

July 2012



Focus On
Ken Thoreson

Top Sales Associates

Supporting the Global Sales Community

8.5 qualities of a sales leader.
How many do you have?

by Jeffrey Gitomer

The right use of logic and
emotion in sales

by Gerhard Gschwandtner

How to hit your numbers and
become a sales superstar

by Joanne Black

Process: can success really
be just mechanical?

by Paul McCord

6%, 20%, 74% —
where are you?

A Conversation with Dave Kurlan

Also inside: Top Sales Highlights and *Jonathan Farrington Uncut*

Welcome

Whooooosh! Did you hear that? It was the sound of Q1 and Q2 rushing past.

How are you doing against quota YTD? Actually, that was a trick question, because we already know: Around 52% of you are not where you should be, which means you not only have to get into gear and hit those Q3 & Q4 numbers, you also have to make up that short-fall. Who said that we only bring you good news?

Well, we can assure you that we at **Top Sales Associates** are here to support you in any way we can: Over at **Top Sales World** amongst the host of resources there for you, we publish a brand new sales tip every day from a team of top sales experts: We also post a brand new interview every week, and Linda Richardson and her team are there to offer advice on your most pressing sales issues.

If you are a sales leader, you absolutely must acquaint yourself with **Top Sales Management**, where you will find everything you need to make you successful ... articles, "How to" guides, interviews, sales team development sessions etc. You not only owe it to yourself, but you also owe it to your team to become the best manager you can be!

And so on to this month's magazine: We have four superb articles from Jeffrey Gitomer, Gerhard Gschwandtner, Joanne Black and Paul McCord. Linda Richardson is interviewing Dave Kurlan. Jonathan Farrington is asking if we need a cull of salespeople in his regular "JF Uncut" column, plus we announce this month's "Top Sales Article of the Month"

So you see, we do care, and we really do want you to be in the "winner's enclosure" come the end of the year.

The Admin Team

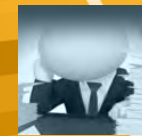
PS: Whoops, almost forgot, the "guvnor" has just launched his new consultancy, so you better keep him happy by popping over and taking a look – **Jonathan Farrington & Associates** – Thanks!

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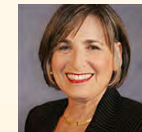
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from the past four weeks ... in case you missed them

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At last, a resource site dedicated solely to sales leaders - including Sales Managers, Vice-Presidents of Sales, Sales Coaches, Sales Directors and CEO's

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The Busy Person's Pages

Here is what you will find in this month's edition.



8.5 qualities of a sales leader. How many do you have?
by Jeffrey Gitomer

Take me to your leader. If you have one. Are you a leader? Do you aspire to be one? Are you a true leader or a leader in name (or title) only? Leadership is the true challenge for the next decade. Entrepreneurial ... [Read More](#) ▶



A conversation with Dave Kurlan
by Linda Richardson

Dave Kurlan is founder and CEO of Objective Management Group, an assessment company, and Kurlan & Associates, a sales force development firm. Through OMG he gets to look at the good, the bad ... [Read More](#) ▶



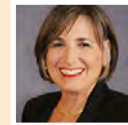
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by Gerhard Gschwandtner

Selling is a transfer of energy that comes from two sources: logic and emotions. Guess what has more influence over a buyer's actions? To explore this further, let's review some of the logical elements that ... [Read More](#) ▶



Top Sales Article of the Month announced – Plus the ten nominees for June

Where do the articles come from? Each month we select the very best sales articles from the major article sites, which have been written by top sales gurus from around the world. We cull through till we find ... [Read More](#) ▶



How to hit your numbers and become a sales superstar
by Joanne Black

Batter up! Baseball season is in full swing here in the United States. It's time to get your sales prospects on base. Baseball is a long season with 162 games per team over approximately 30 weeks. . It's probably the ... [Read More](#) ▶



Focus On
Ken Thoreson

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Is it time to get rid of a few salespeople?
by Jonathan Farrington

“So Jonathan, are there too many salespeople in the world?” That’s not really a question one expects to be confronted with at a private dinner party. Unfortunately, like those poor medical practitioners who ... [Read More](#) ▶



Process: can success really be just mechanical?
by Paul McCord

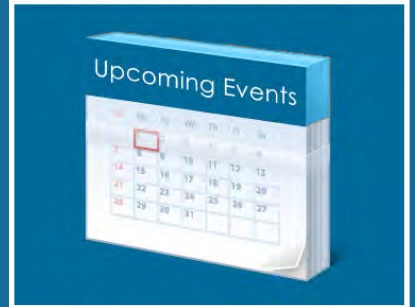
Today you hear some version of the same message almost everywhere you turn: “What makes a company successful is process [successful companies] find a formula that works.” “You simply ... [Read More](#) ▶



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from the past four weeks ...
in case you missed them

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8.5 qualities of a sales leader.

How many do you have?

Take me to your leader. If you have one. Are you a leader? Do you aspire to be one? Are you a true leader or a leader in name (or title) only?

Leadership is the true challenge for the next decade. Entrepreneurial ventures are starting in record numbers, competition is stiffer than ever, customers are demanding more, and profit margins are

thinning. All of these trends create leadership opportunities.

Do your people follow you or avoid you? Do your people respond to your assignments? Do your people complete their tasks? On time? Are the meetings you lead structured, supportive, and encouraging?

Where do leaders come from? Everywhere. Some have natural aptitude and environmental advantages, but all leaders must learn the fundamental skills if they want to gain or maintain their position. If you're having a hard time following, you might try leading.

Here are a few leadership challenges to ponder:

- Are you tired of being a follower?
- If you want to lead, where do you start?
- Are leaders born or made?
- What is the best way to become an effective leader?
- What are the leadership skills you need to develop?
- Do your people want to listen to

you, or do they HAVE to listen to you?

If you are one, or want to be one, check out these 8.5 qualities of "what it takes" to be an effective leader:

1. Maintain a positive attitude.
Be solution oriented-action oriented-people oriented. A leader's enthusiasm is contagious. If you get too close, you can catch a serious case of success.

2. See change as an opportunity.
Change is certain. Followers tend to resist change. It is the mark of a leader to welcome change and take advantage of the opportunity it presents.

3. Deploy courage.
Douglas MacArthur said, "Courage is just fear that holds out a little longer." Good advice. George Patton said, "I don't take counsel from my fears." Good advice. Leaders choose courage.

4. Take a risk.
The biggest risk is to never take one. One of the hallmarks of success is the willingness to risk. Leaders are determined to win or try again.

5. Listen.
Listen with the intent to understand. Leaders listen to learn. Your prospects know their needs, and they know what's happening on the front lines of their business. Just listen.

6. Communicate.
Leaders set the example for open

communication. They use their heads, say what they feel, and speak from their heart, not from their policy.

7. Delegate and empower.
Leaders share responsibility. They don't dictate. They set examples for others to follow. Leaders encourage growth in others by challenging them to take new responsibility, encouraging them to succeed, and supporting them if they fail. Leaders understand that mistakes are lessons on the way to success.

8. Understand others, yourself, and your situation.
Leaders understand the importance of an open, inquisitive mind. A constant quest for knowledge brings greater understanding.

8.5 Commitment.
Commitment is the catalyst that makes all the other leadership

There is one rule that is universally applicable. This rule, when followed, makes great leaders. Unfortunately, this rule is employed the least: Lead by EXAMPLE.

qualities a reality. Daily rededication to commitment is the difference between leaders and would-be leaders.

Rate yourself between one and ten in those 8.5 areas. If your score is under 80 (highest possible 90), you need help.

Whether you lead your company, lead your sales team, or lead your peers-how you employ and implement your leadership skills will determine your leadership success.

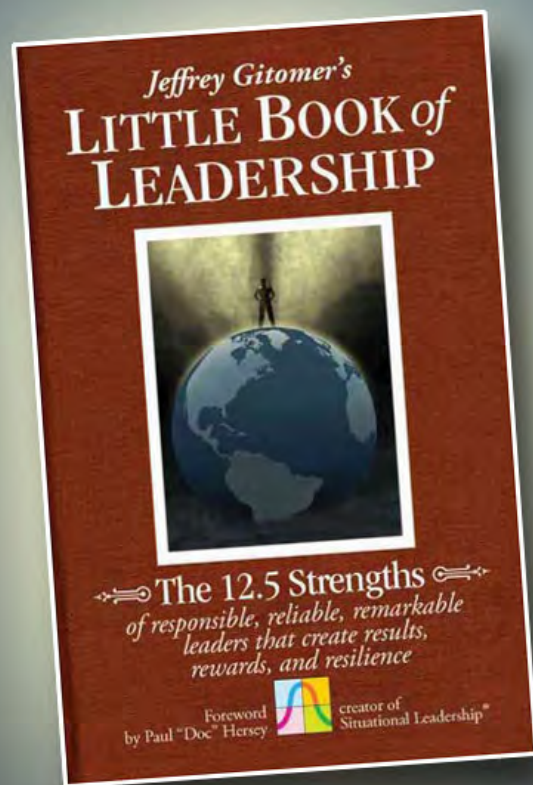
If you're a business owner. You wear many hats. So many owners fail to realize their first job and biggest responsibility is in sales. How you lead the sales team determines how the rest of the business fares.

If you're a sales manager. Lead, don't manage. Your hands-on support and encouragement is often the difference between exceeding your sales goal and finding a new job.

If you're an aspiring leader. Start small. Lead a group or committee. Do whatever is necessary to make it a winner. Do it again, until it begins to feel natural. Respect the power of leadership-and the power of the people you seek to lead.

There is one rule that is universally applicable. This rule, when followed, makes great leaders. Unfortunately, this rule is employed the least: Lead by EXAMPLE.

Want more tips? Find them in my **Little Book of Leadership.** ■



This article was written by **Jeffrey Gitomer.**

To find out more about **Jeffrey**, visit: www.gitomer.com



6%, 20%, 74% — where are you?

A Conversation with Dave Kurlan by Linda Richardson

Dave Kurlan is founder and CEO of **Objective Management Group**, an assessment company, and Kurlan & Associates, a sales force development firm. Through OMG he gets to look at the good, the bad and the ugly of what is happening within sales organizations worldwide everyday.



When he works with CEOs - the usual decisions makers for his sales organization assessment work - if they so much as mention the words “getting consensus from their teams” he is quite direct in telling them they won’t get it. Why? Because the data he collects on the organization’s current capabilities and the analysis he provides is often

perceived as threatening by sales leadership. As he described the situation, I was reminded of the song, *Don’t You Bring Me No Bad News* from the musical “The Wiz”. But hiding bad news doesn’t change it, and Dave illustrates that facing it can.

Unfortunately, the news is often “dark and gloomy” but the bright side emerges for companies that get a clear *data* driven picture of why their sales team is performing the way they are, and how much better they will perform once the skill gaps are filled and the right people are in place.

For twenty years OMG has been innovating, and its data is based on the evaluation of 600,000 salespeople. In their engagements OMG answers the top 10 to 20 business questions their customers have not been able to answer such as *“What impact is sales management having on the performance of my salesforce?”*

“Can the sales organization execute its strategy?” “Can a particular group execute?” “Can they be saved?” “What will it take to save them?” OMG provide all the answers backed up with black and white data and it’s the answers to these questions that often disappoint the leaders!

One piece of data that might surprise you is the breakdown of how sales people are performing: only a scant 6% of salespeople are evaluated as excellent, 20% are good, and a staggering 74% are not making the grade.

When I asked Dave what insights we can glean from the data as to why so many salespeople are underperforming he didn’t hesitate in attributing underperformance to a lack of consultative skills. The data shows that on average the salespeople they evaluate have only 21% of the attributes of a consultative skills set. Dave

emphasized that whilst there are huge gaps in closing and huge gaps in hunting, it is the consultative skills side that is a difference maker.

A question customers often ask: *“Is the transformation of underperformers possible?”* I expected more of a resounding “yes” from Dave, but he was justifiably more measured. He said “usually” and explained that it depends on the skills-levels of the sales team and the factoring in of the length of the sales cycle. He pointed out that the ability to turn underperformers around varies for every company and industry. He explained that if the sales cycle is relatively short and the skill gap of underperformers is not huge, the underperformers can usually be saved in 8 to 12 months with a performance plan and coaching. However, when the sales cycle is longer and the skill gap is deeper, it is more of a challenge to develop (save) the underperformers

While the profile has been evolving for the past 20 years Dave noted that it is the recent dramatic

The challenge of coaching is two fold: sales managers must have a skill set that enables them to develop the skills of their salespeople and the coaching skills to change behavior and reinforce the sales process.

change in buyer behavior which has created four significant changes:

- The *Work Ethic* has changed. The eight hour workday for a salesperson is gone. He sees the need to work three times harder to achieve the same results and to “live, eat, and breath the business you are in.”
- *REAL Consultative Skills* are essential. Dave believes that just a few years ago a salesperson could come into a territory with relationship skills, industry knowledge, transactional skills, experience, be known in the territory and succeed. Not so today. Although consultative selling has been around for a long time Dave’s data shows that most salespeople are still engaged in transactional selling.
- Salespeople must come with *Business Social Networking Skills*. The days of salespeople being computer illiterate are gone. Developing up-to-date computer skills and taking advantage of cutting edge sales tools is not an option. While this is not an issue for a younger generation of salespeople, many of the more experienced salespeople have not fully embraced technology but must do so or be left behind.

- *Build Business Acumen*. Dave acknowledge this is a difficult area to assess and it could be the next frontier for assessment. But without industry and business and deep customer knowledge salespeople will not be able to bring value at the level necessary to meet the new demands of their sophisticated customers.

It is impossible to talk about the performance of the sales team without considering the performance of the sales managers. The biggest change OMG is seeing in sales management is the huge move to coaching which has become the primary role of sales managers. The challenge of coaching is two fold: sales managers must have a skill set that enables them to develop the skills of their salespeople and the coaching skills to change behavior and reinforce the sales process.

I asked Dave what salespeople could do to be in the ranks of the excellent 6%. His advice: *“Really think about how selling has changed and how your buyers have changed. Think about how consultative you are and don’t take for granted you are consultative. Understand that the profile of a successful salesperson continues to evolve and be open and ready to change how you sell.”* ■

Linda Richardson is the Founder and Chairwoman of Richardson, the global sales performance company and is responsible for product and sales strategy. www.richardson.com





The right use of logic and emotion in sales

Selling is a transfer of energy that comes from two sources: logic and emotions. Guess what has more influence over a buyer's actions?

To explore this further, let's review some of the logical elements that can influence the outcome of a sales call:

- Product knowledge
- Customer knowledge
- Social information
- Sales process
- Diagnostic questions
- Sales-ready messages or call script
- Persuasive proposals
- Persuasive presentations
- Call timing

Most sales training prepares salespeople to tap into the right information, ask customers the right questions, diagnose the right problems, create the right solution, prepare the right proposal, and close the sale at the right time. It all sounds wonderful during the sales-training program, and it looks great on a whiteboard. The trouble is, when salespeople believe that their job consists of building a prefabricated bridge made of the right logical elements from the seller to the buyer, those salespeople will

be disappointed 80 percent of the time.

Zig Ziglar once said, "*Logic makes people think, and emotions make people act.*" I am convinced that the logic bridge between buyer and seller represents only 20 percent of the buying decision in a B2B setting. If logic was all it took to persuade a buyer, we could move the entire sales process online and eliminate the need for salespeople, just like Amazon did.

What Creates Emotional Impact?

Dr. Albert Mehrabian at UCLA found in his research that feelings and attitudes are communicated 7

percent by words, 38 percent by tone of voice, and 55 percent nonverbally. Since most inside salespeople use the telephone as their main connection with the buyer, how we say what we say (tone of voice) has five times more emotional impact than what we say (the actual words).

What creates emotional impact is the salesperson's ability to do the following:

- Create feelings of trust and rapport
- Affirm the buyer's need for good self-esteem
- Sense the buyer's emotions in the moment
- Show empathy
- Appropriately reflect on the buyer's emotional expressions
- Adapt to the buyer's rate of speech
- Harmonize with the buyer's tone of voice
- Get in synch with the buyer's emotional energy
- Complement the buyer's moods with uplifting statements
- Give the buyer emotional space to facilitate free associations
- Draw out and address the buyer's hidden fears
- Support and enhance the buyer's positive viewpoints
- Project and maintain positive energy throughout the call
- Be authentic and spontaneous

These points describe some ways that sellers need to meet buyers' emotional needs so that buyers become comfortable with sellers. This list is by no means complete, but it creates a composite image

that defines likeability.

Sales trainers and sales managers constantly remind us that selling is a people business and that we buy from people we like. Guy Kawasaki tells of how he met Richard Branson in Russia. They met in a green room before a speaking engagement. When Branson asked Kawasaki what airline he used, he learned that Kawasaki was loyal to United because he had the highest status there. Branson didn't use logic to persuade Kawasaki to become a customer; he simply picked up his leg and started to polish his shoes with his jacket. Kawasaki switched to Virgin America in a heartbeat.

It's about time that we recognized that buyers want to deal with likeable salespeople, and it's about time that we give them what they want. At our last Sales 2.0 Conference, an attendee told me about her interest in a Sales 2.0 solution that was offered by a sponsor. She said, "The salesperson

It's about time that we recognized that buyers want to deal with likeable salespeople, and it's about time that we give them what they want.

This article was written by **Gerhard Gschwandtner**.

To find out more about **Gerhard**, visit: www.sellingpower.com



in the booth perfectly understood my needs, and I shared our pain points with him in great detail. At the end he told me that he would put me in touch with his company's rep in my region. That was frustrating, since I have to go through the same process all over again." Isn't it time for buyers to be able to choose the salesperson with whom they want to work?

With new social CRM solutions such as Nimble or Reachable, geographic territories will be giving way to social proximity, in which leads are assigned to salespeople who have the best social connection with prospects.

In the not too distant future, companies will allow customers to select a salesperson who scores highest in likeability. Who wouldn't want to get a shoe shine from Richard Branson or a direct tweet from Zappos CEO Tony Hsieh or a Facebook "Like" from Michael Dell?

Since most products become commodities faster, the ultimate competitive advantage is the salesperson. In the future, smart companies will give buyers the ability to choose salespeople, based on what they believe is the ideal match between professional competence and emotional intelligence. Emotional proximity could be the ultimate competitive advantage. ■

If you find yourself in a difficult sales or sales management situation, it's very likely that we have already walked that ground. More, we have probably created a paved road through the jungle that you will find easy to walk on and through to a successful outcome on the other side.

Collectively, we have more than 400 year's sales experience between us; We have served on the boards of some of the world's most successful corporations; we have lead sales teams of hundreds- even thousands; most of us have written best-selling books; – but most importantly, we all started out as rookie salesmen and women, and we have worked our way up the ladder- we understand every aspect of selling.

JFA is a genuinely global consulting company, delivering leading-edge sales team development solutions to all six continents, via a team of top sales experts and a network of global partners. You can visit our solutions area [here](#)

Our team of Associates has been carefully chosen, and each of them brings a unique element of expertise and experience in specific sales disciplines, which allows us to present “best-of-breed” training, coaching, mentoring, and advice across the full spectrum of sales team activity. You can meet the team [here](#)

Equally, our Partners are selected after a rigorous qualification procedure, to ensure that they have the very high levels of commitment and skills necessary to maintain the standards of excellence we adhere to.

Philosophy

At JFA, we take an analytical approach to sales team and sales leadership development, and we work with a very simple formula:

Attitude + Skills + Process + Knowledge = Success

Our reasoning is this: **Attitude** is fundamental to any achievement, because individuals

with the right attitude are far more likely to embrace the essential skills, recognize the control that process brings and have the desire to continually expand their knowledge.

Skills are the ‘tools of the trade’ and have to be developed on an ongoing basis. They also need to be specific, because too much time and money can be wasted over-burdening frontline sales professionals with inappropriate and irrelevant skills, without any identifiable plan for their future requirements.

Process brings organization, efficiency and control - both for the individual and for management.

Effective, process provides objective analysis and indicators, which can be benchmarked and accurately measured.

Then, there is of course a need to build in knowledge, and that must include knowledge of products, industry, market sectors, competitors, business, own company and last but not least, self.

It is rare for a sales team to have all four of these elements in place, but those that do have discovered the “Sales Holy Grail” - **Sustained sales growth achieved efficiently, reliably and by design.**

Our primary objective from day one, has been to redefine the parameters governing organizational growth and work with our clients to develop commercial excellence.

Whatever your requirement, we probably have a world-class solution.

You will find us here – Jonathan Farrington & Associates



Delivering world-class solutions via world-class experts ... globally

Company Profile



JFA is a global consulting company, delivering leading edge sales team development solutions, to all six continents, via a team of top sales experts and a network of global partners ... [Read More »](#)

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Associate News

This area is reserved for Associate announcements: In other words if any of them have events coming up, which they would like to promote, then this is their space. If necessary, we can update it almost daily. The “Learn More” link, will take visitors directly to the Associate’s specific landing page



JF Sales Team Assessment Launches July 10th

Hundreds of millions of dollars/pounds world-wide are wasted every year on irrelevant, unnecessary or inappropriate sales skills development: As a consequence, we have designed what we believe is the most sophisticated, and the most comprehensive sales team assessment/audit solution – Optimus+ – which we are almost ready to share with you.

The JF Journal

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Top Sales Article of the Month Announced



The May Winner
“Searching for Excellence”
- 4 tips for improving your
sales team’s success

By Colleen Francis
on: Top Sales Management ▶



Where do the articles come from? Each month we select the very best sales articles from the major article sites, which have been written by top sales gurus from around the world. We cull through till we find the 10 best pieces of sales advice – which we then share with you. The monthly winners compete for the Top Sales Article of the Year Award in December.

The June Nominations

Should Discounting be a Sales Strategy?

Each week I get at least one person asking me if they should reduce their price as a way to increase sales.

By Mark Hunter on eyesonsales ▶

What is the value? Where is the value? Who perceives the value?

You have been making value perceptions and value judgments your entire life.

By Jeffrey Gitomer on eyesonsales ▶

Why doing the right thing is always the right thing

It is not always easy to do the right thing. At times it can be hard to know what the ...

By Dan Waldschmidt on eyesonsales ▶

Is Integrity a Sales Strategy?

I was speaking to a group of professional sales people in Johannesburg, South Africa, on the subject of integrity in business.

By Dave Kahle on eyesonsales ▶

Business Networking and Sex

There have been a lot of books written about business networking and referral marketing. I've written quite a few of these myself.

By Ivan Misner on salesopedia ▶

Let me tell you a story...

Sales people are educators. The typical salesperson spends a lot of time learning about his/her company, and its products/services.

By Adrian Davis on salesopedia ▶

Why is Qualifying a Prospect So #%&@ Hard?

If you read my ebook Why is Selling So #%&@ Hard?, you already know that a ...

By Tony Cole on salesopedia ▶

The Magic of Dialogue

When I think of magic, the first images that come to my mind are magicians with playing cards, hats, rabbits and sawing pretty ...

By Kevin Eikenberry on topsalesmanagement ▶

Create a Selling Culture

Everyone at your company is in sales. The person answering the phones is in charge of first impressions.

By Colleen Stanley on topsalesmanagement.com ▶

Multi-tasking: Crazy Busy, or Just Crazy?

I often observe sales and service professionals who are so busy and who believe that ...

By Nancy Bleeke on topsalesmanagement.com ▶

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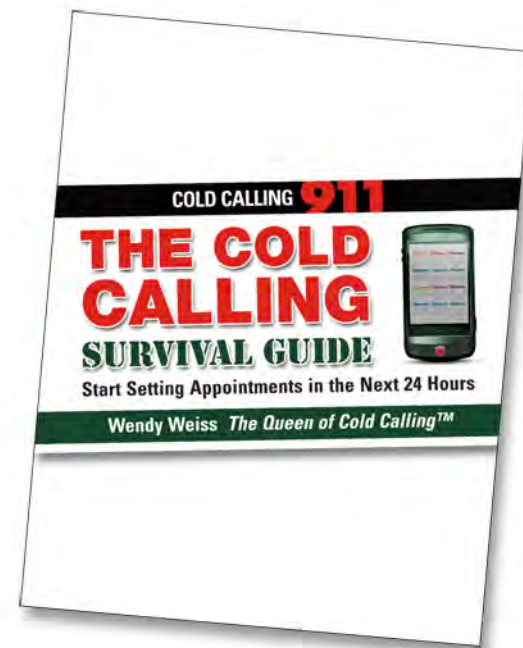
● Salesopedia ● Eyes on Sales ● Sales Gravy ● Ezine Articles ● ChangingMinds ● RainToday

Authors: To be considered for Top 10 Sales Articles, please submit your articles to the above sites, which are the only ones we select from. **We do not accept any articles directly.**

Wendy Weiss is recognized as one of the leading authorities on lead generation, cold calling and new business development. Her newest e-book, **The Cold Calling Survival Guide**, shares her secrets for getting face-to-face with highly qualified prospects. In fact, you'll start setting appointments within 24 hours of reading it.

You'll learn how to:

- Identify real prospects fast
- Grab your prospect's attention in the first few seconds
- Get more appointments and more sales in today's tough selling environment
- Overcome fear forever
- And much, much more!



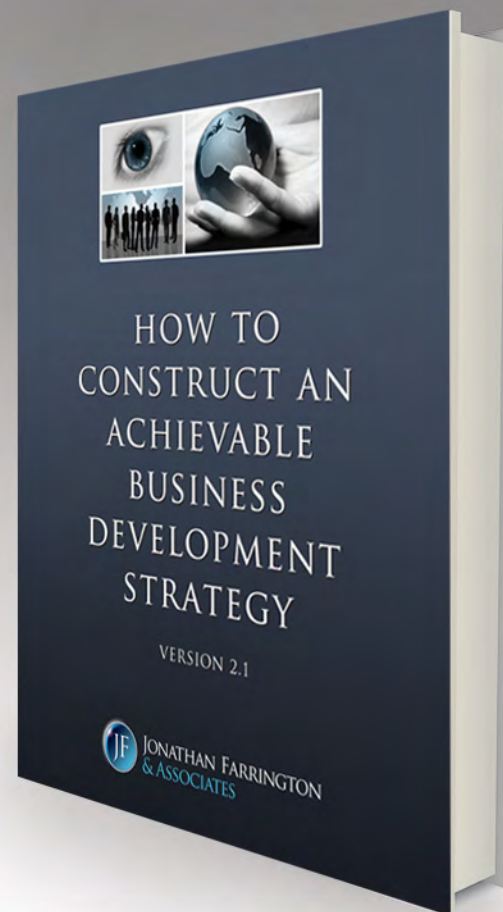
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“How to Create an Achievable Business Development Strategy”

for **FREE** when you sign up to receive the JF Journal. (You will then receive a brand new “How To” guide every week for the next 12 months).

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How to hit your numbers and become a sales superstar

Up your hitting average through referrals, and up your sales game for a winning season.

Batter up! Baseball season is in full swing here in the United States. It's time to get your sales prospects on base.

Baseball is a long season with 162 games per team over approximately 30 weeks. It's probably the only sport where you can be 30 percent successful and still be considered a star with a multimillion-dollar contract.

Let's break down what it takes to be a superstar. Here's an example from the movie, Bull Durham:

In baseball, what separates a superior hitter from an average hitter is only 30 more hits in a season. That's all. While a .250 hitter is considered an average ball player, a .300 hitter is considered superior. If each of them has 600 at bats in a season, a .250 hitter will have 150 hits, while the .300 hitter will have 180 hits. The difference of only 30 hits equates to approximately one extra hit per week for an entire baseball season.

What's Your Batting Average?

This is the same kind of analysis you need to do for your business. How many additional “hits” do you need to get to reach your revenue and profit goals? How many more



referral meetings and referral clients will get you to your goal? Choose all of some of these metrics to manage your referral activity:

- The number of people you ask for referrals each week
- The number of referrals you receive
- The number of referral meetings you schedule
- The number of referral meetings you conduct
- The number of new deals you book
- Increases in revenue
- Increase in deal size
- Increase in new customers
- Increases in profitability

Business referrals come from

everywhere. Think about it. Identify all the people you know (and you know lots of people). The people you know, know people. (**Everyone is part of your sales team.**) And you don't know who people know until you ask. You might get the perfect referral from your attorney, a fellow passenger on an airplane, your fellow employees, your next-door neighbor, or even your family. **You're the missing link in your sales success.**

Ask for at least one referral week, and you'll hit the ball out of the park. You may not make millions of dollars, but you might help your clients do the same. You'll be at least a .300 hitter, and everyone wins. (**Here's how to ask for a referral.**)

What's Your Referral I.Q.? Take the Quiz

Subscribe to Joanne's free Back in the Black Newsletter and receive our free No More Cold Calling Referral I.Q. Quiz. This interactive PDF presents 13 questions to accelerate your referral business and double your sales velocity! Subscribe to **Back in the Black.** ■

This article was written by **Joanne Black.**

To find out more about **Joanne**, visit: www.nomorecoldcalling.com



Focus On Ken Thoreson



Acumen Management Group Ltd. "operationalizes" sales management systems and processes that pull revenue out of the doldrums into the fresh zone of predictable revenue.

During the past 14 years, our consulting, advisory, and platform services have illuminated, motivated, and rejuvenated the sales efforts for organizations throughout North America. Ken provides keynotes, consulting services, training and products designed to improve business and

revenue performance. The sales management thought leader is recognized as an expert in sales execution, channel management, revenue generation, sales analysis, compensation, forecasting, recruitment, and training within the sales function.

As a speaker, Ken energizes

audiences and recharges their personal commitment to professional excellence to help drive personal and organizational change and growth. In addition to the 3 books based on his Sales Management Guru series, and Success Simplified, co-authored with Stephen Covey, Ken's many articles and nationally recognized blog are excellent resources for executives who want to revitalize their organizations. He is currently a columnist for Redmond Channel Partner Magazine, a publication for Microsoft channel partners. Ken's blog has been rated in the top 10 sales blogs in the United States

Ken is a member of:

- The National Speakers Association. www.NSA.com
- Founding Chair of CompTIA's IT Business Growth Professionals Community
- Founding Member of Top Sales World and Top Sales Managers www.TopSalesManagement.com

To find out more about Ken, visit: www.acumenmgmt.com

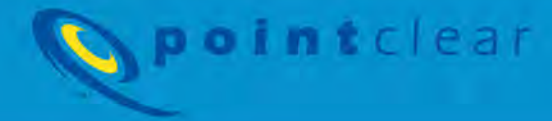
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Is it time to get rid of a few salespeople?

“So Jonathan, are there too many salespeople in the world?”



That's not really a question one expects to be confronted with at a private dinner party. Unfortunately, like those poor medical practitioners who are regaled with requests for advice on everything from ingrowing toenails, to hemorrhoids, I have kind of accepted that if any of my fellow guests have a beef about sales-related issues, then I am going to be in the firing line.

I usually begin by trying to explain that everybody, everywhere, sells every day: Then I have to elaborate, and eventually, I find myself defending this fine profession, which actually, after a couple of glasses of a decent Burgundy, I can do all evening – even with my eyes closed.

But let's take a more pragmatic approach to the question: Are there too many salespeople in the world?

What we do know is that there are too many under-performing salespeople on the planet – about 52% of the current sales population according to Aberdeen's recent report, which I am about to digest in full – I'll report back on the findings shortly.

Why? That is a far more complex question to answer – that is to say, there are several answers.

To begin with, most companies, in most industries, find it easier to keep hiring new salespeople, rather than investing in those that they have already: Rather than stopping and taking stock of their current assets, and thinking about what it would take to get that team operating at optimum performance levels, they play the numbers game, which of course is a complete nonsense, and totally unjustifiable financially.

Let me give you an example. What % of sales leaders do you think could accurately answer the following questions about their own team?

- If you benchmarked your team on an individual basis against the best in your industry/sector how would they fare?
- What would it take for them to become the very best?

- Are you able to measure the impact of any investment you have made in training and developing the team in recent years? – I.e. what return have you seen on that investment?
- What further development is required in order for them to achieve optimum performance levels?
- If any members of the team are currently underachieving do you know why and do you understand what will be required to get them back on track?
- Who in your team is capable of much higher levels of achievement, if they were to receive appropriate coaching?

And then follow that up with:

When thinking about your own sales force:

- Do you understand their motivators – what is driving them?
- Do you have visibility of their numbers – year to date, forecast vs. required performance?
- Activity levels – are they working hard and smart enough?
- Engagement – are they talking to the right level in their prospects/accounts?

But let's take a more pragmatic approach to the question: Are there too many salespeople in the world?

- Messaging – are they capable of delivering an appropriate message at the right level?
- Qualification – are they only spending time on deals where they can compete and ultimately that they can win?
- Closing – are they constructing successful campaigns and closing business?

I'll repeat the question – what % of sales leaders could accurately answer those questions?

Let me give you a clue, it is more than 1% but less than 5%.

That is pretty frightening isn't it?

Secondly, H.R. are getting in the way: They don't mean to, but particularly in the corporate space, they have far too much authority and far too little experience to make the decisions about sales team development that they are making.

In my experience, in this critical area, most H.R. departments are about as useful as a one-legged man in an ass-kicking contest. They should stick to what they are good at, like looking after employees welfare; ensuring that the company adheres to the maze which is today's employment laws, and spending as much time as possible at conferences and on training courses, to add another qualification to their CV. Not in

your company? You are very lucky!

Finally, unlike most other professions, there are no qualifications required to become a professional salesman or woman: I find that very disappointing, and I am also deeply concerned that even the super-rich corporations, who used to put their latest intakes on a solid two year program, before letting them loose on an unsuspecting audience, now believe that around two weeks of product training is quite sufficient.

However, those companies who have implemented their own “academies” – including most of my clients – are reaping rich rewards: Turnover has been reduced to virtually nil; teams are happy, and feel valued; staff typically work longer hours, but are also working smarter, and they are totally committed. None of that should come as a surprise to any of us. When a company demonstrates its commitment to its employees, by investing back into them, those employees are anxious to repay that faith – it is a “no-brainer” and definitely “win-win”

How about you, are you really valued by your company? Or are you one of the at least 80% of sales professionals who remain unqualified to do your job properly? ■

To find out more about Jonathan, visit:

www.thejfblogit.co.uk
www.topsalesassociates.com
www.jonathanfarrington.com





Process: can success really be just mechanical?

Paul McCord discusses the issue of whether success can really just be mechanical.

Today you hear some version of the same message almost everywhere you turn:

“What makes a company successful is process . . . [successful companies] find a formula that works.”

“You simply cannot be successful in complex sales unless you have a solid process. A proven process is more important than anything and everything else.”

“If you want to be successful, you must concentrate on developing an effective sales process that produces the results you want because that IS the secret of success.”

“Top producers have a repeatable process. Everyone else

has only unfounded hope.”

All of the above were picked from things I have read in just the past week. And these are far from the only ones, I could go on and on with statements in the same vein from recent articles and forum discussions.

Process is the concept du jour

Process=Success

No process=Fail

Everyone's on the bandwagon promoting the current hot topic.

Now, don't me wrong, I'm a firm believer in process. I have a process for almost everything I do and I'm a strong promoter of process. I've written numerous articles and two books that are centered on process. I firmly believe that a proven, effective, repeatable process is one of the foundations to a successful sales career or a successful business.

I don't, however, think it is the most important ingredient or the one that determines whether or not one is successful.

Important, yes. Absolutely, positively, 100% critical? No, not really.

Success in sales or business is far more than simply turning the right mechanical knobs or punching the right buttons.

Don't we wish it were that easy? Simply create a formula that seems to work and success is guaranteed.

We can all think of companies who have a formula that works and appears to be the cornerstone of their success. Let's take three examples that we all know: McDonald's, Disney, and Kentucky Fried Chicken. I'm taking these because they are familiar to everyone and the real reason for their success is easy to identify. We could take examples from any industry and any selling situation,

but these three are very simple, straightforward examples of where the cornerstone of success for them lay. **In each instance their business formula helped, but it wasn't the thing that exploded these companies.**

What made McDonald's, McDonald's? Was it Ronald or the Hamburglar? Not at all. Was it the machine like efficiency demanded of each franchise and the requirement that the food taste exactly the same no matter what franchise one visited? No, that came later.

McDonald's success lay in the heart and soul of Ray Kroc. Kroc was a never tiring evangelist for McDonald's. He lived and breathed McDonald's. In a sense, Kroc forced McDonald's success because he wouldn't settle for anything less.

McDonald's successful formula was built and perfected over time. Kroc's drive and determination gave him the time needed to refine and improve the system that the original founders of the McDonald's concept had begun to devise. It took Kroc three years and a bunch of money to develop his successful process—a process that is still being perfected today. If Ray Kroc hadn't had the passion to demand success, there wouldn't be a McDonald's, at least not as we know it today.

In the same manner, Mickey, Minnie, and Pluto didn't create

Disney. **Disney was more a creation of Walt Disney's drive and passion than Mickey's popularity.** Long before Mickey was born, Walt had to overcome lost contracts, a former buyer of his cartoons stealing his entire staff of artists save one and his at that time one original cartoon character, Oswald the Lucky Rabbit. Oswald might have been lucky, but Walt wasn't. Most would have folded their tent and given up after having everything they'd built torn down—especially by someone they had worked with and trusted.

But like Kroc, Walt had passion and unlimited drive. He believed in himself and he believed that success was right around the corner—if he just continued to sell his passion. His dedication and drive paid off. Shortly after losing his staff and Oswald, he found Mickey. Although Mickey was a success, he still wasn't the success formula that “made” Disney—Mickey gave Walt the money and time necessary to find his ultimate mega success formula which was turning cartoons into feature length animated movies and the spinoffs from them that continue to this day.

Likewise, Colonel Harland Sanders and Kentucky Fried Chicken's success isn't due to a business formula but rather to a man who believed so passionately in his product and

his vision that retired and broke, he hit the road to sell his chicken formula to cafes and restaurants across the country—and his share if they used his secret recipe? A nickel for every chicken they sold using it. It's hard to make a living at a nickel a chicken—even in 1955.

Process is a tool for a salesperson just as a paintbrush is a tool for an artist. Put a paintbrush in the hands of an artist with the passion and drive of a Leonardo and it becomes an instrument to create beauty; put it in the hands of someone one who is only looking to make a buck and it is nothing more than a tool used to paint a wall.

The same is true with sales. Put an effective process in the hands of someone with the passion and drive of Harland Sanders and it becomes an instrument for changing lives; put it in the hands of someone who is disconnected and only interested in making money and it becomes nothing more than a way to make a sale every once in awhile.

By all means, find a predictable and effective process; it will help you make sales. If you want success, you must marry that process to deep, heartfelt passion and drive because whether we like it or not, success isn't mechanical; **success is nothing more than the outward expression of one's passion, drive, and vision.** ■

Success is nothing more than the outward expression of one's passion, drive, and vision.

This article was written by **Paul McCord.**

To find out more about **Paul**, visit:
www.mccordandassociates.com



Top Sales Highlights

from the past four weeks ... in case you missed them

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