

Surviving And Prospering In Your Sales Career

Field Manual for the Sales Professional



**Exposing the Sales Subculture
of Bad Bosses & Self Destructive
Salespeople.**

By Greg Hill

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Dedicated to My Wife Joanna Hill who inspires me in everything I do. To my two daughters Tessa and Nichole Hill

To Lenny Jackson the best sales person I have known who passed away while helping me with this book.

To my Mom for all her support and wisdom.

To all those I have worked with in the last 30 years.

NOTE TO THE READER

Please go to my website <http://www.worldsbestsalestrainer.com> and tell me what you think about this book, whether it be praise or criticism. Your feedback will make a difference in future editions of this and other books I am writing. Other members will also benefit from your wisdom, so be thoughtful and let us know what you think.

I also do sales training, both generic and specific to a company or industry, so your feedback will have an effect on my presentations. The website is also designed to be a resource for the sales professional, and includes my free "How to Sell" video series which is available to all registered members.

Being a sales professional and surviving the dangerous and hostile environment of sales is challenging and hopefully <http://www.worldsbestsalestrainer.com> is a place where the sales professional can come and get the information and resources needed to succeed.

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1. INTRODUCTION: THE PURPOSE OF THIS BOOK

First, I would like to tell you what this book is not. It is not a sales book. That will be my second New York Times Best Seller if all goes to plan. Also, this book is not for “self-help “. If you use what you learn here in your personal life, I am not responsible for the results. Second, as a sales manager and trainer it is not my job to kiss your butt and tell you how great you are. Most of the problems I have created and bad decisions I have made in my life, have come from having a big ego and over-estimating my own abilities, so no one really needs to be artificially pumped up. It is my experience that salespeople are looking for validation anywhere they can get it. The only validation that counts is what is up on the sales board. Sales managers and owners will always give their new sales people well scripted impressions of what to expect, and what they need to do to succeed. I will explore the reasons behind hiring practices, pay plans, and reveal the reality of what your job is in their eyes. You will see an unabashed version of the love/hate relationship that companies have with sales people. Most sales people think that there is only one financial reality they have to deal with, the more they sell, the more important they are to the company. Unfortunately, this is not always the case. Read the rest only if you want an honest and logical guide on how to survive in the sales environment.

My first sales job was selling insulation in the home in Martinez, California in 1978 (if you don't count when I was selling kumquats door to door in my neighborhood at seven years old). I have been in one form of sales or sales management ever since. I have succeed at some jobs and failed at many. It is my opinion that being a good sales person is the easy part. Being able to maneuver through the hostile and competitive mine field that every sales person experiences when he is hired is more difficult. If you believe, like most, that all you have to do is show up, work hard, and good results will follow, then why is turnover so high in the sales departments of companies that otherwise have a stable workforce? Unfortunately there is more to the average sales job than sales. There are sales managers to deal with that have an array of agendas that, many times, do not include your success. There are company structures that are fair and unfair. Lots of things will affect your success in the sales field, not just how good a pitch person you are. Many a career has been lost or a sought after promotion has been unattained because of factors other than sales results.

The chapter titled “On Stage and Off Stage Behavior” and the numerous references throughout the book give you permission to be the person that you need to be to succeed. You are not hired to be true to yourself and grow emotionally. Your job is to get results, live through the process and maybe even be happy.

If you are not currently employed as a sales person, or if you are unsatisfied with the sales job you have, you must first contend with finding a job. This is a huge challenge. It is my goal to reveal little talked about insights that will help you with your decision and analyze your true potential once you take a new sales job.

What are the characteristics of a successful and unsuccessful sales person? Why do some thrive while others self-destruct? I have created four different profiles for salespeople. Which one are you? All types can thrive. What are the emotional pitfalls you will be faced with and what is the best way to handle them? How about your colleagues? I believe in what Simon Cowell said when he talked about the so-called “tight relationship” between the contestants on American Idol, “They all act sad when someone leaves the show, but truly they are happy that it was not them.” You have to live with people with whom you are competing. What is the best way to handle this situation?

How to manage your manager? If your manager is giving you a hard time, it is probably your fault because you are not managing your manager properly. There are several types of sales managers from good to awful. I have categorized them in the chapter on “How to manage your sales manager.” You will be surprised at my suggestions.

Here is the bottom line. Sales is as Darwinian an environment as any in the civilized world, if you don't count the Penitentiary, and the rules for survival are just as complex. I have seen reps come in all hyped with success seminars pumping through their heads, ready to do great. Reality then kicks them in the butt, or worse, they are promoted to your boss. Here is the deal. Success training does work, and I will go over those things I experienced in that realm that are worthwhile. But the main purpose of this book is to show you the unsavory realities that are present. That way, you will not be like a little bunny running through the forest about to get snared by a trap.

Most sales people do not take the time to analyze the business model of the company for which they are working. You will be extensively educated in why companies do what they do and what the motivation is for that behavior. You will understand the purpose and history of pay plans and sales department structures. This will make it easier for you to determine whether an organization deserves your hard work and loyalty and, above all, if there is a future for you.

2. EVOLUTION OF SALES

The sales Industry has gone through a major evolution since this author landed his first sales job in 1978. At that point, judging from all the stories told by relatives and friends, sales had not changed much since the 1930's. We will call this the Old School method of sales. Anyone who was brought up in the Old School will tell a person that it is not only the best way to sell, but the only way to sell. However, sales has evolved away from the Old School method, and there is a good reason for this. Those who write the checks began to realize that the methodology used was not keeping up with the times. This trend started in Business to Business sales and then spread to Business to Consumer sales.

The biggest change was the client. Starting in the late Seventies and early Eighties, a wave of entrepreneurs entered the market. They were younger, smarter, better educated, more sophisticated, and, unfortunately, much less patient. Before these baby boomers took over, people were more polite and more respectful in general. A good salesperson could and would take advantage of these characteristics. At this time, however, these entrepreneurs started to become aware of the salesperson's tactics and tricks. This helped to render them useless. The Seventies brought us what this book has coined as the "Herb Tarlek Effect". Herb Tarlek was the sales manager in the classic TV series WKRP in Cincinnati. Herb, played by Frank Bonner, did a great job portraying every negative stereotype of an "Old School" salesperson. He exposed many of the tried and trusted tricks a pitch person had used for decades. If it was only one show, the effects may not have been so devastating, but it seemed that every TV show and movie from then on besmirched the sales profession. WKRP was a favorite show among salespeople, mainly because of the Herb Tarlek character and the funny clothes he wore, even though it started a trend that made it harder for the sales professional to make a living.

There are certain realities of the Old School Salesman. Yes, it is sales*man* because, for the most part, those that made their money in sales were white men. Women and minorities were not encouraged to participate in sales. Women were generally thought to be too vulnerable, and it was believed with minorities that the client would not accept them. This obviously has changed for the better. Today these two factors have no effect on a sales professional's effectiveness.

Besides being male and white, these salesmen had other similar characteristics. For the most part they were Type-A personalities, i.e. dominant and aggressive. They were given a lot of freedom by their employers because what they did was considered magic. There was not much in the way of sales training or books, and the reality of sales did not jive with the lifestyle or self image of the average American. Owners and executives of companies would put up with a lot and afforded these salesmen a ton of freedom, because they were afraid to negatively affect the outcome. Before Herb Tarlek, the average salesman received a lot more respect. In many companies the top salesman was the highest paid person in the company including the CEO. Many of the top brass were promoted from the ranks of the sales department.

Old school sales promoted benefits over features. “Ain’t she a beauty?” was about as specific as these guys wanted to get. It was about trust, control, and closing techniques. Much of today’s sales training revolves around these techniques. They are just disguised so as not to be quite so obvious. Also, before the Eighties, there was basically one pay plan for most sales positions, and that was straight commission. There is also something else to keep in mind when an old friend or relative starts opining on the good old days with an unending series of war stories about their sales conquests. It was a lot easier to sell back then. People in general were more eager to listen and were not as jaded and hardened as they are now.

When I started in sales I was lucky enough to be taught the old school ways. I was given a script that I had to memorize and a flip book to make my presentations. This was a good way to start, but it had obvious limitations. These methodologies are still prevalent in certain industries. In 2001 I was in between jobs. I answered one of the ads that promised freedom, leads, and wealth by being an independent rep for an established company. So I interviewed on the phone and got invited to their training. This model had been around for decades even though this was the first time I had experienced it in this form. We had to pay for our own flight, pay for the training material, buy in, and establish an independent contractor status that even the IRS would respect. I was in Texas for one week of classic training. The product was a directory and marketing program to sell to businesses. The methodology was straight out of the Sixties, flip book and all, and the leads were worthless. Interesting enough, this company ended up changing its model with the advent of the Internet, which they got into late. I know this because I sold them online advertising while I was national sales manager for an Internet marketing company. This was the only time I made any money from that company.

In the economic dislocations of the late Seventies a lot of people lost their jobs, and those that had sales jobs were hit pretty hard. The best sales jobs were corporate types at that time. When sales declined, many commissioned sales people could not make a living, while those on salary were just let go. This created a large reservoir of smart, educated people with a lot of time on their hands. Then in the early Eighties, the economy started to heat back up. Many new industries and start-up companies began to emerge. This was the beginning of the golden era for sales professionals. Because the Herb Tarlek effect was in full swing, salespeople did everything they could, not to appear as the aforementioned stereotype. They dressed better, acted more sophisticated, and called themselves anything but a salesperson. This is when marketing rep, account executive, and sales consultant all became synonymous with salesperson. Also in the early Eighties there was a huge influx of women entering the profession. Many held top producer roles in many companies. With the number of women now around that would rather kick a man's butt than be admired, the industry as a whole cleaned up its act. Salespeople were told to buy expensive shoes and sunglasses and to always have a nice manicure (For a while I was even getting highlights in my hair and wore clear nail polish. My wife, who has her own manicure studio in Beverly Hills - www.hautepedicure.com - laughs at that every time it is brought up).

As mentioned before, the new business owner was much more entrepreneurial, educated, and sophisticated. They didn't believe what the sales professional did really was "magic," because many of them were aware of sales techniques. As we got towards the 1991 recession, this became a problem for sales professionals. The problem with smarter, more sophisticated bosses is that they are not as easy to fool. By this time every company had a slew of business majors at its disposal, and these people made it more difficult to sell. So, what ended up happening was this: sales professionals were out there trying to make sales, and feeling that they were the most valuable people in the company. Upper management, being generally more educated and believing that they had higher IQ's, felt that they should be the highest paid people in the organization. Upper management also assumed that the best way to handle salespeople was to control them. So the sales professional was deluged with paperwork and call reports that were daunting.

Traditionally salespeople were expected to find their own leads through cold calling and referrals. Now, there were all these new marketing majors with a bunch of fancy new marketing techniques. Salespeople were still required to get their own leads, but the marketing majors needed to justify their existence. This caused major turf battles to occur between marketing and sales, the point of contention being, "Which drove which?" I talk further about this in the "Sales Tools" chapter, since it was a really big change in the way companies did business.

Marketing companies were not only trying to drive sales, but were also trying to influence entire other industries, such as advertising. From a salesperson's point of view, there is nothing worse than being underpaid, while receiving useless marketing material from some kiss-ass marketing hack. With that said, there has been a lot of good marketing done, however, it is always a mistake to have marketing drive sales. It is also not a good idea to reverse the order. There should always be a lot of communication and teamwork between both departments. Another problem is that being a marketing person sounds better than a salesperson. So when salespeople all started calling themselves marketing reps the whole situation became very confusing.

The next trend to influence the sales industry was the "consultative" sales process. This formula reframed the sales process from one that was driven to obtain results, to one that emphasized the process itself. Originally, sales professionals were evaluated first by their personal skills, and then by their product knowledge. It was believed that salespeople first had to sell themselves, and then sell the product. When consultative sales became the dominant methodology, the sales person's "people skills" became secondary to product and industry knowledge. Even crazier, the consultative sales person was told by management to convey to the prospect that whether he or she bought was not important, since really the salesperson was here merely to educate the customer. This sends chills up my spine just talking about it.

Many believe that the consultative sales model was created because the client became more sophisticated. This was a contributing factor but not the main one. In the Eighties, many changes were happening, one of the most important change being a massive influx of technology into the market place. In addition to many new products, old products become more complicated. Companies therefore pushed this new sales model, thinking it would be easier to sell more technologically advanced products. In some cases they were correct. There was also an emotional

component to this transformation. As previously stated, you had all these new business majors, and these degreed professionals had not spent their parent's life savings to become Herb Tarlek. So, a salesperson is now called a consultant and not a salesperson, and his or her job is to educate, not to get results - the perfect job for a marketer. I worked at one company that had its sales process go from the 5 basic steps to the sale - which is similar to the one I will explore in my second New York Times Best Seller - to a 13 step consultative sales process. It was a ludicrous and overwrought procedure.

In the opinion of this author, business majors of all types were in cahoots with the heads of Human Resource departments, in order to promulgate this consultative sales theory. That way, everyone could feel good about themselves. The self improvement craze was another element that added to the popularity of this cult-like movement. Many authors and lecturers (I am not mentioning any names but you know who you are), found huge audiences that wanted to learn how to sell. I ask you, what is more attractive and easier to market? A bunch of ways to manipulate people in order to close the sale, or a method in which everyone is a consultant and their job is to educate the masses? Obviously, the latter is much more compelling and is more conducive to higher self-esteem, the actual goal of this process. These sales experts made a lot of money preaching this consultative sales model to willing individuals and companies, but let me just say that it is never a good idea to tell salespeople that it is all right not to get the order. Sales is, and always will be, a results oriented business. Any thinking salesperson or sales manager should be able to see the problem with a sales process that is built on this premise of education instead of results.

Not everyone is a good sales person, nor should everyone try to be one. What is the real reason why not everyone is a good salesperson? If one is afraid of personal conflict, sales is not a good field for that person; in addition, good salespeople think that getting their way is more important than being right.

Many of the first players in the Internet boom thought that one of the major benefits of this new industry was the elimination of salespeople. They did not understand salespeople. They did not buy things from salespeople, and they certainly did not want to share their venture capital with salespeople. It was all pretty amazing. For the first time in history, anyone could start a company for a few hundred bucks, and create a new service or product. The prospect of being able to market a company for free via the search engines, was something that every entrepreneur and wannabe thought was their ticket to prosperity. The idea of the Internet was that people would choose to do business with your company because of your net presence. There would be no need for salespeople, they had become obsolete. In fact, many of the salespeople that were getting others to invest in this new industry were saying just that.

Imagine this... you are in your forties; you have a ton of sales experience, and the hottest idea to come down the line in years is being controlled by genius introverts in their twenties. Let's just say that no matter how far we had distanced ourselves from the Herb Tarlek image, the genius introverts were not buying it. They did not want salespeople. I was living in New York in 2000. I had left my job, and thought that I wanted to get in with an Internet company. I had been working in the Yellow page industry and figured out that it was not going anywhere. So I answered every Internet

ad, followed every lead, and had the worst interviews in my life. Finally, I found a job as the National Sales Manager of an online directory in Los Angeles that was run like an old time phone room. Since I was getting involved just as the bubble was beginning to deflate, I saw the most amazing thing. Companies would have websites with no phone numbers, pretty much saying, "Don't call us; send us an email." This was amazing to a guy who had handed out tens of thousands of business cards in his career, in the hope of getting a phone call. It is still incomprehensible to me that you can have a successful business and limit communication with your clients. The MSN search engine was the best example of this. In 2000, they had only a handful of sales people for their search property, and their policy was only to talk to big players. It was easier to get the personal phone number of a Hollywood starlet than it was to get through to an MSN account executive. The company I worked for at the time had a relationship with MSN and sold their products to regular advertisers. Having a relationship with an MSN rep at the time was like having Willy Wonka's golden ticket. It still seems to be this way today. Most Internet companies are using the marketing model and are resisting the sales model, mostly because, despite being a less-expensive option to set-up, it is a more expensive system to maintain.

The biggest problem for a web entrepreneur is that there are no barriers to competition. If someone comes up with a good idea, there will be 100 competitors within 30 days. The old laws of market share play heavily into the success of any Internet venture. Many of these companies were started with huge amounts of venture capital by "twenty-somethings" that were book smart and very technically savvy. The problem was that they were not experienced in business or life and were not very mature. Those that did think to hire salespeople, hired people that were like they were, smart yet inexperienced. After many of these companies ran out of seed money, and, in some cases, were taken over by more traditional business people, the salesperson was reestablished. Some businesses flourished while others waned. In some cases this occurred because of the product they were selling, but, in many cases, it was due to a lack of sales management.

To really understand the need for salespeople, one has to understand the customer. People love to be talked to and sold something. They want to be told they made the right decision. They want to know that if anything goes wrong, they have a contact that cares inside the company, and that they can get in touch with them. Even with online marketing, in order to be successful over the long haul, a company must have a very strong customer service department to handle questions and complaints. The personal touch must be made available to the customer, especially if that customer is going to be a repeat customer. Every salesperson has had to deal with a client's buyer's remorse. No website, no matter how interactive, can deal with this emotion. The Internet may one day change the role of, but will never erase the need for, a talented salesperson.

3. PAY PLANS

One thing should be clear before dissecting the various pay plans that most companies offer. All sales jobs are commission based. This is really important to understand. The only purpose for hiring a salesperson is so the company can turn a profit. It is not to make sure the salesperson gets a pay check. Some companies may have a model that will allow a ramp-up period, but, generally speaking, the only reason a salesperson exists in that company is to make them money. Any other position in the company is a matter of need. A company will hire people to do a job if they have the money to pay for it, and if they believe that person will add to the company's ability to succeed in its mission. If a company is profitable and if the shipments to customers are not going out fast enough, the management may decide to hire another warehouse person. This is not so in sales. The need factor is not so important when hiring someone to sell your product. No matter what pay plan is used, if the salesperson does not bring in more than what he or she is paid, that person will be let go no matter how nice he or she is. The truth is that salespeople really are not that popular. (I cover this in the chapter about "How to Manage Your Colleagues.") The sales professional needs to think that every day he or she goes to work is the first day, and, if that salesperson is not able to perform, it maybe his or her last. As I said once in a moment of brilliance in a sales meeting, "You are all temps, and if you don't make some sales today, your services will no longer be needed".

The basis of all pay plans for sales professionals is the distribution of risk. The question becomes, who will bear the risk - the salesperson or the company; or will it be shared? The challenge with all the pay plan models is that they can all be exploited by either the salesperson or the company. Every salesperson that has been in the field for any length of time, can tell stories of how companies have been dishonest and not kept their side of the deal. It is true that there are salesman mills out there that are designed to take advantage of salespeople. These places plan on never keeping a large percentage of those they hire. What you won't hear from salespeople is how often they took advantage of the company, using their freedom to have coffee with friends instead of selling.

Every company that hires a sales professional to sell products or services has a two pronged challenge. When hiring anyone but a salesperson, the company has to deal with only one learning curve. No matter how simple or complex the job, as long as the person has the required skill set and desire, they should be able to do the job in a matter of time. With sales, there is not only a learning curve that includes product knowledge and procedures, but there is also a production curve. The production curve means that until the salesperson starts making sales and is bringing in enough revenue to cover a paycheck, he or she is not viable. The Sales professional cannot just show up. He or she needs to produce.

The following are typical sales pay plans:

- Straight commission
- Straight commission with a recoverable draw.
- Straight commission with a non-recoverable draw.

- Salary plus commission
- Salary plus bonus.
- Sales net, usually comes with a salary.
- Overage
- Multi Level Marketing.

STRAIGHT COMMISSION: *The sales professional's compensation is established by the amount of revenue he or she brings into the company, or by a desired result he or she achieves within a set time frame. A salesperson makes a sale, gets a lead, accomplishes a goal declared by the company, and that salesperson gets paid a predetermined amount of money.*

At one time, this was the best kind of job to have. Many industries still run on this model - realtors, loan brokers, and car sales people just to name a few. Many start-up companies like this model because it puts all of the risk on to the new hire. The promise is always that when the company makes money, the salesperson will make money. The president or owner will make it sound as though the new hire is a partner, and the amount of money that can be earned as a salesperson with this company is unlimited. Of course this rarely comes to pass. Getting the new hire to work for them for as little as possible is part of the plan. Once the product takes-off, whether or not the salespeople are a part of it does not really affect the company. One should make sure there are set goals with agreed-to compensation. If the person who does the hiring is not willing to take the time to lay out a path of success, he or she is either not a very good business person (meaning the company does not have a plan), or he or she just does not care. Either situation should make the sales professional wary.

As already discussed, the learning curve and the time it takes to get up to speed in sales is usually the most difficult part of a sales job. Just like anything else, it is easy not to appreciate what one gets for free. Companies that hire commissioned salespeople sometimes make the mistake that they do not have to put any resources into the sales team. Things like sales tools such as a CRM (Contact Resource Management) program, marketing materials, and sending salespeople to trade shows, often are not considered for someone the company is not paying any "real" salary. There is also an emotional component to commissioned sales. It has to do with respect and appreciation. If the salespeople are working hard for future rewards, it is important that the sales team is recognized for loyalty and sacrifice (I have had to explain this principle to every superior I have had when managing a sales force). When money is scarce and the team is investing in the future, they are scrutinizing every word and action that is coming from the company leadership. Any sign of contempt or minimizing the hard work of the sales team will be interpreted that promises of future prosperity will not be kept. That is a morale killer.

On the other hand, the commissioned salesperson expects more support because of the fact that he or she is essentially working for free. Commissioned salespeople can be defiant in their behavior because they only get paid when they sell. Commissioned salespeople often think they can do whatever they want or work only when it is convenient. Keeping regular hours, accounting for time in the field, and other menial duties will often be ignored.

This sales model is fertile ground for abuse by the sales management team. Let me go over some of the scenarios I have witnessed in my career, but please don't think that my familiarity with these schemes is an admission that I have perpetrated any of them on my sales crew.

The most popular abuse is what this book will call the salesman mill. Management knows that the salesperson will be unable sell enough to make a living. The idea is that he or she gets a few clients then leaves. These clients will become house accounts and will bring in future revenues. There are always a few salespeople that are making a good living that are trotted out in front of the new applicants to show how easy it is. Every product has a primary market either in a geographical territory or in a category of business. If this is off limits to the new hire, history shows that it is impossible to make a living. This is a scam. Also, the new hire needs to do a little homework. If the business is 10 years old, has not recently changed its product or service, and is constantly hiring new salespeople, the salesman mill may be part of the program.

Another popular ploy is to let the salespeople do all the "heavy lifting." Once the product or service gets established, the company fires the commissioned salespeople and hires less expensive order takers. Salespeople are expensive, and it is legitimate to reevaluate the company's method of getting products and services to market. Salespeople are good at opening accounts and revisiting them for the occasional up-sale or bump. If the salesperson is managing his or her accounts, that salesperson will not be able to find the new clients that make salespeople worth the money they are paid. So is it practical for client management and smaller orders to be handled by client-support.

The best way to succeed in a commission based sales model is to treat the job as though it is one's own business. The company the salesperson works for is the client, and the salesperson needs to produce for them. Salespeople must take their duties as seriously as possible. If a salesperson works harder and smarter than his or her colleagues, the results will prove or disprove the viability of the situation.

STRAIGHT COMMISSION WITH A RECOVERABLE DRAW: *Same as a straight commission pay plan except the sales professional receives a stated amount of compensation to be paid for an interval. This amount must be paid back before the full commission is paid.*

On the surface, this looks like a good compromise, and, in some cases it is. However, one should keep the following in mind; the overriding reason for a company adopting this strategy is its inability to acquire qualified applicants through a job posting. Most likely, the company's offering of a straight commission job did not work, and this is almost always the fallback position. When a company chooses this pay plan first, it usually means they know from experience or knowledge of the industry that the straight commission model will not work. One should not be fooled. Management has a set amount they are willing to risk. If the new hire does not produce before that amount is reached, they will be terminated.

Also realize that in most cases the company does not think of a draw as a salary. One should always remember there are only two reasons to offer a draw. The first is to get applicants to come to the interview and to accept the position. It is a loan against future sales. If a new hire is terminated, there are no commissions to pay back the loan. The new hire may not be paid any money once the company drops the axe. This is rarely discussed in the interview. The second reason is to make sure the sales reps have enough money to get to work and to be able to function. The intention usually is not to make the new hire comfortable or to make it so he or she does not need to hustle. It is in everyone's interest to have the new hire hungry and in need to sell in order to have the things he or she desires. It is always funny to me when one of my sales people asks for a raise while they are still on a draw. My response has been the same for decades, "You want a raise? Sell something."

STRAIGHT COMMISSION WITH A NON-RECOVERABLE DRAW: *This plan is often referred to as a guarantee. The company will pay the sales professional a salary until the amount of the earned commissions exceeds the amount of the draw.*

Straight commission with a non-recoverable draw is most prevalent in industries with mature products and/or established markets. Another reason that a company would choose this type of pay plan is because of the competition for sales talent in the industry. The best companies want to attract the best people. If one company in the industry offers a guarantee, then others will follow. It is also common in well funded start-ups. This was a very widespread practice during the dot com boom. If you want a sales force that will look good to investors, this is the easiest way, especially if money is not an issue.

SALARY PLUS COMMISSION AND SALARY PLUS BONUS: *The sales professional gets a steady pay check and receives a commission or bonus for each sale, or a commission once a certain sales total is reached.*

Even though this is the most popular pay model with job applicants, it is in one way a rip-off, since it reduces the opportunity for a big pay day. On the surface this pay plan sounds great because it reduces the risk of working for free. But, the elimination of this risk will cost the sales professional in the long run. This is how it works. The CEO tells the VP of sales that the most they will spend for each sale is 15%. The average sale is \$1000. So the commission on each sale would be \$150.00 if we were using the straight commission model. The average sales person makes two sales a day which would mean that their total sales for the week would be \$10,000. This would translate to a \$1500 commission check at the end of the week. The VP of sales now has to come up with a structure using the Salary plus commission model that insures that the commission never exceeds 15%. He or she offers \$750 per week salary and 5% on the first \$10,000 of sales and 10% on anything above \$10,000 in sales for a week. So, a salesperson sells exactly \$10,000.00. His or her pay for the week would be \$750 salary and \$500.00 commission which would be a total of \$1,250. The fear of risk insurance just cost that salesperson \$250 for the week. If that same salesperson had a great week and sold \$20,000, his or her total would be \$2,250.00 instead of \$3000.00. This is just one example, but this will hold true in most cases. There are companies that are just starting a new product line or that are start-ups, which will use this model before sales are coming through the door. They have

chosen this model to encourage hard work and new customers. One can bet that the minute the salesperson starts hitting large numbers, the pay plan will be changed to something less lucrative. The reason for the generous pay schedule is to keep the sales team motivated. Once the product is established, the tone will change to being more pragmatic and less generous.

SALES NET, USUALLY COMES WITH A SALARY: *The sales professional is paid a commission on the amount he increases a sale or his sales totals for a certain time period over the previous year.*

This is a demonic pay plan that must have been inspired by Satan himself. It is the only pay plan I know of that has actually caused someone to commit suicide. The reason why this commission model usually comes with a salary is that it puts the onus of the growth of the company squarely on the salesperson's shoulders. Most pay plans pay the sales representative on the amount of the sale. This is not so with the sales net model. The salesperson only gets credit for the amount of the increase of the sales from the year before. For example, the salesperson goes to see a client that is spending \$100.00 and that client renews the account for \$120.00. That salesperson made \$20 of sales net that will count towards the commission program. Now this is where it gets evil. If that same salesperson were to renew the account for less than the person spent, the negative difference would be subtracted from the sales net he or she had accumulated that pay period.

Using a similar example, let's say the client who spent \$100 last year now cancels. The salesperson, who had \$20 in sales accumulated sales net, now has a negative \$80. If one is going to take a loss, it will probably be on Friday afternoon on the last day of the pay period (This will wreck your weekend, trust me on that). Of course the salesperson can keep it in his or her briefcase for the next pay period, a risky move but quite common. This is a very common pay plan in the yellow page industry. Being under this plan will give one an incentive to become very proficient at saving the deal. There is another thing one should be wary of, if one finds himself working under this plan. If the salesperson is having an outstanding week or month, management may drop a couple of losers in his or her lap, in order to reduce the salesperson's pay for that period. Of course, the salesperson will not be told that the client is expected to cancel. He or she will make the call feeling happy that they finally got something from management. It is not until one is in the middle of the call that one realizes how this will negatively affect an otherwise great check. This is by far the most brutal plan I have ever been under.

OVERAGE: *The amount of money the sales professional is paid on a sale is determined by price point.*

Some companies have a sliding price for their products and services. This means the more the salesperson squeezes out of the prospect, the more commission that salesperson makes. This pay plan is one of the reasons the public hates salespeople. The weaker and less knowledgeable the prospect is, the better and more profitable the deal becomes. Clients are known as mooches, at least that is what they were called in the 70's. This format uses a lot of tricks to maximize the profit on each sale. In most sales situations the salesperson is trying to convince the client that their product or service is the right fit. In this model that is not sufficient. The "pitch person" is creating emotional environments that will extract the highest price and thus a bigger commission.

My first real sales job in 1978 selling home insulation used this model. The key when the customer complains about the rate or tells you they can get it for less somewhere else, is to have some phony reason to lower the price "just for them." Again, this model does not work everywhere.

Overage is more prevalent in certain industries. Tools, nuts and bolts, and chemicals are a few that come to mind. Also, the salesperson's geographic area will play an important role in how much money he or she will be able to make. The reason is competition. In rural areas, as opposed to a large city, the customer will have a much smaller selection of where to do business. The biggest danger a sales professional faces under this plan comes when it is time to ask the customer for another order. If the salesperson does not give the customer the best price, he or she runs the risk of someone coming by and undercutting that price. Many times the salesperson will have to make a decision on the spot to go for a larger commission now, or delay that, in the hope that with a good price, he or she will make another commission in the future. Due to the inherent greed factor in this plan, many salespeople miss the repeat business altogether and spend their time looking for the next sucker.

In order to get the higher rates, the salesperson will be asked to sell service and convenience. This translates into the salesperson's time. He or she may be asked or have to offer to do inventory, stocking, deliveries, or even clean-up of the bins and storage areas. These tasks are not worthy of disdain, but one should be aware that every minute a salesperson spends doing menial labor at a client's place, is a minute that salesperson is not selling. One may have to do these jobs to keep a client, but the salesperson's real job is to sell the product or service.

The Internet has all but wrecked this way of doing business. Any business person in a position of making purchases has a computer at his or her fingertips. Very few will not be savvy enough to do a little research before spending their company's money. If one is selling to consumers, he or she may get by for awhile, but one should expect complaints when someone finally figures out they could have gotten the product or service for less online.

MULTI-LEVEL MARKETING: (Wikipedia, Wikipedia, Multi-level marketing) Multi-level marketing (MLM), also known as Network Marketing, is a business-distribution model that allows a parent company to market its products directly to consumers by means of relationship referrals and direct selling.

Independent, non-salaried salespeople referred to as distributors (or associates, independent business owners, dealers, franchise owners, sales consultants, consultants, independent agents, etc.) represent the parent company and are awarded a commission based upon the volume of product sold through each of their independent businesses (organizations). Independent distributors develop their organizations by either building an active customer base who buy direct from the parent company or by recruiting a down line of independent distributors who also build a customer base, thereby expanding the overall organization. Additionally, distributors can also earn a profit by retailing products they purchase from the parent company at wholesale price. Distributors earn a commission based on the sales efforts of their organization which includes their independent sale efforts as well as the leveraged sales efforts of their down line. This arrangement

is similar to franchise arrangements where royalties are paid from the sales of individual franchise operations to the franchiser as well as to an area or region manager. Commissions are paid to multi-level marketing distributors according to the company's compensation plan. There can be multiple levels of people receiving royalties from one person's sales.

I choose to use the Wikipedia definition because I don't know that much about this sales model. Don't get me wrong, I have wasted thousands of dollars on various products and strategies; the problem being I have never succeeded at any of them. I am very cynical when it comes to these programs. With that said I have met many that have succeeded at these. Here are just a few observations. The successful people I have met do not consider themselves sales people in the truest sense. For the most part they are friendly, outgoing and truly care about what they sell and about those who are in their "down line". What I am saying is that they do not consider themselves sales professionals and they do not really act like ones. When I start talking about sales methodology, they really are not that keen on listening, nor are they very knowledgeable about it, except for the motivational component. It is a very interesting way to make a living, but, at the same time, I have no idea on how they do it.

I can tell you a little about what I heard from two individuals. The first worked with a certain weight loss product that was popular in the 1980's. The company had developed a catchy slogan and put it on buttons that all its representatives wore. It seemed the top producers were really making a killing. Huge groups gathered to hear them speak. They were charismatic and gave fantastic speeches. Some of what I heard would have been admired by the best motivational speakers. Then it was reported in the news media that one of their products had a negative effect on the user's health. Sales plummeted. It was in the midst of this crisis in MLM heaven that I pulled one of these speakers aside. What he told me, astonished me at the time, but made great sense after I thought about it. He confessed that he would tell his audience that he made \$60,000 in a month, but what he failed to mention is that he paid \$40,000 in advertising. He did not disclose to me if he had any other overhead, but I made the assumption that he did.

The second individual was one of my first sales managers. He was working every evening after work selling for one of the oldest MLM companies out there. For a year I watched him draw circles at night. You know how that goes – you get three, then they get three, and so on down the page. No one has to do any real selling. We just all buy from ourselves. As it turned out, no one he knew made any real money either. After a year of drawing circles, he told me that he wished someone had told him that this was a book and tape business at the beginning. It turned out that he spent more on motivational books and tapes, sales materials, and so on than he ever came close to making drawing circles. What was even more disturbing to me was that he was truly a very talented salesperson. These two experiences early in my career shied me away from joining any of these organizations myself.

These two examples are in this book in order to draw a few conclusions. The first is that any network marketing endeavor must be run as if it is one's own business. It comes complete with advertising costs, inventory needs, personnel issues, and often times even physical overhead such as office space, websites, and telephone lines. If one does the friends and family technique that a

recruiter may suggest, it will not be long before that person has no friends and is no longer invited to family functions. If a person is unwilling or unable to invest, his or her chances of success decrease dramatically. With the advent of the Internet, it has become easier to reach people who are interested in this type of business, however, using the Internet introduces its own set of problems. Many programs presented online as advertising or as online marketing plans such as those with banner ads or facebook® and twitter® links, are nothing more than well dressed schemes designed to separate people from their money. This is true not only when recruiting people to join an organization but also when selling a product. Second is that someone, somewhere in every organization has to actually sell the product. The notion that everyone buys from themselves and no one sells is ludicrous. The main problem with this concept is that people have buying habits. No matter how good the product, the organization just will not be able to get enough people to change those habits for everyone to make money. Finally, much of one's success will be based on timing. If a person hits something hot or gets in early, he or she may end up at the top. The obvious challenge is finding the right opportunity. A person may waste a lot of money looking for one and never find it. Every MLM company is represented somewhere online. The Internet today is filled with schemes, scams, and a few genuine opportunities. Every person should be careful where they invest their time and money.

Most sales professionals believe that the only change to a pay plan should result in an increase in their compensation; the main theme being that the only reason that a company exists is to pay the salespeople. Commissions get higher the harder the sale is. Hence, when the product or service achieves adequate market penetration the commissions will come down. The legend that companies will pay their sales people more than the CEO may have been true back in the 30's. Now, most CEO's or CFO's have a ceiling on what they will pay a salesperson. The obvious question is, why not pay a salesperson as much as they can earn no matter how much that is? The answer is that others contribute to the success of the company besides the person who signs the deal and collects the check. If the salesperson is the only person who is well compensated, it will be difficult to attract and keep talent. If one thinks he or she will be able to answer an ad on Craig's List and make a half a million the first year (which is ten times more than anyone else in the Company), that person will most likely be disappointed. The truth is, if a person wants to make more money, that person should work for a company that pays well in general.

When I worked for Runner's World Magazine back in the 80's, the publisher announced that his salespeople would not make more than \$40,000 per-year. I thought back then that this was shortsighted and cheap. Now I look back and think at least he was honest.

4. TYPES OF SALES JOBS

The field of sales jobs is as varied as any field out there. There are many things to consider when deciding which job to take. The next chapter will look at different facets and compare them.

EMPLOYEE VS. INDEPENDENT CONTRACTOR:

The first thing to look at is employment status - whether the sales professional actually works for the company as an employee, or is an independent contractor. When consulting, this author always advises companies to separate its sales department from the people that have normal jobs. The reason for this is that salespeople approach work differently than most. One way to separate salespeople from the other members of the staff is to have them be independent contractors instead of employees. Theoretically this would make the company the client of the contractor which may motivate the contractor to be respectful and courteous to the company's employees.

INDEPENDENT CONTRACTOR: A non-employee who has been hired to complete a task outside of the company.

With the Internet and the fact that many salespeople work in a different geographic than the home office, this is a very good option in many situations. Usually, but not always, the independent contractor is paid straight commission. The rules vary from state to state on what constitutes an independent contractor, but in general, the company cannot control the independent contractor as it can an employee. Rules exist that the company cannot supply the contractor with the tools of their trade. In this scenario, there are some pretty substantial tax breaks for both the employee and employer. State and Federal governments are apt to challenge the status of this relationship if there is a reason to do so. It is important to note that if a sales professional earns money as a self-employed person, he or she is responsible for both sides of the social security tax. This can add up, and is why many independent contractors incorporate (Please talk to your tax professional regarding the tax consequences of being an independent contractor). In many cases the independent contractor pays a small fee for training and marketing materials to show that they are not employees. Sometimes these expenses are offset with a first sale bonus or some other apparatus to compensate for the money spent.

Most independent contractors believe that the company is only interested in results and not in behavior. Anyone who has conceived and managed an independent contractor sales force will confess that how much and how the independent contractor works is the subject of much scrutiny. In the company's mind, they see the independent status as a cost saving measure that should not affect the behavior of the salespeople. If one talks to those who are hired under this pay plan, and they will describe a series of benefits and privileges that will not be shared by the management. One thing is true. The sales professional is not restricted to have one form of income. He or she can have other clients. Also the sales professional should keep in mind that he or she is not protected by the laws designed to protect the employee. There are a few exceptions, but, the rule is, the independent

contractor can be let go at anytime without any notice and with no severance pay. Many companies use this model to open a territory or experiment with a new product or service. If all goes well the company may bring all clients in house and change the model to something that costs less per sale. The independent contractor would then not be eligible for unemployment benefits. If one does become an independent contractor or is already one, he or she needs to pay their taxes. Many applicants and new hires have had to confess in interviews that they have IRS liens. It is uncomfortable and brings their character in to question.

Most readers are familiar with the employee status. The company that hires salespeople as employees will usually impose more structure and have more rules to comply with especially if the job includes a salary.

INTANGIBLE VS. TANGIBLE PRODUCTS AND SERVICES:

Products and services fall into one of two categories, intangible and tangible. An intangible sale is defined as selling a service or product that does not exist until it has been delivered to the client. Advertising is a perfect example of how something that does not exist can be sold. Any salesperson selling yellow page advertising will express amazement about how much ownership the clients assumed over their space in a big book. The reality is that without the ads, the book would not exist. The salespeople are trained to show the customer the current version as though it had any bearing on what the next book was going to look like. Another example is radio advertising. These people are literally selling air. The ad only exists once it is aired. This may seem to be theoretical subject matter but selling an intangible has some unique qualities not shared by its counterpart, the tangible. Selling the intangible allows the sales professional to be much more creative in selling the product or service. Because they are selling something that does not exist, the salesperson can frame it to what the client needs. In most cases, the successful intangible sales professional will use a proven sales process to get the prospect to the need to buy the product (What is the best sales process to use? The generic version will be in my second New York Times best seller). With that said, the intangible sales person needs to be able to tie the features of the product or service to real benefits.

I have been selling intangible products and services for most of my career. In the mid 90's I was pretty burned-out so I decided to open a cigar shop. This turned out to be a financial disaster. Being a sales professional, I thought I would crush any employee I hired because of my superior sales skill set. Twenty-one year old Alice came into my shop and kicked my butt. See, I had never sold a \$9.00 item, especially one you could hold in your hand. After making a few adjustments to my mind set, I was able to keep-up with those that I hired.

The best example of a tangible product is the car sell. Features rule in the tangible sale, however this is not to say that the salesperson should never bring-up benefits when he or she can. The days of selling a car by talking about the wind in ones hair on a summer day are in the past. Fuel mileage, horse power, and the way it drives are much more important than any story a salesperson can tell. One should keep in mind that intangibles usually have a larger profit margin than tangibles. Once a tangible product becomes a mature product, there is the possibility it will become commoditized. When a product becomes a commodity, it no longer needs someone to sell it. It is sold strictly on

price. As in all examples, it is a matter of degree. Companies do not have salespeople sell gold, but there are gold jewelry sales people. Gold is a commodity and jewelry is not.

CLIENT-CENTRIC VS. COMPANY-CENTRIC:

Every company claims to be client-centric. Many companies are not. What I mean by this is that management does not really care if the client is happy – not as long as there are not any consequences for the company. For example, during the real estate boom, many mortgage companies emerged and thrived. They were all selling loans from the same wholesale funding sources. Some chose the long term approach and made sure the clients knew exactly what the particulars of the loans were for which they were signing-up. They only made loans that would likely be paid back. Other mortgage companies wrote loans to anyone that would sign. When the real estate boom was over, which companies do you think made the most money, the client-centric or the company-centric ones? Unfortunately for society, sometimes crime does pay. Even though it is not politically correct to say so, often companies that focus on the clients are not the most profitable, and thus are not able to pay the high commissions that the company-centric companies can.

Since advertising is what I have been selling for the last 30 years, I can tell you that certain types of media are famous for hype and for maximizing profit. Radio salespeople are notorious for selling radio spots at different rates to different clients. One time, I was buying some radio spots for a client. I did an ROI or “Return on Investment,” analysis on what the salesperson was offering. I came to the conclusion that the buy would not work for my client. Instead of getting a counter offer or some other explanation, the salesperson told me, “I don’t sell that way.” What he really meant was that it was of no interest to him if we made a profit or not. My response was, “Well, that’s the way we buy media.” The fact that he admitted to being company-centric blew me away.

Sometimes salespeople know that the client is not getting the best deal, or that there are other alternatives in the market place that would be a better fit. Whether or not to reveal this is an individual choice that each sales professional will have to make. The experience of most salespeople is that selling something that you know is not the best option for the client, is the biggest factor in “Burn Out”. With that said, no matter what a salesperson sells even if one is as fair and ethical as one can be, there will be times that the client will not be satisfied and call you a liar (OK, that may just happen to me, but you get my point).

PREMISE VS. TELEPHONE SALES:

Conventional wisdom believes that anything sold exclusively on the phone is a rip-off, and that phone sales people are unattractive. The main reason for this belief is that, for the most part, it is true. Business to Consumer (B to C) sales has become a lot less prevalent since the advent of the no call list. It has also diminished because most people understand they can probably find the same service on the Internet for less. So, the only consumers left that a phone solicitor can call are those that are too lazy to put themselves on the list, or too poor or ignorant to fire-up a computer.

Phones sales for Business to Business (B to B), are challenging because of the “gate keeper.” Businesses will, as a rule, try to stop every phone solicitation. It will be terminated at the first call

with a not so polite, “No thank you.” By the way, if anyone who answers a phone in a business says that they are on the no call list, the salesperson has permission to explain to them that there is no such thing as a no-call list for business. I once called this guy by getting his number from his own website. He told me he was on the no call list. I explained to him that I found his number on his website. He told me that was for customers only. The arrogance of some people is astounding...

Premise sales are considered to be more prestigious than phone sales and they often pay more. But, the advantage for a company to employ a phone solicitor is that he or she can cover more ground than a premise salesperson. The downside is that it is easier for a premise sales person to close larger deals. Lately, a tactic that I have been using with more frequency is to create teams of phone and premise sales people. The phone person takes the sale as far as they can take it, and then sets the appointment for the premise person.

As a telephone salesperson, the phone handset will sometimes seem to weigh 100 pounds. Their premise counterparts will suffer from a similar dilemma which is commonly called “hot door knobs”. What this means is that both telephone and premise salespeople experience resistance to the sales call. The major difference between the two is that the phone sales position is highly supervised and guidance can be quickly administered. The premise rep is not as well supervised and can become a victim of this psychological problem. The best way to deal with resistance is to power through it. Do just one more cold call on one more customer. Every sales person has felt this heaviness at one time or another. Make no mistake about it - this is your subconscious telling your conscious that it does not like being rejected, or that it does not like change. Selling has both of these feelings as possible results. If the prospect is not receptive or is being unreasonable, you will feel rejection. If you land the big deal you will experience change, so either way your subconscious will not want to cooperate. To help in this situation, recall a recent success and focus on how it felt to succeed. Another strategy is to summon up your competitive spirit and realize that your associates are out there working and getting results. Getting outside of one’s self and looking at the big picture is the key to fighting any kind of sales resistance.

Outside salespeople or premise sales are becoming less and less common, due to the cost to keep them going, and the lack of results that come from a resistant population. It became so hard to cold call B to B in the 70’s that I had to take a job selling door to door in the early 80’s. That is certainly not going to happen in today’s neighborhoods. Another risk with outside salespeople is that they do not always behave. A funny story is told by someone that used to work for a former major phone company that provided cars to the premise sales reps. The rep once asked why they did not have the name of the company on the car. He was not upset that they did not and was actually glad they didn’t, but he was curious. It turns out that the reason was that the company became uncomfortable explaining why their cars were being parked in front of strip clubs every day. This is just a cute antidote, but it does illustrate a point. Outside sales can be fun, but to be successful you need to push yourself every day, and this gets old.

Many outside sales professionals travel a lot. This seems romantic. It is for a while if one is single. It can be quite fruitful, if you know what I mean. It is also very hard not to spend all ones money. Per

Diem's, the money the company gives you on a daily basis, does not go far. It is very easy to overspend.

By the way, if one of your buddies is cheating on their spouse, end the friendship immediately. When that spouse becomes suspicious he or she is going to hone in on you like a laser beam and grill you like Jack Bauer of 24. The only answer is, "Gee, I don't really know. We don't hang out anymore." Yes, it is a lie, but never tell the spouse anything. The couple will reunite and you will be made to feel as though you are the devil. At least that is what I have heard. Of course, I don't have any firsthand experience.

APPOINTMENT SETTER:

Many sales models include a role for someone just to set appointments. This is a hard job that usually does not pay very well. This is a good job to start ones sales career with, because you learn the basic sales techniques. Many companies promote from these ranks because there is less ramp-up time. The appointment setter is usually very familiar with the product line.

There are three keys to being successful as an appointment setter.

1. He or she should be nice and smooth. It is important not to be pushy. The appointment setter is a helper not a sales person. Aggressiveness from the person on the other end of the phone is expected. The best way to counter their curtness is by being understanding and nice. Expressing ones belief in the product as opposed to why they should buy, is much more likely to lead to the preferred result.
2. It is a numbers game. The more people one calls, the more appointments one will set. There have been mediocre appointment setters that have out-produced much more talented colleagues just by being more diligent.
3. He or she needs to be a fast thinker. Prospects will come up with all kinds of reasons why they cannot talk or why they are not interested in the product or service. Engaging them and getting them to talk is the appointment setter's primary goal. Critical thinking and logic will go far in trying to set the first appointment.

Many premise sales positions require appointment setting. Usually the sales professional will not have the luxury of having someone do it for him or her. Whether one is setting appointments for someone else or doing his or her own phone work, one should not try to close the person over the phone. On the phone, the salesperson is either trying to get the customer to come to the showroom or the lot, or to try and let the salesperson come to the client's place of business at a set time. Overselling on the phone is a crucial mistake. That is not to say that one may not have to go into some features and benefits in order to get in the door, but the position on the phone is that all of their questions will be answered when they are seen in person. If a person is setting appointments for someone else, he or she needs to explain to the potential customer that the person they will be meeting will be able to answer all their questions much better. One thing that works when setting appointments is to tell the potential customer that there is something that must be shown to him or that there is something he must see. In all sales, there is a close. Here the close is for an appointment. Once an agreement has been reached, the person making the call should thank the

potential customer and reaffirm the appointment by saying that they look forward to meeting the client at the agreed time and date. This portion of the job is then done...the caller needs to hang-up the phone.

LINER:

The liner is used a lot in the car business. This person needs to have a lot of product experience. His or her main job is to create interest and to sell the prospect on the idea of sitting down with the closer. He is the first person to approach the client, and his or her job is to "line" the client up for the closer, hence the moniker. Like the appointment setter, the liner is an entry position in many companies. It is a great way to become familiar with an industry and a company.

Part of the liner's job is to gather information for the closer that he or she may then use to close the deal. The potential customer's current income, how much can they afford in payments per month, preferences in make, model, color, and desired extras, may all be expected from the liner when he flips the customer to the closer. A good liner will keep his or her ear open for any information that the customer gives that will help the closer. Even personal information such as where the potential customer lives, whether they are single or married, how many children they have and their ages, all will be useful to the closer. Needless to say, the ability to put the potential customer at ease, to develop a rapport, and to get him or her to open-up are crucial qualities for a liner.

PHONE SALES:

The Internet has changed the game of phone sales for the better. "So are you in front of a computer? Well let me show you what I am talking about." Now a salesperson can have a prospect follow along on their computer to explain the product or service. This has made it a lot easier to engage and close a prospect. Phone sales run the gambit of pay and responsibilities.

Phone sales can be broken up in to two categories - inbound and outbound. Inbound is when the prospect calls into the company to inquire about a product or service. These calls are generated by advertising or marketing campaigns and therefore cost money. That is why the company is very concerned how the calls are handled. There is also a legal liability that a company assumes when they solicit phone calls. To protect themselves from accusations that the sales people made false promises is why they record the calls. Sales people making false promises to sell something? Why that's outrageous! Well, they record the calls anyway. Obviously being a sales person receiving calls is easier than having to make them. There still is a range of expertise that is utilized for this position - anywhere from a closer to an order taker.

There is something about an outbound phone solicitor that people inherently do not like, but outbound phone calling is an integral part of many well paying jobs. For instance, investments such as stocks and bonds, home mortgages, Internet advertising, some types of insurance, phone service, and many types of home improvement are examples of industries that extensively use outbound phone solicitation. Many of these jobs are not only well paying, but are also very prestigious. They run the gamut from stockbroker to the guy that calls up on a Saturday morning to sell magazine subscriptions. The job usually consists of calling down some sort of list, however this is not always the case. These also vary from being qualified leads gathered in a number of different ways, to

complete cold calling and everything in between. Every type of pay plan discussed in the earlier chapter can be found in the outbound phone solicitation business, however most will involve some sort of commission structure whether it be straight commission or possibly a bonus program based on production.

An example of an outbound phone solicitation job that does not involve any kind of list is Internet advertising. When I worked as the National Sales Manager for an advertising agency in Los Angeles, I would have my reps find a spot on one of the websites where we had an agreement to sell space. The reps would then go to different search engines and search for websites that would work in that available spot. After getting the phone number off of the website, they would call the business to sell that spot. This process worked amazingly well.

CLOSER:

Every sales professional thinks they are a great closer. Few really are. I just so happen to be one. I sold high pressure chicken fryers for restaurants back in the late 70's. It was really cool. I got to drive around a really big motor home that had the fryers in it for demonstrations. I had probably the best sales manager I ever had, let's call him Jim. Jim really cared about me, but his company and I totally self-destructed. We blew-up the whole opportunity. I learned a ton from this guy and ended-up going back to college after this job. He told me that he had met very few natural closers. I asked him what it was about me that made him say that I was one. He asked me, "Do you like people?" My response was, "Besides you, not really." He smiled knowingly.

Closers are used a lot in the car business with liners. "So how much is the car?" "I am going to have to talk to my manager; he will make you a great deal." The closer position is where the art becomes apparent. They all do it differently but the goal is the same. Many times the closer is also the boss. This is because the more perceived power one has, the easier it is to close.

This is also very common in big phone rooms. Once the prospect is qualified, the liner will say, "That is a great question. Let me have my manager answer that for you." This is known as a hand-off or a T.O. (Turn Over). The closer's job is to get the deal and then hand it back over to the phone rep to wrap up the ordering process. At least that is the way I always did it. This can be a very exhausting role to do day after day.

There have been many books written on techniques of how to close a sale. I have just such a book brewing in my head, but we will not go into any of those techniques here. One point should be made though. A closer must be able to ask for the check, credit card, or signature. Many a salesperson has done their job perfectly, and then failed because they would not or could not ask for the money. Everything in sales leads up to this moment. Without the close, all the other positions, not to mention any other work done with the potential customer, becomes meaningless. If one has a fear or an aversion to asking the ultimate question, that person can never be a closer. He or she may even need to consider another line of work.

5. TYPES OF MANAGERS

BROTHER-IN-LAW:

If a sales manager has a special relationship with the executives or ownership of the company and would otherwise be working at some low paying job where no one would listen to him/her, then the boss falls in to this category. Back when fathers-in-law would give their sons-in-law a job in order to keep their daughter and grandchildren fed, the son-in-law would often be made Sales Manager. Now the Dad just hires the daughter. If someone is qualified, competent, and related to the company “brass” then they are not part of this group.

If a salesperson finds him or herself in this situation, he or she should understand that this manager is there for a reason. Is it to motivate the sales team? No. Is it to inspire each salesperson to reach their sales goals? No. Maybe he or she is there to create a positive emotional environment to increase the salesperson's self-esteem? No. This unqualified appointee is there to protect the assets of the company and be the jerk that does the bidding of the higher-ups. Upper management does not want to be perceived as a bunch of self-serving donkeys. They hire dumb brother-in-law, who has a monster size ego, to be the tough guy. For example, the bean counter sees that many of the salespeople are making more money than he is, so he recommends a change in the compensation plan to the brass. They like it, but none of these wimps are man enough to face a hoard of screaming salespeople. The best solution is to have the dumb-ass relative take the heat. It is a very practical answer.

One thing to look out for in this situation is favoritism. Since this person got his job through favoritism, it only makes sense that he or she will manage the same way. Even though they will not admit it, he or she is not as smart as the people that they supervise. After losing one argument after another to subordinates and looking idiotic, they all go to the same tactic. They surround themselves with rent-a-friends that they have paid-off with other people's hard work. They do this to reinforce their otherwise indefensible authority. One should keep in mind that, just as the sales team shows its sales manager no respect, neither do his or her bosses. He or she is a fool, and everybody knows it.

PSYCHO/SADIST/NARCISSIST SALES MANAGER.

This very disturbed individual is usually an incredibly talented closer, and can be quite knowledgeable. He is an asset to the company. It is important to remember that this person has nowhere else to go. His or her craziness would not be accepted by any other organization. The current management team has decided that they will accept this person with all their faults, however he may not be able to find another situation if this one does not work out. The first and only priority of this manager is self preservation. Unlike the next two categories, this unfortunate category has both men and women as members. These managers like to screw with those that work for them. There is something inside of their dark and soulless being that needs to hurt those that

trust and rely on them. It is really hard to watch, and it makes one crazy when it happens to him or her.

It has happened to me on numerous occasions. I was working at my cigar shop and this customer had an idea for a product to sell to other cigar shops. It turned out to be a massive violation of trademark laws, but I am going off point. I was hurting for cash, so I told him I would set-up to sell his product. We were going to share the profits. There was one big problem. He did not realize how good at this I was. My team and I made several thousand dollars worth of sales in the first few weeks. When I asked for my money, he bought me a pair of pants and told me that he was not going to pay me because I needed the money. Huh, that makes no sense, right? It was baffling. See, in his crazy mind this all happened because of his great idea and how dare I ask for half of his profits. There was no room for someone like me in his crazy world. Other people's success threatens these types.

A common characteristic of the Psycho/Sadist/Narcissist sales manager is the need to be known as the smartest person in the room, bar none. Their need to be right about everything knows no limit. They will commonly argue about the stupidest detail. If by some chance they lose an argument, the gloves will come-off, and the person with the correct point-of-view will be personally savaged. Another common trait is a severely dominating personality. If a sales manager is dominating the sales team to the point of being counterproductive, and is making sure everyone knows that he or she is in charge, one can take it as a strong indicator that this sales manager falls into this category. The best tactic at the salesperson's disposal is to do nothing, or to quietly find another job. Chances are the Psycho/Sadist/Narcissist sales manager will eventually self-destruct.

I went to work as the national sales manager for an online advertising agency where I had as many as 40 sales people. The VP did everything he could to make my life miserable. Every time I got to the point where I was making livable money, he would change my pay plan. That was not the worst of it. I surmised by the way he manipulated me and others, coupled with his outrageous outbursts, that he may have been incarcerated. His level of skill to manipulate and dominate resembled those whom I had met that had done serious time. I eventually left the company after he had hired another person to manage the account executives, leaving me with only the low-end cold callers. After my departure he went to the new investors to convince them to fire the founder and CEO, and to make him the top dog. This coup d'état failed, and he ended-up out on his butt. Later I found out through a friend of mine with whom he later went into business, that he had gotten thrown back in jail for a parole violation. Sometimes I amaze myself with my insights. Despite the fact that he was an immoral slime, I liked hanging out with him. He was very smart, and I am sorry to admit that some of the wisdom contained in this book came from him.

ANGRY MAN MANAGER:

The reason the Angry Man Manager has his own category is that he or she - mostly he - is not disturbed but just pissed-off. His attitude is that he works with a bunch of ingrates and connivers that never listen to anything he says, and then blame everyone else when things go terribly wrong. This can be quite trying on one's patience. There is also just the garden variety alcoholic or

rageaholic. This person is just not happy unless he has someone at which to direct his anger. We will deal with more on this subject in the chapter, "How to Manage Your Manager."

Being angry all the time can cloud a superior's judgment. This results in stupid decisions that will affect a salesperson's ability to make a living. One example of this would be the manager that suddenly demands more detailed call reports for no reason, or schedules additional sales meetings to further berate the sales force when sales drop. Not only does this take the sales force out of the field, giving the sales people less time to sell, but it further drops an already sagging morale. Instead of encouraging the salespeople to stay out longer in an attempt to bolster sales, he brings them in so he can vent. Venting might make him feel better, but it does not really solve any other problem, and it certainly will not help a salesperson's commission check. Of course, if a salesperson abuses his or her freedom by having coffee with friends, going to the movies, or taking long walks on the beach instead of selling, that salesperson might actually deserve to be yelled at by his or her manager.

Many times the anger is for effect, and is the only way the sales manager can get people to listen to him. For effect or not, it can be very frustrating working for this type of individual. After a day in the field dealing with customers, many of whom are unreceptive, a salesperson does not want to dread returning to the office, because he or she does not know what they might face when they walk through the door. This same feeling in the pit of the stomach can also be felt by the in-house, premise salesperson who has been on the floor all day. He or she dreads seeing the manager's office door open, or hearing him walk across the showroom floor. This can get very tiring on a day-to-day basis. If a company has a high turnover rate in its sales department, this could be one of the contributing factors. The burn-out rate of working under these circumstances is usually very high.

It is difficult for companies to find sales managers that understand the industry and that are effective. That is why this behavior is often overlooked in the sales department while it would not be tolerated anywhere else in the company. Fear as a tactic only works for awhile however, and in the end, fear as the only motivation will cause people to push back. Before that happens, everyone hopes this person will find the carrot to go with the stick. If his threats are never carried-out, despite all the bluster, the sales force will begin to ignore or give a cursory acknowledgement to this man or woman and then go about their business. They will give as much heed to this person as they would the boy that cried wolf. This may back this person into a corner forcing him to act, but until he does act, the sales department will not take him seriously.

HOT CHICK MANAGER:

Everyone thinks she got her job because of her looks... including her. Usually a top producer while a sales person, she was promoted to illustrate to everyone that women can also advance in the company; that, and the old guys like to check-out her cleavage at manager meetings. Really, we do.

The downfall of the Hot Chick Manger happens in three areas. First, there is a lack of maturity in the concept of her role in the company. As a salesperson it was pretty much about her everywhere and all the time. She would walk into a client, and it was about her. In a one-on-one with her manager, it was about her and her performance. At those pesky sales meetings she was able to steal more attention than most of the other participants. Now that she is a manager, she still thinks it is about

her. The problem is that the salespeople she is supposed to be managing are not getting what they need.

I had a manager at a publishing company that I worked for who thought it was motivating for us to know that she could leave work in the middle of the day to get her nails done. You can guess what the talk around the office was when she left. You can also guess what this did to morale and the work ethic of the average salesperson who had to report to her.

The second problem area is with subordinate men. This is very complex, so please try to follow along. The Hot Chick Manager is single and wants to have a boyfriend, but she cannot date anyone that works with her because it would compromise her position. She has to make the men on her sales team undesirable. For a man to be constantly reminded that he is not in the pool of desirable men, is a very un-motivating situation. Emotionally castrated men don't sell very well. I am sure this is not the only scenario that ends up with emasculation, but it is the most prevalent. To make matters worse, women have been objectified in the sales room probably for their whole career, and will often feel resentment to all men for this. So they bond with the women on their team to help them succeed. The men see this as favoritism. This splits the team along gender lines, and creates a horrible working atmosphere.

The third area again has to do with maturity. Salespeople don't care if her daddy still calls her princess; the members of the sales team are not her subjects. Salespeople don't want to have to show her admiration. Being promoted is not being crowned; besides it is not really a promotion as much as it is a change in focus. The salespeople are not less important than the manager just because they work for her. As a matter of fact, the salespeople should be more important now that she is their leader. One is called a manager because one is supposed to manage.

This category of manager was created to illustrate what happens when someone immature, vain, egocentric, shallow, inwardly unsure of herself and outwardly unaware of how her actions affect those around her, gets into a position of authority. Physical beauty stereotypes this manager, because it seems to be the overwhelming reason she got the promotion. Although these characteristics can also be found in men, they seem to manifest themselves in a different manner.

To illustrate my point, let me share an experience I had a few years back. I had just closed a business I had for 5 years and went to work for an independent yellow pages publisher. I was broke. Since I had previously worked for a national yellow pages, I was pretty sure I could do the job. I found myself in one of the worst situations I had ever been in. This woman easily humiliated salespeople more than any other manager I had ever experienced. Before being transferred by "The Princess" to another division (because I was scary), we were supposed to have a meaningless meeting at 8:30 am. She did not show up until 11:30 and came in with one of the women reps. They had met for breakfast. The reason why she was late was because she had to take a stray dog to the vet to get a flea treatment. Not only was I less important than a dog, but I was also less important than any random stray dog. If I had been younger and not as experienced, this would have scared me for life. The point is that the job of sales manager means that the focus needs to be on the sales reps - not that the sales reps are forced to focus on the manager.

MARRIED MISOGYNIST PIG MANAGER

If your married manager is more interested in trying to get some action with a co-worker than he is in his sales numbers, he qualifies as a Married Misogynist Pig Manager. Just to be fair, it should be pointed out that this category includes both men and women managers, but they are predominantly male. The fact that he is addicted to inappropriate sexual behavior makes him a bad boss. Why? Because if he is immoral enough to cheat on his wife and destroy his children's innocence, he will at some time in your career either ask you to be his alibi, or will throw you under the bus in order to cover his sick behavior. The sad part of it is, many of these guys could be really good managers. Many of them are very experienced and could do their job really well if they were not always trying to target the next score. Being good sales persons themselves, as well as having huge egos, they generally only look at what they want. If you help them achieve their depraved goals, then you are their friend. If you do not, then you are a foe. The problem here is that salespeople rely on the higher ups to help them reach their potential, and to make as much money for themselves and the company as possible. If there is another agenda interjected by the Married Misogynist Pig Manager, it upsets the balance and can ruin the career of good sales people. It is most unfair to those of the opposite gender, for they have to deal constantly with the testing and the attempts at an affair. These managers use a lot of coercion and promise to get what they want. If you are a man managed by a man Misogynist Pig Manager he may leave you alone, or even ignore you totally, so he can focus on making the big score.

The Married Misogynist Pig Manager also ruins it for other sales managers. Whenever a new male sales manager is hired, he is looked at with suspicion. This, of course is the opposite of what he needs to do a good job which is to be trusted. It is also unfair to the sales professionals who need to stay at arm's length in order not to get snared into a web of deception. By far the worst part of having a Misogynist Pig Manager is that they never have time to do their job well, because they are off on some forbidden rendezvous. This means that the people underneath them will have to do more work, and this will affect their numbers. Fellow manager will also have to pick up the slack in tasks that are assigned to the sales management team.

THE NEWLY PROMOTED:

Every new manager suffers from "manager-itis." This is a disorder in which the new manager convinces him or herself that they were the best sales pro ever, and that they work for a company that does everything right. Many also seem to suffer from a similar malaise, which goes something like this, "I will be a better manager than the current batch, because I am fresh from the field. I am more relevant and current. My reps can relate to me." The first error with this belief is that having your Reps relate to you does not mean that they will produce... but I digress. Every new manager says this, and yet it has never turned out that way.

The manager played the game as a salesperson, but now they act as if there is no game, and also as if they had always played things by the book - just the way the company said it should be done. Another problem they have is that the salespeople who worked with them remember differently than the way they reminisce in sales meetings about their days in the field. "I was successful, because I was always prepared and on time." (You forgot about being hung-over, you pompous jerk). This clash of realities gets in the way of the fantasy of being the perfect manager. It is also annoying how these individuals were such jerks when they were salespeople, and, now that they

are a manager, they will run around with a phony smile. It is really more of a smirk, "Look at me. I am a manager, and you are not."

The reason they got promoted was because of their results, but don't be fooled. In many cases it was also because they were a big league butt-kisser. The problem is if you work for them, they will expect the same from you.

Another issue is that being a good sales manager is a difficult job. Making sure a sales team has what it needs to succeed versus what they want, is a difficult balance to achieve. It takes some experience to know how to do this job. It is like this...just because one eats in a restaurant does not mean that one can run the restaurant.

Working the new guy is really a challenge especially, if a salesperson knows more about the job than the new manager does. A mature salesperson gives this manager a lot of space and room to grow into his or her new position. The challenge comes when a problem arises with a tough client, a crisis hits with the inner workings of the company, or the salesperson just plain needs something to do his or her job. The more experienced salesperson may have to make suggestions on how to handle these situations, but the suggestions need to be done in such a way as not to remind the new manager of the fact that he or she is more stupid than the one making the suggestions.

THE OLD PRO/ LAZY GUY:

If a rep is really good at his or her job, and does not need much supervision, this type of manager is ideal. If a salesperson is still learning his or her trade or is not really that disciplined, this may not be a good situation for that salesperson. Old pros know every trick of the trade, yet they do as little as possible. Most of them really want to be retired but cannot afford it. They also live in fear that they will have to go out to sell again. This does not mean merely accompanying a sales representative on a sales call to help close a deal, or visiting an old client. The idea of being in one's late 60's or even in your 70's and pulling around a case to go see clients, is not good for one's self image. To me, it would prove that I was a failure and that I could not move on – this is probably one of my biggest fears.

The bottom line is they have this position because they have to have it, and not because they want to have it. With that said, these old pros bring a lot to the table. There is not a situation that will come up which they have not been through a hundred times. One may not be able to use exactly what they say, but the context of what they say will be right on the money. A salesperson should not rely on them to play politics in the office. Their agenda will usually be one of appeasement so as not to make waves (Where is the fun in that?). As far as handling objections and dealing with different personalities, their wisdom is worth one's attention.

They will reminisce about their dragon slaying days a lot. One will be required to listen to the same stories over and over again. By the time this relationship is over, a salesperson may be able to tell these stories better than his or her manager, but, even if one cannot, he or she will be able to tell them right along with the manager and oftentimes word-for-word. But that is the price a salesperson has to pay. Remember, you will be the same way when you are their age.

The lazy person is included in this category because reporting to a lazy manager has the same pitfalls. A salesperson will have to deal with many of the issues that come with being self-managed. The salesperson will need to make sure he or she does their job completely because the manager will always throw a salesperson under the bus if there is a problem. This type of manager will not take even the smallest hit for anyone on the sales team, but once a salesperson works in this environment, it is difficult to work with a more proactive manager.

THE COMPANY HACK:

This manager cares more about rules and procedures than results, and the reason for this is control. A control freak will want to bring the conversation into his or her realm. The purpose of making everything about the rules, and of having lots of meetings, is to keep control. This method props-up the weaker members of the sales team, but also stunts the ability and potential of the more creative top producers. Why would a manager do this? There are 2 reasons. First, if everyone is doing the same, then the manager will not have to terminate anyone due to low performance, thereby avoiding unwanted attention on the sales team. Second, top producers can be demanding and difficult to control, characteristics that do not fit into the "Company Hack's" diabolical plan. The plan is control. No one should doubt it.

I knew of one manager that would give every rep only one pen. If you lost your pen, you would not be given another one without a lecture. Of course your fellow reps would snag any pens that were left on your desk. One repeat offender had to leave the office and go buy a box of pens which wasted his whole morning. The reasoning behind this asinine exercise was that this manager wanted his reps to be more organized. He did not last too long.

Another reason why a person would manage this way, is because they do not know the job well enough to manage any other way. If someone is not promoted through the ranks and is put through a sales manager training, then the company has decided that intelligence from the field is not pertinent to success. Not having any real experience, the only choice is to manage from the book. When a company hires managers from the outside, the newly hired managers will be resented by those in the company, unless the sales managers are paid less than the top producers. This is a model that has its advantages to the company because it can keep control of the message that goes out to the sales force.

THE PRO:

This is me. Well let's just go on that premise for now. A pro can be young or old, attractive or not, a man, or a woman; they can be newly promoted or hired from outside the company. There is no stereotype for a real professional sales manager. They will have some of the traits that have been described in the sections of less desirable sales manager types, but the core of their management style is getting the best results for their direct reports and for the company. As a rule they tend to be client-centric, because the reality is that the entire sales team works for the client. Importantly, they have the pull and the will to get things done for the client.

His or her high standards make the statement that this is a real pro. These are not only high standards for the sales team but also for themselves. A good sales manager knows that practicing

what one preaches always leads to better results, and the results are what really matters. A pro can step into the salesperson role and do the job as well or better than anyone on their team. They should be awesome closers because if a person wants to be a leader, it is the manager's role to go into the difficult sales situation and make it happen. The pro knows how to manage his or her salespeople and his or her boss. He or she will protect a salesperson from the office politics, if that salesperson listens to the advice given.

The job of a sales manager is to position the salespeople to succeed. This does not mean that he or she will fulfill every request. A professional manager is not a secretary. On the contrary, most of the time it is saying "no" which will get the salesperson back on track.

Managing a sales team is like teaching a class of 5 year-olds. One must treat the entire class equally, while at the same time giving each individual the specific attention he or she needs. Some may be cuter or more likable, but each student must have the teacher's guidance to live up to his or her potential. It is the same with salespeople. They all have different needs but all deserve the same chance to succeed. I have to say that the 5 year olds tend to listen more attentively...

The pro has a methodology to bring along to manage members of their sales team. They all do things differently, but they do have a reason for what they do. The pro always focuses on results and treats the members fairly. Finally, there is no question about who is in charge.

OWNER OF THE COMPANY

The boss being the acting sales manager can be an interesting experience. Understand that in most cases you will not be able to sell as much as your boss. Being able to make deals, and having the pressure to keep the company profitable, he will always keep the clients for himself. If a salesperson is being paid straight commission, this can cause some conflict. One should remember every dollar a salesperson receives is his money. This situation happens mostly with start-up companies.

6. MANAGING YOUR MANAGER

The easiest way for a sales professional to manage a sales manager is to do the job and do it well. Usually with a few exceptions, the top producers will have the easiest time. If you hit your numbers, it means the manager can focus on those with less production. People are motivated though self interest. It is a lot easier to like someone when they are making the company money and not taking up a lot of someone else's time and effort.

When I first hire someone there is this bond. We mutually decide that together and with the rest of our team, we will achieve great results and all have happy and productive lives. Then I wake up in a cold sweat thinking to myself, "Not this self-indulgent nightmare again!" Inevitably, the new hire does not live up to my expectations or to his or her promises. Of course, I do have an eye for talent, but choosing the right people is the hardest part of my job.

Success is the execution of well informed pragmatism. It is not an attitude, it is not mental, and it certainly has very little to do with feelings. It is about working hard, having the skill, and knowing what one is doing. Having said that, I should point out that being liked will make a person act more positive; being on one's game and feeling good will happen naturally. This is what the pro manager is looking for, and it is his or her job to keep a salesperson on track. What the reps are not looking for is a bunch of feel good jargon that keeps them around the coffee machine and out of the field or off the phone. There are things that a sales professional can do to optimize his or her skill set, and these are covered in the chapter "What Pros Do to Win."

Before analyzing sales managers, a salesperson needs to at look things from the manager's point of view. Most sales managers were sales professionals, and chances are sales is all they know. Sales managers all fear that they are going to have to go back to selling.

Going back to selling is the biggest fear I have, and I am sure I am not alone. I was hired by a publishing company in New York, and they paid me a lot to relocate. That is where I met the beautiful Polish girl who is now my wife and the mother of my Children. It was a great job personally, but professionally it had its difficulties. I met one fellow salesperson that affected my way of looking at the future. He had been a high level sales manager and owned his own company. By his own admission, he had spent his money unwisely and made some bad decisions. Now in his sixties, he was pulling a brief case alongside sales reps 30 years his junior. I do not want to be this guy, and neither does your sales manager.

It is also important to realize that in front of his team a sales manager is in charge, but in reality, this is not always the case. As a sales manager I have often felt as though I should introduce myself to my bosses, to other sales managers, and especially to my salespeople as "Hi, my name is No One Ever Listens To Me".

Meeting with one's superiors or with other department heads is always a daunting task. Most executives that are not directly in sales think it is a lot easier than it is. Depending on the product, other department heads may have unrealistic expectations of how the latest offer will be received in the market place. This can be a big problem. Just because the CEO and his golf buddies like the new roll out, does not mean it will put ink on the sales board or make money for the uninitiated. Being in sales and sales management takes a particular skill set and a unique frame of mind and experience. Those that run other departments may be more educated and have higher IQ's (although we will never admit that), so sometimes the sales management's concerns and issues are not taken seriously. They are rationalized away as whining. The sales department is often told just to go out and sell. If a sales manager looks a little bewildered after a meeting, this may be why.

Jealousy is another factor that comes into play in many companies. These smarter, more educated employees usually do not make as much as those in the sales department. There are many reasons why people in the sales department rival or exceed other departments in pay. Whatever the reasons, this makes the sales manager a target for individuals in other departments.

I was always amazed at the amount of testing and outward hostility I was supposed to endure from those members on my team. It is my belief that this came from unresolved issues in the individual's life. Many times I was offering an opportunity to this person to make their life much better, and my reward was one headache after another.

What is meant by testing the sales manager? In most cases it exhibits itself as defiance in one form or another. Not showing up to meetings, not turning in paperwork, or challenging the manager in front of other teammates. Testing creates tension in an already tense situation, but it does not really accomplish anything. Testing your manager is always bad; quietly evaluating him or her is much smarter. Quietly evaluating is an acceptable practice; testing how far you can push your manager is not. The difference is, while a salesperson is evaluating the manager's strengths in different areas, that salesperson has the ability to change his or her perception. On the other hand, by testing the manager, a salesperson has made his or her agenda obvious to everyone including the manager. This is not smart strategically, and it is definitely not an effective way to pave a road to a successful career.

The first step in managing the sales manager is to evaluate what kind of manager he or she is. After figuring out what kind of manager is in charge of the department, it is important to ask some questions. The first question should be, what is this person's hidden agenda, if any?

For example, I was in a situation where the pay plan was based on the sales net model. The manager would from time to time take a transferee from another unit and dump all the bad territory on that sales rep, in order to make the manager's favorite look better for promotion. It seems cruel but it was very effective. As the transferee, you may want to figure this out before it happens. There are literally hundreds of hidden agendas that can affect a salesperson.

I was the first sales rep to implement a laptop computer in a large publishing company. It cost \$6,500 and it came with the first version of windows. I was nationally recognized and was flown to

the national headquarters. Once I started to get some recognition, my Divisional Manager did everything he could to torpedo my career, including having my largest sale ever reduced because of “credit concerns”. To make sure I never received the top person sales award, competitive reps were granted the ability to postpone their vacations. This was something I was never given the chance to do, and it knocked me out of the running. This happened twice. When they demoted me from account executive to account manager, the company “forgot” to publish the numbers that compared the account executives. I found out through a secret source that I was ahead of everyone. Why did this happen to me. Well, as far as I can tell it was because my manager was openly gay, and someone had started a rumor that I was too. The rumor was that I was given favoritism based on sexual orientation. This kind a thing happens all the time. So hopefully you can learn how to avoid the problems I had.

Another question a salesperson should ask, is how his manager is positioned in the company compared to other managers. One should not necessarily think that if his or her manager is on the lower end of the scale that it is a bad thing. It may not be for two reasons. First, the manager may be more willing to partner with a salesperson if he or she believes that you will increase the status of their team. Second, the only constant in sales is change. Today’s zero will most likely be some other day’s hero. Also, one needs to keep in mind that as the manager’s stock rises, the salesperson's stock will also rise. If a sales professional is fortunate enough to be attached to the best sales unit, that salesperson will be expected to do his or her part. If the manager is a real pro, the salespeople that report to him will do everything to keep the unit in that position.

It is also important to evaluate a manager’s competence compared to the other managers. Maybe the manager is one heck of a closer but is terrible with paperwork or vice versa. This knowledge will influence what one may request of the manager in the future.

Is the manager dishonest? This is easy to figure out. If every meeting starts out with a story the sales team is supposed to stick to, then the answer is obvious. A competent and honest manager will not put his team members' reputation in jeopardy by making them lie for him; the occasional Friday afternoon fun excursion or such being a possible exception.

In the previous chapter we described the various types of manager you may experience while working in a sales organization. The following hints of how to manage a manager is by no means all-inclusive, however you will probably find the traits described in your situation. It should go without saying that your manager may have the characteristics of one or more of the types described. So feel free to create your own scenarios using the following information.

BOTHER-IN-LAW:

Recap: If the sales manager has a special relationship with the executives or ownership of the company and would otherwise be working at some low paying job where no one would listen to him/her, then the boss falls in to this category.

I would be very cautious about getting into this situation again. It almost never works out for anyone concerned, except maybe the boss. The brother-in-law manager has a tendency to create an

inner circle, usually with the intent of letting them do his or her job. The manager is not that smart or qualified, and hence needs help from any available source. So volunteering to do things off the clock to make the manager and his cronies look better will endear that salesperson to them. Also, it is important for a salesperson not to go over the heads of anyone already in the inner circle to get credit for a "great idea". One should feed it to them and let them take the credit. Going to the CEO to talk bad about this manager will not work. His or her shortcomings are already common knowledge. A salesperson will become vulnerable by bad mouthing a manager in this category to the "brass". In fact, one needs to show loyalty to the manager while in the presence of others in the company. You are helped in this by the fact that he or she is probably a sucker for good old fashion butt-kissing. A good salesperson will attempt to get the boss to grant extra privileges or a special lead that will end in a sale. If they do agree to help beyond what they do for others, it means that salesperson is approaching or is in the inner circle. A good salesperson should be able to manipulate this manager pretty easily. Promotion in the company may not be an option because the ownership wants to keep the power within "their people". Creating an exit strategy should be a high priority for the smart sales professional.

PSYCHO/SADIST/NARCISSIST SALES MANAGER.

Recap: This very disturbed individual is usually a very talented closer and can be quite knowledgeable. He is an asset to the company.

Working for a Psycho/Sadist/Narcissist Sales Manager should be thought of as a learning experience at best. These types of managers are usually very talented - just by observing them one will become a better sales professional. A salesperson will also learn how to survive in any sales environment. The salesperson who is reporting to this type of manager should consider this a trial by fire; he or she need take nothing this manager says personally. It is all said for some dark psychotic reason. One should never try to be a friend to this type of boss as this manager will look at any attempt to be close as a sign of weakness. The best way to act is the same way one would if one were in prison, and in my experience some of my managers have been there. The less one engages with the boss, the better. It is also interesting to see how they are in front of a prospect. I have often thought that if this person would act like this all the time, I could really enjoy this job. This manager can really turn on the charm when he or she wants something. With a client, this type of manager is usually a great closer. The problem for the sales professional comes when this manager decides that he or she no longer wants anything from an individual that reports to him or her. He may even be eyeing the accounts to turn them into house accounts, or to turn them over to a new hire who can be paid less on them. Sometimes one can see no rationale as to why this person would stick a knife into the back of someone on his team. But they are psycho, and that is what psychos do.

ANGRY MAN MANAGER:

Recap: The reason the Angry Man Manager has his own category is that he or she, but mostly he, is not disturbed but just pissed-off.

Managing this category of boss is easy. One should never piss them off and when they are mad, a salesperson should not disconcert them further. It is almost that easy. Salespeople can be difficult, causing the boss to become agitated. Because of the “wimpification” of society, such displays of anger by the boss can appear exaggerated and dangerous, instead of being the honest displays of frustration they actually are. This is not to condone actual abuse, but a salesperson needs to give a manager a break and forgive him or her for the predictable outburst. Being understanding in this situation will endear the team member, because the outburst is an obvious weakness of which the manager is aware. What most salespeople do not understand is he or she may be shielding the team from the wrath of the higher-ups. His or her fit may be enough to divert the fury of some of the more powerful executives, ones who intend to do more permanent harm to members of the sales team's careers.

HOT CHICK MANAGER:

Recap: Everyone, including herself, thinks she got her job because of her looks. Usually a top producer while a sales person, she was promoted to illustrate to everyone that women can also advance in the company.

The same rules apply for dealing with Hot Chick Manager, as with Psycho/Sadist/Narcissist Manager, since she is a sub set of that type. Many of the bosses that suffer from this syndrome of hatred do recover. A portion of these women will eventually get more even-handed once they feel a little more secure and as they understand that all members on their team need occasional guidance. Some men can successfully navigate this mind field (even though I have never been able to do it myself). It is usually the touchy-feely, emotionally sensitive, metrosexual, the one who is also a good butt-kisser. Red meat for this genus of boss is the Alpha male, the one who has to be right all the time. In reality he is an emotional wuss and cannot deal with the thought that no one understands or cares about him. These two will butt heads from the start. In the worst case scenario a game of one-upsmanship may begin. The new woman manager will single him out in sales meetings by trying to deflate his over-inflated ego. In return, the typical Alpha male will begin to plot ways to get even. He will voice his opinions louder, and point out the mistakes the manager is making. Already insecure, the woman in this game will point to her position and attempt to use her authority to beat the male into submission.

For the average salesperson who has to report to the Hot Chick boss, the best course of action is to do his or her job to the best of their ability. The women on the team can try to bond with her by offering her their support. This should be done in private in a "woman-to-woman" talk. Men should try not to ask for too much until this manager finds her feet and stabilizes. A good male sales professional will realize that she is inwardly shaky in her new position. Since she and everyone else think that she got her promotion because of her looks, she will try to prove to everyone that this notion is wrong. In doing so, she will make mistakes. Any male that may have to be on the team for any length of time must not embarrass the new manager by pointing out these mistakes in front of co-workers. If one chooses to do so, one must be ready to incur her wrath. It is best to sit back to see if the new manager is able to grow into her position. If she cannot, one should begin to explore ways to get transferred to another manager. If that is not possible, a good exit strategy is in order.

Males on the team must be careful not to take any reference to sex personally. She cannot sleep with anyone on her team. This would be considered sexual harassment and would open the floodgates of litigation, as well as jeopardize her new position. As a defense mechanism against unwanted approaches, she may begin to tell the men that report to her that they are not in her league. She may even emphasize this idea to the more desirable men under her. A good sales professional must be able to see this for what it is, and should not let it affect his performance. The worst thing a male can do is to retaliate with a smart-ass comment when told that he is inadequate. "You are a little big in the butt yourself," or "I heard you only sleep with customers," is probably not a good thing to say to one's new manager. Trust me on this - I happen to know this one for a fact. Maybe that is a clue as to why I did so poorly in this type of environment, and why this never-before-mentioned type of sales manager was included.

MARRIED MISOGYNIST PIG MANAGER

The Married Misogynist Pig Manager, or MMPM. If the Sales Manager, is more interested in trying to get some action with a fellow worker than in his sales numbers - and he is married - then he qualifies as a Married Misogynist Pig Manager. The fact that these people are addicted to inappropriate sexual behavior makes them bad bosses. Why? It is because if they are immoral enough to cheat on their wife and destroy their children's innocence, they will at some time in your career either ask you to be their alibi or throw you under the bus in order to cover their sick behavior. The sad part of it is, many of these guys could be really good managers. Many of them are very experienced and could do their job really well, if they were not always trying to target their next score. Being good sales persons themselves, and having huge egos, they only look at what they want. If you help them achieve their depraved goals, then you are their friend; if you do not help, you are a foe. The problem is that salespeople rely on the higher ups to help them reach their potential and make as much money for themselves and the company as possible. If there is another agenda interjected by the MMPM, it upsets the balance and ruins the career of good sales people. It is more unfair to the woman sales professionals who have to deal with the constant attempts at trying to have an affair. These guys use a lot of coercion and false promises to get what they want. If you are a man managed by an MMPM, he may leave you alone, or even ignore you so he can focus on making a big score.

Married Misogynist Pig Managers also ruin it for sales managers. Whenever a new male sales manager is hired, he is looked at with suspicion by the MMPM. This is directly opposite to what the new manager needs to do a good job - he needs to be trusted. It is also unfair to the sales professionals who need to stay at arm's length, in order not to get snared into a web of deception. By far the worst part of having an MMPM is that they never have time to do their job well, because they are always off on some forbidden rendezvous. This means that the people underneath them will have to do more work, and that will affect their numbers. Fellow managers will also have to pick up the slack in tasks that are assigned to the sales management team.

A word of warning - don't ever become friends with the MMPM's wife. This is very important. If she asks you if he is cheating, you are really screwed. There is only one answer that might get you out of

this jam and that is "How am I supposed to know? He is my boss I avoid him as much as I can." This is the exact tactic you should employ. Your job is to sell, and having a boss that has other agendas means that you are now among the "self-managed." You will be put in a situation where he will want you to cover for him. Sometimes it is the only way not to get fired, but it will also keep you from getting promoted. Once a superior thinks you are lying to him or her the chances that they will promote you are not very good.

It is really important that you keep your social life separate from your work life. This will help you not to become one for his wife's friends. Also, do not introduce him to your friends. He will end up hooking up with someone you know, and she will start talking about him. You will then be in the awkward position of knowing that your friend is dating your married boss. If you are a male you may want to resist becoming part of the inner clique. There are advantages to being buddies with the boss, but remember the Married Misogynist Pig Manager has an agenda and could put you into a bad position.

As a woman, you should know that this type of boss is most likely going to try and figure out a strategy to hit on you. One example is "I will help you with your accounts why don't I come over tonight after work." "You're hitting on me," says the cute female sales professional. "No I am not," say the MMPM, "I just did the same thing with Ralph a couple of weeks ago." What you will find out by looking at the TV Guide, is that he was there on the night of the seventh game of the NBA championships, along with a dozen or so others, drinking beer, smoking cigars and watching the game. If this is not their first Rodeo they always have a back up story.

Make it clear from the beginning that you are only there to work. If the boss wants to talk about subjects other than work, try to ignore him and move along. Small talk is the bait that he will use to engage his next victim. These guys are smooth. Many women sales professionals believe that they can be friends with their manager, and will not be affected by his bad habit if she introduces the MMPM to her own, extremely handsome and nice, boy friend. "He won't hit on me because he and my boyfriend are buds." These are seasoned sales pros - a handsome little boy toy does not stand a chance. A true MMPM will try and split you two up, so he can be there to pick up the pieces. The methods will range from pushing the boy toy's buttons so he over reacts in public, to getting him drunk at a strip bar and then "accidentally" letting the attractive sales pro see the cell phone pics. Don't try and out manipulate the Married Misogynist Pig Manager. Even if you are good at manipulation, chances are he is better.

There might be a few that think having a MMPM as a boss is a great advantage, and may decide to give the boss what he really wants. This will work for the short run, up until the point that some other sales pro finds out or notices that "the girlfriend" is getting all the good accounts. The one thing about sales people, if they believe someone is getting special treatment, they have no problem letting the world know all the little details. What the women who chooses this doesn't understand is

that if she makes this choice, she is now the problem. She is a problem for their manager's wife, for the manager and for the manager's boss. Chances are, the woman that decides to please the Married Misogynist Pig Manager, will be out the door instead of enjoying that juicy promotion.

THE NEWLY PROMOTED

Recap: Every new manager suffers from "manager-itis." They convince themselves they were the best sales pro ever, and they work for a company that does everything right.

The first question a sales professional should ask themselves when introduced to their newly promoted sales manager is, will this boss last? If the professional concludes the boss will not last, it would still behoove them not to put themselves in a position of having an enemy for the rest of the boss' tenure with the company, no matter how short. In many companies newly hired sales managers have the life expectancy of a helicopter machine gunner in Vietnam. As soon as they get promoted, it may be time to start planning the farewell party.

If a salesperson makes the assessment that the new manager will survive, the best thing to do is kiss his or her butt and support them. When he or she starts to bluster, ignore it. It is just that basic insecurity coming to the surface. The new manager will have doubts because, as a salesperson, he or she really did not realize what a management position entailed. Another factor is the salesperson's teammates. Chances are they will detect weakness, which means they will start testing. As much fun as it is to see the boss squirm, one should never participate. It will also be tempting to come to the rescue. The best tactic is to implement what I like to call "Hockey Fighting Rules." The referees will always let the players fight until one or both hit the ice. This means that a good sales professional will let the manager handle his or her team. The only time one should step in, is when it becomes obvious that real conflict has ended. Coming to the rescue too soon will make the manager look weak. Just like a hockey fight, a meddling salesperson will probably end up taking a verbal shot to the eye. Remember, the manager should have the upper hand in these skirmishes. It is important to let them become battle tested. The new manager is going to be challenged a lot, not only by the salespeople, but also by upper-management and fellow sales managers. The sales professional should always keep in mind a manager needs team players and allies but not friends. Unless the salesperson and the manager were close before the promotion, it is advisable not to become buddies.

Living in Los Angeles I have met a few celebrities. The friends that they have, the ones that are truly close and get invited to the cool parties, are the ones they knew before they became famous. This may seem unfair, but think about it from their position. It is really hard to trust someone when you think they want something, or in this case are dependent on them to make a living.

Because the newly promoted feel insecure, it is always a good idea to praise them in front of their superiors. Just be careful since, in other situations this gesture may not be appreciated as much as it will here.

THE OLD PRO/ LAZY GUY

Recap: Old Pros know every trick of the trade, yet they do as little as possible. Most of them really want to be retired but cannot afford it.

The Old Pro's management style is usually a hands-off approach. As long as a salesperson is hitting his or her numbers, this manager will leave a salesperson alone. If the salesperson gets in trouble, this manager may throw him or her under the bus. Just like the newly promoted, the old pro and lazy guy manager will get his or her share of challenges, but instead of fighting back, this manager will just smile and let it pass. A smart sales professional will never underestimate an old pro. He or she knows how to survive, otherwise this person would not be in the position of management. So, just let the other teammates talk too much, for the sales professional needs just to focus on the job at hand.

A smart sales professional can learn a lot from these individuals. An old pro is there for a reason, the reason being that they are well seasoned. The old pro knows the product and how to sell. A salesperson should learn what he or she can from them, and should not be a threat to the manager's easy life.

THE PRO

Recap: A pro can be old or young, attractive or not, a man, or a woman; they can be newly promoted or hired from outside the company. There is no stereotype for a real professional sales manager.

I think I can speak in the first person on this one. Do your job and communicate with me. I do not like surprises. I know how to get out of any predicament we might find ourselves in, however I need the opportunity to work my magic. I am all about the numbers, so don't be counterproductive. I don't like distractions. Because of my competitive nature, I always want to be on top, and anything that may prevent me from remaining there will be dealt with instantly, and possibly harshly. I will be friendly, but I am not all that interested in friends. That is not to say that I have never been friends with my reps - I have - but the relationship is usually on my terms.

The Pro almost always has a plan to succeed. It is a good idea to listen and follow their suggestions. The salesperson may not understand the plan, but if one plays along he or she will see it come to fruition. Also, the pro is a great resource for all aspects of the job. A salesperson should never be afraid to take a pro manager on a call to see a difficult client, or to use the boss to help save a deal that is headed for the tank. A pro manager will also invest in the salesperson's success. This is not just being benevolent, but is done because the Pro is secure. This manager knows that the more people he or she can help get promoted, will elevate his or her position in the company.

If a pro manager helps others to get promoted, that pro will have more friends in high places. This can be only good for that manager. Asking a favor from someone who owes you is good leverage. Guilt is a wonderful tool.

A sales manager is getting it from both sides, from the people that work under him, as well as from those over him. It is much easier and sometimes more profitable to be a salesperson rather than a

sales manager. The sales professional will keep that in mind the next time he or she is bored and is considering the fun of harassing the boss.

The following needs to be discussed, but might make some people uncomfortable. What if the manager is so evil, so incompetent, or so crazy that life is unbearable? What if the salesperson knows that his or her days are numbered? In other words, is there ever a case when a salesperson should try to get the manager to quit or be terminated?

Once I got transferred into the worst sales unit in the company. This team did not have one revolving door, it had two. Except for one butt-kissing favorite of the boss, no one lasted. This unit always placed last, and the manager wore her hair in the shape of an asparagus spear. She was crazy and a liar, but, most of all, she was really annoying. She would wait until I was out on a sales call and then she would page me with a "come to the office now" message. Instead of answering her phone call from me, she would make me drive in to address some stupid paperwork issue that was not really an issue. Then she told everyone that I was bad at my job. It was hell, and it became war. One time I left my pager hidden on her desk so that when she paged me with some meaningless question, it would ring, but she would see that I had escaped for the day. I did it on a day I was going to turn in big numbers, thereby making it more difficult for her to produce one of her emasculating lectures.

Unfortunately there are times when it becomes logical to undermine the manager; to try to get him or her fired. A salesperson should never make this decision lightly. Chances are, even if the salesperson is successful, he or she will end up losing the job eventually anyway. If one thinks that he or she is the first in succession for the management job, and that once the evil one is destroyed, the sales person will automatically have the management job bestowed on them, they might want to think again. This scheme rarely works. First of all, a salesperson needs to understand that this is not the first time a rep has thought up a diabolical plot to overthrow the evil ruler. As a matter of fact, upper management has seen this scenario on numerous occasions, so please do not try this, even if you are one of the superstars, and especially if you are new to the company. Not being familiar with the terrain and personalities makes it much more difficult. The wisest tactic is to try to get a transfer, or to abandon the mission and find another job. If one insists on plotting a coup, there are some things that person should consider.

In the "real" world, a salesperson is considered a master manipulator, however in the normal sales department, one may be just an average manipulator. This is what happens to high school athletes that go to a major college and for the first time need to compete for their position. In this case, the ability to pressure and intimidate or whatever tactic is in the salesperson's arsenal may not be as effective, because the audience has the same qualities as the salesperson.

When one is concocting a plot, the plotter must tell no one, not even his or her mother, wife or husband, boyfriend or girlfriend, and especially not anyone with whom they work. As a matter of fact, if an associate is stupid enough to try to create an alliance, that associate should march right in to the manager's office and tell him that he or she cannot succeed in this negative environment. Beyond that, if one is earnest in the quest to overthrow the manager, that person should say that he

or she does not understand what the manager's problem is. If a salesperson wants to have any chance of being considered for the manager's position, and wants to suffer as little collateral damage as possible, he or she must not have any statement or action that can link him or her back to this plot. Also if the situation were to change suddenly, say the manager gets transferred, drops dead, or whatever, a smart salesperson wants to be able to abandon the scheme without acquiring the reputation as a job wrecker. In order to have the best chance of pulling this off, one should appear to have completely bought into the corporate line, and be the one who always wants things to be positive. At least that is the public image a sales professional wants in the company.

A salesperson must realistically evaluate the manager's situation in the company and manager's talent. I have always been underestimated in both stature and intelligence. I have never been at a company that someone has not tried to "take me out." It has not worked yet. I have been on both sides of this equation.

By figuring the weakness, one can create a scenario that can get the salesperson what he or she wants. Here is an example. The manager is always complaining about the company, maybe always saying that they are not appreciated. This is an easy one. The salesperson should see if he can get the manager to admit that the manager would look for another job if there were one out there that they liked. Once it becomes clear that the boss has gone out on an interview, the salesperson simply walks into the manager's boss to ask for a transfer off of the team. The reason? The salesperson is a company person who thrives in a positive environment, and cannot see how the manager interviewing with the competition will help anyone achieve the goal of a successful sales career.

This above scenario brings up another part of this process. A salesperson needs a device which is usually either an accusation or a provable fact, which can be levied at the target. It is really important that the salesperson never states his or her context. In the previous scenario, the salesperson could have gone in and said the manager is trying to work for the competition. He or she could have asked the manager's boss, "Doesn't that make you mad?" This may work, but it is a weaker case and would have made the salesperson look like a tattletale. That is why the salesperson needs to make it about the salesperson. They should look humbly at the manager's boss, and say with a combination of non-verbal cues and words something like this, "The only reason I am here, is because I want to make this company my career, and to have everyone succeed. This situation is so bad, that it is going stop that from happening." When reps bust into the CEO's office and start talking about how incompetent their manager is, they are given a pat on the head and told to take the rest of the day off; to come back tomorrow, not knowing that it is to pick up their final check. This happens because there is no plausible reason for this meeting, except self-interest. A smart salesperson must always let whoever he or she is dealing with know that there is a viable reason for doing what he or she is doing, besides self-interest. One should deny that self-interest was the motivation until his or her last dying breath.

There are other devices besides disloyalty that can cause ruin to a career. Dishonesty or stealing from the company is pretty effective.

There was this district VP at a publishing company whom was not very well liked. One day it was discovered that he had used the company account to put tires on his wife's car. Hum... I wonder how they found that out. Dishonesty is usually a great charge to levy at someone. Lying is not. We are salespeople, and even though no one will admit it, we could all be caught in a "technical interpretation of the truth." Also, the lies that the salesperson caught the manager telling probably originated from the CEO, the same CEO with whom the meeting must be held. Many times sales managers are given directives by their bosses to lie to the sales team. Complaining to the CEO about lying is not usually a good idea.

Sometimes the device is other people. A salesperson can whip others into frenzy and actually get them to do the dirty work, while that salesperson sits back and waits patiently for the correct heads to roll. This is very effective, but most of one's fellow workers will usually not fall for this. The salesperson will be thought of as a trouble maker.

My favorite method is to overthrow by proxy. In the example of the lady with the asparagus hairdo, I had let everyone know at the headquarters that I was unhappy. I did not let any of her direct bosses know I was unhappy, but everyone above them did. The pressure and accusations came down on her bosses. She never saw it coming. This is an example of termination by proxy, because I had outside forces that applied the pressure. This can also work with large clients, but one needs to be careful. A client's only motivation is to pay less for things. The salesperson could become an unintentional casualty in a negotiation process.

No matter what method one uses, he or she needs some tricks to help them succeed. A salesperson can create paranoia within the manager's mind, by letting him or her know there are threats about. The salesperson should assure the manager of his or her loyalty and even go as far as to say that he or she will keep the manager informed. Of course you will not ever bring up the subject again, and if asked about it, you will say that you will look into it. The only time you should ever reveal what someone said, is after you have left the company. The purpose of this tactic is to provide cover, as well as to acquire information about how the scheme is working. Also, one should get to know the manager's personal friends. They will reveal things about your manager that may be help.

My main point is that you need to be very careful about trying to oust someone. Think about it - you may end up with a worse boss than you already have. The biggest mistake I see is that salespeople often have healthy egos, and can't stand to be told what to do. They also usually dislike the person who is telling them what to do, but this is not a reason to employ any of these tactics. Also, if you are going to do this, make sure that it is well thought out and effective. You do not want your manager to survive your plot, just so he or she can make you a target. One last thing, please do not try this unless you are very smart. It will backfire on you. Unfortunately, someone who thinks that they are smart will take this information and try to use it. The worst part about not being smart is that you probably do not realize it

7. HOW TO INTERVIEW

There are two types of sales jobs an interviewee will apply for - one in which the company is trying to fill a specific vacancy, and one where the company will hire as many suitable applicants as possible. The higher the base salary, the more established the product, and the less risk assumed by the salesperson, the more likely it is that the job will fit in to what can be called a premium sales position.

Most positions that are being advertised place the risk on to the new hire. The companies with these positions are often referred to as mills or HTS, "high turnover sales". The philosophy for this is simple - The company seeks to spend as little as possible on each new hire, in the hope that even if they abruptly leave they will have at least produced enough to offset any costs that have been incurred. Formulas are labored over by management to construct a position that will be attractive enough to entice candidates, but will be designed for minimal risk for the company. Theoretically, a certain percentage of the sales professionals will perform well enough to stay, either through talent, or luck of the draw such as getting a better territory or superior lead source. These performers will be paraded out in front of the new interviewees, as proof that a good living can be obtained by working for this company.

Don't believe that these veterans will be eager to invest in your success. In most cases they will be very protective of their position, since they have seen hordes of sales people come and go; besides, most of the easy clients will already be spoken for. An example of this is radio advertising, which in many markets is a straight commission pay plan. The senior account executives have all the established clients, and therefore make the most money. Unless a new hire stumbles on to an emerging company or cracks a new category of advertisers, it will take a long time to amass a clientele that will create a sustainable paycheck for the rep.

The hiring manager plays the most important role in the mill scenario. If he or she is any good at the job, they will do what they can to create the impression that this is a premium job. This may include multiple interviews or having the applicant take tests. This is all meaningless because, if you are at all reasonably qualified, you will be hired no matter the result of this process. At the other end of the spectrum, many companies do not hide the fact that they run through a lot of sales people. Instead, they ask the question, "Are you good enough to succeed here?" It is the practice of some companies to have mass interviews, interviewing a large group of applicants at the same time. Understand that in either situation the reality is that they are trying to sell you on coming to work for them. This is the antithesis of the traditional hiring process.

Don't be surprised if the manager is not waiting for you when you arrive for your interview, or if there are multiple applicants scheduled for the same time. The reality of today's business is that about half of those who agree to an interview actually show up. So if you arrive, you are half way there.

So what are some of the clues that a job is of the "sales mill variety" or is an HTS? One clue is that the company sells a product or service that has a residual income stream. The math explains it. Say

for example that a company offers a \$3000 a month draw. A new sales person works for only one month before quitting, after having sold only \$1000 worth of product. Upon the rep quitting, the company will likely turn the account into a house account, will keep collecting the money that would have gone to the rep, and will eventually turn a profit. If this happens enough times the company can generate significant sums for itself. Another way to discover that this company knows there is going to be a high turnover, is to observe their hiring practices. If they have ads running constantly on internet job boards and local newspapers, it is logical that they are willing to pay to fill up their sales room. Also, look at the hiring systems in place - if the process for hiring sales people is streamlined, it is because they have done it a lot. One thing to note, however, is that just because a company practices these types of behaviors, it does not mean that this job should be avoided. This could be the perfect fit for you. If the timing is right and your skill set matches what the job calls for, you may be one of the sales people that is used later in their career to lure the masses of new sales people into the company.

It is your responsibility to determine what kind of company you are applying to, and then to act accordingly. If you feel that this company is going to hire you and let you succeed and fail on your own, you should try to get every concession you can. Find out how those who have been with the company for a while succeed. Look for every edge you can. Remember, in this situation you are hiring them. Negotiate up front for what you want, because once you hit the sales floor, the time for negotiating is done and the time to produce has started.

How should you interview for a HTS job? Understand that the hiring manager knows what it takes to succeed, so listen and ask questions, especially about how a sales professional succeeds where others do not. Act as though you plan on taking their offer, and you will have a chance to try and sweeten the deal before you agree to the terms. Be enthusiastic about the product or service and pay attention to the sales strategy. Why would someone want this product? Ask about the competition and listen carefully. If their strategy is that they get to the client before that individual can make a better choice, you might want to consider other opportunities. Since your success relies on the product or service your new employer wants you to sell, you need to evaluate what you are selling and make the decision whether you see yourself being able to tell a believable story to prospects. The most important aspect of considering an HTS or Mill job is who do you sell to? Make sure you have a viable path to the prospect. If you are a skilled sales person and you have the right attitude, it is possible to succeed, but keep in mind that it is solely up to you. Do not rely on others to motivate you or invest in your success.

After reading this you may want only to consider "Corporate" or "Premium" sales jobs. Unfortunately, this is everyone's first choice, and the worse the economy becomes, the rarer these positions are. If you have experience in a particular field, or have specialized knowledge or education, this will increase your chances to get one of these premium positions. Tech sales and pharmaceutical companies are two examples of these desirable jobs. The problem is that the "typical" sales person usually does not have the background needed to start his or her sales career with one of these more desirable sales positions. Most sales people land that "premium" sales job

by succeeding at less desirable jobs first. One thing to remember is that, no matter what the sales position or the company, when sales results do not meet expectations, the sales position will become less lucrative. Many positions today that are considered high turnover positions were once coveted premium positions.

There are several aspects of interviewing for sales jobs that are common to premium as well as the other types. With the advent of the internet job boards you will apply for several positions at one time. It has become common that when called to set up an appointment, the applicant is not sure which job the interviewer is from. The following 5 steps to the successful interview will help you no matter what. These steps are very similar to the 5 steps of the sales call that form the bases of my generic sales training. An interview is nothing more than a formalized sales presentation. In the sales industry it is sometimes the employee who is interviewing the employer.

The first step is preparation. Once you agree to come to an interview, you need to take the time to look up the company and understand the industry. Make sure you get the website address. Companies sometimes have different product lines, and you want to make sure you are researching the correct information. The following was posted on a sales blog by Bea Kazemi , Sales Manager at FastnetIT, Melbourne Area, Australia, Industry Staffing and Recruiting. (Kazemi, 2009)

Pre-interview checklist:

1. Research the company.
2. Print relevant information off website and highlight key areas.
3. Request a company brochure, and/or phone company as a potential buyer pre interview.
4. Compile sales achievements and relevant documents into a handout (sales targets, list of accounts won, list of achievements, and summation of client database) - this is really powerful!
5. Identify direct competitors, target market both industries and decision makers to whom they sell.
6. Prepare for behavioral questions - have examples of different customers, major accounts, and your pipeline management.
7. Map and directions of meeting.
8. Plan a Personal presentation about yourself and what makes you a better candidate than the rest.

The Second Step is to introduce yourself. In this step there are 3 objectives to accomplish - you should say something that will induce a positive response, you must say something that will validate the company you are interviewing with, and you should establish your credibility. It is important that you show them that you can be nice. You need to accomplish all three objectives in just a few sentences. Here is an example:

“I have been talking to quite a few companies. I must say that our phone conversation got me interested in meeting you to find out more about your sales position“. In this example it has been established that the interviewee is desirable by other companies, plus, they are validating the hiring manager on doing a good phone pitch. Having a planned introduction that takes into account the previous interaction helps in creating a good first impression.

The third step is q and a. It is ok to inquire about compensation for a sales job more so than jobs in other departments. Because the applicant is not getting a steady pay check, he or she needs to know what is required to make money. The one mistake that many applicants make is that they are accusatory in the questioning of the hiring manager. Let's be real, the manager is exaggerating how much money the average rep makes. Of course they are leaving out vital information, like the territory you are going into is terrible or has been worked to death. You can evaluate these things in your head, but there is no need to make sure that the interviewer knows that you know that he or she is full of it. This is not going to be a good strategy, so just play along - you can always turn down the job later. It is important that you try and keep control of the interview. The best way to do this is ask questions that the interviewer wants to answer. Always ask about how to succeed, and what do the top producers do that is different than those who don't do as well. It is also critical to figure whether the interviewer is an alpha sales person or a businessperson that wants to hire people to do what he or she can't do. Generally speaking, the alpha sales person wants to see how tough you are, while the business person wants to know about sales technique. The Alpha salesperson knows how to show his team how to sell and can spot talent. What he or she doesn't know is whether or not you are willing to take your bumps and not quit before you succeed. The business person who is not a salesperson is more interested in the technology and your personality because, to the non-sales person, that is what makes a good salesperson.

Once you have gotten enough info to get this person hire you, you need to inquire about the hiring process. This will naturally lead you into the fourth step, which is where you talk about you. Now is the time to let go of control and let them ask you questions. By now you should have a good rapport and know what their hot buttons are. You should always be able to talk numbers about your past sales performance. Be as honest as you can, since most sales managers are pretty good at detecting exaggeration. Interviewers will sometimes ask you questions to see how well you think on your feet, and to measure your critical thinking skills, so be ready. When you sense the questioning is coming to a close, ask them when they plan on hiring someone.

The final point - now is the time you need to close. Not to get the deal, but to demonstrate that you are a closer. Don't be afraid to push through their reasons for not hiring you on the spot. “You are going to end up hiring me anyway, so let's be efficient and I will see you tomorrow to fill out my paper work.” This is a dance, and if you do not try, the applicant that did push hard will probably get the job.

8. TYPES OF SALES PEOPLE

The objects of sales can be divided into two major classifications - tangibles and intangibles. When looking at a career in sales, this is a crucial distinction to consider. It is not to say that once you have sold tangibles you cannot sell intangibles or vice versa, but it is my experience that there are people better suited for one or the other. There are some that can do both just as easily, but these are the minority, even though most sales pros believe they can sell anything. I whole-heartedly believe in my ability to sell both, though I have spent most all of my career as an intangible sales person. As discussed in the "Types of Sales Jobs" chapter, it was not as easy as I thought it would be when I opened my cigar shop. I have always been more comfortable selling something that doesn't really exist.

The tangible sales pro has a good memory and can remember many different details. The archetypal tangible sales person is the guy who sells auto parts. These people are amazing; they have memorized literally thousands of part numbers. As a group they do not have to have a lot of sales skills, because if you need an alternator, there really are not a lot of options besides a new or a rebuilt one. Across the car lot are the car sales people. They too are tangible sales types, with the focus being features and benefits. The tangible sales person's inclination is to talk features.

As a sales trainer, much of the training focus for companies with tangible products, is on how to tie benefits to features. In many cases, the sole purpose of the training is to make the guy who is paying for the training feel like, "This guy is good - that is what I keep telling my sales force."

A good sales person for a tangible product is proficient at needs assessment and should be "consultative" in their sales approach. This is because the client requires a product to fulfill a specific need, therefore accuracy and critical thinking are important.

The intangible sales pro is more creative, and does not get bogged down by pesky facts and features. They are problem solvers with ideas. They need to create a story that talks to the individual client, and creates a picture so that the prospect will believe the product will fulfill the perceived need. In other words, intangible sales people are good bull-shitters. Sorry for the blunt language, but that is the truth. When you sell something that does not exist until it is delivered, you can make it what you need it to be. The typical advertising sales person and the industrial nuts and bolts person are both in sales, but that is where the similarity ends. The intangible sales person talks more about theory than specifics, uses more "sales techniques" to move the prospect towards the close, and focuses much more on benefits than features. You will not hear a person that sells industrial locks say "Just imagine how good it will feel if you buy these cam locks."

So, if you are starting out in sales, how do you know if you are an intangible or a tangible sales person? Ask yourself what motivates you to buy something. Is it how it looks, or is it how it makes you feel? Do you do a lot of research and make sure that the specifics will fulfill your needs? The best way to figure out what kind of sales person you are, is to examine what kind of consumer you

are. Do you focus on the features or the benefits? When it comes to tangible versus intangible sales, it has more to do with who you are as a person and less about the product or service you are selling. There is plenty of opportunity in both forms of sales.

There are basically four kinds of sales professionals. First, let's talk about the technical sales person. Usually this kind of sales person has a degree or several degrees in some specialized field; certifications may replace the need for this formal education. This qualification goes beyond product knowledge, and these sales guys can speak to the tech hacks in the company. They will be listened to more than a non-technical sales person, since they speak the technical jargon. Being a sales person in the same field for a long time can make one feel that he or she speaks the language and can talk the talk. They may learn a lot about a certain subject, but will always come from a business or sales perspective. The tech sales people who are "Techies" themselves, also understand the perspective and agenda of the techie, which is why they are taken more seriously. This is very important. In many smaller tech companies, one of the officers may be the only sales person. If the ticket is big enough and the company can survive on only a few sales per year the owner/officer may be the only sales person.

The clients of these companies rely on their vendors to come up with real solutions, not just products and services. These solutions are usually expensive, therefore liability is just as important to management as the actual sale. An example would be high-end medical equipment or telecommunications equipment. To be a true technical sales pro, you should be able to do much of the support yourself. Being on the top of the food chain, these tech sales professionals can make a ton of cash. Clients may rely on the sales person as much or more than they do on the company that the sales person works for. This relationship makes them as close to indispensable to their companies as a sales person can be. In general they are very smart, a little egotistical and might be a little lazy. But what do you expect from a smart rich person?

Some people fall into a sales job by accident. They were looking for a job and a sales position became available and they took it. The applicant had good people skills and a skill set that was attractive to the interviewer. The main attraction was that they were trainable. People that never intended to be in sales can do well. They are usually in sales jobs that do not have a lot of rejection or a lot of pressure to produce. This is because "normal people" do not have the ability to sustain the emotional pain that a sales person goes through on a daily basis. Eventually a position becomes available that suits them better, and they move on, being the better and stronger for it.

The second type is the climber. They are usually one of those smart guys with a business degree. They apply for the sales job for a couple of reasons. First, they like the money they can make. Let's face it, when kids get out of college, they usually do not have a high paying job waiting for them. Sales is a good way for some to make good money when they graduate. The second reason is that in many companies, sales is one of the best ways to climb the corporate ladder, especially if you have a degree in finance or management. This way you can get out of the sales department once you have the stature to be promoted.

As we know, sales people need to sport a pretty big ego. Because of the “self-esteem enhancement training” most have gotten instead of an “old school” education, the ego is not an issue. What is at issue is a sense of entitlement. These recruits do not think of themselves as salespeople for the long term - they believe they are more valuable than “just a sales person.” This creates a tendency to be a little too aggressive in wanting the high paying position without really earning it.

Another aspect of the climber is that he or she may have a tendency to be the teacher’s pet. Many of those in higher positions see themselves in the climber. The climber has no issue with kissing a little butt on his or her way up. So many climbers feel that the other salespeople are not very accommodating in their inevitable ascension to the top. Their team members are not honorable, have a negative attitude, they sabotage, and are generally doing everything they can to knock them down a rung or two. The climber would be correct in this assessment because, to a regular sales person, the climber is someone who has entitlement issues, is a butt kisser and thinks they are better than the other reps on the team.

The next type is the entrepreneur - a person who has a vision and is starting a business. They need money to fund their dream, so they sell. The good ones can sell pretty well, but not because they have good sales technology or they are slick sales people. They succeed because they are able through intellect and enthusiasm coupled with the ability to manipulate the product or service, to get customers. It is surprising to many that start businesses, how good a salesperson they are. This is because it is a matter of pride that their customers are satisfied. It is also a matter of survival, since most of the time the entrepreneur has put every resource into their new venture. If it fails he or she will lose everything so to say that the entrepreneur is motivated is obvious. Motivation to succeed and the ability to keep pushing is vital in sales, and the entrepreneur has that. This is why people who have never sold before can sometimes do really well.

Unfortunately this frame work has its limitations. First, the entrepreneur has a tendency to do everything himself, so after the first round of sales they become too busy to get new customers. However, they do not usually have enough money to hire people to do the jobs they do themselves. The entrepreneur has also become an expert in doing the tasks that are needed. To train someone is a daunting task at best and seems impossible at worst. This is really true when it comes to hiring sales people. They have been overwhelming their prospects with product and industry knowledge, yet when they hire a sales person of necessity they often hire someone for as little money as possible. It was easy for them to sell, so anyone should be able to do it. This is not usually the case, because the new sales person does not have the survival motivation or the tools to do as well as the entrepreneur. In many cases there is also an issue of control. The entrepreneur wants to control everything the sales person does, which inevitably slows everything down - a difficult place for the sales person.

Many years ago I applied for a sales job and after an extensive interview with the entrepreneur I got the all commission job and was given a sales script. I read the script, and then did what I always do, I started engaging the customer in small talk, asking questions and employing the sales process as I thought I was hired to do. The phone was pulled out of my hand and the “sales manager” started to recite from the script to the client, who at that point wanted to get off the phone as

quickly as he could. "I could have gotten that guy," I exclaimed. The entrepreneur came in the room and said it was his company and he had worked very hard on the script, and as I was working for him, I was going to do it his way. I had two points to make in response. First, if I am working on straight commission, I am really working for myself. Second, with a face like mine, if I could read a script and not sound like an idiot, I would be making a million dollars a picture. As I said, it was a long time ago; a million per picture is not a lot in today's world. So, whether selling or transitioning to an independent sales department, the entrepreneur needs to be in charge but not in control.

Even though many want to categorize themselves as tech, climber, or entrepreneur, most really fall into the sales professional category, our fourth type. Those that are in the sales professional category are exactly where they should be. A true salesperson should not really do anything else. It is what they are suited for and what they do best, and whenever they wander from sales they are not as happy or productive. The Peter Principle is very obviously at work in this case. How many times has the top sales person gone out on their own or been promoted to a non-sales position, only to fall on their face or at best have very difficult transition period?

There is a whole chapter on the characteristics of a sales person, but it should be said that the true sales professional is in sales because there really is not anywhere else for them to go. "We are here because we have to be, we have nowhere else to go."

The industry can effect what kind of person should work as a professional. For example, an insurance sales person may not make a good "closer" for an auto dealership. Salespeople that work in certain industries should be similar to those that they sell to. For example a slick urban type would not do well selling to NASCAR race teams. But this same person may do well selling network and hosting services. The type of sales person needed depends on the maturity of the product or service, and the specificity and expertise it takes to produce the product or service. This determines whether the sales person should be like those he or she sells to. This is important because if you are not excelling at your job, it may not be because you are not a good sales person. It may be you trying to be like the people that you sell to, while they are looking for someone that is not like them and more in the world from which the product comes. I am not going to buy flowers for a wedding from a sales person like me. So the persona a sales person creates for themselves is important.

Sometimes you should be like those you sell to, such as in the early days of the internet - everyone wore black and was not well groomed. For a while this really worked.

Let's examine some of the industries that hire sales people and look at the characteristics that seem to be common to them.

Many people make a living at residential real estate sales. The most successful are good at need assessment and are good listeners. Trust and being comfortable is more important than being persistent and aggressive. That is why this form of sales is one of the most popular jobs in the country. The freedom of an unstructured job, without the "Herb Tarlek" negative stereotype which turns many off, makes this a good choice for a lot of people. Real Estate agents and brokers must have good social skills and be good networkers.

Insurance sales people have a similar skill set to Real Estate sales people, but have additional requirements. They need to be good networkers, but also have a lot of rules and regulations they need to deal with. Since insurance is a regulated industry, ethics and compliance is essential. More Insurance sales people have wound up in front of a judge than you would think. Life insurance sales people are more typical of what others consider to be a "typical" sales person, than someone who sells home and car insurance. When the focus of your pitch is, "What is going to happen when you die," you need some skills to get through that conversation.

Advertising sales professionals are usually pretty hardcore. This is true from the person that sells ads in the weekly direct mail piece to those that sell radio time. For a long time, the Yellow Pages is where many made a good living. Ad sales people are some of the best closers and most versatile of sales people. This is because many types of people own businesses, and they need to buy advertising. The other little secret about advertising is that the more effective it is, the more it costs. So it could be said that advertising is always too expensive. If an advertising company has a lot of happy, satisfied customers, well then it is time to raise the prices. Ad sales is about selling as much advertising to as many people as you can, in the shortest amount of time possible. Nothing is less valuable than a minute of air time that was not sold, or unsold ad space in yesterday's paper. So being able to camouflage the fact that you are persistent and aggressive is important if you are in this line of work. You need to close a lot, so being a nice person who is a good networker is not going to fly. This person also has to be tough, because they will get a lot of rejection.

Industrial sales, also known as widget sales people, usually have a fairly well marked out territory. The client really needs the product in order to do business. Price and sometimes quality and service - but mainly price - determine who gets the sale. The industrial sales person has been most affected by the internet. These reps have to have a good mind for remembering their product line and also need to be amenable. They can only push so much because the client has a defined need. If the company makes office chairs they only need 4 casters for each chair. Trying to sell them five for each chair is not going to work. So the industrial sales person needs to be perceived as reliable and honest. They also have to have a good work ethic and be well disciplined, especially if they travel a lot. It is real easy to work on the golf game instead of making sure you hit your numbers.

Retail wholesalers are those that sell to retail stores. They are a diverse group. Obviously the person that distributes cigars to a cigar shop is going to be different than the apparel rep, who is different than the person that stuffs racks with baseball cards at Target®. These have a few things in common. First they know how to act in front of the client, because that is where they spend their time. Also they know what the trends are. But other than that, these sales people can range from someone who is a major closer, to one who is merely an order taker.

Retail sales people come in two categories, those that want to be there and those that don't. Unfortunately for most shoppers, a huge majority are in the latter category. This is because the only way a retailer can get people who want to be there is to pay more than their competitors. This would mean their price will be higher, and then the consumer would not patronize that store. Some retail sales are commission sales, like high end clothing, appliances and furniture. There are some real pros in this line of work. They can read people like a popup book. They will do a quick

hardware check and they can probably tell you your net worth. Patience, good people skills and the ability to create the “compulsive sale” are common attributes. These people are closers.

There are obviously many more industries or kinds of businesses that hire sales people than the above mentioned. It is important to realize that every company has its own culture and knowing a little more about what is out there, may make it easier to navigate any situation you encounter.

9. HOW TO ACT

A Company hires a new employee in a department other than sales. This Employee will go to the office on his or her first day, will ask where to go, and will do everything he or she can to keep a low profile and fit in. Under the same circumstances, a salesperson will walk into the new office, greet everyone enthusiastically, and gaze at all the people that have been put there to help them do their job. The customer is the income source of a company, so if a company uses the sales model, everyone really is there to help a sales person with their job. This is, of course, not really true, but the point is clear that a sales professional for a company does have a more important role than some others. Once a sales person has established a customer base, they are not as easy to replace as a customer service rep or someone in the accounting department. If the position is an outside sales rep, they are also afforded a lot more freedom. Because of this, coupled with the fact that sales people have a tendency to have highly developed social skills, a sales rep will consider themselves to be part of the most important department of the company. This is an opinion that only they hold.

So how should a sales rep act? The following proper behaviors stem from my observations of others - the improper ones are from my own mistakes, which are unfortunately many. As a sales manager I am always telling reps how to act and I marvel how things appear from a different perspective. The things I did as a sales rep without any hesitation, I now condemn in those that work for me.

Salespeople as a rule do not have a realistic view of how their behavior affects others, or of how they are perceived by others. The best way to comport as a sales person is to use the example of a Broadway actor working on a play. This theatrical actor has three parts to his daily routine. First, he wakes up and has time to do what he chooses. Second, he goes to the theater and interacts with the director, the other actors, make up is applied, and he anticipates the performance. Finally, after all the preparations have been made and the audience is seated, he goes on stage to perform. This is exactly how a sales professional should approach his work day. Using this formula and being mentally prepared for every aspect of the work day will help to make decision making easy

Behavior while not at work is easy - do what you want to do, and even though it is a cliché, be yourself when you are not at work. In sales you are subject to a lot of scrutiny. How much you sell, your actions, even what kind of shape your desk is in. As salespeople you never want to show any weakness or vulnerability, because you are swimming with sharks, and even a single drop of blood will create a feeding frenzy with you as the main course. Therefore, in your off time, surround yourself with people that are not in sales, and will accept you without getting any benefit from the relationship, except that of being with you. More importantly, don't feel that you have to win every argument and control every conversation you have with family and friends. It is really important that you guard your personal life and your family from the hostile environment of sales. You need to have a place without conflict where you feel safe. You are tougher than most, but this is an easy point for a sales person to ignore. If you do not give your subconscious mind a place where it does

not have to be in survival mode, it will eventually rebel and sabotage the source of the discomfort. Unfortunately, in this case that is your job. The subconscious does not have the same priorities as the conscious mind - it is primal by nature. I believe that this is one of the reasons why sales people have a tendency to be self destructive. The more money I made in sales, the more I would feel the pressure to perform and would be jealous of others. One of the best remedies that I found was to have a plan that got me away from the sales environment and allowed my subconscious to rest from the rigors of the job. When I did not do this, my job became more daunting and I was not able to be the creative problem solver that I needed to be.

The second portion - the back stage behavior - is how you act in front of management and your fellow sales professionals. In order to avoid the drama that usually occurs between sales reps, it is advisable to have slowly evolving relationships with those people with whom you work. Don't BBF with other reps right away, even though it is tempting. Many new hires treat their arrival like the first day in the college dorm. In reality, the situation is more like the first day on the yard at a penitentiary. These people are out to exploit any vulnerability you show. Many salespeople exploit the emotional weakness of another rep to boost their standings. These people are your competitors not your friends. Simon Cowell brings this up in every season of American Idol. Sure everyone is a little sad when someone gets voted off, but there will never be a show where one contestant will volunteer to leave to spare another's feelings

Many years ago I got a job at a very large company. At the 5 week sales training prison, I was told that everyone would invest in my success. When I got back to the office where I was to work, I was seated next to an old pro who had been in the company for over a decade. I would ask how much something was and he always answered \$100. So I asked him, "I thought we were all friends? Why are you not helping me?" He snarled back at me, "I am not your friend. Figure things out yourself!" Being a little put off I told him that he could be a little friendlier, to which he replied that he didn't want to be my friend because I would probably not last six months and that would make him suffer separation anxiety. A couple of years later we did become friends, but I have used what he did with me many times since.

Properly done, back stage behavior creates a barrier between your personal time and the hostile environment of sales. Actors are always trying to bond with the people they work with as much as they do to those seeing the performance. This is because how they are perceived by those they work with, will determine the roles they get in the future. We forget that this is not good behavior in sales, and we allow our work life to get mixed up with our personal life. This will eventually affect our ability to thrive in our career

Finally, there is the on stage behavior, or how you should act in front of the customer. If you do a good job of managing your behavior while not at work, and your back stage behavior, being in front of the customer will be easy. Great actors play many roles. Every play calls for them to be a different character. The same is true with the sales professional. Every time you are in front of a customer, it is just like an actor in a different play. The great actor is able to inject themselves into the role they are playing. Be the person you are that best fits the situation. You are on stage just like the actor.

The only difference is the actor will get paid for his or her performance no matter the outcome, whereas you will only get paid if the performance gets the desired result

It is important to remember three things in front of the client or prospect. First, it is your job to make the biggest sale in the shortest amount of time possible. This is the truth, despite all the new technology that has shifted the focus away from the primary mission. Prospects know this, so when a rep acts as if the sale is not his primary concern, it can look phony. Without saying anything, your creditability has gone down and the prospect will trust you less. So you need to assume that the prospect knows why you are there and will accept your mission as long as you meet their objectives. One way to distract the client from your main mission is to find something else not really related to your mission but something that will help their business. Show them the latest application on the web or anything that shows that you care about their business, while at the same time showing that you are smart. Even though it is easy to get caught up in small talk, you have a very limited amount of time to get your business done so stay on track. That is unless your prospect wants something different. Some prospects want to engage in conversations or they have an agenda that they want to bring in to the sales call. The point is, do not lose your way during a sales call, it is easy to get distracted and you should always keep your focus on the stated mission, which is to get the client to agree with your proposal.

Secondly, it is your job to fit in to his environment not the other way around. Fitting in does not always mean being similar. It means that you find a way to have a relationship with this person. It could be both being the same age, or finding something interesting about their business, even if you know nothing about it. Creating a rapport with the prospect is important but so is the environment. Observe how formal the interactions are between the prospect and those with whom they work. You can get a lot of clues on how to be comfortable in an unfamiliar environment just by mimicking other's behaviors.

I was on a call with a brand new rep. She was very attractive and usually got what she wanted just by her outgoing personality and her looks. Because of her innate talent, she never really worked on her sales fundamentals. One time we were in a lawyer's office who we were pitching, and she says, "Wow this is a great office." A valid approach so far. Then she says, "I want an office like this. Can I have yours?" She was kidding of course, but asking a lawyer for anything is not really fitting in with that world. We lost the sale.

What can you do as a sales professional to fit in? The main task is to try. Many sales people don't choose to fit in because they think that people should accept them for who they are. It is human nature and logical to believe that the less someone is like you the less you can trust them. So if you appear to have nothing in common with those that you are selling, then it will be more difficult for you to get them to trust you. I was recently on a sales call with a prospect that made custom motorcycles. He had no technology knowledge and I am not into motorcycles. In fact I have told my daughter that she cannot ever be on the back of one. Even though this was not my usual work environment, I took it upon myself to find a way to fit in. I have always enjoyed motorboats, so I used that as a starting point of common ground. In a matter of ten minutes we had established a rapport sufficient enough for me to get the sale.

Any sales professional has the skill to fit into any environment they want to. If you make it part of your sales routine to first observe and then assimilate into the prospects surroundings, you will find that it takes less time and sales calls to close a deal. But keep in mind that in order to be convincing you must be convincible. If you try to win every point, and never concede anything, you will only be able to sell a certain percent of those you present to. Now the fact is you are probably very well armed, and no prospect or client should be able to logically dismiss you and your product. With that said, let them try. Listen to what they say and if you are good, you can use what they say to lead them to the sale. Many reps do not have the confidence to be pragmatic, so they repeat what they have heard without even listening to prospects or client challenges. You want them to engage in a debate. Always be open to what the prospect is saying, and then convince them to buy anyway. To be convincing you must be convincible or at least appear that way.

Lastly, one huge mistake that many sales people make, is that they forget that they are employees. It is easy not to treat the company's property with respect, and it is easy to think that the supply closet is your own personal Office Depot. The fact is, many people around you will take things and misuse company property. There is usually an attitude of entitlement that pervades the sales department. For the most part you will probably get away with it. The problem is that these deeds never seem to go away. There may be a time when one of these indiscretions will come back to haunt you. Once I was working for a large telecommunications company when there was a major political power shift. A few weeks later a very bright and successful VP lost his job because he had used the company account to buy his wife a set of tires for the family car. He was not the only manager to do this. If he had been totally clean he may have survived, however the problem was that his major rival had just gotten promoted to the top spot. The point is, no matter what is going on, always be a professional and buy your own office supplies.

10. TYPICAL SALESPERSON

Most salespeople will tell you that they are not treated very well by their company, and that they should be appreciated since they are the ones that bring in all the money. Additionally, if you ask the average person what they think of sales people in general, you may not get a positive answer - especially if you ask those who work alongside them. "They have huge egos and you can pretty much bet that they are going to over-react to any situation they are involved in" or "Immature, self-centered, loud and not usually very good at paper work" are typical reactions. These will be included in just about any description of salespeople. Unfortunately some generalizations are true - by nature sales people have a tendency to be dysfunctional and self-destructive.

That fact is, if sales people were not different anyone could do the job, and consequently it would pay less. We must realize that sales people are viewed as a necessary evil in many businesses, for without sales people the company would not exist. I believe that the rise of the marketing model has as much to do with a distaste for sales people as it does with profit motivation.

It has been said that sales people are their company's ambassadors to the public. Why then do most companies treat their sales people like a fancy hotel treats the hookers in their lounge? Sure, management wants them there since it increases business, but when a salesperson tries to pick up a commission check they are treated as if they stole something. There is another something puzzling - everyone who knows that a sales person is on commission acts as if that person really did not earn the money, and is therefore obligated to share it with everyone. It is presented as a team effort; but when was the last time you saw someone go up to the CEO of a company and ask to share his compensation?

A quick case in point: It was the late seventies or early eighties a part of my life which is a blur. I was talking to a guy in a bar who owned a men's clothing store. He hired sales people and was wondering why his best sales people drank too much. I replied that maybe they are your best sales people *because* they drink too much. Later on, I amended that thought after I worked in a few phone rooms with practicing heroin addicts. Junkies know how to close. The following is a list in order of the best sales people:

1. Heroin Addicts
2. Alcoholics
3. Coke heads
4. Crack Heads
5. Crystal Meth Addicts

I do practice what I preach; I have hired many a phone rep from a rehab or sober living facility, since many people in recovery do very well in sales. They have the attributes of an addict have

kicked the destructive habit. As an addict, they needed to concentrate on getting their next fix, which translates in the sales realm into a supreme ability to focus on the end result of clinching the sale. They are also good at creating their own alternate reality, and getting people to buy into it; again, an excellent sales trait.

The first reality a salesperson has to deal with is, that for the most part, the people who work with them don't like them as much as the salesperson thinks they do. Sales people have strong personalities – it's basically a prerequisite for the job. Most of those with whom salespeople work, don't have this quality. In addition, most people are conflict averse - they will do what they can to avoid confrontation. Salespeople are good at verbal conflict because that is what they do for a living. In order to avoid conflict many of those with non-sales positions, will just nod and smile knowingly. The salesperson takes this as agreement and believes he or she has just won over another friend.

Sales people also take a lot of rejection, which has gotten worse over the years. So being tough means being tougher than everyone else. The average salesperson takes more rejection and has been subjected to more rude and abusive behavior in a month, than most people are in a lifetime. As a coping mechanism, salespeople learn to become dominant, controlling, manipulative, pushy or a combination thereof. In addition, most sales people have worked out a multitude of strategies for getting their own way and capitalizing on the attention. This makes being around salespeople, especially in a work environment, very daunting. It is like a regular guy being around professional football players - it is uncomfortable and a little intimidating. No matter how non-threatening the salespeople are, there are those who will feel more comfortable once the salespeople leave the building. Salespeople are competitive and sometimes do not realize how competitive they are. This makes everything a chore, from participating in department meetings to figuring out where to go to lunch. Salespeople always know the best place to eat.

So if this is true why do salespeople typically have a lot of friends? It is because they have superior people skills, and they are a lot of fun to hang around with outside of work. Salespeople are usually the funniest people at the party. This does not however, always translate to an easy working relationship. Salespeople will also hang out with other sales people. This is like policemen having only policemen friends; it is easier if your friends have been where you have been.

Salespeople believe that if only their ideas were taken more seriously, the whole company would run much better. Salespeople have great business ideas, unfortunately 90% of them are about sales people working less and making more money without really profiting the company. They are great ideas...for sales people. When they do have a great idea for another area, much of the time it was someone else's first. Every salesperson who becomes a sales manager sees and talks about this. As a salesperson it is so easy to be critical of management, but once you are in management, the job is so much more difficult than it looks. Once the new manager starts dealing with the realities of the company and the demands put on the sales team, it becomes obvious that much of what the salespeople talk about is really not practical.

Many salespeople believe that they do not need a sales manager, and would say things like, "Look I don't need to go to these weekly meetings. I can do just fine on my own. I am self-manageable." Of

course everyone else in the room is thinking, "More like unmanageable." Salespeople are independent and want to be left alone; unfortunately being left alone means less production. Even the most disciplined, self-motivated, mature sales person needs to be held to some level of accountability. This job is emotionally painful, and the idea that someone is keeping track of your results makes it easier to work that summer Friday afternoon or to make that last appointment on a rainy day.

Anyone who has managed sales people has seen their propensity for self-destructive behavior. It is predictable that after a long struggle to make a sale, as soon as the rep has a good pay period, you may not see them for a while. Salespeople get used to struggling and when prosperity strikes - or even the possibility of prosperity - something inside will sabotage their success. A salesperson's worst enemy is often themselves. The examples of this are startling. When a sales person who probably has a pretty good ego, has a series of successes, he or she will start to believe that they really are smarter than everyone else. The hard reality is that just because someone is a better salesperson than everyone else, does not mean they are smarter than everyone else. To do well at the sales game you need to have the ability to use critical thinking and to come to a preconceived conclusion. In other words, a sales professional wants to discuss all the options while always coming to the same end result - the customer makes a purchase. Unfortunately, this preconceived conclusion process does not work well in real life. For example, sales people think they can always run a business better than management. Running a business takes a lot of sophistication, planning, a grasp of the big picture, and the ability to objectively analyze a situation. Also, as a sales person, the role is to deal with only one part of the business model - getting the prospect or client to agree to the purchase. Even though the sales pro is exposed to many aspects of the business, they are not experts in anything but sales. Sometimes this exposure gives the sales professional a false sense of security as it relates to being well rounded or being an expert in the industry. The fact is that street smarts and smooth talking are not always enough. Just because sales people can out talk most people, does not mean that they can out think them. This is why many businesses started by successful sales professionals struggle.

There is another pressure that is unexpected. Once a salesperson starts to do better than everyone else, they are treated differently. Initially, everyone congratulates you, but then the emotional beat-down starts. This is most disheartening when it comes from those with whom you palled around. Logic would dictate that if one person could succeed everyone could. But instead, everyone makes excuses why the success is not real. It can also make one feel used. Those who were not previously friendly, are now your best buddies especially at corporate events when higher ups want to talk to you. It can be uncomfortable being on top.

Most sales books do not talk about the problems associated with being a sales professional. Keeping things positive sometimes means living in a fantasy world. If you read the blogs or sales books they all state that working in sales is the same as any job, except that you get more when you do well. The self-inflicted pressure to perform and the mental stress that is created from the enormous amount of rejection would affect anyone; not to mention the fact that every company thinks it has an obligation to play head games with its sales staff, thinking this will motivate them to sell more. Never has the CEO of a company come into a sales meeting and said, "Well sales are down

because we saw changes in the market." Or, "We know you are not selling well because we never deliver our products on time." It would be a free ice skating day in hell if that ever happened. Who wouldn't be a little controlling or over-reactive if the environment they worked in was always making everything their fault?

So what is the best coping mechanism? Many use the drugs and alcohol which were discussed at the beginning of the chapter. This, of course, is not the best answer. It is like not paying your parking tickets - someday your car will be towed away. I have found that using the "3 Stage Behaviors" in the "How To Act" chapters do a lot to manage stress. The best coping mechanism is to succeed and make lots of money. This has its own set of problems of course, but if you live within your means, and do not overspend, you will have less stress. Why is it that sales people, especially those on 1099, don't think they have to pay their taxes? It is amazing how many new hires will be called into their manager's office and be told that their wages are being garnished. It happens a lot and sometime to those you would least suspect.

People will say that salespeople always have to be right. Well, if we are wrong, no one will buy anything from us. There is no better proof to a salesperson that they are right than to get someone to say yes. This is a hard job emotionally, but you chose it for a reason. Probably it is because you like the fight. There is something in you that wants to prove yourself. After being rejected several times, nothing can give a salesperson a bigger rush than making a nice-sized sale. We also understand people and what motivates them better than anyone. Many psychiatrists have marveled at the psychological acumen of sales professionals. Many have written about it. We can evaluate people, change perceptions and, yes, even manipulate others. We just are not objective about ourselves. Then again neither are therapists.

There is great freedom in owning up to who you are and what you do for a living. Don't deny who you are. Realize that others in your company do not have to cope with the amount of pressure you do. When things do go wrong in the company, chances are the sales team is going to be blamed, even if it is obvious that it is not their fault. Make sure you do what you can to reduce stress in your non-working hours. Most of all, remember you were looking for a job when you found this one.

11. SALES CONTESTS, INCENTIVE TRIPS AND AWARDS.

I think that most sales contests, incentives trips, sales awards and anything resembling any of these, should be illegal. That, and the creators of these poorly planned and ill-conceived contests should be punished. Nothing shows lack of respect to our profession more than treating us like a bunch of trained seals that get a fish after we do a trick for the management team. The worst part is the sales reps are all supposed to get excited, enthusiastic and thankful for being manipulated. Sometimes these challenges are fixed, most especially when they are hastily conceived. Don't act shocked – a sales manager will even have a contest when he knows his team is going to have an increase in sales for some other reason, such as a seasonal upswing. The worst part of sales contests is that many times they are not well thought out or planned very well. It is my experience that, when you take into effect the tax consequences, it is not a practical idea unless the prize is cash or it is something that the winner was going to purchase anyway.

I worked for a smaller publishing company when the VW beetle was reintroduced back in the late 90's, so the company had a yearlong contest where the winner would receive a brand new VW bug. The competition was brutal, friendships were lost, people stole sales from each other - it was bloody. At the end of the year one woman emerged as the winner by only a few dollars. She was handed a symbolic key chain to show everyone she had emerged victorious. Why did they not give her the car? Well, first they were not actually giving a car away, but only leasing it for the winner for one year. The lease was limited to only 10,000 miles of driving a year, and had a penalty for every mile after that. In this job we drove a minimum of 30,000 miles a year. She would have had to insure the car, maintain it and would pay a third of the total lease payments in income taxes. So management had sold this as the best sales contest ever, and had presented their top sales rep with a car she could not drive and that cost her more money than the car she already had. So you see the problem with sales contests that are run by former sales people who do not worry about delivering on their promise, but instead want to show how smart they are by getting everyone to sell more. They whole thing was a sham. The woman ended up taking a cash payout which was less than \$2000, everyone was angry at management, and morale sunk to an all time low - so much so that I used to joke that everyone's home page was www.monster.com. For the next few months, new sales were at an all time low which wiped out any gains made by the contest

Here's another example: A really large company I worked for had a contest for a color TV. The person who won was not very well liked by management. They kept putting off giving him his TV, until the boss was finally exiled to Seattle. This was fine with me and everyone else, because this guy was a real jerk, but my buddy eventually quit without ever getting his TV. He ended up suing the company for the TV and won more money than any TV would have cost.

Contests never seem to achieve their stated goal, which is to have a significant rise in total sales. There is usually an increase followed by a dip in sales. This is because the sales people burn through every lead to make the sale for the contest. Sales professionals should at all times be cultivating some prospects that might need nurturing for a future sale. During the contest these prospects are ignored since the rep will be out for the easy kill.

This means that once the contest is over the participants will not have any warm leads.

Please don't think this antipathy for sales contests is because I never have finished first in one. Well, as a matter of fact, in my 30 years of sales I never did finish first...so what!?! The problem with sales contests and things of that nature is twofold. One, it shows that management could be paying their sales teams more. Instead of paying what is budgeted to hold these events, why not instead raise everyone's commission rate. Anytime management says that they have to readjust the commission structure because they need to lower costs, but they keep sales contests, they are either lying or stupid, or both. It makes no sense to lower a compensation plan, while at the same time keeping a contest or incentive trip. If you are experiencing this, it is most likely because some hack in the accounting department, or some VP, decided that the average sales person is making too much over the market rate. This means making more than the hack and the hack's buddies, so they create the lowered compensation plan. Logic dictates that if company profits are down you cut the frills first, and a contest would certainly count as a frill. Another point brought up in support of contests, is the one that, we are making more money, so we thought we would hold a contest. If this is the case, then why not just give the sales team a raise?

Secondly, the whole idea of sales contests proves that management believes that you need to be coerced to do your best. Again, treating the sales staff differently than other employees will cause nothing but trouble. The others resent the fact that there are no contests where they can win a TV. The sales people resent them for getting a pay check without having to produce anything. The whole idea that management can get the sales reps to sell more by offering them a TV, means that they are thought less of than the employees in other departments. Manipulating a sales pro is like trying to physically intimidate a professional wrestler. You better plan on doing a pretty good job of it. That raises a great question: Why do the sales managers insist on these contests? One answer is that they need to impress the non-sales brass in the company. Think about it, what do sales managers do? Typically, they are the eyes and ears of what is going on in the field. With the emergence of marketing research and large marketing departments they have been charged only with making the numbers grow over last year or even last month. This short sightedness has led to doing anything to make the numbers increase. It is also a lot easier to be in charge of sales people than to be one. A case could be made that contests are one of the vehicles sales management use to justify their existence.

So, is there ever a case for a well run and well thought out sales challenge? Yes. Competition can be good for morale, and can provide a break from the monotony of the sales routine. The most important aspect of running a successful contest is that the contest must be secondary to the overall sales plan. If the contest becomes the sole focus of the sales department, there will be blow back. This is why many contest prizes are not races to which the winner gets the spoils. One good example of this is one in which all those reps that hit budget or quota get a chance to win a prize. Another example is one in which everyone that sells a certain amount or improves a certain percentage gets a prize

Another good use for the contest is to introduce a new product. Salespeople do not like change, and are very skeptical of new rollouts. There is good reason for this skepticism, for many new products are brought to market with a lack of thought, or are just someone's pet project. Therefore, many sales professionals will take a wait and see posture before taking the time and effort to pitch something new. A contest that is winnable will increase the skeptic's sales of the new product or service

To avoid disaster a contest should be fair and winnable. There have been many contests that no one wins because none of the salespeople have met the minimum requirement. Instead of increasing morale, this situation sends the undesirable message that "You all suck." Not a good morale booster. Also, do not try and be crafty about the prize. Avoid the VW bug scenario which made everyone want to look for a new job. It is also important to make sure that the results are not predetermined. Office politics in sales contests is the worst politics of all. It will create an atmosphere of mistrust and resentment in the whole department. Everyone will hear about it, since salespeople are not known for their discretion.

The best contests are the ones that were planned the best. The more thought that goes into a contest, the better the chances are that it will be successful. Surprisingly, the creators of a contest often focus more on the prize, than on setting goals and an over all context to the contest. This is counterproductive, since the contest can be a vehicle to institute a change in the direction of the sales team. For example, many sales departments become focused on existing customers since they are easier to get a hold of and more comfortable to pitch. A contest on new customers is a good way to refocus on the life blood of any company, which is new accounts. However, this needs to be done while making sure to keep the status quo.

Sales Person of the Year - this MVP status is something that every sales professional wants to have, but it can come with unintended consequences. Personally I have had nothing but bad experiences with year long contests. I have finished 2nd several times, usually because of the ineffectiveness of my manager, or because of an actual plot to over throw my number one status. One year, while I was on vacation, the manager in charge of the office made new rules so someone else could beat me by a few dollars. I had been number one all year long. This really funny joke was so demoralizing I eventually stopped trying.

Sales departments can become so dysfunctional and competitive that upper management will make political decisions that will destroy an individual's career. This sends a poisonous message to the entire sales staff. The inherent problem is that the amount you sell compared to others, is not always about how hard you work or what a great sales person you are. There are outside forces that will influence how much a salesperson sells. These are too many to name completely, but the big ones are territory, client list and position in the company. Obviously, a sales manager having the ability to make deals where others cannot, would be a big advantage to accumulating numbers. It is unspoken, but no one above the rank of salesperson cares if things are fair. It is only how much profit each sales person creates that matters. Unless management is willing to put effort into creating a level playing field, one on which a rookie has the same chance of success as a veteran, these year end awards are more demoralizing than uplifting. Management really doesn't care about

the individual salesperson, and does not want to take the time and effort to respond to the endless complaining that comes from the sales floor. Most in management do not have good vision - they do not really try to figure out the unintended consequences of having an inequitable system. Sure everyone gets to dress up and get drunk on the company's dime, but all this really is just for the brass to have a place where underlings can kiss management's butt, rather than to really appreciate the sales person.

So if you want to win one of these contests, find the people who have won in the past and ask them what they did. Try and find out what their mind set was, and how they achieved their big numbers. Don't be discouraged when you find out that luck had a lot to do with it - it usually does. The funny thing about luck, the more time someone is out in front of the client the better the luck. The successful sales person always does one more cold call and is constantly pushing for any opportunity to make another sale; they are always looking for the next prospect and realizing that every no just means that a yes is getting closer. The best way to win sales person of the year, is to be consistent and stay focused. Also it is important to be liked by the company brass. Fairness is not always what determines who wins the salesperson of the year.

The incentive trip does not really make sense anymore, due to the amount of taxes the individual needs to pay at the end of the year. Because of the internet and discount travel sites, the individual can plan a vacation for much less than a company can plan a corporate event. Getting a group discount does not apply to planning an incentive trip. First of all, when you plan your own vacation one does not usually have to prepare gift baskets with a logo printed on everything. Also, group events like tours need to be paid for by adding the cost to every person's tally. The problem is that, by the time you get the "income" of the trip added to your yearly gross income, the amount of taxes can be more than if you just went to the same destination with your family. Besides the only reason you want to be around your bosses is to kiss some ass so you can be promoted sometime in the future. Wow, how fun is that?

I have a better idea. Instead of having an incentive trip, the company should have a disincentive trip. You want your sales people to be motivated to sell? You want to see the biggest increase in sales in the history of the company? Pick the most boring place within a 6 hour drive of where your company is located and hire me, Greg Hill of www.worldsbestsalestrainer.com to have a one week intensive "retraining" camp. The lowest 20% selling salespeople will "get to go". They will be updated on the products and services that are sold by the company. They will brush up on their sales skills, (this is my role); they will also be evaluated by management. Just for fun there will be daily exercise. The weekends at the office prior to the end of the contest will look like a week day. This will cost much less, since it is 100% work and no play, and the "winners" will not have to pay any more taxes. Most of all, everyone will do what they can not to go on the "disincentive trip."

12. GETTING PROMOTED AND OFFICE POLITICS

Why are *Office Politics* and *Getting Promoted* covered in the same chapter? The obvious answer is that in sales, being a top producer is often not enough. If you are not liked, respected or one of the gang, you most likely will not be invited to join the company elite.

We will first address office politics - what is this? It is judging people by things other than numbers and productivity. This leads to unfair advantages being given to sales people who have found favor with those who are in charge. Office politics on the sales floor is not just unfriendly but a blood sport. It is hardcore, and increases the stress of doing an already stressful job. Many have quit positions because the stress of the job and the infighting had become unbearable.

I have been on both the winning and losing sides of office political fights, and have regretted every outcome. It always starts off as innocent fun, but somewhere along the line it turns into a brawl. It is just like when two men start wrestling at a party. It is fun in the beginning until one guy starts to lose. Instead of giving up he turns it up a notch, the escalation begins, and someone ends up getting hurt. This dynamic is especially true if you are in your late 30' and early 40's, but of course I am not talking from personal experience. Ok, I am, but the point is made that at some time in one's evolution as a sales professional, one must learn that he is there to sell, and not to dominate those he works with.

Political infighting and rivalries are not productive. There may be a temporary rise in numbers but at what cost? Managers of competing sales teams will pit their top producers against each other to create a competition. This does work to increase productivity. However, what starts off as an effective motivating strategy, ends up being dysfunctional. Managers have a propensity to take the rivalry on as though it is they themselves who are competing. They pull every tactic to make their person win. This includes cheating. This scenario always ends up with undesirable results. Once a sense of unfairness taints an individual's performance, morale will suffer.

What is the cause of office politics? The simple answer is bad parenting. Sales people are like children in this respect. If you leave them to their own devices they will do things to each other that will cause chaos. Sales people have a different agenda than the company they work for. The company wants to be as profitable as it can. The sales person wants to have the best numbers compared to those they work with. As a sales person, it makes perfect sense to get into your rivals head and sabotage his or her success. Companies and management seem to be blind to this and will actually encourage this behavior.

I observed growing up that many parents would use the age old strategy of divide and conquer. The idea is to have all the children pledge their loyalty to the parent instead of to each other. It is much easier to control things this way, than to actually parent the children and evaluate each situation individually. The natural evolution of this dynamic is that you will have the good kids and the bad kids. So parents divide and conquer to keep control, and sales managers do the same. It is much easier to pit different sales people against each other than to actually manage them. This creates a dysfunctional atmosphere which at best distracts the sales people from doing their job.

The most surprising aspect of this dynamic is that those who use this tactic get a real thrill out of it. They really believe they are being very clever, which of course they are not, they are merely being lazy.

We are a family, is what many will tell new hires. They are right, it is like a family... a dysfunctional family, one in which the parents should be jailed for child abuse. It is amazing that with all the opportunity that is in the country and all the examples of wealth and success, how many sales rooms are run like a street gang. Everyone trying to run their own little scam and there is no importance placed in the long term vision.

So how should a company deal with the sales department office politics? First thing is to isolate the sales department from the other departments as much as possible. A separate address is best. Secondly the only way someone is judged publicly is by his or her numbers. Managers should respect other manager's team members just as much as they do their own. The focus should only be on the objective of making sales - all other conversations or remarks should be looked upon as distractions. The more that managers and sales professionals focus on their respective jobs, the higher the morale and the better the results.

As a sales professional, if you are in a situation that is mired in politics, what should you do? Well, you have 2 choices. I strongly recommend that you do not participate in the politics at all. As alluring as it is to be in the "cool clique," you really should just go to work, do your job and not listen or buy into what anyone says about you or anyone else. If it is not about work, just ignore them and walk away. Only talk to your boss about business. Don't hang out with co-workers outside of work, and be as private as possible. You will be the one management comes to when they want the job done right.

There are good players and there are evil players in the hostile world of sales. The good are those who want an even playing field and an equal opportunity for everyone to succeed. The evil are those who want to "fix" the outcome and secure supremacy through manipulation and special privileges. They must be dealt with. Unfortunately any attempt by a sales professional to try to impose an atmosphere of fairness in this environment will be met with severe resistance. Evil in the sales department only exists with the complicity and the knowledge of upper management. Even though the company line is that the company is fair to its employees, be aware that this is only a slogan.

If you choose to participate in the harsh world of office politics, you are on your own. Take no prisoners and play to win. Here is what happens if you don't:

I once worked for a company in New York. It appeared to be a perfect situation. I had known the owners of this new publishing company from 15 years before. They had been one of my biggest clients. They were starting a new company. I came into what I thought was going to be my last job. I saw myself working for them forever. I was there 2 weeks and met this beautiful Polish girl named Aska who I fell madly in love with, and a year and half later we got married. We now have two

beautiful daughters, Tessa and Nichol. So at that time I was on my game, and was ready to succeed. It turned out to be the most dysfunctional sales atmosphere I have ever been in.

My rival had a phone solicitor who would call into everyone else's territory, stealing business to increase his numbers. The inside deals were unbelievable. There was an ongoing contest that the rep that had the best results of the month got to have lunch with the boss. My rival had won several months in a row. Finally, I won a month even though my rival was still cheating. The boss stood me up twice for our lunch and on the third try he is more than an hour late. He comes to the table and says, I don't have time to eat. I am late for another meeting. I had an entire litany of subjects I wanted to address. He would have none of it. I knew my dream of retiring with that company was in jeopardy. So I launched a political smear campaign on my rival with precision and elegance. By the time I was done, I had turned every rep against him. We had a meeting and he was blindsided. It was perfect. He had no idea it was coming. His once unstoppable dominance and manipulation had been shaken

After the meeting I was pulled into my VP's office, a man I still admire. I was told to knock it off and play nice. I had made my point and I should let upper management sort it out. However, showing weakness at that point would only make me a marked man, but he insisted. I told him that I would play it his way, but that as a result I would be out in 6 months. Later I found that most of the deals my rival had gotten were poorly written and incomplete and had no chance of the bill being paid. I was let go exactly 6 months later, and the VP that yelled at me was soon to follow. Years later I told him that if I had kept up my strategy of torment I would probably still be there. My rival is still there as far as I know. So here is my point, if you choose to play the political game, play it as hard as you can and don't back down, while keeping your eyes open for another job. It is my experience that even if you are on the side of good, you may not win.

Evil does not exist in a vacuum and is there because it is part of the design of the company and of management. Another reason why evil people prevail, is because they have nowhere else to go. Good people just want to be happy and have no issue finding another way to make money.

Getting promoted is also political, and for a very good reason. Others that have already reached that higher level need to be able to work with you. If you are seeking a sales management job, the fact that you can sell is a prerequisite, but there is a lot more that is needed. You need to do your job well and be someone who can fit into the management team. But be careful, since all sides have a lot to lose if the wrong promotion is granted. This is why Babe Ruth was never made the manager of a Major League Baseball team. Many have witnessed the star sales person get promoted, and then totally fail. Not only do they lose the new job, but they lose the job they had worked many years to build while the company loses a top producer and the sales pro has to start all over. Management is looking to promote someone they can trust and who can take the pressure.

If you want to be promoted out of the sales ranks and you work for a functional company, you need to know a few things. First, keep your numbers up. You do not have to be number one, just show that you are an exceptional sales professional. You also need to show that you sell the way they want you to. Most companies have a certain methodology on how to sell. Few sales people

actually follow it. The company has sales material that they have provided, and they want that used in a presentation. In the old days, salespeople were given flip books. If you wanted to be one of those that were to be promoted you had your “presentation” book updated - it was never covered with dust. Also become an expert on the non-sales tasks that are required for your job, such as documentation of daily activities, travel and expense reports, etc. - all the things that sales people ignore and do only when they are pressed.

You need to buy into the company mission and the message that management is expressing, no matter how wrong you think it is. When you are promoted, you will have the ability to change how things are done and how people are treated. You will probably not get promoted if your main focus in meetings is how much things have to be changed. Those that are charged with making the promotion decisions think they are doing a good job whether or not that is the reality. So if you are constantly implying that things suck, you will probably not be their first choice

Most importantly, you need to be respected by your team mates. Not necessarily liked, but admired and trusted as someone that they believe does a good job. This is why office politics and getting promoted is related. If you have a lot of enemies and you are considered evil by many, this may slow down your climb up the corporate ladder. Unless of course you are working for a dysfunctional company, then you are in.

13. HACKS

I know it seems unfair to refer to everyone that is not a sales professional as a hack. I have met many people that are really good at their job that are not in sales. With this said, they still do not appreciate or really understand what it takes to do a sales job. The only people that can relate to sales people are those that have succeeded at sales. So that is why I call them hacks. If this book was about how to survive the dangerous and hostile world of accounting this chapter would include sales hacks.

In the company they work for, sales professionals will sometimes have to interact with those that serve roles other than sales. These non-sales professionals seem to have difficulty understanding the point of view of the sales professional. We have discussed those reasons in the chapter entitled "The Typical Sales Person". In some cases there is even a palpable hostility shown towards those in the sales department.

One of the reasons for this friction is that sales people will do whatever it takes to get the sale, or for that matter to get their way. If this means dominating the art department for a whole day to get their project done, what is the big deal? Sales people believe that the company has these resources so that the sales department can get its job done. Sales people for the most part do not care if one of their colleagues is in front of them in the queue for the other skills. They are competitors, and if getting this deal helps the numbers, then it comes under the umbrella of my job is to get results. This is always justifiable.

Since the sales professional's job is to go out into the world and convince prospects to buy into the reps vision, why shouldn't they be able to do the same to those with whom they work? First of all those that work for other departments do not report to the sales person. They have their own boss to whom they are accountable. These bosses often have different agendas and priorities than those held by the sales team. So the reason why a non-sales person may have a look of terror on his or her face every time they are approached by a sales person, is because of the impending conflict between what the salesperson's request is and what their boss has asked them to do. Another factor - what a sales person thinks is a reasonable request maybe impractical if not impossible.

This is not sales related but illustrates my point. I was on a road trip with several other sales people at a hotel that used cards for the room keys. One of my buddies had the hardest time getting what was then new technology to work, so he told the hotel manager just to put a key lock on his door. He thought this was a reasonable request, even though the hotel had this new system which not only monitored who went in and out of their room, but was tied into the reservation system. It had also cost a ton of money to install. Despite the inability to do the request, my co-worker felt it was perfectly reasonable to make his room have a key lock.

Many times sales people will make these types of demands without considering the consequences. Sales people are very convincing by nature, and can get people to things that don't have the results the rep intended.

ACCOUNTING HACKS

Accountants and those in the accounting department, often have to interact with sales people. Mostly this concerns matters of the sales professional's compensation and determining how much to charge a customer. As far as the compensation, how many times does a sales person open his or her pay check, and then walk into the accounting office and exclaim to everyone in the room, "This is not right?" This happens a lot. The salesperson is usually angry, rude, accusatory and almost always wrong. Any explanation given by someone in the accounting department is met with disbelief and the always irrelevant, "I can't live off this!"

Next is the matter of collecting the money for what is sold. Sales professionals can be very creative when putting together an order. Paperwork is not the strength of a lot of those who sell. Many times the client is surprised by the bill, and the accounting departments personal has the task of dealing with them. So the accountant rightly feels annoyed that he has to clean up the mess created by the sales department.

If the sales department travels or needs to be reimbursed for expenses, the accounting department is often in charge of denying unreasonable expenses, and then having to listen to the explanation of why the sales person needs to be paid, even though it is not company policy. From the point of view of the accounting department, generally staffed with people who do not like conflict, it is the sales department that causes them the most headaches. It is easy to see why they may devalue what the sales department does accomplish. From the accountant's point of view, accountants are smarter, better educated, and trusted with more sensitive information. It really bothers them when sales people make more money than they do. They give no credence to the fact that the salesperson is taking on some of the risk in making sure the company is profitable. The fact that sales people take a lot of rejection and are abused by the public, is not considered. So in other departments, the sales department is often thought of only as a necessary evil

Higher level accounting hacks often are those that help set compensation for the company. Even though the sales team is often forging new relationships while maintaining the old ones that keep the company afloat, these money people think the sales professionals are expendable. While they actually are expendable, they are also costly to replace. Losing a sales person may also be costly in the form of lost revenue from loyal clients that were with the company because they liked the sales person. Accounting hacks will always say, "We can't afford to pay the salespeople that much." What they fail to realize, is that the sales professional will not put out the enormous amount of effort it takes to sell, if he or she is not incentivized well. Big payouts only happen with big sales. Sometimes the accounting hacks will misinterpret the compensation plan, or may manipulate it to reduce the commission paid. This is always met head on and with lots of drama by the sales person it effects. What is the definition of a sales person making too much? Usually it is when they make more than the head of accounting.

If the sales professional is properly trained and implements the following tactics, much of this hostility can be avoided. The following are good principals to follow because, after all, it is the accounting department that writes the pay checks. First, open your pay check after you have left the building, since nothing is going to be done about any errors at 5:50 on a Friday afternoon. If you believe there is an error, do your research before you bring it to the attention of the accounting department. Next, check it over with your direct report, and ask his or her advice. Be nice, put your concerns in the form of politely phrased questions and listen to the explanations. Always stay on top of your paper work and make sure you do it right. Remember that your work product will be examined by many and your reputation will be affected by what they see. Do not have the mindset, "That's close enough, let them figure it out." Take your time and make sure that you cause as little extra work as you can. When communicating with those in the accounting department, you should consider their mentality. They actually chose to do this kind of work. All these numbers have to add up. They studied for years to be able to do this. Do not tell a lot of stories and exaggerate to make your point. In general you have to be a black and white thinker to do this job. So be accurate with your figures and realize when you are talking numbers that you have entered their world. They also have seen what the reality of your job is, by seeing who you have sold to and the amount you have made the company. Inflating your value to the bottom line will not be productive. To use a high school stereotype - you were the one that was trying to cheat off their test.

TECHNO-HACKS

Techies are even more analytical than accountant types. Their knowledge of their field can be quite extensive. Many of them were the smartest person in their class, are highly educated or amazingly self-taught. They have a tendency not to be a people person, so when they are approached by a person who relies on persuasion skills and wants special favors, they resist. Sales professionals use the excuse that they know nothing about technology, and therefore they should put no effort into anything that has to do with technology. They constantly blame "the computer" for not working right, when it is the sales person who is not working right. The highly trained often over-worked tech specialist is treated more like a technology maid having to clean up the messes created by salespeople. When a tech shows a salesperson how to do something, the sales person often doesn't listen, merely figuring that the problem is solved. When the same problem occurs again, the salesperson calls the tech claiming things are broken again, ignoring what they should have learned the last time. "I don't have time for this," says the rep implying that, somehow, the tech does

Many Techies do not understand how smart they really are when it comes to math and deductive reasoning. It baffles them that people who think of themselves as really smart and who sound smart, cannot do the simplest thing when it comes to technology. Remember that sales people have a tendency to be extroverts, which simply stated means that they process their thoughts outside of their heads or they talk things out. Techies are the opposite. They process internally. So what seems to be unresponsive behavior by the introvert is really their way of processing what the extrovert is saying. This can create tension because the sales person often wants an answer so he or she can move on. The Techie does not want to get caught up in an ill-conceived plan that will take time away from their other duties. When this situation becomes untenable for the tech hack, he will not likely confront the sales rep head on. He will feel out-matched in verbal skills, and will use

passive/aggressive tactics to defend himself. An example of this is not responding to phone calls or emails.

This behavior usually infuriates the sales professional, who will then just turn up the pressure. Eventually this will turn into a nightmare that management will have to get involved in. Having management solve a problem is the same as the government; it will only get worse for both parties. How then, as a sales person, should you interact with the techies in your company? The tactic of buddying up to them and becoming their friend does not usually work. Being smart, they can figure out that this ploy is only to get them to do things they do not want to. The answer is to do things on their terms. Have your management team do as much of the interaction as possible. Don't assume that it is ok to make requests, without first finding out what the policy is - even if you see others doing it. Always play by the rules.

MARKETING HACKS

Marketing hacks are the natural born enemies of the sales department. They think they are sales people only sexier and with no accountability. As covered in the "Evolutions of Sales" chapter, being in sales is not sexy - it is much classier to say you are in marketing. This is why recruiters and sales people will often use the term "Marketing Rep," when sales rep is really more accurate. If the sales revenue increases significantly, these marketing hacks will be in front of the company brass with amazing speed, trying to take all the credit from the sales team. If the sales figures are down, they are the first ones to blame it all on the sales team. Since marketers have a tendency to be creative they are really good at being vicious.

Sales and marketing departments always seem to be fighting for supremacy because they both have the same goal - to increase sales. Marketing hacks believe that it is better to create an atmosphere where prospects make inquiries to the company regarding their products or the public buys them retail in a retail environment. Sales people are order takers, or at best are those that benefit from the genius of the sexy marketing hack.

Sales executives and those that report to them believe that marketing sets the table and sales brings the food. Sales people are often asked to find their own prospects. What works better for the sales professional is when prospects are supplied. The sales person can then use their time closing the deal, instead of hunting for potential customers. This is where a "tail wagging the dog" scenario can develop. Once this process of lead creation is successful, it is natural for an ambitious head of marketing to overreach and start to tell those in sales how to sell. They want more control and more credit. Remember they are the architects and the sales people are just the dumb construction guys hammering boards together. The problem is that sales takes a lot of creativity and flexibility. No one can really predict how a prospect is going to act, or what it is going to take to close the deal. Not even a sexy smart marketing hack. Remember these battles are over control and budget dollars. Whenever someone uses the word "branding" you can kiss the budget for sales-oriented marketing dollars good bye. The situation that works best for the sales professional is when the company is sales driven instead of marketing driven. This means that the executive that is in charge of both departments is the VP of Sales, therefore numbers, not marketing theory, will drive the needed decisions.

So... you are in a meeting with a member of the marketing team. How should you act? Make sure that the focus of your conversation is what you need from them. Number of leads, quality of leads and the type of collateral material you require. Do not let them dictate the type of sales material you should have. This is because, in many instances, the context of this material will be what makes their boss feel good. Many times it will be created to feed the ego of upper management, and glorify the PR genius. It will be virtually ineffective. Most importantly, keep them out of the sales process. They do not know how to sell. You do! Gang up on them. This will happen naturally with a little encouragement from you. Finally, keep the marketing hack focused on his mission - to make it easier for you to sell, not to make his department look better.

HUMAN RESOURCE HACKS

The Human Resources Department always wants to have as much influence in hiring sales people as possible. Sales managers usually want to control who works for them. Human resources would like to have all applicants take an aptitude test. For a sales manager, having an applicant take a test is a great idea, but they would prefer just to put the results in with the other info to evaluate and help to determine who to hire. Tests work well as additional information, but whether a person is theoretically going to be a good salesperson is only part of the equation, since sales managers run their teams like sports franchise - certain players are better fits. This is something a test cannot answer.

Human Resource folks are usually very enthusiastic about the company they work for. Even though much of their job is clerical, they want to be part of the game. Unfortunately, sales people have a tendency to need their help more than others because of the sales person's "fluid" life style. So listen to the Human Resource hack - he or she just might give you good advice on the inner workings of the company. Always remember though, that the only person that really matters is your boss.

ARTIST AND PRODUCTION HACKS

Artist and production people need to be handled very carefully. Many of them would rather be using their talent for things other than creating art for corporate America. This is just what they do to make a living. They spent years doing art in an academic environment where their creativity was praised. Now, all they hear is "So when is this going to be done?" Most creative people live in a world of colors and design where pressure is not the focus. They also have a tendency to be the most conflict averse department in any company. When they do go the extra mile to get someone out of a jam, many times they go unappreciated or find out later that the need was overstated. Yes, sales people have been known to exaggerate the importance of a project in order to control the situation. The problem is, if you play by the rules while your comrades do not, your project will always be in the back of the line. Therefore, the best strategy is always to support the structure in place, and to advocate that everyone play by the rules, even the bosses. This is the best way to get the edge you are looking for. When others say something is a high priority, remind them that their poor planning is not the art department's emergency.

The main theme is that people have different agendas than you do. Everyone wants the company to do well, but not everyone cares if you succeed individually. So be on the lookout for other people's agendas; be positive, and remember that you are “backstage” and working, even if you are not in front of your boss or a client.

14. SALES TRAINING VS SALES CULTS AND THE WEB

There are a lot of diet plans in the market place. They all promise the same thing, and each one of them has success stories. Yet no diet works for everyone or even for a majority of people. One diet will work for some while not for others. A diet will become trendy and then fade back into the pack. The main reason is that all diets work on the same principal - eat differently, change your activity level and you will lose weight. The reasoning and methodology vary, but diets all have the same goal.

It is the same with sales training. Each sales trainer has his or her own way of organizing the information and emphasizing what they use. The fact that sales training is similar is why it all works. Your mind will only grasp what you think you need to succeed; if you do not expose yourself to ideas you are eliminating the ability to be inspired. When something you hear resonates with you, it is because you have already had that thought - you were just not applying it. So, no matter what training you are taking or books you are reading, it should help.

When is the best time to go on a diet? It is when you are fat, not when you are in great shape. Nobody in this industry will acknowledge the burden sales training puts on a stressed out sales professional. Sales people have to deal with the pressure of the job, money and the stress that is caused by not having a steady income. Training takes time and costs money, and should be done only when it needs to be done. If you are slumping while others are thriving, you should look into a training course that makes sense for you. If the sales numbers throughout your company are in decline then it makes sense for the company you work for to sponsor a seminar or training for everyone. If the higher ups are not willing to make the investment, it may be something you should do on your own.

If you are the number one sales person, you should take a reasonable amount of time in gathering information about your industry. Reading trade magazines and websites to improve your industry knowledge is always important - more important than having some sales trainer speak endlessly about theories that might or might not work. That is not the best use of your time. Obviously if you want to listen to something in the car or do something on a continuous basis, that is fine, as long as it does not take away from your sales time and does not create stress.

On the other hand, if what you are presently doing is not working, it is ok to take a day or two off to go to a seminar or workshop and get your game on. The one question that everyone should ask themselves is, "Am I working hard enough?" Are you disciplined enough, are you pushing yourself every day to make that extra sales presentation or that extra cold call? Are you planning your day and taking the time to figure out where that next sale is? If you are not doing these, try them for one pay period before you go and put out a bunch of money for a training course on your credit card.

What kind of training should you choose or not choose? Sales training that is generic is only going to be able to help so much. That is why it is free at www.worldsbestsalestrainer.com . If a company or an industry really wants to train sales professionals, the teaching needs to be specific. That of course costs money, since it takes time to create a curriculum that will do some good. Also, there is a certain level of expertise needed to be credible. That is why much of this type of training is done in-house. The problem with in-house training is that it is rife with non-sales agendas that are stuffed in by non-sales professionals. Legal will want the sales people to play it real safe, so as not to ruin the lawyer's tee time with some call from a client's lawyer. Accounting will not want to extend credit to clients, unless the client fills out a credit application that would take over an hour to do. The manager who developed a new product will push it as the best product for the customer, before it is has even been sold. Marketing may want to install new sales materials that focus on how great the company is, just to kiss up to the company executives. Not one of these agendas is of interest to the client or prospect. This is why when a two day in-house training seminar is announced, everyone does not jump up from their desk and shout hurray.

There is also a psychologically-based issue relating to this - if a sales professional hears something from a stranger, he is much more likely to believe it than if he heard it from his sales manager.

I have had this one client for several years, and have created and managed their sales team. One of my salespeople, we will call her "Sunshine" went to a nationally known sales training course. She could not understand why every time she suggested I go, I looked at her with contempt. Finally I told her, "You know I am a sales trainer, right?" After the course, she came back to tell me all the great ideas for getting more sales. After a few minutes, she realized that I had already told her to do everything she had just learned in the course. Sunshine had paid several hundred dollars to learn what we had already shown her. Because the people giving the course were not her bosses, she had listened. Because I was her boss she didn't believe me. That is why prior to giving sales training for a company, I interview the sales managers and ask them what specifically they teach their sales people. I then teach the same principals to reinforce what they have previously learned. The sales people always nod in agreement but very rarely say, "Our boss told us the same thing."

Another category of training is based on interpersonal communication - how with words and non-verbal cues or "body language," you can help establish rapport, affect someone's state of mind, and influence outcomes. The first book on this subject of Neuro-Linguistic Programming, *Frogs into Princes*, was published in 1979, and was a little overwhelming for the average sales person. Later, this information started showing up in easier to understand packages such as seminars, workshops, audio sets and trainings. (Wikipedia)It was initially developed in the 1970's in Santa Cruz, California by Richard Bandler and linguist John Grinder. It was very popular at the time, because it combined self-help with the ability to influence others. A lot of people jumped on the trend since it was new technology, and did not resemble any of the standard sales training. Much of what Tony Robbins did with his fire walks and books is said to be based on NLP.

This training is insightful and makes sense out of a lot of behavior that sales professionals see in the course of their day. There is good information on establishing rapport and understanding

“states of mind” of those we communicate with. This study of NLP should not be discouraged, but understand that it is not sales training and needs to be used *with* good sales practices - it does not replace them. Top producers may not always be privy to NLP and it is not necessary to be a successful and certified NLP technician (if there is such a thing) to be a great salesperson. This training has a cultish feel to it - the theory can get almost mystical. This has been around for over 30 years and has not really ever been considered a main stream methodology for sales. It is like many other thought processes, it has some good components but does not replace hard work and good sense.

Much of sales training focuses on a winning attitude and being positive, a sort of “fake it till you make it” attitude, which can be important to doing well. However, forcing this on a sales team often has the opposite effect. This kind of training works best when it is voluntary. Good sales managers should create an atmosphere where the team believes in itself. It is really quite ironic when a management team is really hard on the sales people, and then brings in a “positive thinking” speaker to pump them back up after they have been tearing them down. There are, however, a couple of issues with the positive thinking model. The most obvious is when really bad things happen. Walking around with a fake smile when you are in the middle of crisis, really does not help the situation. Sometimes it is ok to be angry at things. The best way to be positive is when you are selling well and making good money. Positive attitude is simply imitating the way you would feel when things are going the way you want. Many managers use positive thinking to protect themselves from being accountable for their own actions. “Why did you give my client to another sales person right before I was going to close him?” asks the sales person. “Well, that is not having a positive attitude!” says the jerk manager. This is more common than you would want to believe.

Another message included in many of these types of training, is how to overcome the fears that are common to every sales job. The idea that everyone has these fears, and of teaching ways to triumph over them, is very productive. This has been very effective in helping sales professionals thrive. As for this attitude training, it is a personal choice; there may be times in your career when this makes sense, while at other times, it is just a waste of time and money.

From a business prospective, sales training is somewhat limited in its appeal, because it only really applies to the sales professional. The natural evolution is what is known as success training. Everyone should listen to a tape series or read a book on success training, and that is about it. There are plenty of examples of success for you to model in your own life. The only way to achieve success is to succeed, so keep working hard and never give up. Oddly enough, this is not included in most success training. Success is an outward activity. This means you will be rewarded by what you achieve or create or sell. Contemplating ones navel will not get anyone to the private jet club. Success training can become a club where you see the same faces year after year - which means that it is not working. The most successful people are usually those that everyone is paying to teach others how to be successful.

There seems to be a lot of self-glorification in this industry. The person becomes more important than the message. The most important person is you, and those that are teaching only exist to help

you achieve what you want. So when the person becomes bigger than the message, you may want to reconsider your involvement. If the focus is on you and your success, then it is considered training. If you are asked to sacrifice for the movement or the group, then it is a cult.

The web has made finding sales training so much easier. It has opened the field to new generations of solid sales trainers who take their role very seriously, and who have helped many others learn how to sell. It wasn't too long ago that there was only a handful that could make a living at doing what they love. It was expensive - several hundreds of dollars for audio sets, workshops and seminars. Now there are scores of online courses that you can start any time, and are much more reasonable, including free video training on the 5 steps to the sales call at www.worldsbestsalestrainer.com. This would not have been possible just a few years ago. Everyone has something to offer, whether the training is highly produced or just one guy in front of a camcorder. This has been important to the sales community. For reasons expounded in other chapters, the sales model has been taken over by marketing driven campaigns. But this author thinks it will not go away, for when the economy slows down, as it always does, the sales model becomes more popular. In hard times it takes a lot more effort to get a sale. Even though the ultimate expense of a sales model is higher, the costs of opening a sales model are a lot less than those of starting a marketing campaign, so the sales model enjoys a resurgence in a down economy. It is also important to consider that many of those who interview ask about what training you completed, because they know that those who put effort into their craft, are more likely to succeed.

15. SAVE YOUR MONEY AND HAVE AN EXIT STRATEGY

The title of this chapter says it all. Most sales people are in a very fluid situation. Markets change. Businesses get sold. Bosses get fired. Unless you work for yourself, you never know what is going to happen. There is also no guarantee that you will always make a certain amount. Instead of being mired in debt like many in the sales community, it is important that you have a rainy day fund. It is baffling how many sales professionals want to be on a 1099 as an independent contractor, and then never pay their taxes. Every sales manager and PR manager has had the conversation with a new sales person about how the IRS has contacted the company, and now a percentage of their pay check will be garnished. It is always awkward. The tax man will always find you.

Brian Tracy, the famous lecturer and author who revolutionized sales training and success training, talks volumes about how and why you should save your money. He suggests that you write everything down, so you know how much you spend. The biggest reason sales people spend too much is stress. Buying things and going places reduces stress temporarily, but will increase it in the long run. Mr. Tracy also talks about the virtues of being frugal, like not buying a new car when you can buy a perfectly good used car and save on the depreciation. He does a good job making the point that you need to keep what you earn and that your employment situation can change at any time. He is right, but the problem is that sales people do not get into debt just because they spend too much. It is often because they don't make enough to do the job. Being a sales professional is an expensive job to have, especially if you are working a premises position. Some expenses are covered by the company but many are not. It is like running a business with overhead - once your sales go down even a little bit, the amount of spendable income drops drastically. This is really dramatic if you are on straight commission. There are parking, lunches and dry cleaning bills and a seemingly endless stream of other ways you can spend money when selling. It can be a little unrealistic when people say not to use your credit card ever. The Sales Person will then think, "Well I guess I will not be going to work today, or "I hope it's ok to wear jeans and a t-shirt because all my work clothes are dirty and I have no money for cleaning." Use the card, but use it wisely. There are so many conflicting messages - you need to dress the part, it takes money to make money, and on and on. It is very confusing, especially since there is always that big sale right around the corner that will solve everything.

Being frugal is one thing, but being really cheap or overly tight sends a message to those to whom you are selling which can be counterproductive or incongruous. If a salesperson is driving an old car and wearing a cheap suit, he is telling his prospects that he either is not very successful in selling the proposed product or service, or that, if the roles were reversed, he would not buy what he is selling either. You can't be a cheapskate, and then ask someone to buy a product or service from you. Even if the product or service is meant to save money, to appear cheap seems as though you only care about your own interests and not those of the client. The other extreme does not work either. If you pull up in a \$150,000 car sporting a \$6000.00 suit, the average business owner or buyer is going to be quite wary of doing business with you.

So how should you handle your money? The key is to make enough money to do the job. If you are expected to look a certain way when you meet with or visit clients, make sure that your pay will enable you to do this. Bosses and business owners sometimes look at their salespeople as an expense, and not as an income source, so there is an effort to grind you down and pay you as little as possible. It is really important that you have a minimum that you will work for. If it is not met, start looking for another job. Make it very clear to your management that this is the minimum amount you need to stay with this company. If they ask you, "Since you are not making your minimum requirement, are you looking for another job?" tell them yes. You need to remember that no matter how much you have invested in a company in time and effort, it is not a good idea to stay if your needs are not being met. If it is not important for them to keep you, you probably don't want to work there anyway

Many sales positions require that you fill up your pipeline. There might also be a long sales cycle that creates a delay from when you start, to when a reasonable amount of money comes in. Many companies compensate for this, but many don't. Be realistic if you take this kind of job. This is when it is really easy to run up those credit cards. In this situation, figure out how much you think you will be going into debt, and then double it. This will give a much more realistic idea of the hole you are digging for yourself.

So what is the best way to handle your money? The first thing is to make a lot, but then be realistic. Sales people need to keep up appearances, but only to a certain point. There is no reason to pretend that you are a really rich person when you are not. But you will also miss out on a lot of opportunities if you act like a poor person when you are not. Plan your money out the best you can, and save something every week, unless you are in crisis mode. Remember, that you are in a very fluid industry and things can change for the better or for the worse very quickly.

You also need an exit strategy, and should save up your money for it. The sales profession, for the most part, is a young person's game. The older you are, the more things change and the faster your expertise can become obsolete. Also, sales is hard work, and there is a period in everyone's life when it is time not to be stressed out and pushing for the next sale. Have a dream - one that includes some way out of sales - whether it is to go into another type of business or to retire or to be promoted off the sales floor and into an executive position. Whatever it is and whether or not it happens, you will most likely be leaving the job you have today, so have a plan.

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SALES PROCESS CONSULTING: Are your sales lagging? Do you need a proven problem solver to help streamline your sales department? Greg Hill has been in sales for over 30 years, and through his company GregMedia, Inc. will provide any level of support that your company needs to succeed. Here are some examples for what we have done for our clients:

- Sales script creation and development
- Market penetration and market share analysis
- Training of in-house sales force
- New product development and marketing
- Online and conventional advertising consultation

SALES TRAINING: Most sales training is about product knowledge and sales techniques. Greg Hill, with over 30 years of hardcore sales experience, is an expert on both. He also adds something not seen in other sales training - an honest and logical assessment on how to survive in the sales environment. This includes how to deal with management and with fellow sales associates, as well as how a sales professional should manage their day. This training alone will make your sales team more productive and easier to manage.

How about sales techniques? Greg will take the time to evaluate your product or service and will come up with the right way to approach, present and close your customers. He will then train your team with his fun and easy to learn style. He is an expert and will not waste your time with untested sales theory that few people can understand and that no one under pressure to make a sales quota would do anyway.

Greg uses the old school “5 steps to a sales call” method, to which he has added his own unique twists. Even the savviest veteran on your sales team will be interested in listening to these new spins on a traditional method. Greg will customize a training and consulting package to fit your needs and budget. He will also train on any of the solutions his company has provided. “I teach people about the job of Sales as well as teach on how to sell,” says Greg, who also runs the website www.worldsbestsalestrainer.com.

SALES COACHING: Our sales coaching will increase your sales numbers, can end a slump and will get you excited about your job again. Having individual time to be personally coached will help you realize that there is a way out of your current situation and that you can produce at your fullest

potential. Having observed sales for over 30 years, has shown me that there are not any new problems. The answers are there - you just need some guidance to get them. There are no contracts just an hourly rate. You use what you need and quit when you feel the time is right.

We cover everything from helping you structure your sales day, the sales process and handling objections to closing the deal. Sales coaching works - you will see results. Call us today for a free evaluation and let's get started. Just call us at 877 820-4734 or come to www.worldsbestsalestrainer.com

WEBSITE SALES AND ORDERING SOLUTIONS: Why buy a website just because you like the way it looks? How about a great looking site that does what you need to do to make you money? GregMedia specializes in websites that can be used as an ordering system by your sales professionals. Our websites have a powerful CRM which allow management and the sales professional to be in complete control of all leads and accounts. Send out proposals, close sales and collect funds all in the same place. Each sales professional can log in and check his or her proposals and orders. We have been doing this for our clients for several years, and use the DotNetNuke™ content management system, which allows the users to update the content of their site with no programming, saving you both money and time.

Let GregMedia be your complete sales department. You know your services and products; we know how to increase your sales revenue. We do not use gimmicks or untested methods; instead our team will structure your sales department to be efficient and successful. For a free evaluation call us at 877 820-4734 or come to www.worldsbestsalestrainer.com.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Greg Hill took his first sales job in 1978. He has been involved in sales or sales management ever since. He has held positions as an employee, a consultant, a sales manager, an independent contractor, a small business owner, and the owner and president of his own consulting firm. He has worked both on a national level and a local level, and has sold to consumers, local business owners, national and multinational corporations. Besides being a salesperson himself, he has hired, trained, motivated, and fired salespeople for thirty years. Greg has been on every level of the management team from low-level management to Vice President of Sales. He knows salespeople and the world of sales.

Greg's resume includes being an account executive for Weider Enterprises' Muscle & Fitness, Shape and Flex magazines from 1982 – 1983. He was also the Western Sales Manager for FIT Magazine Runner's World and Strength Training for Beauty magazines from 1983 – 1984. In November of 1984, he founded The Gregory Hill Company. His clients and positions in their organizations included being a Direct Response Consultant, Vice President of Win Management, a consultant for Buy By Video (a Sub-division of TBC Corporation), and President of Palmer Associates, a magazine rep firm created with Woman's Sports & Fitness to sell advertising on the West Coast. From 1988 to 1994 he worked in the Yellow Page industry where he was the top representative for GTE Corporation. From 1994 to 2000, Greg became the owner of a small business, Politically Incorrect Tobacco & Gifts. After closing his shop, Greg then went to work as the National Sales Manager for 411Web until 2003. In 2003 he again went into business for himself by founding the corporation and consulting firm GregMedia, Inc.

Today Greg is both a consultant and Vice President of Sales for his major client Planet Online. His responsibilities include market penetration for all of Planet Online's products. These products include web hosting, website creation and development, Internet service provider, a cost comparative search engine, and both VOIP and Competitive Local Exchange Carrier phone service. He is also in charge of hiring and training of salespeople, acquisition and maintenance of key accounts, advertising, and marketing strategies. As part of the senior staff at Planet Online, he has been involved in or asked to consult on all the major decisions made by the company since 2006, and has been part of the day-to-day decision making that is necessary to keep the company running. Greg is also doing sales and marketing consulting for numerous other corporations. His team analyzes the current sales effort, helps train the existing sales force, and suggests new marketing strategies. He has assisted many organizations in reaching their true potential and sales goals.

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