

Introduction to Conscious Sales

Introduction

This one's for Jason, following our session this morning, in which he shared sales pointers and knowledge gleaned from three different sales books – while I shook my head and called out No! No! No!

'I have to write a book on sales it seems,' I told him, exasperated.

'Please Kiki,' he said, 'because we're floundering out there, trying to get some information to help us.'

So, superhero cape in hand, here I come!

Sales is not a process, or a pitch

To start with, you need to change your mind about what sales and the sales process is all about.

Sales and marketing is not something bolshy, loud, and assertive. And you don't need to cultivate these qualities in order to master the sales game.

You don't need to follow a point by point set of steps, to guide the prospect to the close. You don't need to be the all knowing one who has all the answers. Nor do you need to threaten or frighten your prospect with the consequences of not dealing with you.

You don't need fancy manoeuvres, gimmicky statements and silly questions that insult the other person's intelligence in order to sell.

What you need is:

a willingness to deliver and add value,
clear intent and a clear mind,
ability to be present,
selflessness,
curiosity, and
a sense of humour.

Fortunately, these are all qualities you can cultivate.

Salesmanship training

You can train to develop great salesmanship like any great athlete trains and develops their game. This is what this book will help you to do. And it will produce results.

Don't be confused into thinking that this less obvious, but definitely more sophisticated method does not result in sales.

No, this is a results orientated book written by someone who has done more cold sales calling on the phone and in person – even knocking door to door at night – than you have had breakfasts. And not to sell chewing gum either. So. Suspend your disbelief.

If you want to become a great salesperson, if you too want to develop the confidence to say 'I can sell anything to anyone, anywhere, anytime'... then read this book and start to practice. It is a lot easier and more fun than you think.

Oh, and by the way, I'm an introvert. Yes. I'd rather be hiding somewhere with a book, or writing one, than being out there talking to people. So don't imagine that great salesmanship is something only the extroverts can master.

Many unnoticed, silent, introverted qualities are needed to be a great salesperson. The ability to listen, not just to words, but to all that is unsaid. Intuition. Timing. Empathy. Even dance. I love to dance. And great salesmanship is nothing more than a form of dance. A dance of skill and grace, which if executed well, will always result in a sale.

Being present is where it starts

Grace is important. You want everything to be elegant and graceful. Your pen, your folder, your personal grooming, your words, and of course your flow. Flow is the underlying current, like a river taking you and the client from a beginning to an end. From a start to a finish.

Be very clear about the finish line. You are always there to conclude a sale. Always. You are not there to meet, introduce, find out, assess, inform and so on. You are always, always, there to close. Drop all pre-conceptions about how long the sales process should take. It happens in a moment. If you go there with very clear intent. You are always, always, there to close. Gracefully.

You cannot be graceful unless you are totally in the present moment. Being in the present moment will be a problem if you go into the meeting carrying preconceptions or 'a sales process' with a whole lot of labels, stages and manoeuvres to execute, in this and that order.

If you are not totally present, not fully conscious, and not open to the client's needs, you are more than likely not going to conclude the sale. Unless the person in front of you is even less conscious than you are, or has been plunged into fear or powerlessness by your presentation – and that way of selling is just not on. It also has very limited lifespan and result, and definitely not the subject of this, Conscious Selling book.

When your sense of self and of power is totally grounded and internalised you don't need to be loud, or bolshy. You don't need to intimidate or coerce people. All sales start on the inside. Which is good news for the introverts of the world.

First, you need to internalise the sale. You need to sell yourself on the product or service. This is the major part of your preparation. For the sales process really happens outside of the sales meeting. That's an absolute fact. We will cover this, the preparation, at the end, once you understand what you are doing in the sales meeting. Once you become familiar with this new Conscious Sales paradigm.

Sales jargon re-defined!

To start a new sales paradigm we need to use not only a new approach, but also new words. The lexicon of sales is harsh, and lacks both sophistication and grace. Sales words are left

brain orientated, linear and filled with machismo. We talk of a pitch (which is a 'hurl or throw'), a process (which is a 'series of actions'), and of objections ('opposition, refusal, argument'). Here are some more interesting definitions you will find in your local dictionary:

Prospect is defined as 'something in view as a source of profit'.

Client is 'a person who is receiving the benefits, services...of a company'.

And customer is 'a person who purchases goods or services from another; buyer; patron; but also anyone under the patronage of another; a dependent.' Interesting.

Entering the sales arena tussle

As a result of these words and their definition, one is on some or other level, entering a sales arena and preparing for a tussle between sales person and client in which the sales person must win.

Sales person starts the pitch by hurling or throwing things at the client or prospect, the client takes cover and objects and then the sales person performs the close. That's exactly the case if you take the definitions to heart.

This activity will suit only a small portion of the more outgoing, not averse to a confrontation, part of the population. The rest of the potential salesforce will run for cover, resign, and generally do anything to avoid 'The Close'.

Not 'The Close'!

So forceful is the close that it has become necessary to have a consumer protection act, so that people who were co-erced into the close have a way of backing out.

Some hard core sales people are taught not to take no for an answer and to persist and browbeat prospects into submission.

No matter what.

Against this, you have people who are just plain incapable of saying no. Many people. Gentle people who have sales meetings because they cannot say no on the phone, and of course, guess what, they land up signing up for all sorts of services they neither need nor want.

No namby pamby wussy walk away

Now don't think for a moment that you are not talking here to one of the greatest sales people and closer of deals of all time, *moi...* Don't think for an instant that I am suggesting some namby pamby kind of wussy walk away. No. All sales meetings must result in a sale. We just need to do it elegantly, subtly, and with grace. In other words, conscious selling.

For the sake of convenience, I'm not going to change the basic sales words that we all understand. I will not replace 'sales process' with 'mutual benefit dance' or 'closing' with 'successful conclusion'.....no. But, I will teach you some simple – must be simple! - effective and workable ways of conducting a sale which will increase profit and add value and which will require no jargon, pitch, or sneaky manoeuvres.

Conscious, effective, but definitely results driven sales.

Conscious selling, begins by extending respect to the prospective buyer. Start by granting your prospect enough respect and intelligence not to insult them with silly jargon and closing prompts. They've seen other sales people before you, and more than likely heard it all before.

What not to do to prospective clients

Don't bore them.

Don't insult them.

Don't patronise them.

Don't try to control them. End of chat.

Pretend it is you, sitting on the other end of that table – then ‘do unto others...’

Conscious Sales Definition

To re-define the sales process, we need to look at sales with new eyes. Bring up some new words, emotions and feelings about it. This may mean that you must create a new job title and description for yourself.

The sales process is a dance, a game, a seduction, the setting up of a relationship, a wooing, a service - in the truest and most selfless form of the word. Think Mother Teresa, think of a monk kneeling to wash someone’s feet. That’s selfless service.

Giving, in order to benefit the other. The benefit to self is definitely there. But one starts with the giving. And that is the correct order of things as far as universal law and universal flow is concerned. Give to receive. Plant before you can reap. Give benefit before you receive a return.

Right Motivation: Selfless Service

Service itself is defined as ‘an act of helpful activity, help or aid.’ That’s good. We want that. As sales people we are primarily in the help industry. We are there to help. Unfortunately the word service has been overused and denuded of meaning. It’s one of those words thrown about willy nilly with little connection to heart, help or delivery.

To be of service and to help is not a doing thing it’s a being thing. It starts with an intent and a motivation. In Buddhism one talks of ‘right motivation’. One develops the proper motivation and beingness from which right action can then emerge.

The motivation to help should underpin all sales and should be infused within all salespeople. And to help, is to add value. How we do that, comes next. We do that through a dance. Or at the very least the idea of a dance.

Sales & Rhythm

Dance and dancing means to move one's feet or body, or both, rhythmically in a pattern of steps, especially to the accompaniment of music. In sales we are moving in rhythm with the other. This is in terms of speech, movement, flow, subject matter, energy. Always with the intent of adding value and of delivering. And thereby almost naturally and effortlessly, closing.

Relationship means a connection, association, or involvement. It is also, an emotional or other connection between people. Without establishing a connection and a rapport between you and your prospect nothing will happen. People buy from people. People do not buy things. Yes, even in the age of computers and online shopping. Otherwise corporations would not spend millions getting the rich, the pretty and the famous to endorse anything.

People buy the way they think something is going to make them feel. And people buy how you make them feel. Make them feel good.

Seduction

Seduction is to entice, or tempt. This doesn't have to be sexual, although we usually think it so. It's very obvious that seduction sells. Look at any advertisement for anything. Temptation works too – buy this and you get that. Buy this by then and you get this too.

Don't think that just because you are face to face with someone, that you don't need to seduce them, or to tempt them. What does that mean? That means you need to find out what turns the other person on, and give them that. And notice I say turn on, not interest. What turns the person on? What makes their eyes spark and sit up straight?

Do they want safety, power, fun, security? How do they want

to feel? Who do they want to feel like? That's what's behind every endorsement – the idea that people want to experience what it's like to be 'a successful movie star' or a 'fit and healthy athlete'. Not only in a generalised way, but very specifically, people want to identify with this particular athlete, or that particular movie star.

What is the client really buying?

So you really need to understand what is driving the prospect to buy. What is the underlying feeling and identification that underpins the sale. Who is the client trying to be? What is the client wanting to feel?

Capital growth, security, good investment, exceptional vacuum cleaner, beautiful holiday home, reliable or fancy car are all obviously not the answer.

Be very clear that no one is ever trying to buy things or services – no matter how obviously they may want or need these things. Consider that if 3 different people presented the same thing at the same price to a client, the client would definitely have a preference. Who would he choose to buy from and why?

Consider, that many people with pretty similar background and experience may apply for a job – yet only one is selected. What is that selection based on? The same is the case when you interview people for a position – ask yourself on what basis do you pick one over the many, with similar background, experience and skill. The answer will surprise you.

I often watch reality shows where there are choices and decisions to be made. Mostly around travel and cooking but sometimes I may diverge as far as dating and wilderness challenges. I am totally intrigued about how people make decisions.

I am fascinated how a couple will provide a list of criteria – say for a home in another country. Then, they will select a house which meets with absolutely none of those criteria while ignoring

the one that meets them all. It will always be an arbitrary thing that swings their decision, and it's almost impossible to guess what they will do.

People will always, always, surprise you. So never go into a sales meeting thinking you know anything. This is very good advice.

So what do you offer the client while you are trying to discover and fine tune what they want? What do you walk into the session holding? How do you begin the dance of seduction?

Basic expansion

Well you cannot go wrong with basic expansion. With a basic raising of the other person's resonance. With making them feel better about themselves and the world. Tempt them beyond that, with how much better still, life will be with whatever you are selling. (Not how life would be worse without it – big distinction. Even if you are selling life cover or funeral policies, always focus on the bright side.)

You really cannot go wrong if you arrive armed with the intent to help, dance in rhythm with, seduce, connect, discover and deliver what the client wants, and add value.

Reflecting on these new words and their meanings, we have the beginning of a new way of looking at Conscious Selling:

Helpful Activity
Moving in rhythm
Entice or tempt
A connection

Consciousness

Let's also not forget Conscious which is 'being aware of one's own existence, sensations, thoughts, surroundings'. Being fully aware of or sensitive to something - in this case

the client. It's having the mental faculties fully active, aware of what one is doing. Another definition is 'deliberate and intentional'. To be conscious is to be aware of being aware.

As far as consciousness is concerned, that, is in actuality the underlying purpose and motivation for any activity. To raise not only your own consciousness but the consciousness of the other person. When you have this as your major underlying motivation, then everything you do will have a depth of flavour. Like a fine well brewed brandy or a well balanced broth.

Salesmanship is ...