reflecting on the objection does not mean spending a lot of time on it, or even much time at all. We are not sitting around, staring at it, and appreciating the objection; handling it is about moving through it quickly and refusing to let it slow you down or interfere with your sales process. The only thing you are trying to do in this phase of handling the

objection is to acknowledge the buyer's concerns. Something is causing him to pause and question what it is you are selling: we need to let him know that we understand his concern. It is important to acknowledge the objection so the buyer does not feel like you are ignoring him or pressuring him into a sale.

The way we reflect on the objection is by repeating it to the buyer. This shows that you heard his concern and are acknowledging it, and it gives you a second to think about how you will answer or **reject** his objection. By repeating the objection back to the buyer, you give yourself a few extra moments to consider your next move while reinforcing that the idea you are still working towards the buyer's best interests. Reflecting is the first step in handling an objection but that should lead you right in to the reject phase of handling objections.

Reject: I am not telling you to reject their concerns rudely or dismissively. I use the term "reject" so you understand that you cannot let objections get in the way of making your sale. If you stop selling when people give you an objection, then they sold you on quitting. If you truly believed in what you were selling (you do believe in what you are selling, don't you?) then an objection should just motivate you to work harder to make the sale.

Note that I did not say to sell harder; I said *work* harder at selling. These instructions sound similar, but the latter makes you come off as pushy and annoying while the former means you are looking for other ways to overcome the objection.

To effectively reject an objection, you need to know your buyer and what stimulates him. Handling objections is just an extension of your perfect pitch and relationship building skills. When rejecting an objection, you have to clearly explain why buying what you are selling is the right decision for the buyer by using the proper sales stimulus to impulse your buyer. Sales stimulus will not overcome the objection, but it can help

you paint a clear vision for your buyer, allowing him to see the situation from your position.

Re-direct: After reflecting and rejecting the objection, you have to get back to your pitch. Now that you have removed the objection, you are able to move forward in the sale; so, you need to revert back to what you were doing right before the objection. My least favorite part about objections is that they interrupt the flow of the sales process and, more often than not, the difficulty in moving past them is not the objection itself but the momentum lost by receiving an objection at the wrong time during the sale.

Using one of the sales stimulus and recovering by building impulse is the best way to come out of the objection and to re-direct the buyer back to the pitch. If you had any impulse built up before the objection, your ability to zone back in on whatever created that impulse will be vital in re-establishing momentum and getting back on track to the close.

The timing of an objection can be just as important as the objection itself. By recognizing patterns in objections, you can begin to understand the different principles that you may still need to practice. If you are getting objections early on in the sale, then you need to work on your introduction and relationship building. If you are getting them in the middle of your pitch then maybe you are not being clear enough through your presentation.

You want to deal with objections as they come up throughout the sales process. Although taking the time to confront them might slow your sales momentum, it is better to address any concerns your buyers may have than to ignore them until the end. Consider an objection like a large boulder that the buyer is trying to put in front of you on your road to making a sale. If you ignore it, then it sits in your path the whole time. With any additional objections, your path can become so cluttered that it will become impossible to navigate the path to your sale. Dealing with the objections on the spot allows you to set the boulder aside so that you always have a clear path to

the sale.

In sales, the boulders grow as you fight them. A simple objection early on in your pitch could turn into a huge issue when you go for the close, because if you are not handling the objection well, the buyer begins to think you are not listening to his concerns. The smallest detail can become your biggest enemy if you ignore it until the end.

Although objections can come at any time, you want to try to perfect your pitch so you are in control of when the true objections come. If you have done a good enough job of understanding your buyer and his needs, then you should be able to anticipate possible objections before they arise. That being said, the best time to get an objection is after you have made a closing statement. The objection comes towards the end of your pitch which means you have gotten through most of what you were trying to say and were able to at least make some kind of a closing statement. More importantly, when you do overcome the objection, you should transition right into another closing statement. At this point you have done everything possible to sell your idea, and the buyer is right at the tipping point. By reflecting and rejecting the objection you can re-direct the buyer from their objection back to your initial intention with another closing statement. If done properly (with enough practice) this process of dealing with objections becomes natural and automatic.

This part of dealing with objections is useful in determining if the buyer is just stalling you or if there is a deeper reason why you cannot close the sale. We are fooling ourselves to think that we can close every sale every time. Sometimes, the objection is legitimate and cannot be overcome. Sometimes you have to admit you cannot close the sale on the spot and you have to do everything possible to set yourself up for success the next time. It is okay (sometimes it is even better) to walk away from the situation knowing you still have an opportunity to make a sale, as opposed to pushing too hard and burning a bridge.

“What great thing would you attempt if you knew
you could not fail?”

- Robert H. Schuller -

11. WELL, WHAT ARE YOU WAITING FOR?

By now you should see that pretty much all of the principles I discuss come full circle and are equally relevant in your efforts to become better at sales and life in general. By practicing and being confident in yourself, your product, and your ideas, then it becomes easier to take control and develop a perfect pitch.

Life is full of opportunities to practice all of the principles in this book. If you have made it this far then you should be anxious to get out in to the real world and show off your new found super powers. Don't be afraid to experiment and challenge the concepts in this book. Remember that there is no real system to making more sales but the principles in this book should provide you with the necessary road map to taking control and leveling the playing field of life. So go out there and start selling yourself. But remember, don't sell yourself short.