A SELLING MODEL - HAVE A PLAN

Whether you’re in engineering, production, accounting or do an outstanding job of answering the phone, you can influence the world around you. Every day, all day, you are either buying or selling. You’re either influencing the world around you, or you’re accepting what other people are selling to you. Whoever you are, whatever you do, if you’ve ever wanted more control in your life... Welcome Aboard.

‘Wait’, you say. “I don’t have the gift of gab. And, I don’t like trying to get people to do things they don’t want to do.” Well, you’ll be relieved to hear that selling, real selling, has more to do with listening than talking. A good salesperson knows that his career will be short and not very rewarding, if he tries to get people to buy things they don’t want and don’t need. Effective selling hinges on helping the other person get what they want. It’s a cooperative, mutually gratifying, process - not a manipulation. And, best of all, selling can be learned. So, read on.

“I’m accustomed to giving people orders and seeing to it that they carry them out. I worked long and hard to get myself into a position of authority. Why would I want, or for that matter, need to learn about influencing people. I have plenty of influence: I tell people what to do; they do it.” It’s certainly true that selling people on an idea or course of action is very different from the line-authority approach found in most traditional organizations. There, people or computers must do what we tell them to do... or, so the theory goes.

But, if you are in sales, you know that no one you deal with has to do anything you tell them. It’s your job to bring them to a point where they want to buy. The other person can say ‘No’ at any time, without fear of reprisal. Sometimes it feels like you spend your days pushing on a string. Do those to whom you give directions always carry them out, if you’re not watching all the time? How has ordering your boss to do something worked out for you? No matter how much power you imagine yourself to have over others, people always do a better job on things they want to do. Leading people to that place where they want to do what you had in mind - that’s real power.

Everyone needs to know how to sell. Read on.

You’ll notice almost immediately that this course is organized and presented in ways that may seem very different from traditional training programs. Our purpose here is to:

- read about ideas and advice on effective selling
- develop an understanding of how and why people make buying decisions
- learn strategies and processes that prove effective in selling and for influencing the decisions people make
- map out, in very specific terms, what you want to do to improve your effectiveness and efficiency in selling:
  - what are your selling goals
- how do you plan to achieve your goals
- what people and resources do you require
- how will you know when you’ve reached your goals
- what can you do if it isn’t working... who can help

It’s important to point out at the beginning that, when we talk about selling, we are not just talking about getting people to purchase our goods or services. The processes and concepts associated with effective selling practices extend into almost every element of human interaction. Most of the concepts you will learn here can be effectively applied to other areas of your life. People are the only beings on earth who can actually buy something. Ultimately, when you sell, you sell to people.

Therefore, the concepts and processes employed to be successful in commercial selling are readily adapted, and just as effective, in the other areas of your life. If I really know how to guide and assist my customers in purchasing concrete pipe, I can use the same concepts to help guide my boss in accepting a new advertising campaign or the revised employee parking policy I’ve proposed. Everyone, in every walk of life, wants to influence his or her environment. That’s selling. Our definition of selling is simple, and it has a wide sphere of application: SELLING IS CHANGING THE OUTCOME. You may have gotten the ‘sale’. But, if the order would have come no matter what you had done, you didn’t sell anything. You only wrote up the order. Now, accepting an order is great, but who knows what the sale could have been if you were able influence the buyer’s purchasing decision.

**LET’S GET STARTED**

This is not a course where you will be working toward taking and passing a test. Our purpose is to learn about core concepts in effective selling. Then, incorporate those ideas that you think will work into a plan. A plan that clarifies your goals with respect to becoming better at selling, sets up parameters and a strategy for reaching your selling goals, and specifies how you will measure your success in getting where you planned to go. The work we do here will be for you, not to pass a course. It just might change your life.

The first assignment is simple. Read the three books that lay out the core concepts for this course:

**Sprout! - Alan Vengel & Greg Wright** (Berrett-Koehler Publishers)

“Everything I Need to Know about Sales I Learned from My Garden” Don’t let the simple, engaging story keep you from learning the lessons for successful selling in this book. If you are in selling, you’ll identify with the stories and will probably have a visceral connection to the feelings of the characters telling them. Sprout’s analogy of selling to gardening really works. It’s a great tool for understanding what produces results in the real world and how you can excel in your marketplace.
The Little Red Book of Selling - Jeffrey Gitomer (Bard Press)

“If they like you, and they believe you, and they trust you, and they have confidence in you they MAY buy from you.” Jeffrey Gitomer is one of today’s most popular and widely-read sources on how to be an effective seller. His style is in-your-face, and if you’ve been selling to put food on the table for any time at all, you know in your gut he’s right.

• You might want to sign up for Jeffrey Gitomer’s web-based newsletter. It’s free

The One-Minute Sales Person - Spencer Johnson & Larry Wilson (William Morrow)

“More sales in less time with less stress.” “It works! Whether you’re selling your ideas, products, services or yourself” A modern classic in how to sell and how to manage yourself as a seller. The One-Minute Sales Person reinforces the concepts and processes set forth in the other two books, and makes a compelling case for the fact that effective selling does not involve getting people to do things they don’t want to do. The authors’ ideas and strategies for self-managed selling are effective and easy to actually do for most people. They tie in well with Gitomer’s concept of self-motivation: ‘Kick Your Own Ass’.

Go buy these books, and a highlighter. Then, find a quiet spot to read. Get back to this outline AFTER you’ve read all three, cover-to-cover.

Welcome back. At this point, you should have completed reading all three books listed above and be ready to put the ideas you’ve read to work for you. It’s always okay to go back to any of the reading materials. It’s a solid strategy to learn or clarify anything that’s not clear. After all, life is an open-book exam.

Now, we are going to begin the process of putting your objectives on paper and understanding the how they can be realized in your life. Here’s the strategy we’ll employ:

Before you begin, find yourself a mentor for this course. If you are a professional sales person, the best choice might be your immediate supervisor. It doesn’t have to be your supervisor, but it should be someone who can give you competent counsel on the suitability and validity of any selling plan you develop. Another reason to involve your direct organizational superior in this process lies in the fact that, by working together in drafting a selling plan, you will both have agreed on the definition of a ‘good job’. Then, all you have to do is work your plan. Everybody has committed to be happy with that.

If you are not a professional sales person, look for a mentor among the people who are willing to devote some of their time in helping you become awesomely effective in your life. They should be someone you trust and someone with whom you can share the things that are important to you. You are always free to contact your ACPA Regional
Engineer for help should you get ‘stuck’ in the process. Don’t know who your Regional Engineer? No problem. Just call ACPA and ask.

Notify ACPA as to who your Mentor will be for this course.

**EXERCISE 1**

Go to the Appendix for this course and print a copy of Exercise 1 - What I Want My Life to Be. Follow it’s instructions. Take your time, give it your best effort. If you want, get the involvement or ask questions of others, including your mentor. Sit down in a quiet place, where you won’t be interrupted or distracted... not while you’re watching the ball game. Grab a pen and start thinking about what you want your life to be.

- what you have, or are receiving, and want to keep
- what you want for yourself and don’t have, or want to keep
- what you want for others, but don’t have
- what you’d like to do, or be able to keep doing
- pick one thing that you would really like, but see no way it can happen
- things that really make you angry... how would you change them?
- relationships that you’d like to change or improve or eliminate
- fears you have about the future... how would you eliminate those fears?
- if you were King of Earth, what would want your life to be like?

Don’t dismiss this as a silly exercise. The world truly does step aside and make way for the person who knows where he/she is going. And, when people have no particular plan for their lives, it’s obvious to everyone but them. If people don’t seem willing to follow you, maybe they think you’re lost. On the other hand, you may be that rare individual who feels completely happy with your life; you don’t want to change anything. Fine, then work on this: what are you going to need to do or have in order to keep things like they are now?

It might take a while. Ideas may not flow right away. Try it for about 15 minutes. If the ideas are flowing, keep going until nothing more comes to you. Then, set aside the sheet and come back to it in a day or so. But, be prepared to jot down notes in the meantime. When you set your mind to this task, like your computer, it will keep running in the background. In the middle of the night, during meetings, while you’re driving - new ideas will pop into your head, often the best ideas you have. Jot those ideas down right away. Don’t let them escape

You have to start the process with a sit-down-and-work-at-it session. Come back and sit down with the worksheet at least two additional sessions (no distractions) over a two-week period. Don’t skimp or cheat. The only loser will be you. If
you’ll put your head and heart into this, it will impact your life. You will not have to share this list with anyone else... unless you choose to do so.

After no less than two weeks, go to Exercise 2, below.

EXERCISE 2

Go to the Appendix for this course and print a copy of Exercise 2 - Why Make a Selling Plan. Follow it’s instructions. Take your time, give it your best effort. If you want, get the involvement or ask questions of others, including your mentor.

We have a gift for you as you work on this exercise. Listed below, and included in Exercise 2 from the Appendix, are concepts we think represent compelling reasons to create a serious, well-drafted sales plan. They are taken directly from your required course books. We’ve done all the work for you. The concepts are even color-coded to the source-book. You’re welcome!

Sprout!

The Little Red Book of Selling

The One-Minute Sales Person

Editorial Content & Commentary

Read these key concepts over... slowly. Think about what they mean for you. Make notes to guide you in understanding how each idea will help you. Add other ideas and concepts from any source, if you like. If there are ideas listed that don’t make sense to you, ask someone. Keep asking people until you understand. Then, go to the Exercise 2 Worksheet you printed and circle those concepts that you believe are important to you, for drafting your own sales plan.

No need to do this in a single session. Only you will know if you decide to change your mind on something. Keep the completed sheets where you can quickly find them. You’ll need them for the next step.

WHY MAKE A SELLING PLAN

In most of life, we either pursue our own plan, or default and become part of someone else’s plan

Effective salespeople have a plan. They anticipate the unexpected.

And, as we will see, they work to get their customer what the customer needs/wants, but they always maintain control over the process of accomplishing that end

Do you have goals and a plan to achieve them?
We become what we think about. More often than not, whatever you think will work is the way you do it. 

When you create your own goals and mentally see them as already accomplished - in a peaceful, competent way - you lessen the unknown. 

If you have a good plan, you’ll be more focused and you’ll find that your priorities are clear. That alone produces a passion that comes from a greater sense of purpose and a sense of control over your life and your future. 

Without that clear vision, goals and a plan, you are just selling anything you can to anybody who will buy... That’s a recipe for burnout. 

Planning is meaningless without a vision. More than in any other aspect of life, selling is about seeing what can be and effectively communicating that to those who can make it happen. 

Your philosophy about anything leads to your attitude about that concept, the actions that you take in relation to that concept, and your resultant lifestyle (use a dictionary and give this some thought). 

There is a very strong connection between the clarity of your vision and your excitement about working toward that vision. 

A strong vision has details that are so real you can see it, taste it, and smell it. It must be one of the most real things in your life. 

For your vision to be motivating, you must see it in detail. It must have positive pictures that give you energy and create optimistic feelings that carry you through to its realization. 

You can’t have passion for something if you don’t respect it; if it doesn’t challenge you and make you play at the top of your game. 

The more positive you are, the easier it becomes to succeed. 

Good planning means knowing what makes you passionate about selling, or anything else you’re planning: 

- what do you want to sell
- who do you want to sell to
- how do you want to sell
- how will your life be impacted
- how will the life of others be impacted

Goals initiate behaviors, but, consequences maintain behaviors; the best way to believe you can do something is to try and succeed. 

“I help myself realize my sales goals by catching myself doing something right, then appraise myself - I take a few minutes to feel good about that - even if I’m just approximately right, I tell myself to do this more often.”
“There is nothing more exhausting than jumping over hurdles (and rainbows) you continually put in your own way”

In the end, most failures occur because we quit too soon. Persistence is the engine that drives success in any enterprise.

Treat a business like a garden:

- both are based upon cause and effect relationships - mistakes have consequences
- what you need to know can be learned by almost anyone
- teaches a try-fail-try-again approach to business
- neglect leads to starvation
- the better the business grows, the simpler life becomes
- a long-term perspective produces a happier and more relaxed you

Many of the characteristics of a good gardener transfer well as characteristics for a competent salesperson:

- patience
- ability to nurture
- good timing

... you are not born with any of these characteristics, they must be learned

Price matters. But the more value you provide, the less price matters

More often than not while price is given as a reason for the decision, it really comes down to emotions and relationships... ... people in business have learned that, “the Price is too high” is often the most effective strategy for getting a salesman to go away

“All things being equal, people want to do business with their friends.” “All things being not quite so equal, people still want to do business with their friends.”

Build your credibility with those who value what you know and what you can do... especially what you can do for them... all of that can be learned

Put value in the hands of potential customers without ever asking them to buy anything. Find something your customer considers valuable and GIVE it to them. Learn how to do that in an organization, and on a person-to-person level

Trying to get through on common sense and hard work, going right to the goals while forgetting what’s driving them, will burnout anyone

It’s only when you’re giving the customer what they want that hard work matters. That’s what we mean by working smart:

- set good goals
- lay proper groundwork
- stay customer focused, with an ongoing effort
When you’re with your customer, listen and ask questions 75% of the time. The customer should do most of the talking and you should do most of the listening.

Asking the right questions is just as important. Cultivate listening as an active skill, even reading between the lines and then checking out your assumptions by asking questions and listening with a fresh set of ears.

We often assume a lot about what the customer knows:
- about our product
- about our competition
- about us
- even whether they think about us at all

Preplan your questions. Have a list with you to refer to it (discretely) at all times. Test your questions for reaction and their ability to generate response.

As part of the planning process, you will develop a model for your personal brand:
- how hard you work
- how smart you work
- how dedicated you are
- how you recognize and create demand, directly and indirectly
- how you develop confidence in your brand (company/product/service/you)
- how effectively you have established yourself as an expert
- what separates you from the competition
- your image, as defined by others

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**PLAN HOW YOU WILL SELL**

Okay, you’ve done the work to establish your goals. You’ve identified which of those goals require that you are able to effectively influence decisions made by other people. You have also identified which of those goals are directly related to your job. Now that you have identified your life goals in terms of the ‘selling’ opportunities which can help make them a reality, you’re ready to develop a selling plan for reaching your goals.

If you are a sales professional and your mentor is your supervisor, there are probably advantages in working with him/her to develop a formal selling plan that has the approval and support of your employer. But, if you don’t want to do that, you don’t have to.

If you are not a sales professional, or want to plan toward goals that don’t relate directly to your sales job, you might want to work with fellow stakeholders to draft a plan. For instance, if your goal involves a different place to live, your spouse (and maybe your children) should participate in the planning process. If you are not directly involved in a commercial sales function, your lot in life will still be always be tied to whether you can effectively influence the decisions of other people. For instance, engineers frequently find that the acceptance and implementation their designs depend as much on their ability to convince others their work is appropriate as it does on a project’s engineering merit.
Let’s get started. Below are some concepts from the required course books that might be helpful in organizing an effective sales plan. You will find them duplicated in the text for Exercise 3. Read through them now and consider how these concepts can be part of the plan you are about to make for your future. You don’t have to use every concept. Just mark everything that you believe will work for you:

- No one is going to hand you any degree of success. That’s up to you to build, on your own
- Train yourself, invest in yourself, it’s portable, it builds your self-esteem and your bank account
- How much time do you spend learning something new?
- Invest your time and your effort in things that can help you succeed: have a plan, work your plan, reach your goals:
- Know what you want - have a master plan - or you risk getting what others want for you to have
- Dedicate time to making your master plan work - avoid being diverted into pursuing other people’s goals
- Register your name, and your company, on the web - start telling people who you are and what you can do for them
- Be willing to give of yourself first - look for productive opportunities, have this as part of your plan
- Get others to help you - allow people to help - ask people to help
- Develop a 15-30 second commercial: what you do, how you can help
- Build your network
- Establish yourself as a presence - you’ll learn more about this in the course, Developing a Sales Identity
- Build and polish your skills - you’ll learn more about this in the course, Developing a Sales Identity
- Attract new customers - you’ll learn more about this in the course, Developing a Sales Identity
- Have an impact - you’ll learn more about this in the course, Developing a Sales Identity
EXERCISE 3

Find a large, flat, horizontal surface and lay out the documents you completed in Exercise 1 and in Exercise 2.

Go to the Appendix for this course and print a copy of Exercise 3 - A Selling Approach for My Life Plan. Follow its instructions. Give this exercise plenty of time, it will become the first draft of your Sales Plan.

If the process gets frustrating, take a break and come back to it later. It's amazing how walking away briefly helps. There's no prize for finishing quickly. If you get stumped, seek out help. There's a lifetime of payoff if you put together a great sales plan and work it.

______________________________________________________________________

YOUR SELLING STRATEGY = YOUR SELLING PLAN

Now, we're going to select the best tools for you to fine-tune your planning. Then, you'll develop the appropriate strategies to support your plan. All the concepts listed below are taken from the required course books. Each is an example to clarify what we mean by Sales Strategies. There is a strategy in each of the statements below. See how many selling strategies you can recognize. If you learn them, and use them on an ongoing basis, you'll become an amazing selling machine.

______________________________________________________________________

Sell yourself, even above your product or service.

Be the best, and the money will show up

Selling on purpose: being conscious of what you're doing, not unconsciously repeating a memorized sales routine

Selling on purpose: having a plan, knowing the person I'm dealing with, taking the time and effort to find out what they need and what they want

Selling on purpose: caring about customers... PEOPLE

Selling on purpose: be there the first time a customer tries your product. That signals an above and beyond caring, allowing the customer to interact with you at their time of greatest uncertainty... Over time, they will remember you were there better than (they will remember) whether the product performed to their expectations

Have an objective, or two, for every meeting. Prepare yourself. It takes time - it's worth it

Competitors are like weeds: they will take advantage of fertile soil. So, be aware, and in touch with your customer in some productive way at least twice a month

Keep plugging: persistence plus consistency... without an immediate expectation of return
Your success, is your responsibility: “I’m just learning that the more I know what I want to do, the more I can figure out how to do it myself”

EXERCISE 4

Go to the Appendix for this course and print a copy of Exercise 4 - Build a Selling Strategy for My Life Plan. Follow its instructions. As always, take your time, give it your best effort. Don’t hesitate to get involvement or ask questions of others, including your mentor. At this point, you should be starting to get a feel for the sales plan you’re building. Don’t hesitate to go back into what you’ve already done and change things. It’s your plan.

Please, give this process the investment of time and effort it deserves. The payback will be far greater than the stock market can offer.

HOW TO BUILD AND DELIVER VALUE

All your books for this course talk about value:

- How important is value?
  - How important is it that you provide value to people you want to influence?
  - How critical is it that you deliver value first, and without expecting anything in return?

In selling, you have importance to your customer to the extent that he/she finds you valuable.

Here are ideas about value selected from your reading:

Value: something done for the other person, in favor of that person

- information about how they make profit, produce, succeed
- given first
- given to people who can help the most
- given often
- given without expectation of return
- NOT valuable: information about you, or your company

Value: gives you a position of leadership and authority
To become more valuable, learn, so that you can teach others. Learn about your contacts, then learn things that help them prosper. If you become a valued resource, and expect nothing in return, people seek you out.

Dig out other references to ‘value’ in your three books, or any book on selling. Learn all you can about value and how to deliver it.

**EXERCISE 5**

Go to the Appendix for this course and print a copy of Exercise 5 - TOOLKIT - Learn About Them & What They Value. Follow it’s instructions. This is the first of several tools this course provides to help you toward your new selling goals. The Learn About Them & What They Value is used to record information you discover about customers and prospects. Now, or going forward, feel free to make changes, reformat the worksheet, consolidate all the TOOLKIT assets into an electronic format... whatever you need to do to “own it”. If you are diligent to keep good, complete and up-to-date records about the people important to your plan, you will be far more successful in getting them to help you in reaching your goals.

- what do they put on the Internet
- what does their literature say
- what do their vendors say
- what does their competition say
- what do their customers say
- what do people do you know have to say
- what do their employees say
- what do their salespeople say

If you are to have value to people, you must know what they regard as valuable. Then, you must deliver that value to those people you seek to influence.

Along with collecting general information about the people and organizations you want to influence, the worksheet for Exercise 5:

- uncovers resources and services that the people important to your success regard as useful; what they value

- directs you toward the sources where information valuable to your customer or prospect can be found

* initiates a process establishing you as a “hub” for people to access valuable information and services they want and need.

When people need information, you will know where you or they can find it. You will become their resource. That builds respect and trust. That makes you more valuable to them. The more frequently you provide assistance they value, the more influential you become. Establishing yourself as an expert increases the probability people will think that referring others to you, makes them look good.
It all starts with a solid understanding of what they think is valuable. Initially, it’s often more important to give them what they regard as valuable, than it is to provide information and assistance that you believe to be more important and useful. Remember, the customer’s perception is your reality. First, become an expert in what they value. Earn their respect. Then you can begin gently changing their perceptions.

Here are some contacts and potential topics to bring up in the RCP industry. Talk with these people (contacts) about an issue (topic) and listen for what they think is important and valuable. It won’t be long before you have a substantial list of opportunities for enhancing your value to them.

Contacts:
- Contractors
- Municipalities
- Department of Transportation
- State and federal elected representatives
- Industry leaders
- Taxpayers

Topics:
- Pipe characteristics
- Pipeline installation and inspection
- Manufacturing practices
- How to sell
- Why people buy

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**EXERCISE 6**

Go to the Appendix for this course and print a copy of Exercise 6 - TOOLKIT - Reaching Out With Value. Follow its instructions.

This tool:

- helps you identify and provide value to existing contacts
- plants the seeds for new contacts, and build credibility before you even meet new prospects (people who can do business with you)
- contributes to building your brand throughout your marketplace *(more on this in the P3 Course: Developing a Sales Identity)*

Learn, so that you can teach others. If you become a valued resource, and expect nothing in return, people seek you out.

Action:
speak to groups
contribute to journals, newspapers, web publications
participate/lead on television, radio, web events
participate/lead in industry organizations
participate/lead in community organizations
do it whether your organization helps or not

EXERCISE 7

Go to the Appendix for this course and print a copy of Exercise 7 - TOOLKIT - Tracking Value Delivery. Follow it’s instructions.

This tool:

• helps you test how valuable you are to existing contacts
• gives you insight into whether others think you provide value
• provides the feedback to know how can improve value delivery
• guides you in making plans to grow the value you provide

Do people call and ask for help?
Do people trust you with information?
Do people call and ask for your opinion?
Do people refer others to you for help?
Do people invite you to events without expecting you to pay for them?

HOW TO PLAN YOUR MARKETPLACE

A carefully planned and cultivated customer base is much easier to manage and is more productive than an unplanned one

Decide who you want for a customer. Then, get to know their business better than they do... make a planning worksheet for every customer and prospect

True cold calls are a waste of time for everyone... the worksheet helps assure you know a good deal about your prospect before you ever make contact

Lay out a marketplace large enough to support your vision and plan, small enough to still be fun
**EXERCISE 8**

Using a simple map of your market area, mark your current customers. Then, using a different color, draw in the customer base you would consider ideal. List the small companies you’d like to help become larger. Include the best companies in your market currently served by competitors.

In your ideal marketplace, you might choose not to include some of your current customers. It’s your plan. Make it whatever you want. Design a geographic and customer-defined marketplace you would really enjoy serving. Remember, you cannot ‘live your dream’ until you have a dream.

Don’t make the mistake of giving all your nurturing and service effort to the biggest customers. Spend the time and resources necessary to cultivate smaller customers for future growth. (Sometimes, to encourage new growth and a strong healthy garden, you must weed out old-growth and dead limbs. If they are not performing and are taking up too much of your time, weed them out.

**HOW TO PLAN FOR ALL THE CUSTOMERS YOU WANT**

- Stay in front of the people you want to do business with
- It’s more who knows you, than who you know

**EXERCISE 9**

**EXERCISE 9 - (Optional) Ego-Smashing Reality Check**

*Step One* - List All the Important Contacts Who Know You

*Step Two* - Call Each of Them (Once - Leave Message If No Answer)

*Step Three* - Record How Many Take or Return Your Call

Go as high into the organization as possible before trying to sell

If you must work through the rank-and-file, quickly learn the groups and individuals that are decision makers - concentrate your efforts there

Ultimately, you will likely receive respect only from those to whom you have shown respect
Interact with people as people, not as pawns, not as a means to an end. It costs you nothing to treat another human being with respect. People know when they are being devalued, and you never know who can help, or hurt you in the future.

Every contact with people is an opportunity to plant a seed... which you always have with you, ready to plant. Nurturing that seed gives you a reason to call again. No seed, no reason

Every contact, with every person, is an opportunity to spread the word about your product, to learn more about their business, to find ways they want to be helped... in exactly the reverse order of priority

Walking away without a sale is not necessarily a wasted trip

Learn to build your network of contacts. There will be much more in ACPA Sales & Marketing Module II. If you are in a hurry, get a head start by reading The Little Black Book of Connections by Jeffrey Gitomer

People often ignore or resist networking:
  • they think it takes too much time
  • they don’t feel they are paid enough money to network
  • they think cold calling is a great way to prospect
  • they don’t know how to network, or where to network

We think none of these should be true for you. Networking and relationship building are critical to you plan. But, we will defer an in-depth discussion of Networking and Building Relationships to P³ Module II

EXERCISE 10

Go to the Appendix for this course and print a copy of Exercise 10 - TOOLKIT - Your Current Contact Assets. Follow it’s instructions.

List Your Current Accounts
List Prospective Accounts
Highest Level Contact for Each Account / Prospect

WHAT TO DO IF IT’S NOT WORKING

No sales plan can omit a strategy for what to do when you ‘hit-the-wall’. In such situations, our basic animal instinct is often to panic, say “the heck with it”, or some hybrid of the two. Of all situations in sales, this is the time we most need an emergency plan. A box on the wall to go to, break the glass, and pull out emergency instructions. Guidance we’ve tested before and found to work... even when we can’t think straight.
Sales professionals, in particular, are constantly measured against rigid, economically driven barometers and exposed to constant internal and external competition. It makes you feel like you are on an island by yourself.

Sooner or later, the situation starts to get the better of you. Before you know it you think the world is conspiring against you, or that you are no good at what you do anymore.

The approach must be, not that I failed, but but that I learned what not to do again.

You can’t sell when you’re tired, frustrated, depressed, or unhappy. You’ve got to make a change.

Revisit your goals. Decide on the most important 20% - they are the goals you want to actively pursue... in 250 words or less write these goals, as if they have already been achieved.

If things aren’t working:

- go back to blocking and tackling
- check your plan - am I working the plan / is the plan still appropriate and effective
- change something - talk with your five best customers for ideas
- get someone you respect to evaluate what you’re doing - listen to what they say
- videotape what you’re doing (not for the faint of heart)
- take a day off, have some fun
- avoid negative talk and negative people - ignore idiots and zealots
- ask your boss for help (that does not need to be the last resort)
- create a new and different environment for yourself
- cultivate new associations
- get new information
- don’t panic, don’t press, don’t quit

Self-managed selling helps me realize how good I already am and lets me enjoy becoming even better.

When what you do is unacceptable (out of line with your plan / not moving toward your goals) resist the temptation to withdraw, feel guilty or angry. Reprimand your behavior, not yourself, your behavior. Be specific and pay attention to how you feel about your behavior. Ideally, you would write this down.
Allowing myself to be distracted from my plan is a form of neglect. In the garden, neglect, if not quickly reversed, will cost you everything.

To help assure things are working. Review your goals frequently... I have found Sunday evening a good time (it gives me focus for the coming week and replaces the 'overwhelmed' feeling that may creeps in as the new workweek approaches).

Repetition will lead to change... you become what you think about.

Objectively evaluate whether your behavior matches your goals. Ideally, get input from others that you trust.

Staying focused on my plan usually brings me to my goals faster than I expected.

This one never fails. If you can’t think of anything else, remember the better you get at helping others, the more you will be rewarded.

ACPA P³ PROGRAM  MODULE I - SALES & MARKETING COURSE

A SELLING MODEL - HAVE A PLAN

APPENDIX
Exercise 1 - What I Want My Life to Be

Take your time, give it your best effort. If you want, get the involvement or ask questions of others, including your mentor. Sit down in a quiet place, where you won’t be interrupted or distracted... not while you’re watching the ball game. Grab a pen and start thinking about what you want your life to be - don’t impose any limits on yourself, if you don’t dream big, why dream

• what do you have, and want to keep
  ( season tickets, your hair, $$$ income - be specific: your dog, sharp mind, love of your spouse.... )

• what do you want for yourself and don’t have, or want to keep
  ( blue water sailboat, nice home, $$$ income - be specific: European vacation, sharp mind.... )

• what you want to provide for others and don’t have, or aren’t certain you can continue to provide
  ( university education for your kids, nice home, $$$ income, help for parents, medical care.... )
• what you’d like to do, or want to be able to keep doing
  (play golf every day, gardening, European vacation, entertain friends, ...)  

• pick one thing that you would really like, but see no way it can happen
  (be honest)  

• what are the things that really irritate you or make you angry... how would you change them if you could
  (think about this one... it’s okay if this is a very long list)  

• relationships that you’d like to change or improve or eliminate
  (spouse, children, grandchildren, boss, employee, friend, enemy, neighbor... )
• fears you have about the future... how would you eliminate those fears
  (aging, health, $$, economy, children, golf score rising... )

• if you were King of Earth, what would want your life to be like
  (the ultimate blank check - you can only cash it once, so go for it!)

Don’t dismiss this as a silly exercise. The world truly does step aside and make way for the person who knows where he/she is going. You may be that rare individual who feels completely happy with your life and doesn’t want to change anything. If that’s the case, what are you going to need in order to keep things like they are now?

This exercise will likely take a while. Ideas may not flow right away. Try it for about 15 minutes. If the ideas are flowing, keep going until nothing more comes to you. Then, set aside the sheet and come back to it in a day or so. But, be prepared to jot down notes in the meantime. When you set your mind to this task, like your computer, it will keep running in the background. In the middle of the night, during meetings, while you’re driving - new ideas will pop into your head. Those are often the best ideas you have. Jot those ideas down right away. Don’t let them escape
Start the process with a sit-down-and-work-at-it session. Come back and sit down with the worksheet at least two additional sessions (no distractions) over a two-week period.

You will not have to share this list with anyone else... unless you choose to do so.

Exercise 2 - Why Make a Selling Plan

Read over these key concepts... slowly. Think about what they mean for you. Make notes to guide you in understanding how each idea will help you. Add other ideas and concepts from any source, if you like. If there are ideas listed that don’t make sense to you, ask someone. Keep asking people until you understand. Then circle those concepts that you believe are important to you, for drafting your own selling plan.

No need to do this in a single session. Only you will know if you decide to change your mind on something. Keep the completed sheets where you can quickly find them. You’ll need them for the next step.

WHY MAKE A SELLING PLAN

In most of life, we either pursue our own plan, or default and become part of someone else’s plan

Effective salespeople have a plan. They anticipate the unexpected.

And, as we will see, they work to get their customer what the customer needs/wants, but they always maintain control over the process of accomplishing that end

Do you have goals and a plan to achieve them?

We become what we think about. More often than not, whatever you think will work is the way you do it. he

When you create your own goals and mentally see them as already accomplished - in a peaceful, competent way - you lessen the unknown.

If you have a good plan, you’ll be more focused and you’ll find that your priorities are clear. That alone produces a passion that comes from a greater sense of purpose and a sense of control over your life and your future

Without that clear vision, goals and a plan, you are just selling anything you can to anybody who will buy... That’s a recipe for burnout

Planning is meaningless without a vision. More than in any other aspect of life, selling is about seeing what can be and effectively communicating that to those who can make it happen.
Your **philosophy** about anything leads to your **attitude** about that concept, the **actions** that you take in relation to that concept, and your resultant **lifestyle** (use a dictionary and give this some thought)

There is a very strong connection between the clarity of your vision and your excitement about working toward that vision

A strong vision has details that are so real you can see it, taste it, and smell it. It must be one of the most real things in your life

For your vision to be motivating, you must see it in detail. It must have positive pictures that give you energy and create optimistic feelings that carry you through to its realization

You can’t have passion for something if you don’t respect it; if it doesn’t challenge you and make you play at the top of your game

The more positive you are, the easier it becomes to succeed

Good planning means knowing what makes you passionate about selling, or anything else you’re planning:

- what do you want to sell
- who do you want to sell to
- how do you want to sell
- how will your life be impacted
- how will the life of others be impacted

Goals initiate behaviors, but, consequences maintain behaviors; the best way to believe you can do something is to try and succeed

“I help myself realize my sales goals by catching myself doing something right, then appraise myself - I take a few minutes to feel good about that - even if I’m just approximately right, I tell myself to do this more often”

“There is nothing more exhausting than jumping over hurdles (and rainbows) you continually put in your own way”

In the end, most failures occur because we quit too soon. Persistence is the engine that drives success in any enterprise.

Treat a business like a garden:

- both are based upon cause and effect relationships - mistakes have consequences
- what you need to know can be learned by almost anyone
- teaches a try-fail-try-again approach to business
- neglect leads to starvation
- the better the business grows, the simpler life becomes
- a long-term perspective produces a happier and more relaxed you

Many of the characteristics of a good gardener transfer well as characteristics for a competent salesperson:
- patience
ability to nurture
good timing

... you are not born with any of these characteristics, they must be learned

Price matters. But the more value you provide, the less price matters

More often than not while price is given as a reason for the decision, it really comes down to emotions and relationships...  
... people in business have learned that, “the Price is too high” is often the most effective strategy for getting a salesman to go away

“All things being equal, people want to do business with their friends.” “All things being not quite so equal, people still want to do business with their friends.”

Build your credibility with those who value what you know and what you can do... especially what you can do for them... all of that can be learned

Put value in the hands of potential customers without ever asking them to buy anything. Find something your customer considers valuable and GIVE it to them. Learn how to do that in an organization, and on a person-to-person level

Trying to get through on common sense and hard work, going right to the goals while forgetting what’s driving them, will burnout anyone

It’s only when you’re giving the customer what they want that hard work matters. That’s what we mean by working smart:

set good goals
lay proper groundwork
stay customer focused, with an ongoing effort
(plant - tend - harvest)

When you’re with your customer, listen and ask questions 75% of the time. The customer should do most of the talking and you should do most of the listening.

Asking the right questions is just as important. Cultivate listening as an active skill, even reading between the lines and then checking out your assumptions by asking questions and listening with a fresh set of ears

We often assume a lot about what the customer knows:
  about our product
  about our competition
  about us
  even whether they think about us at all

Preplan your questions. Have a list with you to refer to it (discretely) at all times. Test your questions for reaction and their ability to generate response

As part of the planning process, you will develop a model for your personal brand:
  • how hard you work
  • how smart you work
  • how dedicated you are
  • how you recognize and create demand, directly and indirectly
• how you develop confidence in your brand (company/product/service/you)
• how effectively you have established yourself as an expert
• what separates you from the competition
• your image, as defined by others

COLOR KEY

Sprout!
The Little Red Book of Selling
The One-Minute Sales Person
Editorial Content & Commentary

Exercise 3    -  A Selling Approach for My Life

This exercise is really pretty simple:

(A) **Lay out** the documents you completed in Exercise 1, and Exercise 2.

(B) **Combine** the information in the two documents in the way that seems best to you:

- consider how the selling concepts you circled in Exercise 2 will help make it possible for you to realize the life described in Exercise 1

- there is no right or wrong way to do this
- you can have as many selling concepts targeted to any single goal as you think are appropriate; this is not a game where you match one item from Box 1 to one item in Box 2; whatever selling concepts seem to be right for reaching a life goal, use them... you can use a concept you like a lot on every goal you set... as long as you believe it will work, it probably will

- one of the reasons to come back to this process several times, lies in the fact that you will likely change your mind about some of your decisions... that’s great!

- you don’t have to justify your decisions to anyone - not even yourself

- stay with it... the process is as important as the product; just putting together a solid, written statement of what you want, along with a well-considered written plan to achieve it doubles the probability that you will reach your goal(s)... if all you want to do is get this course out of the way, quit now

- sit down with someone who knows a lot about selling and talk to them about how to do the things you want to do... you don’t have to show them your worksheets or tell them your goals... just ask questions that help guide your thinking... start the process, it will come to you... and you may just establish a new resource for your future in selling... some people call them ‘friends’

Give this plenty of time, it will become the first draft of your Sales Plan. Don’t hesitate to seek advice on any part of this project. It’s important. If you get stumped, seek out help.

If the process gets frustrating, take a break and come back to it later. It’s amazing how walking away briefly helps. There’s no prize for finishing quickly. But, there’s a lifetime of payoff it you put together a great sales plan and work it.

______________________________________________________________

Which of these concepts do you believe are useful and worthwhile in your pursuit of what your life could be?

[ ] No one is going to hand you any degree of success. That’s up to you to build, on your own

[ ] Train yourself, invest in yourself, it’s portable, it builds your self-esteem and your bank account

[ ] How much time do you spend learning something new?

[ ] Invest your time and your effort in things that can help you succeed: have a plan, work your plan, reach your goals:
[ ] Know what you want - have a master plan - or you risk getting what others want for you to have

[ ] Dedicate time to making your master plan work - avoid being diverted into pursuing other people’s goals

[ ] Register your name, and your company, on the web - start telling people who you are and what you can do for them

[ ] Be willing to give of yourself first - look for productive opportunities, have this as part of your plan

[ ] Get others to help you - allow people to help - ask people to help

[ ] Develop a 15-30 second commercial: what you do, how you can help

[ ] Build your network

[ ] Establish yourself as a presence - you’ll learn more about this in the course, Developing a Sales Identity

[ ] Build and polish your skills - you’ll learn more about this in the course, Developing a Sales Identity

[ ] Attract new customers - you’ll learn more about this in the course, Developing a Sales Identity

[ ] Have an impact - you’ll learn more about this in the course, Developing a Sales Identity

______________________________________________________________________

Here some questions that might help you get started or re-started:

• How can selling help me reach and maintain my life goals ?

• What do I need to sell to reach my goals ?

• Who do I need to change ?
  you might be one of the candidates for this; if so, you’ll need to sell yourself on the idea of changing and be able to find ideas to share with yourself on why and how

• How do they need to change ?

• When do they need to change ?

• How long do they need to remain changed ?

• Do I have the skills and resources to make that happen ?
• How can I acquire what I need?

• Who can help me?

Use the Worksheet below to record each of the Life Goals you listed in Exercise I, then list beside each of your goals any of the Selling Concepts you circled in Exercise II that will help you reach that goal.

WORKSHEET: Exercise 3 - A Selling Approach for My Life

PRINT AS MANY COPIES OF THIS WORKSHEET AS YOU NEED

List Your Goals from EXERCISE I
(one goal per space)

List the Selling Concept(s) You Circled in EXERCISE II That Will Help You Reach the Goal
(list as many as you think apply)

______________________________________________________________________

______________________________________________________________________

______________________________________________________________________

______________________________________________________________________

______________________________________________________________________

______________________________________________________________________

______________________________________________________________________
Exercise 4   -  Building a Selling Strategy for My Life

As with every exercise so far this one builds on all those before it. In this exercise you will refine and develop specific strategies to implement your plan. But, before you can begin, you must have a solid understanding of just what a selling strategy is.

First, go to the web and look for ‘selling strategy’. Google it. Bing it. Look in Wikipedia. You get the idea. Go ahead. We’ll wait...

Okay, you found that there were a great many interpretations of ‘selling strategy’. A lot of what people want ‘selling strategy’ to mean depends upon what they are selling. In marketing circles there is a seemingly never-ending debate about what strategy means and what tactics means and whether they are the same or different. Fortunately, we don’t care. We just want get you on the street with a plan that will help you reach your goal(s).

For our purposes, we are going to define ‘selling strategy’ as: an plan of action to achieve the sales goals of an organization or individual; how you’re going to get where you want to be.

So, in Exercise 4, you will draft your Sales Plan. And better yet, you will discover that you’ve already done most of the work:

Step 1 - Print several copies of the Selling Strategy Builder, below.

Step 2 - Look at each item you listed in your Exercise 3 Worksheet. Consider each Goal you entered and the Selling Concepts you determined to be important in reaching that Goal.

Step 3 - Remembering our definition of selling strategy as the, action plan to reach your goal, write what you need to do to reach each of your goals through the selling concepts you linked to that goal in your Exercise 3 Worksheet.

As you work through the Selling Strategy Builder, you will likely find that:

• This exercise will not necessarily be easy

• It will require you to revisit sections of your required texts

• You may need to get the advice of someone who knows more than you about selling

• You will likely enter the same strategy several times, each time associated with a different goal... often in selling, pursuing an effective strategy will help you
reach more than one goal (regular, effective contacts with people who can buy will boost your income, elevate your self-worth and confidence, enhance your value to employers, etc.). Don’t worry about duplications in strategies. They are a good thing.

• If you do this well and develop a plan that actually contributes to your success, as you have described it, you will revise your Selling Strategy Builder several times

To help get you started, and reduce any confusion that you may have about how to use your Selling Strategy Builder, an hypothetical example of the form is shown below:

WORKSHEET: Exercise 4 - Selling Strategy Builder

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strategies: What I’ll Do to Sell (in your words or directly from required texts)</th>
<th>Targeted Goal (from Exercise 1)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Develop a clear, specific plan for selling</td>
<td>Provide All College Expenses for Sue and Mike</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Develop a clear, specific plan for selling</td>
<td>Beach House for Our Retirement</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Constantly be actively developing 5 potential customers</td>
<td>Provide All College Expenses for Sue and Mike</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Exercise 5 - TOOLKIT - Learn About Them & What They Value

In this TOOLKIT Worksheet, you will gather essential information about your customers, the people you want as customers. When you finish, you'll know much more about them. Most importantly, you'll have a better idea as to what they value. Once you know what they consider to be important or beneficial, you can concentrate your efforts on giving them what they want most. A little time invested now will save an enormous amount of time and effort wasted on trial-and-error going forward.

Close inspection of a company’s literature helps uncover what really matters to top management and the owners... especially if they are the same people. Websites
frequently provide much of the same information. If all their photography is of factory buildings and machinery, it really doesn’t take Sherlock Holmes to figure where their heart lies.

When you talk with vendors, competitors, salespeople, and other people, ask them what you want to know in a casual tone, then shut up and listen. If they mention something that sounds especially useful, dig down into the subject with a question or two that brings out more detail.

No one is off-limits as a source of information. It’s most impressive to your targeted individual if you already know a great deal about them and their organization before you talk with them the first time. If you want to do business and don’t know who you need to talk with... you know nothing.

When asking people about an organization, or people in an organization, stay mindful that people rarely have a completely objective view of other people. Factor that in your assessment of their response.

It’s important to note that you are collecting information on:

(1) Anything you can learn about the organization and/or an individual

(2) What that organization and/or individual considers to be important or beneficial; what they value... if possible, what would they be willing to pay for, that you could give them free - before they even ask. That might be something you can do for them, or something you can learn to do for them. It’s most valuable if they haven’t been able to do it for themselves.

*If you are not in sales, but want to become more influential in the decisions affecting your life, recast the form below to match your situation.*

**WORKSHEET: Exercise 5 - TOOLKIT - Learn About Them & What They Value**

*PRINT AS MANY COPIES OF THIS WORKSHEET AS YOU NEED*

Customer / Prospect / Person Who Can Make Decisions that Help You:

____________________________________________________________

• Internet - ‘Google’ or ‘Bing’ the Person and the Organization / Study their Website / Read the Articles about Them - What Did You Learn about Them ?

____________________________________________________________________

____________________________________________________________________

• What Does their Literature Say about Them ?

____________________________________________________________________

____________________________________________________________________

• What Do their Vendors Say about Them ?

____________________________________________________________________
• What Does their Competition Say about Them?

• What Do their Customers Say about Them?

• What Do their Employees Say about Them?

• What Do their Salespeople Say about Them?

Exercise 6 - TOOLKIT - Reaching Out with Value

(A) Lay out your completed TOOLKIT Worksheets from Exercise 5.

(B) From the results you have gathered, list below the 5 most important contacts you need to influence or need to sell. (That information should be on your Worksheets from Exercise 5)

(C) List the 3 most important opportunities to provide value for each of those contacts. (That information should be on your Worksheets from Exercise 5)

(D) List at least 2 strategies that will prepare you to effectively deliver the value opportunities to the five contacts listed above. (Look at the strategies you listed in Exercises 3 and 4 for ideas, or find a better fit from your required reading, discussions with people you regard as authorities in selling, etc.) It’s okay to use the same strategy in more than one instance. Just don’t get lazy... this is your life you are planning. You owe yourself your very best.

(E) If you’ve done a good job in the four steps above, your completed TOOLKIT sheet will be a solid plan for improving your sales effectiveness - no matter what you want to sell.

CONGRATULATIONS!
WORKSHEET: Exercise 6 - TOOLKIT - Reaching Out with Value

PRINT AS MANY COPIES OF THIS WORKSHEET AS YOU NEED (5)

List one of the 5 most important contacts in your worksheet for Exercise 5 - Learn About Them & What They Value

List the first of the 3 most important opportunities to provide value for that contact

List at least 2 strategies that will prepare you to effectively deliver the value opportunities to the contact above

List the second of the 3 most important opportunities to provide value for that contact

List at least 2 strategies that will prepare you to effectively deliver the value opportunities to the contact above

List the third of the 3 most important opportunities to provide value for that contact
List at least 2 strategies that will prepare you to effectively deliver the value opportunities to the contact above.

Now, consolidate all the important opportunities to provide value into a single list by using a highlighter to mark each different value opportunity listed. Those are the value opportunities available to you for immediate development. You have, through this exercise, defined between 3 and 15 value opportunities as today’s most important for advancing your Life Plan.

Next, consolidate all the strategies you listed prepare yourself for delivering the critical value opportunities. Use the highlighter to mark each different strategy only once. Your list should include from 2 to 30 strategies. If it’s 2, you may not be giving this the investment in time and creativity it deserves. If you listed 30 strategies, do some editing and/or make sure you completely understand the exercise. No big deal, just ask somebody.
Exercise 7  - TOOLKIT - Tracking Value Delivery
Exercise 10  - TOOLKIT - Your Current Contact Assets

This exercise helps you assess your current inventory of customer/prospect contacts. Print the Worksheet for this Exercise 10. Write in the 10 customers and/or prospects who are most important to reaching your goals. Not the organizations where your best buddies work or the organizations you’ve known the longest and are most comfortable visiting. List the ten that are the most important to your long-term success. The ten that represent the keys to your Sales Plan.

Now, with brutal honesty, write in the highest-level contact you have in each company. By contact, we mean someone who would know your name and answer the phone if someone said: “__________ from__________ is on the phone for you”.

Now, write in the person who actually makes the decisions you need in order to ‘sell’ to that organization. You’re looking for the person who can decide, without needing to ask someone else’s permission. If your highest level contact is not at least as high as that individual, you don’t have much real influence in that organization. If you don’t know who has the authority to make those decisions, you need to get to work.
## Exercise 10 - TOOLKIT - Your Current Contact Assets

**PRINT AS MANY COPIES OF THIS WORKSHEET AS YOU NEED**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Current Customers / Prospect</th>
<th>• Highest Level Current Contact</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Person Who Makes the Decisions</td>
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<tr>
<th>Current Customers / Prospect</th>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Person Who Makes the Decisions</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
## WORKSHEET: Exercise 7 - TOOLKIT - Tracking Value Delivery

### Top 10 Current Customers or Contacts

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Do they ask me for help?</th>
<th>Do they trust me with information?</th>
<th>Do they ask for my opinion?</th>
<th>Do they refer others to me for help?</th>
<th>Do they invite me to events</th>
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