

EMERGING TRENDS IN PROFESSIONAL SELLING

VOLUME 1

The latest innovation,
research and best practice
in selling and sales management

Compiled and edited by

Paul Sparks

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**Paul Sparks,
Sydney, April 2011**



Paul Sparks

Introduction



Introduction

The early to mid 20th century saw a boom in the creativity and spread of the new form of product promotion – advertising. Combined with an emerging science of marketing, the rapid spread of print media and the growth of radio then television, advertising was thought to be *the* way to reach buyers and consumers with messages that would firstly inform and then motivate buyers to rush into shops or outlets to make their purchases.

“Who needs salespeople when we can harness the power of branding, marketing and mass advertising?” was a question posed by many in Madison Avenue and beyond.

A similar mind-set occurred at the end of the 20th century when the internet emerged as the new digital way to reach the market. Again the question was posed about the need for face-to-face sales encounters when all the information anyone could want was available at the click of a mouse.

Both predications of the death of the salesperson have proved wrong.

The salesperson and the sales function have continually evolved to adapt to changing market and business needs. The world no longer needs armies of brush, encyclopaedia or photocopier salespeople moving from door to door cajoling and enticing a (sometimes) ill-informed public with the virtues of their product, and then applying 101 tried and tested ways to ‘close the sale’.

Today, especially in complex business-to-business (B2B) environments, the salesperson is more important than ever. Whilst the world is awash with information and data, knowledge and wisdom remain difficult to find. Individuals and organisations making important purchasing decisions are looking for insights and value beyond the brochure that professional salespeople can bring to the table.

The challenge for salespeople and sales managers today is to adapt to changing market conditions and to deliver the value consumers and purchasers are seeking. Some of the sales techniques and methods that have evolved over the past 200 years will help meet today's challenges – and some won't. Today's business environment is complex, and the application of simplistic approaches that worked in the past probably won't work today.

This volume will provide some insights into the complex sales world that we live in today, and provide solutions to some of the challenges faced by salespeople and sales managers under constant pressure to achieve ever increasing sales targets in an ever more competitive market. Every reader of this volume will have different challenges – both personally and within their organisations. The chapters that follow won't solve every problem – but they will serve as a starting point to examine various aspects of the function of personal selling today.

Inevitably, change is essential to meet today's challenges – and change is hard. The alternate, however, is even harder – obsolescence and failure.

21st century challenges for salespeople and sales managers

Change remains the single greatest challenge in the business environment. This is especially so for the function of personal selling. The last ten years in particular have seen the sales role come under great pressure as the tide of change alters how we sell and how we manage sales teams. We see this change originating in a number of areas:

- *shifting demographics* in our organisations as both Gen Y and Gen X assume leadership roles;
- *continued globalisation* of organisational activity as organisations look to grow offshore markets and split functions across borders to gain cost and logistical efficiencies;
- *increased use of outsourcing* of traditional core functions – often to third parties operating in different countries;
- *changing expectations of organisational stakeholders* as pressure is placed on organisations to act as responsible citizens, and not just focus on bottom line results. Paradoxically, many organisations are also under pressure by shareholders and investor groups to produce quarter on quarter growth which often works against the longer term expectations of

the organisation as corporate citizen;

- *changes in technology* which have resulted in the ability to communicate instantly across all parts of the globe, and to amass huge amounts of data which can be dissected and rearranged to provide an almost limitless view of markets, customers and prospects;
- an exponential *increase in information* which has meant that keeping abreast of market, industry and competitor intelligence is difficult, despite the fact that much more of this information is readily at hand. We have no shortage of data, but often have less knowledge than in times past;
- a focus on *cost reduction and cost containment* has had many consequences, including a shift from loyalty to employees, to a view that people are 'human resources' to be hired and fired as production and market circumstances demand; and
- *increasing regulation, compliance and higher independent scrutiny* has meant that companies need to move from a 'means justifies the ends' approach to a more holistic and community focussed approach to business. Whilst some have done this, others have invested to ensure that rules can be bent as far as possible without actually being broken.

There are many more aspects of change which impact how business works in this early part of the 21st century – and they tend to impact each other. Many of these drivers of change are challenges in themselves, and this complicated set of business drivers has also resulted in a number of additional challenges for the function of personal selling including the following:

- building *meaningful client relationships* is more difficult than ever before;
- *differentiating products and services* from competitors has become almost impossible in some markets;
- *buying decisions are more complex*, and 'controlling' the sales process has become a myth (if it ever had truth); and
- despite a mantra that 'people are our greatest asset', *investment in sales leadership and development* programs has not kept pace with the demands of change.

Why this book will help

Most sales books tend to be one person's view of what they believe is the 'success formula' for achieving better sales results – whatever that may mean. Sometimes these books contain valuable insight and information. And sometimes the insights are very narrow and the information only applicable if you are in an environment very similar to the author, and you share the author's belief set.

This book does something quite different.

This volume brings you ideas about the practice of professional selling and sales management which are of substance. These are ideas and concepts which are based on evidence, research and the application of theory and frameworks to inform and improve professional practice in the field. They are ideas and concepts which build on current best practice and which can contribute to an emerging base of knowledge to inform the function of personal selling, especially in a B2B environment.

Today's sales manager wants and needs information of value – but most don't have time to read dozens of books every year. This volume brings together 14 contributing authors with a total of nearly 400 years experience in selling, sales management, sales training and consulting.

Each chapter is a mini-book, containing the essence of the ideas and concepts together with practical ways to implement them quickly and effectively in any organisation.

How to use this book

This book has been designed to be a primer of new ideas – a starting point to get you thinking about the myriad of aspects that impact the world of selling in the second decade of the 21st century.

Apart from the opening chapter, each chapter has its own short introduction. Use these to choose the chapters that are appealing and meaningful to you today. Then keep the book on a shelf close to you, and pick it up when one of the many challenges outlined earlier becomes a priority. If a topic hits a nerve – take it further. Check out the author's web-site, or LinkedIn profile, and delve further.

This book won't solve all your sales problems – but it will get you thinking. Here's a brief overview of the topics that are covered in the chapters that follow.

Personal selling in context

The sales function is often viewed in isolation. When this is done, it is easy to look for answers to sales challenges in personal technique and methodology. Whilst these two aspects are important and critical to achieving sales success, a focus on these aspects alone will only provide part of the solution to the challenges we face today.

In the opening chapter the volume editor, *Paul Sparks*, will put the function and activity of selling in context. It will review the evolution of personal selling over the last 200 years and describe the four styles of selling which have emerged in this period. It will provide a framework for you to examine which mode is best suited to your organisation, and how to ensure the mode is best adapted to the challenges of the 21st century.

Leadership

We hear the terms 'manager' and 'leader' used constantly in our modern organisations. Whilst they are often used interchangeably, they are different. Organisations need both. In today's environment, leadership is becoming increasingly important for teams – especially sales teams – to achieve the best possible outcomes. In Chapter 6, *Malcolm Dawes* gets to the heart of the topic and discusses the difference that leadership makes for high performing sales teams.

Based on research extending for over a decade, Malcolm outlines 10 competencies that typify good leaders. Emulate these and your sales teams will thrive. Encourage the development of these in your emerging leaders, and success in the future will be that much more easily achieved.

In the final chapter, *Dr Yvonne Sum* provides insights into how tribal leadership is emerging as a way to unite the diverse nature of teams which exist in modern organisations. A key characteristic of tribal leaderships is the concept of 'learning partnerships', where leaders and team members actively look to learn from each other. For the new generation of sales teams, this style of leadership will provide a foundation element to ensure sustainable success.

Corporate culture

As organisations have grown over the past 100 or so years something strange has happened to how we live our lives as human beings. As organisations have grown, it's become increasingly common for people to act differently at work than they would at home.

But not everybody's happy with this change. More and more people want to be able to 'be themselves' at work – to look for purpose and meaning in how they spend their days, and to live at work as they do away from the office.

- Is it possible to do this in a competitive sales environment?
- Can salespeople act with integrity and authenticity and still achieve high sales performance?

Sally-Anne Cotton thinks these things are possible. In Chapter 11 she outlines how individuals and organisations can deliver golden sales results when they are balanced and aligned in their approach to selling, and when they have a shared intent to work for the common good.

Sales process and methodology

Good processes, methods and approaches are an essential component of building a successful sales career. For optimum performance, the appropriate and relevant methods need to be applied at both a personal and managerial level.

Salespeople working in B2B or complex sales environments must deliver significant added value to clients and prospective clients in order to stand out from their competitors. It's not just what you know that matters in building and adding value. Increasingly it's who you know. And it's not just who you know. Today, you need to invest in your network to take these relationships to the next level where people know you personally – and actively promote you. In Chapter 3 *Julia Palmer* firstly details the reasons strategic networks are an essential tool for salespeople and how they differ fundamentally from the simple networking approach used by most people. She then outlines a simple, yet effective process to map, connect and invest in your network to build not only your sales success – but your future career success.

As salespeople we know that negotiation is an important part of getting the order or closing the sale. But what if we thought about selling being part of the

negotiation process? *Michael Foulds* is a negotiation strategist. In Chapter 5 he turns the traditional sales model on its head and outlines how we can achieve better sales results and build stronger relationships if we look at the world through a negotiation lens. The chapter will answer the critical questions that challenge us as salespeople as Michael outlines the what, why, when, how, where and who of the world of negotiation – and sales.

There are many factors which contribute to performance in the workplace. But the reality is that many sales managers make fundamental mistakes in how they attract and recruit their salespeople. In Chapter 9 *Mark Purbrick* outlines a robust method of attracting, recruiting and retaining high performing salespeople. He especially notes two key points which will ensure better recruitment outcomes:

- be very clear about the actual sales role – including specific behaviours and success attributes; and
- ensure that there is a good ‘fit’ between the candidate and the role, the team and the organisation.

Recruitment is hard work at the best of times. Apply this process and you will reduce the number of poor performers on your team.

Communication

Effective selling is grounded in good communication.

In Chapter 8, *John Barraclough* and *Warwick Burgess* discuss the essential elements of persuasive communication – a blend of the emotional, the analytic and the sensory which will give us a real edge in delivering information to our clients and prospects. The authors draw upon recent research in human perception and cognition as they firstly discuss why you need to engage across these three areas – and then outline the key attributes of building and delivering authentic sales engagement that communicates with persuasion.

To sell effectively we need to be tuned in to our customers’ world. We need to look for the clues that can result in better deals. As salespeople we are communicators – and we can’t communicate well if we don’t understand what our clients are seeing. *Mo Fox* is both an accomplished artist and a corporate strategist. In Chapter 4 she draws on this experience, together with recent research in neuroscience, to highlight the importance of ‘seeing’ our sales situations and our clients with greater clarity. Learn to see more clearly

and we'll be more agile and our actions will be more effective. See well and better sales results will follow.

Personal performance

One thing that sets the function of personal selling aside from many other organisations roles is the importance of the performance of the individual. Individual skills and abilities need to be constantly built and developed to ensure sales success.

In the opening chapter, *Michael Schiffner* firstly explains why sales training alone will never deliver the behavioural changes needed for peak sales performance, and then describes a three part framework which will form the basis to build high performing sales teams. He finishes this chapter by describing a practical process to sustain this mindset as he outlines a six part process for effective field coaching for salespeople.

At some point in our lives we all feel fear, and in some cases it's a healthy response. At other times, fear can get in the way and limit our success. In Chapter 7 *Suzanne Mercier* examines the nature of fear and how it can play out in the business world – especially in our role as salespeople. The good news is that there are ways we can all deal with and overcome the fears that can cripple our performance. Suzanne outlines some simple, yet powerful models, and a seven part process to help all of us deal with our fear – and create great sales results in the process.

If there's a role in today's organisation where you need to get the rewards structure right – it's the sales team. One of the main problems in getting rewards for salespeople and teams right, however, is finding a good method of benchmarking the role because sales jobs come in so many shapes and sizes. In Chapter 10 *Jason White* and *Giles Rhodes* outline a way to measure appropriate rewards by breaking down sales roles across 12 dimensions. Not only will applying this taxonomy assist in getting rewards right, but it could be the start of a way to be more precise about specifying the unique skills and behaviours required in any particular sales job.

Now it's over to you...

The function of personal selling is far from dead.

How you adapt to the changing business environment is your choice. You can keep applying the behaviours and approaches in the same way you have

been doing for years – or you can try something new. The chapters that follow contain something new. Adapt the concepts outlined to your personal situation and you will achieve better outcomes from your sales or sales management efforts.

Success is a journey best enjoyed in combination with an active personal learning and development program. This volume contains essential elements for understanding the latest trends affecting the world of professional selling. If this is a role you want to get better at – the contributing authors will help you reach this goal.

Enjoy the journey.



Paul Sparks

The evolution of personal selling

*Understanding the past to inform
our future sales performance*



Paul Sparks

About the author

Paul Sparks has had a successful career in B2B sales, sales management, training & consulting spanning 30 years. He has worked in sales and sales management roles with market leading organisations including *Canon, Ricoh, Lend Lease* and *AT&T*.

Since 2006, Paul has headed up *Sales Effectiveness Australasia*, an organisation committed to keeping its audience informed about the latest ideas, trends, innovation, research and best practice in professional selling and sales management. As well as a Bachelors Degree with majors in Psychology & Philosophy, Paul holds two Masters Degrees – one in Coaching Psychology and one in Business – both from Sydney University.

His clients range from small businesses, consultants and franchise groups to some of the largest organisations on the globe. They include *3M, News Limited, Fuji-Xerox, Abbott Laboratories, World Vision, the Brisbane Broncos, and Macquarie University*. Paul has worked with government bodies, educational institutions, NFP agencies and businesses and organisations based in Australia, New Zealand, Asia, the US and the UK.

Find out more about Paul's work here:

www.saleseffectiveness.com.au

The evolution of personal selling

Understanding the past to inform our future sales performance

No matter what topic or issue we wish to study and understand, we will be better informed if we view it in context.

The art of Andy Warhol is interesting and engaging simply as a visual experience. However, if we view his work in the context of New York in the 1950s and 1960s – together with a modest understanding of modern art in the 20th century – then Warhol's work takes on added meaning. Not only is the meaning enhanced, but our enjoyment of the visual experience is increased as we start to see more and more how the artist was influenced and what other factors informed the creation of any given work of art.

Most of us experience the importance of context when we travel. Even though we may be very familiar at ordering a meal at a restaurant in our home town, we've all probably been in a situation where we've become perplexed, if not embarrassed, at how such a simple thing can suddenly become quite difficult when the rules and customs are different. But if we take the time to understand a little about the history and culture of our destination, and also get a feel for the current issues and concerns of the place we're travelling to, we can suddenly have entirely new experiences when we venture to foreign shores. And, of course, the more we do this the better we get at adapting to new situations. Again, the context is in terms of time and place.

And it's not just art and other cultures that need to be viewed as broadly as possible. If we want to truly understand any subject or activity, we need to view it in context. Context will add to our understanding and often provide the perspective which can become the basis for our own performance improvement. We can learn from the mistakes of the past, and look for insight by taking a wider contextual view of our subject matter.

The function of personal selling is one of the most poorly defined and understood of all organisational functions. Yet it is the function that sits at the centre of most businesses. Without the revenue that sales generate, it's hard to sustain a business.

This chapter is a contextual overview of how personal selling behaviours and processes have developed historically – especially over the past two centuries. Due to the nature of global economic expansion during this period much of the focus will be on events and developments which occurred in the US, although we will also look for insight beyond those shores. In covering such a broad topic, this chapter will inevitably only talk briefly about some key points and miss some elements altogether – the changing role of marketing and its relationship with the sales function, for example, is a topic not covered that would reward much closer examination. The purpose of this chapter is to simply place in context where, how and why personal selling has evolved as it has.

Hopefully this process will raise more questions in your mind than it answers.

To put some structure to the history, we will highlight four distinct approaches to selling that evolved as the sales function adapted to changing market and social circumstances during this period. Each approach needs to be seen in the context of the other if practice is to continue to evolve and reflect the demands of a society that is now very different from that in which many of the practices originated. Since the process of personal selling is now some 200 years old, we can learn some things from this history, including what techniques and methods work well today, where they work and why sometimes they no longer work at all.

This understanding can then be applied to your personal situation as either a salesperson or a sales manager. You will almost certainly be able to get better results by knowing what to do more of, and by knowing where you should adapt your approach as you apply these contextual lessons from history.

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Michael Schiffner

Building
high performance
sales teams

*Going beyond a training mindset to achieve
sustained sales success*



Michael Schiffner

About the author

Michael Schiffner is recognised by his peers as a thought leader in organisational learning & development based on his success in helping sales leaders construct and execute sales development strategies that realise the latent potential of their people.

As managing director of *Collective Intelligence*, Michael and his team use a blend of adult learning methodologies which incorporate action-learning, simulations with trained actors, 360 behavioural assessments and integrated field coaching to deliver measurable results in the organisations they work with.

Developing emotional intelligence takes centre stage in his programs.

For the last 20 years Michael has helped business-to-business sales teams in North America, Europe and Australasia transition to a sales approach centred on building genuine trust-based partner relationships. His work has been across a range of industries, with specialisation in pharmaceutical, ICT and financial services.

Find out more about Michael's work here:

www.collectiveintelligence.net.au

Editor's introduction

Is there a magic wand sales managers can wave over their teams to raise the performance level of each individual?

If we expect instant results, the answer is probably no. But if we're prepared to invest in the long term success and performance of our individual salespeople, then perhaps there is something that can be done.

Michael Schiffner doesn't have a magic wand, but he does have an approach he calls 'a sales development mindset', which can produce magical results. In this chapter, Michael firstly explains why sales training alone will never deliver the behavioural changes needed for peak sales performance and then outlines a three part framework which will form the basis to build high performing sales teams.

Michael finishes this chapter by describing a practical process to sustain this mindset as he outlines a six part process for effective field coaching for salespeople.

Paul Sparks



Building high performance sales teams

Going beyond a training mindset to achieve sustained sales success

It's simply human nature that we often continue to do things that don't work.

The sales environment is no exception.

While some organisations eagerly embrace innovation in a rapidly evolving marketplace, others cling to outdated practices against overwhelming odds of succeeding. Reluctance to adapt makes it much harder to maintain monthly sales targets, let alone surpass them. To survive and thrive in the increasingly competitive 21st century market place it's vital to evolve the sales management mind-set from a short-term focus to a long-term strategic, more expansive view of 'working smarter, not harder'.

This is where sales *development* is very different from sales *training*. Instead of relying on a simple linear model of training sales staff, it's about valuing the sales function as a lynchpin in the business and effecting behaviours that reinforce better sales results in the medium-to-long term.

In this chapter, I will explain how a shift to an 'organic' and 'integrated'

development mind-set can build a high performance sales culture which will allow you to reap much better results than just doing more sales training.

This chapter offers you a better way – a different mindset in sales leadership. It outlines a progressive, pragmatic approach to help your organisation achieve its strategic and revenue goals.

The sales development mindset

Your sales team is responsible for your top line revenue. Depending on the size of your organisation, even a modest increase in performance (of, say 5%) can result in millions, or tens of millions of dollars in increased revenue. This alone should warrant a robust and continuous sales development strategy.

Of course there are other benefits as well: higher morale, better engagement, a fun workplace, lower staff turnover, less stress, greater motivation, and better work/home balance.

Yet many organisations take a laissez-faire attitude toward developing (arguably) their most important commodity – their employees. Leaders of organisations who attempt to do so often struggle to define a clear vision, develop the required emotional intelligence and demonstrate the leadership needed to engage the minds and hearts of the sales team to execute a successful long-term sales development strategy. Sadly, their poor sales and revenue results reflect such shortcomings.

Most sales organisations suffer from at least one of the following problems.

- They are conditioned by the old paradigm of selling to behave with a short-term mindset.
- They are too busy working in the business (trying to hit their monthly target) so that little time is invested on the business (taking a longer term look at developing their people, processes and strategy).
- They lack the clarity on what skills and resources are needed to develop and execute a sales development blueprint.

A *sales development mindset* produces better sales results than simply implementing outdated techniques and methodologies. What follows is an alternative approach aimed at helping you realise the full potential of your

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Julia Palmer

Strategic
networks

The key to sustainable sales success



Julia Palmer

About the author

Julia Palmer is a highly regarded Networking Strategist who has dedicated her career to educating business people on the importance of developing strategies to create and manage quality internal and external business relationships.

As the CEO of the *Business Networking Academy*, Julia and her team offer diagnostics, training and resources to help people improve their corporate productivity by refining their business relationship strategies. She has worked with many of the Fortune 500, leading industry associations and all levels of government and has delivered keynotes and led workshops on most continents of the world.

Julia is an accomplished author and sought after presenter. She appears regularly on TV and Radio and in Print Media promoting the growing importance of networking relationships in business today.

Find out more about Julia's work here:

www.BusinessNetworkingAcademy.com.au

Editor's introduction

Salespeople working in B2B or complex sales environments must deliver significant added value to clients and prospective clients in order to stand out from their competitors.

It's not just what you know that matters in building and adding value. Increasingly it's who you know. And it's not just who you know. Today, you need to invest in your network to take these relationships to the next level where people know you personally – and actively promote you.

To succeed in today's complex business world, you need to know – and be known by – the key influencers in your client's organisation, your industry, your marketplace – and beyond.

In this chapter, Julia Palmer firstly details the reasons why strategic networks are an essential tool for salespeople and how they differ fundamentally from the simple networking approach used by most people. She then outlines a simple, yet effective process to map, connect and invest in your network to build not only your sales success – but your future career success.

Paul Sparks



Strategic networks

The key to sustainable sales success

Have you ever thought about the power and value of your network?

Networks are a vital and essential part of the business world. Recently we have begun to understand the role they really play in the sales world. The traditional sales process follows a set pattern: prospecting, qualifying, proposing, negotiating and finally closing. This ignores the effect that personal relationships have on the sales process.

In short, it ignores the power of networks.

The personal relationships formed and maintained in our networks lead to referrals, recommendations, partnerships, alliances and knowledge sharing. When done with intention and integrity, the relationships which underpin strategic networks lead not only to more sales in the short term, but are a foundation upon which to build enduring careers and sustainable long term sales success.

In this chapter, I will promote the idea of sales through strategic networking relationships in conjunction with more traditional sales methodologies. There is a great deal of material already available on how to negotiate and close either transactional or complex sales. However, much more needs to be explored about the link between selling and developing long term reciprocal relationships in any sales situation. Customers and prospects form a key part of an elaborate hive of relationships that encompass a wide range of business

as well as personal relationships.

In the following pages I will review some of the research undertaken on the power of networks and the importance of personal relationships. I'll then introduce a model for strategic networking that will help you address some of the key challenges facing B2B salespeople today. Finally, I'll detail a three part process to support the development of your network relationships that will help you build a sustainable base for your professional selling or sales management role in particular and more widely in terms of your longer term career development.

Let's begin by looking at some of the ideas from one of the bestselling books of the first decade of the 21st century.

The power of networks

Malcolm Gladwell's *The Tipping Point* was one of the first popular works to examine the impact of human connections and the power of personal networks to make ordinary things extraordinary – to make things happen.¹

Networks alone won't necessarily spread ideas. To increase the chance of an idea spreading, it usually needs to have value to others and needs to be relevant to a particular group. But then networks come into play. Networks can make a particular restaurant popular while a similar restaurant languishes. Networks can build an audience for one movie while another equally good one closes after a week. A network can connect you with the person you need to know to influence your next major sale, whilst an unconnected competitor fails to get a hearing.

But what makes a network powerful? What does a network need to have influence?

Gladwell highlights the importance of three key types of people in the connection network. He calls these people 'connectors', 'mavens' and 'salespeople'.² Each of them play an important role in the emergence of ideas and products, and can be the difference between success and failure.

1 Gladwell, M 2001, *The tipping point: how little things can make a big difference*, Abacus, London.

2 In network theory these connectors are called different things. The terms used are nodes, clusters, bridges, etc; and strength is measured by closeness, centrality, proximity, degree, etc. However, Gladwell's terms work well to paint a picture for most of us. If you have a scientific bent or a strong interest and would like to explore this field further, perhaps start with one of the books by Albert-László Barabási or Duncan J Watts, both of whom have written several excellent books on the subject of networks.

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Mo Fox

See before
you sell

*How changing your perception is
the key to better sales results*



Mo Fox

About the author

Mo Fox is an accomplished mixed media artist with 15 years expertise in communications strategy, which means she is just as at home with structured analytical thinking as she is with free-form creativity, and happiest when combining the two. Mo's focus is getting to the heart of things and making them work – or work better – to unlock and leverage the value that lies within.

Author, speaker, trainer, consultant, Mo is the director of *The Strategy Studio* and the creator of Studio Thinking™, a methodology that uses art practices and principles to achieve strategic business results, particularly in the areas of change and innovation, culture and leadership.

Mo has inspired thinking across a wide range of industries in Australia and the UK, with clients such as *Kellogg, Toyota, IKEA, Unilever, Yardley* and *NatWest Bank*.

Find out more about Mo's work here:

www.mofox.com

Editor's introduction

Selling is about action – doing things. We visit clients, prepare proposals, deliver presentations, solve customer problems and do a host of other tasks that make selling challenging, rewarding and fun. But with all the action, we can neglect to spend time analysing situations and understanding the wider sales environment.

Sometimes we need to look for the clues that can result in better deals. As salespeople we are communicators – and we can't communicate well if we don't understand what our clients are seeing.

Mo Fox is both an accomplished artist and a corporate strategist. In this chapter she draws on this experience, together with recent research in neuroscience, to highlight the importance of 'seeing' our sales situations and our clients with greater clarity.

Learn to see more clearly and we'll be more agile and our actions will be more effective. See well and better sales results will follow.

Paul Sparks



See before you sell

How changing your perception is the key to better sales results

*“Study the science of art. Study the art of science.
Develop your senses – especially learn how to see.”*

(Leonardo Da Vinci)

The Law of Requisite Variety asserts that the most flexible element in a complex system controls the outcome. And if ever there was a complex and volatile system, the sales environment is it.

The key to success in any environment is agility. And the key to agility is perception: knowing how to see and interpret the world we live in and the interactions we have.

Most of us assume we have a good handle on reality, but reality is an illusion. We construct our own reality. Each of us invents a new reality every minute of every day. We take bits of information and slot them into our preconceived stories, weaving them together to make sense of them so we can create what we want or need and get on with our lives.

The Matrix is real, and we all took the blue pill.¹

¹ *The Matrix* 1999, a movie by Warner Brothers & Village Roadshow, starring Keanu Reeves and Laurence Fishburne. The movie depicts a world where the reality humans see is actually a simulation created by sentient machines to keep us entertained while they use our bodies as energy sources or batteries. The rebels who see the truth are headed by Morpheus (LF) who invites programmer Neo (KR) to join them, believing him to be the prophesied saviour, ‘The One’. At a critical

Two things happen as a result of this.

The first is that because there is no single reality, the multiple realities are continually colliding to create phenomenal failure rates in all aspects of life: marriage (around 50%), new product launches (80-90%), new businesses (75% within 3 years), change programmes (70%), disengaged employees (79%), online businesses (98%)... The list seems endless.

And regardless of industry, sales people close less than 10% of the prospects they call. That's more than a 90% failure rate.² (Incidentally, this is still more than twice as successful as most advertising.)

Not that failure is a 'bad' thing – in fact I'd argue it's both healthy and crucial so long as you know how to allow for it and how to leverage it. But it does mean that all the success we experience comes from a very small pool of possibility, and that increasing that conversion rate – even by a really small amount, a couple of percentage points – could bring huge financial dividends.

The second effect of the reality myth is that if everything is an illusion and we accept that we're all just making it up as we go along (which we are) then we can theoretically create almost anything we want – even perform magic and pull the proverbial long-eared carrot-muncher out of the ubiquitous cranial adornment.

Whether the outcome is success or failure depends on how you see things. Literally. Because according to Edward de Bono and Harvard's Professor David Perkins, a staggering 90% of all the non-technical mistakes are not due to errors in thinking, but errors in perception.³ In other words, we don't stuff up because of how smart we may or may not be, but because of how we take in and process the information in the first place. Which implies that just by changing how we see things, we can have a profound effect of the results we create, and that we could therefore take sales conversion rates from a mere 10% to possibly 15%, 30% or maybe even over a dizzying 50%.

How? By switching off the autopilot and learning to see what's 'really' there, instead of what we assume is there. Specifically, learning to:

point, Morpheus tells Neo he must choose: "You take the blue pill - the story ends, you wake up in your bed and believe whatever you want to believe. You take the red pill - you stay in Wonderland and I show you how deep the rabbit-hole goes." Needless to say Neo pops a red one and thus a squillion dollar franchise is born

² Morgen, SD n.d., *How we build a 90% failure rate into the sales process*, Marcommwise, <<http://www.marcommwise.com/article.phtml?id=903>>

³ Perkins, D 1995, *Outsmarting IQ: the emerging science of learnable intelligence*, The Free Press, NY

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Michael Foulds

The sale
is the
negotiation

*Reframing the sales process for better sales
and stronger customer relationships*



Michael Foulds

About the author

Michael Foulds is CEO of *ENS International*, a global negotiation consultancy.

Michael has over 25 years of professional experience, across a range of management functions and industries. He has extensive business development and project experience throughout Asia-Pacific, and has assisted clients in the areas of strategy formulation, due diligence, post-merger integration, and profit improvement.

At *ENS*, Michael brings his commercial and strategic experience to bear in assisting clients with complex 'high stakes' negotiations.

Michael holds degrees in Finance and in Information Systems. His PhD research focused on how peers influence consumer purchase decisions. He lives in Sydney.

To find out more about Michael and *ENS* please go to:

www.negotiate.org

Editor's introduction

As salespeople we know that negotiation is an important part of getting the order or closing the sale.

But what if we thought about selling being part of the negotiation process?

Michael Foulds is a negotiation strategist. In this chapter Michael turns the traditional sales model on its head and outlines how we can achieve better sales results and build stronger relationships if we look at the world through a negotiation lens.

Michael will answer the critical questions that challenge us as salespeople as he outlines the what, why, when, how, where and who of the world of negotiation – and sales.

Paul Sparks



The sale is the negotiation

Reframing the sales process for better sales and stronger customer relationships

Sales methodologies often provide excellent guidance on how to understand buyer needs, ask the right questions to build value and understanding, and apply a range of psychological insights and techniques to counter objections and close the sale.

However, many miss one important point.

Selling is about both influence and negotiation. Negotiation is the vital factor. But in most sales organisations, negotiation is placed within a very narrow box – as illustrated by the traditional sales process in figure 1.

In this chapter I will tip this view around and place the sales process within a negotiation framework. When applied in the real world, viewing ‘selling’ with a negotiation mindset has resulted in thousands of salespeople achieving better outcomes, and stronger customer relationships. Taking this approach could help you achieve the same.

Selling as a Subset of Negotiation

Let’s step away from the ‘sales world’ for a moment, and enter the world of professional negotiation. In that world, there are two pre-conditions for any negotiation:

Figure 1: Traditional Sales Process

There are of course many more sophisticated sales processes. In practice though, we tend to see the traditional version at work more often than not. More sophisticated models also perpetuate the 'small box' negotiation paradigm.

1. a perceived conflict between parties, and
2. a reason for the parties to continue relationships.¹

How often do your sales meet these two criteria?

Hopefully all the time! Stepping back to the 'negotiation world' with the two pre-conditions in mind, it follows that all negotiation activities – for any type of negotiation – are aimed at **reconciling conflicting needs** while **working towards the desired relationships**.

Does that still sound like what you are trying to achieve?

Again it probably does. But does it fit with the way that your organisation formally and informally manages its sales process? The traditional sales process paradigm tends to encourage:

A focus on less than half the battlefield. It's not just the customer relationship that matters any more. These days selling no longer belongs to the Sales function alone. Sales professionals increasingly depend on colleagues in other departments who may have different objectives. Yet few sales processes formally consider internal stakeholders, or other parties in the process who can help or hinder the sale.

¹ Goldratt, E 1994, *It's not luck*, The North River Press, USA. Note that I'm not saying here that the relationships necessarily need to be long-lived – although that is the case in many professional sales negotiations. Sometimes you only need the relationship to last as long as the negotiation takes. However, even in those cases, it's worthwhile considering how negative feedback from the other party might affect your reputation in the market..

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Malcolm Dawes

Sales leadership or sales management?

*It does make a difference for
high performing sales teams*



Malcolm Dawes

About the author

Malcolm Dawes is a highly respected and sought after organisational performance consultant with a keen interest in sales and leadership development. In particular he is a recognised expert in helping people understand how to increase their interaction effectiveness when managing people and situations.

After a successful career in pharmaceutical sales, sales management and training, Malcolm joined the global consultancy *dta Worldwide* in 2003, where he is now the Managing Director. *dta Worldwide* provides state of the art performance acceleration strategies in disciplines such as assessment, leadership, sales superiority, interaction effectiveness and emotional intelligence.

Malcolm's consulting and training work has taken him from the UK to Australia, with extensive experience in delivering programs across Asia.

To find out more about Malcolm's work please go to

www.dtaworldwide.com

Editor's introduction

We hear the terms 'manager' and 'leader' used constantly in our modern organisations.

Whilst they are often used interchangeably, they are different. Organisations need both. In today's environment, leadership is becoming increasingly important for teams – especially sales teams – to achieve the best possible outcomes.

In this chapter, Malcolm Dawes gets to the heart of the topic:

What difference does leadership make?

•

What characteristics make a good leader?

•

What can you do to increase the effectiveness of your own leadership – and the effectiveness of your future leaders?

Based on research extending for over a decade, Malcolm outlines 10 competencies that typify good leaders. Emulate these and your sales teams will thrive. Encourage the development of these in your emerging leaders, and success in the future will be that much more easily achieved.

Paul Sparks



Sales leadership or sales management?

It does make a difference for high performing sales teams

What do we mean when we talk about sales leadership?

Are there some people who are simply born leaders?

Or can anyone be a leader if they develop the right skills and behaviours?

Maybe, it's simply a case of blind luck – some people just happen to lead well under certain circumstances.

Perhaps it's something that just comes with age and experience.

And in any case – does it matter? If we manage our teams well, does leadership change anything?

This chapter explores management and leadership, and shows how both are needed for sales teams to succeed. We will review some leadership thinking, and examine some current research which shows that critical leadership skills do make a difference in sales team performance. Sadly, many of these skills are often not present in today's organisations. This is important, as a lack of sales

leadership can result in team conflict, high staff turnover, low motivation – and ultimately poor sales results.

A Tale of Two Sales Teams

Let me start by telling you a tale of two selling organisations. Both are based on real stories with some details changed to protect the innocent and guilty ... you decide which is which!

One approach

First, we'll consider a relatively new company. Less than five years old the company (we'll call them *Venox*) recently initiated a new selling process. *Venox* makes and sells medicines to retail pharmacies and also has sales people calling on General Practitioners. The *Venox* Sales Managers were trained in the new process and how to implement the new method with sales people in the field. The particular process, although new to *Venox*, was not a new way of selling. In fact it was quite the opposite. It has been around for about 30 years. After all as they say, 'there is nothing new in selling'. (Well there is actually – and you will read more about that in other chapters of this book.)

Nonetheless, the new process was seen by *Venox* to be the way to go. When I discovered the approach to be used I discussed the pros and cons with a senior manager at *Venox*. I was told that it was too late to change anything at that stage since significant money, time and effort had been put in to making it work. What sort of effort? Well, the energy went into spending more time on 'managing' the implementation. There was a directive to spend more time in the field working with the sales representatives.

What's wrong with that you might ask? Nothing at all providing that a leadership approach is taken. That is to coach, understand the sales person's situation, support and identify what is and isn't working. Instead there was a 'whip cracking exercise' to continue doing more of what hadn't been working. Managers had to ensure the approach, that did not appeal to customers and which was not getting the results required, continued to be used.

About six months later, I was at *Venox* Head Office and bumped into one of the senior managers involved with the roll out of the 'new' sales process. I was told at that brief corridor encounter that the previous quarter had been pretty ordinary. Sales were down and targets not achieved. There were a number of reasons put forward as to the lower performance, but to me none seemed to ring true. These ranged from the time of year – getting close to Christmas – to

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Suzanne Mercier

Are your sales
people sales
imposters?

*How to overcome fear
to create great sales results*



Suzanne Mercier

About the author

Suzanne Mercier, has more than 25 years experience in creating engagement through purpose and meaning and in addressing what prevents us from becoming authentic leaders in our own lives and work environments. Her skills include business strategy, marketing, advertising, communication and the development of human potential. Amongst other accomplishments, Suzanne was the first female Board Director of *George Patterson Advertising*.

For the past 12 years, Suzanne has focussed on speaking, training and facilitative consulting to create sustainable and profitable businesses starting with authentic leadership, purpose and meaning. Suzanne is also an accomplished author, and a recognised authoritative speaker on the topics of personal authenticity and self belief.

Find out more about Suzanne's work here:

www.imposterhood.com

Editor's introduction

We all feel fear. And it's important that we do – or we could end up in some very dangerous situations. But fear in our sales careers can be a limitation we can all do without.

In the following chapter, Suzanne Mercier examines the nature of fear and how it can play out in the business world – especially in our role as salespeople. The good news is that there are ways we can all deal with and overcome the fears that can cripple our performance.

Suzanne outlines some simple, yet powerful models, and a seven part process to help all of us deal with our fear – and create great sales results in the process.

Paul Sparks



Are your sales people sales imposters?

How to overcome fear to create great sales results

Fear nearly destroyed my business, and my career.

I procrastinated with my sales calls. I found myself thinking things such as, “I’ll make that call later after I’ve set up the new filing system”. And of course I didn’t get around to making the sales calls – not enough of them anyway.

Happily, I managed to overcome the fear. Since then, helping others ‘take the fear out of selling’ has become a passion of mine, because I have experienced the price of fear.

Why did this happen? It wasn’t that I was unsuccessful, or that I was not good at my job. I had previously worked in a corporate environment, initially as a marketing manager for **Schwarzkopf Australia**, then a similar role at **Amatil**, and subsequently at **George Patterson Advertising** as an account director, strategy planner and board director. I loved those roles. I enjoyed pulling apart a product or service to understand its essence, and getting inside the mind of my target market or audience to identify the best way for me to connect with them to communicate my message. I loved developing communication strategies to convince clients that they were receiving a fabulous creative idea.

In my view, an essential part of my job was to help customers and clients see what we were giving them and make sure they understood why it was so valuable.

After leaving the advertising industry, I started my own business. I was transplanted into a more traditional sales and business development role and the product I was selling was no longer the creative genius of the agency or a tangible product of some kind. It was selling 'me' and it became personal. That's when I discovered fear.

We all feel fear

We all feel fear at some stage. My intention is to reduce the impact of fear on your ability to create great sales results, and to help you do the same for your sales team. To do that, we need to explore the nature of fear in selling, and to increase your ability to respond positively in sales situations where you may feel vulnerable and uncertain.

You probably have great sales skills, particularly if you've been working in professional sales for many years. You've probably done all the sales skill development programs there are, and you may feel that what I'm talking about here is just more of the same. Perhaps it is. More likely, though, that is not the case. Fear seems to be a subject that is not discussed openly – especially for those of us in the vanguard of the sales world. For so many reasons, fear causes us to feel ashamed. We may think there's something wrong with us if we experience fear: we may feel deep down that we really aren't good enough to be in the role we're in, or we may feel that we're the only ones who experience this crippling emotion. If this is you – then the material and action points we'll cover in the rest of this chapter should help you.

If you can't relate to the feeling of fear, perhaps you've already overcome it, or maybe you're just unaware of it. When we live with something for a long time it becomes the norm, and we don't think twice about it. But even if you can't relate to the experience of fear personally, perhaps you can see it being played out in colleagues. Again, the material we'll discuss in the rest of this chapter will allow you to start to help them.

Here's one more point to consider as we discuss fear and the sales world. If you've been selling for a long time, you may be at the top of your game and think that you'll never experience call reluctance or hesitate in asking for the sale. Would it surprise you to know that 40% of sales veterans have experienced fear in both those situations at some stage in their career? And

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**John Barraclough &
Warwick Burgess**

Gaining the last
yard in sales

The value of persuasive communication

**John Barraclough****Warwick Burgess**

About the authors

For more than twenty years *John Barraclough* has been using his skills, experience, education and drive to commercialise new services and technologies, and to then manage the businesses through growth and transition stages

Warwick Burgess has been involved in developing effective communication methods for over 30 years. From an early professional career in marketing for multinational companies, to his involvement in several multimedia businesses, Warwick has helped people develop and present successful, strategic presentations.

For the last three years John has been working with Warwick to build *Presentation Space* (as part of *Space Group International*) which applies a patented blended eLearning approach to the design and build of effective learning solutions to achieve lasting skills based behavioural change. Built upon extensive research into cognitive science and adult learning trends, they offer participants an online learning experience supported by focussed instructor lead workshops.

Find out more about John and Warwick's work here:

www.presentationsspace.com

Editor's introduction

Engaging clients and potential clients is harder today than it's ever been.

People and organisations are better informed than ever before about the products and services they are looking to invest in. Many are also looking for suppliers who can be partners and deliver value beyond simple transactions – but often struggle to see value through a cloud of product conformity.

How do we engage our clients in this environment?

In this chapter John Barraclough and Warwick Burgess discuss the essential elements of persuasive communication – a blend of the emotional, the analytic and the sensory which will give us a real edge in delivering information to our clients and prospects.

The authors draw upon recent research in human perception and cognition as they firstly discuss why you need to engage across these three areas – and then outline the key attributes of building and delivering authentic sales engagement that communicates with persuasion.

Paul Sparks



Gaining the last yard in sales

The value of persuasive communication

What is happening to the sales process?

As Winston Churchill said: *“The farther backward you can look, the farther forward you can see.”*

Fifty years ago, in his 1960 *Harvard Business Review* classic *Marketing Myopia*, Theodore Levitt exhorted companies to more broadly define the market in which they competed.¹ Railway companies were encouraged to think that they were in the transport business, oil companies in the energy business and movie companies in the entertainment business. In short, Levitt suggested that companies look at the goods and services they provided from a customer’s perspective. For many corporations at the time, this revelation drove enormous change.

Fifty years later, another Harvard Business School marketing expert, Youngme Moon, is bemoaning the inability of companies to differentiate their products from those of their competitors for their customers.² According to Moon, we’re in a mess. As companies try harder and harder to just match each other’s offerings and innovation so they don’t ‘fall behind’ – the actual end result is: competitive conformity.

1 This classic article was republished in 1975, with additional notes and comments. Levitt, T 1975, ‘Marketing myopia’, *Harvard Business Review*, September-October 1975, Vol 53, Issue 5, pp26-183.

2 Moon, Y 2010, *Different: escaping the competitive herd*, Crown Publishing Group, NY

In Moon's view, companies have come to look like each other. In an attempt to keep up with each other, and remain competitive, they've in fact lost any competitive differentiation they may have had. Meaningful separation has disappeared. That is, over time the intense focus on matching competitors' offerings has led to increased competitive uniformity and a resulting lack of differentiation.

The result of fifty years of customer focus is that it is harder for your sales force to **gain the last yard** in the sales process and close the deal.

In this chapter we are going to look at the impact of this ongoing change on your sales team, explore how human communication works, and how you can use this knowledge to improve your sales performance through the sales cycle; to communicate persuasively and close the deal.

The Impact of Competitive Conformity on your Sales Process

The sales process is becoming more information intensive, with greater interaction with marketing and every other part of the business, and with greater client expectations.

An article published in the *Journal of Personal Selling & Sales Management* in 2005 talked about the integration of sales and marketing.³ The authors noted that increased competition, shorter product life spans and greater customer expectation has led to organisations responding by trying to integrate previously isolated functions and generally flattening the organisational structures. From a marketing perspective this has meant an emphasis on integrating how marketing communicates – blending activities across different methodologies including publicity, advertising, web communication, direct response, etc.

Since this article was published, we have seen the rise in importance and power of social networking and information sites like Google, LinkedIn and Facebook. Sites like these provide ongoing, rapid dissemination of information to customers and communities.

However the authors in the *Journal of Personal Selling & Sales Management* then went on to make a very good point, which is even more relevant today.

3 Rouziès, D, Anderson, E, Kohli, A, Michaels, R, Weitz, B & Zoltners, A 2005, 'Sales and marketing integration: a proposed framework', *Journal of Personal Selling & Sales Management*, vol. 25, no. 2, pp113-122.

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Mark Purbrick

Simply
the best

*How to attract, select and
retain top performing salespeople*



Mark Purbrick

About the author

Mark Purbrick has a proven track record of growing businesses and maximising employee engagement and performance. Mark is the Managing Director of *Peoplogica* and also serves as a director on a number of company and government Boards. As well as being the Regional Director of *Profiles International*, his past roles include CEO/Director of *The Wine Society* and Trading Manager for *The Fosters Group* (Wine Clubs Division).

With a background that encompasses the hospitality, retail, wholesaling, direct marketing and people capital sectors, in both executive management and consultative roles, Mark's experience enables him to develop customised solutions that work.

Mark's philosophy is simple: *Select people based on 'fit' not 'like', measure their performance, recognise good performance, challenge poor performance, listen to them and then trust them. Get this right then you can spend most of your time on the customer, vision and strategy; all critical areas that are the future of your organisation.*

Find out more about Mark's work here:

www.peoplogica.com

Editor's introduction

Why do so many sales teams contain so many poor performers?

There are many factors which contribute to performance in the workplace. But the reality is that many sales managers make fundamental mistakes in how they attract and recruit their salespeople.

In this chapter, Mark Purbrick outlines a robust method of attracting, recruiting and retaining high performing salespeople.

He especially notes two key points which will ensure better recruitment outcomes:

•

be very clear about the actual sales role – including specific behaviours and success attributes; and

•

ensure that there is a good 'fit' between the candidate and the role, the team and the organisation.

Recruitment is hard work at the best of times. Apply this process and you will reduce the number of poor performers on your team.

Paul Sparks



Simply the best

How to attract, select and retain top performing salespeople

I am yet to meet someone who says they have purposely hired a poor performer.

Why is it then, that about 25% of the Australian workforce is considered substandard by their managers? Unfortunately, in many sales departments, the percentage of poor performers is much higher.

The question is, *“Why are currently accepted selection processes resulting in only about 25% top performers, 50% adequate to very good performers and 25% poor performers?”* Ask any process professional what a 25% success rate means and they will tell you that the process you are using is flawed.

Compounding the cost of this situation is that a top performer is three times more productive than a poor performer and yet you are probably paying them both the same base salary. Adding insult to injury many of these poor performers want to stay and keep performing at unacceptable levels, often in spite of your efforts to help them improve. This results in high financial costs to your business – and high health costs (stress, anxiety etc.) for all individuals involved.

This raises some critical questions for managers:

- How much revenue and profit is your sales team forgoing because your recruitment process has allowed poor performers to get through?
- What success could be achieved by increasing the number of top performers and decreasing the number of poor performers?
- Is there is a better way to attract, recruit and retain top performers?

The good news is that there is a better way. The bad news is that many sales managers – and HR professionals – will have to first accept that current processes are not working and then have the courage to change the way they attract, select, train and coach their most important asset ... their people.

Over the past five years, my team at Peoplogica has worked with many companies, large and small to help achieve better outcomes in their sales selection activities. Based on this collective experience, this chapter will help sales managers increase their chances of attracting, selecting and retaining top performing salespeople.

Five big mistakes

There are five fundamental mistakes many sales managers consistently make when they recruit new salespeople.

1. The sales role has not been fully understood in terms of 'job fit', resulting in people being selected who are simply not right for the role.
2. The selection process lacks rigour, so hiring decisions are made using only a small amount of relevant information.
3. The job advertisement doesn't speak to the candidates you want to attract, limiting the quality of the candidate pool.
4. Recruiters and managers rely too heavily on emotional connections during the interview and, as a result, tend to hire people they 'like' as opposed to hiring people who will perform and 'fit' the role.
5. Recruiters and managers rely on a limited amount of candidate information and don't use the full range of selection tools available to allow them to be more scientific and objective in their recruitment decisions.

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**Jason White
& Giles Rhodes**

Rewarding the sales force

*A taxonomy of sales roles to inform
reward and incentive programs*

**Jason White****Giles Rhodes**

About the authors

Jason White heads up the Talent and Organisation Consulting Practice for *Aon Hewitt* across Asia-Pacific. He has over 15 year's senior HR and performance consultancy experience. As well as spending 10 years with *Aon Hewitt*, Jason has worked in a consulting capacity with *PricewaterhouseCoopers* and *Cullen Egan Dell*. Jason holds an Economics Bachelor with Honours from the University of Newcastle. In his current role, Jason leads a team which partners with clients across the region to identify and size opportunities to drive improvements in business performance through better people management.

Giles Rhodes is a Remuneration Management specialist as well as an HR Generalist. He has worked extensively with a wide range of business sectors including ICT, Financial Services and Not for Profit. He has worked with clients to create new pay structures; introduce remuneration strategy policies; manage remuneration reviews; implement and review benefits packages; and undertake executive and general employee pay benchmarking reviews. He has presented at executive level in Asia-Pacific and across Europe. Giles is responsible for the delivery of remuneration projects on behalf of *Aon Hewitt* clients across both Australia and New Zealand.

Find out more about the work of Aon Hewitt here:

www.aonhewitt.com

Editor's introduction

If there's a role in today's organisation where you need to get the rewards structure right – it's the sales team.

One of the main problems in getting rewards for salespeople and teams right, however, is finding a good method of benchmarking the role because sales jobs come in so many shapes and sizes.

*The folks at **Aon Hewitt** have developed a taxonomy that may help solve this problem.*

In this chapter, two of their senior consultants, Jason White and Giles Rhodes, outline a way to measure appropriate rewards by breaking down sales roles across 12 dimensions. Not only will applying this taxonomy assist in getting rewards right, but it could be the start of a way to be more precise about specifying the unique skills and behaviours required in any particular sales job.

Paul Sparks



Rewarding the sales force

A taxonomy of sales roles to inform reward and incentive programs

The recent economic downturn and recovery highlighted a number of issues about the design and management of sales force reward programs. In the period before the downturn, aggressive rewards programs were common. This may have resulted in unproductive, unsustainable and, at times, unethical behaviour.

Many organisations are now looking to better understand the efficiency, effectiveness and risks that surround their reward management programs. As a result, conventional wisdom and some traditional design and management techniques in sales force reward are being challenged – including the methods used to benchmark the mix and levels of remuneration for sales force roles.

Traditional benchmarking techniques for the sales force have always been challenging for managers. Given the nuances of every selling situation and the subsequent variation in activities performed by the sales force, it has been difficult to accurately ‘size’ and ‘match’ roles to the market. Traditional dimensions such as sales budget, territory size, and headcount responsibility cannot account for the full range of important attributes that affect the work performed by the sales force – issues such as the length of the sales cycle, the volume of selling opportunities, or the conversion rate of sales compared to the number of prospects. As a result, we start seeing some roles being ‘over-priced’ and others being ‘under-valued’.

Considering the importance placed on providing attractive and competitive remuneration packages for sales people, we need to be absolutely sure that the market data being gathered provides an accurate view of pay levels for the industry, particularly for unique and/or critical high demand and short supply sales roles. By ensuring we gather the right market intelligence on pay levels we reduce the risk of paying too much, not attracting top talent, and not motivating our sales people to perform.

So how can we improve the efficiency and effectiveness of sales force benchmarking?

A fundamental starting point involves re-thinking the nature of the data gathered, how this is analysed and how it is utilised for benchmarking.

This chapter introduces a new benchmarking methodology that provides a more holistic platform for evaluating and matching the key attributes of sales roles. We look at twelve key attributes of selling roles that drive sales force remuneration, and identify key findings about how those attributes affected sales remuneration in a sample of nearly 25,000 sales representatives in the United States.

Why benchmark in the sales environment?

Benchmarking is the foundation for 'competitive pay management'. It typically involves a job matching exercise in which sales managers use position descriptions to match a salesperson's role to the nearest matching role in the relevant survey database. Position descriptions typically reflect core accountabilities and key sales dimensions including sales revenue and territory size.

Benchmarking sales force remuneration levels provides sales managers with a relative assessment of how peer organisations reward their sales force. Sales organisations typically use benchmarking as the primary basis for setting and annually adjusting salary levels and structuring variable reward opportunities.

There are three critical reasons sales leaders should ensure they are using the best possible benchmarking and pay management practices.

1. They need to ensure they attract the right sales force talent with the right capabilities for their business.

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Sally-Anne Cotton

The alchemy of 21st century selling

*Transmuting balance, alignment and intent
into golden sales results*



Sally-Anne Cotton

About the author

After a wide ranging life in the business world, Sally-Anne Cotton began her career as a specialist consultant and experienced facilitator and executive coach with *Mercuri International*. She was a thought leader in introducing accelerated learning techniques to the delivery of sales development workshops.

For the past 18 years, while maintaining her passion for selling to senior leaders, Sally-Anne has developed expertise in measuring and mapping cultures and leadership styles, profiling leader and leadership team integrity and designing cultural and leadership transformation initiatives and programs.

Sally-Anne continually applies the concepts of lateral and systemic thinking to her work with some of the largest corporations in the Asia-Pacific region.

Find out more about Sally-Anne's work here:

www.executivealchemist.com.au

Editor's introduction

As organisations have grown over the past 100 or so years something strange has happened to how we live our lives as human beings. As organisations have grown, it's become increasingly common for people to act differently at work than they would at home.

But not everybody's happy with this change. More and more people want to be able to 'be themselves' at work – to look for purpose and meaning in how they spend their days, and to live at work as they do away from the office.

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Is it possible to do this in a competitive sales environment?

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Can salespeople act with integrity and authenticity and still achieve high sales performance?

Sally-Anne Cotton thinks these things are possible. In this chapter she outlines how individuals and organisations can deliver golden sales results when they are balanced and aligned in their approach to selling, and when they have a shared intent to work for the common good.

Paul Sparks



The alchemy of 21st century selling

Transmuting balance, alignment and intent into golden sales results

To deliver golden results, sales practice in the 21st Century should reflect three basic tenets.

1. Human performance requires balance to achieve its peak.
2. In an organisation, individual performance is at its highest when the organisation is also balanced and aligned with the individual to support personal effort.
3. Optimal performance is only of real benefit when the intentions behind the actions flow from a concern for the common good.

The more an individual can bring their whole self to work, the more engaged they are and the better they perform. This is only possible when there is alignment between what they are being asked to do (their behaviours and actions) and who they are (their beliefs, identity and values).

The performance of both individuals and organisations will suffer if the intentions of all are not fundamentally aligned. This is why the old-style view

of 'sell at any cost' must change. When the intention is simply to get the deal, regardless of whether or not the solution is in the customer's best interests, then there are no winners.

If 'self-interest' rather than 'common good' lies at the heart of the actions – either of the individual salesperson or of the organisation as a whole – then the long term sustainability of relationships will be affected. When the relationships that exist on many levels between the salesperson and their manager, their clients, their colleagues, different divisions or departments and the organisation itself are in good health, then all involved can thrive.

Aligned organisations with positive intent provide the essential environment for sales people to sell with balance. In this environment salespeople can achieve a balance between the interests of their selling organisation and the interests of their clients. They can also approach their client encounters in a balance manner which is neither manipulative nor timid. When conducted with intelligence, knowledge, skill and sensitivity, balanced selling leads to trusted collaboration between salesperson and buyer which will deliver high value to both parties.

Professional selling in the 21st Century must move from the tricks and word games of the past ('clever ways to overcome every objection', '75 ways to close a sale', etc.) to encompass these three elements – balance, alignment and intention – if it is to take its proper place in delivering sustainable organisational and personal success.

The good news is that business success and positive human outcomes can be achieved in the same process. This chapter will show you how it can be done.

But before we discuss sales success, let's look briefly at some other areas of human performance for insights into the importance and value of harnessing the power of balance, alignment and intention.

Sales insights from the world of entertainment

Roll up! Roll up!

As a child I loved the circus. The cacophony of noise, the medley of smells and the palpable taste in my mouth were my own personal roller coaster of delight. These days I find myself drawn more and more to the people-centred acts and the adrenalin pumping anticipation of the success – or failure – of the performers.

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Dr Yvonne Sum

Tribal insights
for sales leaders

The power of learning partnerships



Dr Yvonne Sum

About the author

Dr Yvonne Sum transforms leaders of tomorrow today. She provokes senior business leaders to 'lose their minds and come to their senses' by integrating their leadership lessons at home successfully back into the workplace.

Yvonne's depth of international experience and breadth of clientele span across Australia, the USA and Asia Pacific in pharmaceutical, IT, financial services, retail, forestry, entrepreneurial groups, architecture, surveying, education, learning & development and health professionals.

Yvonne has made personal transformations through diverse contexts: from being an officer in the *Royal Australian Air Force*, to dental surgeon in entrepreneurial practice, media consultant, professional actor and presenter, and now expresses her passion as an international Certified Speaking Professional (CSP), leadership facilitator, transformational coach, business woman, wife and mother.

Find out more about Yvonne's work here:

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Editor's introduction

Leadership for 21st century sales teams is undergoing a generational shift.

Command and control styles of sales management may have worked in the past – but with Generation Y now providing a large proportion of team members, a different approach is required.

Dr Yvonne Sum sees parallels between today's sales teams and how tribes and families have functioned when operating at their peak. In this chapter she outlines the elements of authentic leadership which – when applied with wisdom and care – will bring out the best in this dynamic generation.

The application of this model of authentic leadership will lead to engagement, commitment and a successful, sustainable sales team.

Paul Sparks



Tribal insights for sales leaders

The power of learning partnerships

Sales are the life blood of any profit-based organisation. Without sales, there is no 'oxygen' to feed and sustain its head, its heart and its soul.

Yet sales teams constantly fight an internal and external battle.

Salespeople are often stereotyped as greedy individuals with little to no team spirit, motivated only by monetary bonuses or achieving their own personal goals. They are seen by some to play outside the normal rules, and receive special rewards when others in the organisation do the hard work to keep customers happy and loyal. Salespeople are often treated with suspicion, and despite their best efforts, past experience can cause buyers to be wary in their dealings, so both parties miss great opportunities to build value together.

And managers – especially sales managers – have been doing it tough in recent years. They are expected to deliver ever more with dwindling resources through budget and workforce cutbacks, while at the same time attempting to engage (or re-engage) a sales force with low morale as a result of these cutbacks. Add the constant restructuring in our rapidly changing world, and they don't seem to be getting too many breaks.

On top of that, there appears to be a growing disconnection between sales managers and their team members.

In most organisations today the bulk of sales team members are generation

Y or younger. The goals, values and experience of this group are very different to their typical baby-boomer or generation X manager. And it reflects in many ways – including how sales team members want to interact with their prospects and clients, how they wish to be rewarded and their expectations for career growth.

Now let's add another layer of complexity. Sales teams operate in a constantly changing global marketplace that makes it even harder for managers and team members to develop a unified and connected approach to their task.

Is it possible to overcome these competing demands?

The power of possibility

Unity and connection are possible. Salespeople can be seen in a positive light if they add value to their client organisations, and work in concert with the varying operating divisions of their own organisation. This is possible with effective leadership. Sales managers must become sales leaders. They need to connect in an authentic way with their team members, their organisation, their clients and more widely across the myriad relationships which make up the tapestry of their lives.

For sales managers this shift to leadership is now critically important. And there is something you can do.

Learn from tribes of the past – and then apply this learning to the way you interact with your 'tribes'. As a leader – build learning partnerships in a tribal setting and you will see your organisation address the challenges of market complexity, changing demographics and generational shift and, in the process, see improved sales results and ensure relationships at all levels develop and thrive.

In this chapter I will talk about 'tribes' and how we can apply the wisdom of past generations to build organisations which connect and unify with tribal passion and continually innovate through the power of learning partnerships.

Back to a tribal future

Recently, the writer and social commentator, Seth Godin looked at leadership



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Overcoming fear to create great sales results: *Suzanne Mercier.*

The future of effective sales leadership: *Malcolm Dawes.*

Walking the tightrope of sales success: *Sally-Anne Cotton.*

Understanding personal perception to achieve better sales results: *Mo Fox.*

A new taxonomy of sales roles: *Giles Rhodes.*

Why sales training doesn't work: *Michael Schiffner.*

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