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3RD EDITION

Selling to **win**

the best book ever written on selling

RICHARD DENNY

author of the international best-seller - *selling to win*

Selling
to win

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Selling to win

RICHARD DENNY



**KOGAN
PAGE**

London and Philadelphia

Throughout the book 'he' and 'she' are used liberally. If there is a preponderance of the masculine pronoun it is because the inadequacies of the English language mean that there is no single personal pronoun suitable to refer to both sexes.

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For Lyster, Walter, Giles and Julius

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Preface

When I was initially approached to write a book on selling, although honoured I was extremely dubious. My own business library contains hundreds of business books and I have to confess I have only read a handful from cover to cover, but I have also benefited in numerous ways from the information gathered from my library, though my style has been to dip in, speed-read and pick out the guidance I was seeking.

I therefore decided on the back of that invitation to write a book that people would really want to read from cover to cover, but also able to dip in and dip out of, a book that would make a major contribution to an individual's success and a book that would last for years. Well, *Selling to Win* is now in its third edition, with numerous reprints translated into over 20 languages and, according to the media, is the definitive work on this important subject. Over the years, I have received thousands of letters and e-mails with amazing success stories from readers who have been guided by *Selling to Win* – they did it, and the book was their mentor. *Selling to Win* has achieved the vision that I initially had.

So now we come to this new edition and while the text has changed, what have really changed are our market conditions and trading environment. The internet has created new buying

behaviour – there is more choice, and people generally are now more price conscious.

However, the principles described in this new edition are still important today and they will be in another 20 years. Break them at your peril.

To new, aspiring winners of business – good luck and go for it!

Introduction

The purpose of this book is to provide the reader with the foundation to achieving great success in selling. The approach in most cases is common-sense, businesslike and professional, how our customers would like to be sold to. If you follow the advice you will develop long-term relationships and also make you and your company profits. Nothing wrong with that!

Most business managers agree that it is very difficult to find professional salespeople who can go out and bring back the business. And the real star professionals are, of course, even rarer.

Businesspeople in the United Kingdom have devalued selling for far too long. British managers have convinced themselves that they would do better if they didn't employ salespeople. And, anyhow, good products sell themselves, don't they? Salespeople just demand new cars and fiddle their expense accounts. The buying public, too, have never appreciated the value of salespeople – pushy people with turned-up toes (from all the slammed doors) and who make you buy things you don't really want. Who in their right mind would invite a salesperson round for tea?

Salespeople try never to admit that they are involved in selling. They call themselves 'executives', 'consultants' and

‘managers’. But nowadays nearly everyone is involved in selling at some level. Doctors, solicitors, estate agents, surveyors, architects, bank managers, advertising agents – the list is nearly endless – are all looking for new business and have to sell themselves and their services into it.

The world has become more competitive and in order to survive and make progress we all need to understand selling and persuasion. If companies are going to compete and win in the 21st century they will need people who are highly trained with in-depth product knowledge, able to think outside the box and able to recognize new opportunities instantly. And if they are going to beat the competition, these people will have to be true professionals. This book will show you how to be a professional.

In the first chapter I state my belief that everybody is born with a natural ability to sell. This does not mean that everybody is, or will be, or can be, a professional salesperson. I believe that the foundation is there but the skills can be learnt.

I am not promising amazing new techniques that will close every sale. But I do promise that if you follow me you will:

- close a hell of a lot more sales
- master the art of selling
- be a true professional
- be recognized by your colleagues as a WINNER and a STAR.

You will frequently find yourself saying ‘Yes, I know *that*’ or ‘Yes, *that* isn’t particularly new.’ You may *know* it, but do you *do* it? This book shows you how to do it.

Consider this old saying:

A good salesperson can sell anything.

It is rubbish. A good salesperson can only sell *anything* if he or she believes in it. Product belief is *essential*. Product knowledge is important, but not as important as enthusiasm.

As a business consultant I am often asked to go into a client company and teach their salespeople how to sell X. Now, if I have not sold their product or service myself, and sold it successfully, I believe that I am unqualified to teach them how to sell it. But what I *can* do is to teach those salespeople how to persuade their customers or potential customers to do business with them. *Selling to Win* will do the same job for you. It cannot teach you product knowledge, however vital such knowledge may be. It *will* teach you to exploit the one thing you and I do have totally in common, the market-place. And that market-place is made up of individuals, and buyers. Over the years I have tried very hard to sell to companies, shops, factories, industrial sites, businesses and homes and have *never once* been able to conclude a sale with any one of them. You see, I have only ever been able to make a sale to another *person*.

Other people make up our business universe. Now I do agree that at times the question of whether they are really alive or dead arises. We may even wish to use the mirror breath test on some customers. But you can breathe life into your market. Your power to communicate your enthusiasm, not your knowledge, is the key to your success.

How to get maximum results from this book

As you read this book use a highlighter pen to mark the ideas that appeal to you most, and reread these regularly. Dip into Chapter 3 and Chapter 16 at least every once every two months, and for those of you who believe that the finest investment you will ever make is in yourself, invest from time to time

in further motivational books and CDs. The Richard Denny Group (8 Cotswold Business Village, Moreton-in-Marsh, Gloucestershire GL56 0JQ) can supply you with a list of recommended titles.

The *Win More Sales* CD and audio cassette library can be played in your car. Use your travelling time as learning time. Use your car as a learning centre – your own university.

Wise Words

Selling is a profession and must have recognized professional ethics. The professional spirit seeks professional integrity from pride not compulsion. The professional spirit detects its own violations and penalizes them.

Henry Ford, 1922

Selling in Perspective

A great deal of nonsense is talked about selling and the people involved in it. There is also a great deal of justified frustration among disillusioned customers. So let me begin by clarifying some of the misconceptions before highlighting the genuine customer grievances.

The classic close

Selling in all honesty has to be the oldest profession. Yet still to this day there are many people who argue forcibly that some people are *natural* salespeople. I actually believe that everybody is born a salesperson, and some go on to develop their skills and later become true professionals. Consider the following scenario.

A father is out shopping with his young child:

‘Daddy, can I have an ice-cream, please?’

The father replies: ‘No, you can’t right now, because if you eat an ice-cream you won’t eat lunch.’

Does the child reply, ‘Fine, I quite understand that. Never mind, I’ll ask again after lunch, if that’s all right, Daddy?’

No. Almost certainly the child says, ‘I want an ice-cream.’

The parent replies, ‘No, you can’t have one. I’ve just told you.’

The child asks again: ‘Please, Daddy, I want my ice-cream.’

‘You’re not having one. I’ve made up my mind, and that’s all there is to it.’

The child now proceeds with his closing technique. He lies on the floor, kicks his feet in the air and screams, ‘I want an ice-cream. I want an ice-cream.’

The desperate parent instantly purchases the ice-cream and hands it to the child, saying, ‘Here you are, but don’t tell Mummy.’

This is the classic sales presentation. The child exhibits one of the great qualities of professional salesmanship, which is, of course, persistence. Even more important, however, is the fact that he does not accept the word ‘NO’. Now, I am not suggesting that in order to transact the business the salesperson should lie down on the prospective customer’s floor screaming at the top of his voice that he wants the order. It might work, but...

‘No No Conditioning’

So now let’s see what happens to our young super-salesman.

The child grows and during his formative years, he is groomed and, sadly, brainwashed by what can best be described as ‘No No Conditioning’. The child begins to understand the full implication of the word ‘NO’.

He leaves school, college or university, and makes his way into the world with aspirations in many cases diminished, expectations curtailed and, in the vast majority of cases, a feeling that he can't ASK because of the subconscious fear of the word 'NO'. This is perceived as a rejection. (Imagine for a minute an unreal world where the word 'NO' does not exist. What would YOU be asking for each and every day?)

There are thousands of so-called salespeople who to this day are still conditioned and brainwashed by total fear of this word, 'NO'. They become a disgrace to themselves, their families and their profession because they are unable to bring themselves to ask for the business, the order, the brief, the contract. Or to pick up the phone and get an appointment.

What not to do when the customer says 'No'

Until we have *asked*, we salespeople are already in a 'No' situation. If the worst thing any prospective customer can say is 'No', it really isn't too bad. I much prefer to have the 'No's' coming through. They can cut out a great deal of wasted follow-up time and effort, because far too many salespeople get trapped in the proverbial pipeline situation, 'there is a lot of business in the pipe'. Many weak salespeople build too big a pipeline of sales that *might* materialize. Much of this business never actually gets closed off. It just drifts away because of the fear of asking for the order.

Here is the first idea that will make you a lot of money and also win you many more sales. When a customer says 'No', it is only ever 'No' at the moment of time. It is what I classify as only a 'No, not today'. We live such a dramatically changing lifestyle that circumstances and situations change very rapidly. I can guarantee that you have purchased something or have done something within the last six months that

previously you said ‘No’ to. Why? Because your circumstances will have changed.

In my companies, after my staff, my second most valuable asset is our database of existing customers and my third is our database of ‘No, not today’s. Some years ago I called on one of the major British banks to offer them some of our video training programmes and they declined the offer (can you believe it!). So I tried again three months later and again received a ‘No thank you’. Every three months we made contact and then, can you believe it, our contacts had their jobs changed, so we had to start all over again with new people. Three years later they gave us our first small order of a few tapes, one year after that we gained our first substantial order of some £50,000 worth of videos and in 1993 they became one of our biggest clients and we did some £250,000 worth of business. It took us nearly four years to win that business. From now on, remember that every time you get a ‘No’, it is only a ‘No, not today’.

You can’t win them all. It is highly unlikely that we will ever produce a selling technique that will help the seller to close every sale. Of course, we have all seen the sales course brochures and the books that offer the **ULTIMATE**, the **FINAL** and the **MOST EFFECTIVE NEW** method of persuading the customer to submit. There are apparently more than 100 ways of closing a sale. You could use the Half Nelson technique, for instance, or, if you are facing a particularly tricky prospect, a Full Nelson. The trouble with such techniques is that you need, first of all, an amazing memory to recall them and, secondly, some outstanding decision-making skills to decide which one to use!

But in reality this approach is completely out of date.

Hard Sell		Weak Sell
No Customers		No Sales

The old-fashioned ‘tell and sell’ technique has now been replaced by consultative selling and/or selling solutions I am going to use the expression ‘solution selling’. This is probably the most important change to have been adopted by professional salespeople. For years I have been advocating and practising relationship marketing – solution selling is the natural extension of this technique. With ‘tell and sell’, you TELL; with solution selling, you ASK. Consult with prospective buyers and customers to find out about them. If you value the customer, he or she will feel valued, and will be more responsive – this is extremely important. So the pivot in the see-saw diagram opposite is to build relationships. The professional seller, of course, wants to win the sale today, but what he or she is really striving for is the repeat sale next month or even next year and to win recommendations and referrals.

Let me explain in a little more detail solution and consultative selling. People buy a product or service to solve a situation. The seller’s job therefore is to clearly identify the situation that needs solving and/or to identify other problems/situations where the seller’s products or services can provide the solution.

People nowadays are far better educated, more discerning and have a greater choice than ever before. And the problem with so much sales training has been that the salesperson has been trained to assume that ‘if you say this, the customer will say that’.

One problem is that *customers* have never been trained. The buying public are certainly less gullible in some countries. Furthermore, there is a great misconception that in order to be good at selling, one has to have ‘the gift of the gab’ or ‘a bit of the blarney’. Well, do *you* like to buy from a wind-’em-up, shoot-’em-out-of-the-door, fast-talking, gift-of-the-gab smoothie? No, and neither does anybody else.