

| David Staughton

EFFECTIVE CLOSING

**TECHNIQUES & TIPS FOR QUALIFYING BETTER
AND CLOSING FASTER**

How to find your ideal buyers and identify different styles of buyers (Convincer Strategy)
How to avoid wasting time by using listening and questions to qualify your prospects
Effective questioning and group dynamics that help close and confirm the sale quickly



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Chapter 1

Surveying & Strategizing

“In real life, strategy is actually very straightforward. Pick a direction and implement it like hell.”

– Jack Welch, former Chairman and CEO of General Electric

In the previous books of this series, we’ve brushed upon a multitude of tips and tactics to get you ever closer to your client and to closing sales and doing business successfully and happily. This final installment is the last stepping-stone to reach the far end of the river, that slippery bank of success. You’ve proven yourself worthy, and you’re very nearly almost there. All you need is a final calculated leap, and you’ve made it.

Of course, it’s not over then. You can’t just collapse on the grass and call it quits after that. Because what sort of business—not to mention life—would that be? Of course you’ll get up again, journey forth, and work to ford your next river. That’s the beauty of it all: chasing your dreams, pursuing your passion, authoring your life’s story and not just following a script.

For now, however, let’s focus on this river. This leap. This final step of converting a client and closing a sale. Focus. And you can do this.

Know About Strategies: How Do Others Succeed?

What happens on a battlefield? Before, during, or after a fight, a master general has to know his or her bearings, has to know who exactly he or she has on his or her side and against whom he or she is fighting. He—or she, of course—needs to be alert and flexible at every instant, ready to strategize and re-strategize at a moment's notice.

Like such a general, you need to take a precious moment and **look around, survey your environment, and see what's happening**. These are strategies that other successful generals have followed. Since it works for them, why not for you? Why not at least test them out? Let's give them a good look first...

According to those who have found success in the business world, this success springs from:

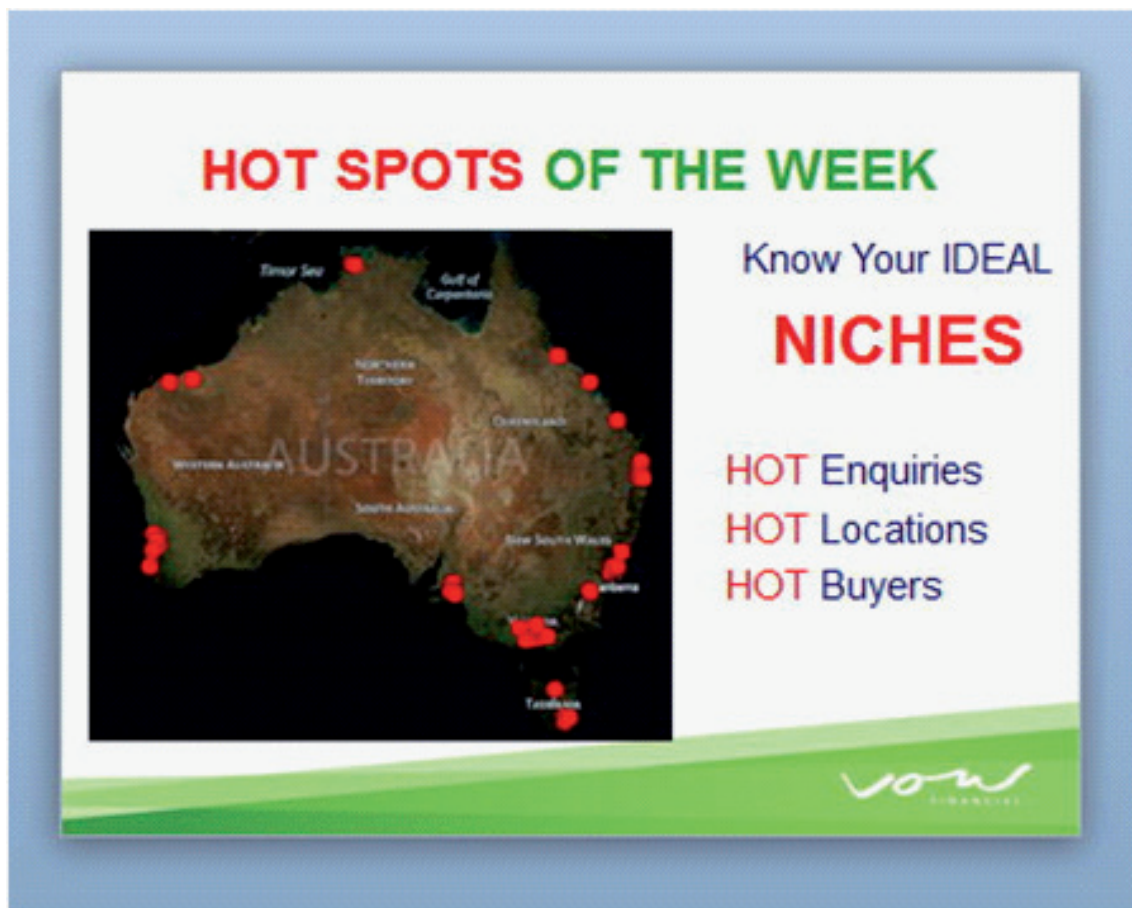
- 1** ■ **Making more calls:** you know, the “how's things?” friendly enquiry. Especially in this day and age, it's a pleasant surprise to have someone surprise you with an actually pleasant phone call, a call with no expectations and no strings attached.
- 2** ■ **Selling more add-ons and extras:** you may also have heard of this as “diversification.” The more diverse and plentiful your products and services, the more likely your client will find something to his or her liking.
- 3** ■ **Asking for repeats and referrals:** keep digging for more gold, more weapons, more allies: What else? Who else? Ask at the end of every sale, and keep practicing: What else are you thinking of? ... What else are you after? ... Who else do you know?
- 4** ■ **Developing niche expertise:** this is about playing up your specialty—that thing you really excel at.
- 5** ■ **Networking with the best:** the best clients, that is. Take your top 10 clients out and discover what industry or association or events they're involved in, and take the plunge to hang out with them. These are the folks who want to put an arm around you and say, This guy here is really, really good. These are the folks who recommend you and support you; they're your best clients and best referrers. And they definitely deserve your time.

- 6** ■ **Rewarding your buyers and referrers for their leads:** what gets rewarded gets repeated! Unfortunately—well, fortunately, for you!—this is the “finishing touch” in business that is pretty underrated. That makes it all the more appreciated! I make it my policy now to absolutely send a card and chocolates even if a prospect has just sent me an enquiry, even if I didn’t get the gig or nothing happens from it—because you never know. And a little bit of kindness can truly go a long way. Gratitude is so overlooked and yet so, so powerful.
- 7** ■ **Using LinkedIn...** especially the Premium for Lead Gen. It’s the latest best networking investment, as long as you use it wisely. It’s the best thing I did, stumping up the extra \$20 a month. It literally turned into a massive database where I could contact and do any research on any company or person I needed to. Instantly, you can find anyone you need there; two million LinkedIn users at the moment, and counting.
- 8** ■ **Writing articles** on your blog or other media channels; raise your voice and others’ attention spans—you exist too, you know. And I’m sure you know something well enough to write about it... something in your niche, perhaps. Everyone’s an expert at something. Write a note that implies: Trust me, I know what’s working in this area, and here’s why. Here are a few more tips and tidbits that have proven invaluable for me, and that might be just what you need at this point in time; it doesn’t hurt to know, and it might always help. There are formulas for the sorts of articles and blog posts you write, of course. You need to know your audience, know what they need, what they desire, and offer them that. The tried and tested format? Begin with a bit of an emotional story, draw them in; then get into the “logic” of the piece, the facts and the points you’re trying to make; end up with a call to action, wham and bam.
- 9** ■ **Thanking** your prospects for their interest... and this means the non-buyers, too. “No” means “no, not now”; it doesn’t mean “no, never.” So send a thank-you card anyway, and you’ll be remembered. About 30% of the people who enquire from you probably don’t take a loan or deal from anybody, ultimately. They just put the idea on hold, or something else happens in their lives. So they’re still there and possibly still interested, and you might just access their lives more easily in the future. Anyway, it always pays to be nice.

Know Where You Stand: Today's "Hot Spots"

Another essential item on your general's to-do list is to **know where you stand**. What have you conquered? What are you moving towards? Where's no-man's land? Where are the land mines and where are the Red Cross encampments? What are the hot spots of the year, month, or even week?

In the business world, these **"hot spots" = your ideal niches**. They're where you're likely to have the most luck with enquiries, locations, and buyers. If you find yourself developing a certain set of enquiries, or honing in on a certain location, or getting along well with a certain set of buyers, you can begin developing a bit of a niche. The example image is a download of the property hotspots in Australia.



Know the Past: What Have You Accomplished?

A generous general also takes the time to boost morale and to celebrate his or her army's victories. So think about it. What's the best thing that's happened? What are your wins? Success stories? Personal best shots? Recent improvements?

Pay attention to these. Looking back at the rocks you've already crossed and remembering some amazing jumps that you made is very encouraging. You should know how you've gotten where you are right now before you trudge on forward. **You need to review your lessons before you can implement what you've been taught.** Know what works for you, and celebrate these small or big successes. Did you have a record-breaking month? Are you getting more referrals from family, friends, and existing clients? Have you befriended some really smart people?

Know People: Who Are You Dealing With?

Finally, know who you're dealing with—on both ends of the field. The closer you get to people, the more you influence them; the more people get to know each other, the more they like each other... or at least understand each other.

In business, this is huge. It can start with the tiniest thoughtful gesture: i.e. August 5th is International Beer Day; have you ever had anyone wishing you a happy beer day? We do. We sent out a message to our clients, wishing them a happy International Beer Day, especially to the ones who enjoy an ale or two. It's unique, thoughtful, and sweet. It's also a constant reminder that we exist and are thinking of them!

Timeless Strategy: The Road to Success

Toyota knows a thing or two when it comes to cars... but, even more importantly, marketing! They've launched a twelve-step program called "Road to a Sale": it's extremely structured, and pretty basic. And if you stop a moment to think about it, it makes perfect sense. (Hey, it also helps explain their very attractive sales reputation!)

- 1. Meet and greet.**
- 2. Find the facts.** Ask diagnostic questions.
- 3. Sell from stock.** Sell what you already have.
- 4. World-class walk-around.** Do a demo, show 'em what you've got.
- 5. Evaluate the trade-in.** Get the details.
- 6. Get seated and relaxed.** Comfy sells. Get them nice and comfortable.

7. **Trial close.** Let's give 'em something to think about...
8. **Get a commitment.** It's about overcoming the obstacles.
9. **Negotiate.** This means deal-making and details time.
10. **Proper turn to F&I.** Sell ad-ons. Extras. Insurance. All that jazz.
11. **Proper Delivery.** Celebrate a great finale.
12. **Follow up.** And ask for referrals. Of course!

Timeless Attitude: Beacon of Positivity

Remember, you only get one chance to make a first impression. To be exact, you've got about seven seconds. Ninety-three percent of how you're judged is based on appearance and body language; 7% comes from your spoken words. Either way, you want to be sure to establish the rapport and respect we've discussed in the previous ebooks—and of course, you want to be prepared.

The first impression is what opens the door... but it's not enough to keep it propped open. Only you can do that: you, as a continuation of the first impression, you in your entirety of character. Your attitude and behavior, your *character*, is what keeps the door open.

Take a moment and think: are you the sort of person you'd like to do business with?



Rapport is critical: establish common ground and a level of comfort and ease and confidence between yourself and the client. Imagine if someone just rings you up and you dive straight into the meat and potatoes, so to speak—the diagnostics: **how much do you want, when do you want it, how do you want it**—and you don't invest in building any rapport. It's kind of like going around asking people to marry you on the first date! If I went around asking **Will you marry me?** on the first date, seems I've missed a step, right? (Not to mention I'd be getting some very strange looks in response!)

Just so, if you don't ask any diagnostic questions and just run your spiel, and if you trash the demonstration and testimonials and features and benefits, and if you don't get your client comfortable and relaxed, you'll have a poor closing and will be left wondering why oh why you did not make a sale?

“Timid salesmen have skinny kids.”

– Zig Ziglar

So rapport is important. But you can't have rapport and bring out the best in someone without first bringing out the best in you, too. A genuine person is like a breath of fresh air: always welcome and most likely to be appreciated. A good attitude is your biggest gift, your strongest weapon, your greatest ally in making connections and establishing relationships.

You attract what you are: be a beacon of positivity, acceptance, and optimism. Show some love, and be generous with your smiles. They cost nothing, and mean everything...

“Don't criticize, condemn, or complain no matter how bad things are in your life. Put on your best face. Fake it till you make it.”

– Dale Carnegie

Chapter 2

Be Prepared

“Life belongs to the living, and he who lives must be prepared for changes.”

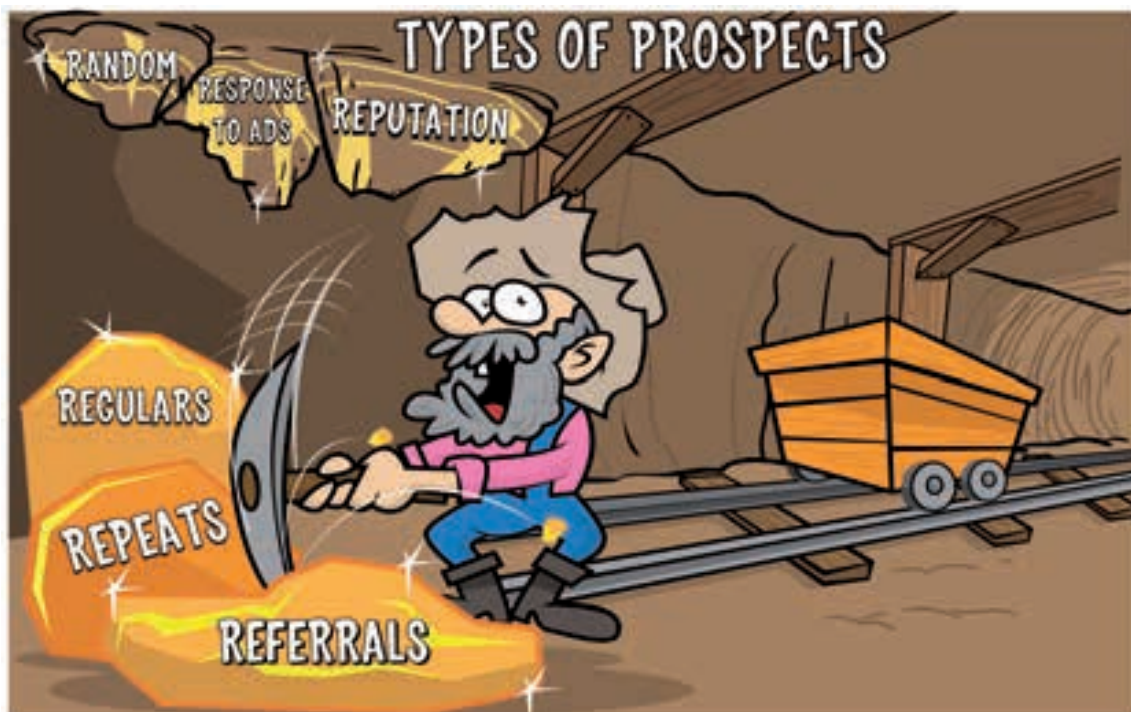
–Johann Wolfgang von Goethe

It’s always good to know what you’re getting yourself into. There are six different types of prospects whom you’re most likely to deal with. Your job is to understand them, make them comfortable in dealing with you, and interact with them about the sale. Ultimately, you want to close the deal, of course—but don’t be surprised, however, if you learn a lot about human nature along the way. Open your eyes, your mind, your ears... and the opportunities will unfold in turn.

Know Your Prospects

1 ■ The Six Types of Prospects

- **Regulars.** These are the folks who deal with you often. They trust you. They keep coming back, they're always ringing you up; they like to do business with you.
- **Repeats.** They've dealt with you before, at least once. They know you.
- **Referrals.** You've been recommended to them by a past client or an alliance; thus warmed up, they're more comfortable in approaching you. My favorite question to pose for them this is: ***Do you mind if I asked how you found out about us?*** And they reply, ***Mary sent me.*** Next of course I ask: ***What did Mary say about us?*** And then you get a delicious serving of positive comments, so you know what you're at least doing right!
- **Reputation.** They know about you from others, or have read about you online; they know more or less what they're getting into, and they are at least a little interested. You're going to have to work harder to build rapport and show your value, though.



- **Response to Ads.** They know a limited amount about you, but you're not completely unknown to them. Again, you'll need to put in more effort to share your services and connect positively with them; on the upside, as they know next to nothing about you, you can pick and choose your business's most positive aspects to highlight!
- **Random.** They don't know about you or your services. Yet. You definitely don't want to be too premature in the closing with these prospects. Make sure to really spend a bit of time.

2 ■ You Are Not Your Prospects

It's important to remember that your clients are just as unique as you are! That's to say, even in instances when you might easily build rapport, empathise, and find yourself on the same wavelength, remember that **you are not your prospect**. Your likes and preferences do not necessarily mirror those of everybody else. Each person has his or her own values, opinions, and ideas about any given thing. While it's your job to persuade, it certainly isn't your job to impose.

Know that the best persuasion comes from the act of putting yourself in the other person's shoes, seeing what he or her likes, wants, and needs, and tailoring your product or service to him specifically and personally. Which leads us to...

3 ■ The 3-4-3 Rule

This means that, on average, out of 10 people whom you address, there will be three folks who love everything you love. Yes! Those curtain shades are amazing! Yes, I want to remodel my kitchen this way! Wow, the cabinet color is exquisite!

Then there are those four people who are in a gray zone of tentativeness or nonchalance: they *might* like you and they *might* agree with you—if you're prepared to be a bit behaviorally flexible to get on their side. *Well, I was thinking it wasn't the right season to remodel yet... but I think your offer is a really decent deal. Do you provide any other services along with remodeling?*

Finally, there are the three people who generally disagree with your complete point of

view. I don't want to invest in these materials. Not from you people. The colors shown here are out of the question. My kitchen doesn't need remodeling anyway. Hmm, these people are kind of like the anti-you.

10 people = 3 agree with everything + 4 maybes + 3 disagree with everything

If you only broadcast on Channel You and only do things the way you like, you're probably going to win only three clients out of 10 prospects. But there's a huge opportunity right here: the people who invest in dealing with the concerns of the guy at the other end are the ones who can double their sales just by being a bit more flexible!

Seven out of 10 is a lot more attractive than three out of 10, don't you think?

Talking To Your Prospects

People are like snowflakes: no two fall the same. So when somebody falls for you and your persuasive marketing tactics, know that this technique won't work for everyone, but it's a good rule of thumb to begin with and build off of. Different people decide to buy things in different ways.

1 ■ Buyer Convincer Strategy

Say you're trying to sell me a house. I'm the type of person who has to validate my preference many times before coming to the conclusion of my decision. But once I make the decision, it's a done deal. I'm sure about it. I want to check it out three, four times, and then I'll make up my mind. Some people are like that; they want to come into contact with the business, check out a whole bunch of testimonials, try on that piece of clothing a few times, and finally make up their mind to go with it or not.

There are other folks who want to have a good look at it first, then think about it on their own—for a couple minutes, an hour, a day, a week, several weeks, several months—and once they decide **on their own** they'll come back and let you know the verdict. They might be slow to decide, but they'll let you know when they are ready.

Still other people are more comfortable with extra interaction. They have trouble in making up their minds, but they're more open to your opinion. This is where you need

to be prepared, knowing what to say to give them a push: a gentle nudge in the right direction, but not a shove that's hard enough to knock them off their feet or out of your office or off the phone!

Then again you've got others who are impulse buyers, choosing something on the spur of the moment or on the heels of an emotion or idea. They need immediate attention, and their attention span is limited, so you need to be in the moment and take full advantage of it!

In a nutshell, be attuned to:

- **The number of times** a client needs to consider.
- **The length of time** he or she needs to decide.
- **The types of proof** that he or she requires.
- **The amount of proof** that he or she requires.
- **Why she buys:** decisions based on emotions first and logic later.

2 ■ Selling to Different Types

Whether your client is the type of person who wants an agenda, wants more information, wants to set up an appointment first, wants to just drop in, you need to be receptive and respectful of his or her needs. Some people are picky about the location—their turf versus yours—and some want you to be prepared before the first meeting. Some want to just “take it as it comes” and establish a friendly basis without any business in the first interaction, while other people have a preferred time of day to do business. Then there are, of course, the elements of speech: speed, rhythm, style (small talk or not?), and all those various preferences in conversation. By now, especially having read the previous books of this series, you know how to pick up on those and mirror them most effectively.

Use a checklist to decide what general “type” your new prospect is and what he or she needs you to do:

- **Send an agenda?**
- **Send pre-information?**
- **Set up an appointment or drop in anytime?**
- **Location? Stand or sit?**
- **Time of day? Morning, afternoon, evening?**
- **Small talk and chatting? Cutting to the chase?**

- **Fast or slow talker?**
- **Dot points or stories?**
- **Process-focused or results-focused?**
- **Lenience (Would he or she be forgiving of a mistake on your part? Can you take risks?)**
- **Amount of time needed to decide?**
- **Nibbles or limps; buys in portions or the whole complete solution?**
- **Happy with claims and benefits?**
- **Needs case studies and proof?**
- **Needs testimonials? Demonstration? Detail and tech data?**
- **Wants a guarantee?**
- **Open to alternatives?**

3 ■ Choose Comfort for Conversion

If I've learned one thing in all my dealings and business transactions, it's that **comfort boosts conversion**. One of the most note-worthy and effective strategies in this domain of comfort is the **Cozy Corner Technique**.

Think back to a time when you sat opposite from somebody at a desk. When and where did such interactions take place? It probably will remind you of once upon a time when you were in trouble with the school principal. Or that time down at the bank manager's office when he or she was giving you a hard time. Or when you were with your accountant, getting the nerve-endings in your brain all jumbled with the numbers. Or when the doctor was explaining his or her findings about your illness.

Usually, in general, there are a lot of negative feelings associated with those one-on-one across-a-desk interactions. Little wonder, then, that we've been programmed to be wary of such instances, to put our guard up and to listen suspiciously or defensively to the person—the feared or even disliked “authority figure”—at the other side of the table.

“If you're not taking care of your customer, your competitor will.”

—Bob Hooey

And yet, it's just as easy to dispel such negativity and preconceived bias! Avoid sitting opposite from your prospect or client at the desk. Grab a chair and sit across or next to his or her on his or her side of the desk. Better yet, sit at a round table or sit on the

corner of a table and sit him or her by your dominant hand; if you're right-handed, seat him or her to your right, and respectively if you're left-handed you can seat him or her at your left. Some people prefer a nice solid comfy couch and a low table instead of a desk. Do whatever it takes to get your prospects comfortable, because only then will they buy!

The main trick that you can learn in negotiations also concerns the scenario of talking to two or more people at a time. Sit where you can see both (or all) of them. Don't have one person sit to your right and the other person to your left; when you're talking to one and facing him or her, the other person feels left out. If he or she feels left out, know that you've just slashed your chances of doing business with him or her. Sit them both on your dominant side, and watch the pattern of conversions grow!

Cozy Corner Recap:

- **Avoid sitting opposite** from them across a desk.
- **Avoid sitting between** them.
- Sit at a **round table, or on the same side** of the table.
- Sit them on your **dominant hand side**.
- Comfy **couches and low tables** preferred.

Taking care of your prospects means looking out for their wellbeing and comfort as well. You want to make sure they're seated on comfortable chairs that won't prickle their behinds and won't stiffen their backs. Is the temperature okay? Too hot or too cold means that their subconscious brains are focusing on the degrees in the room—and not on doing the deal or on you. The more you can **reduce distractions**—noise, smells, glares of light, and so forth—the more likely you are to convert to a sale.

Provide hospitality; treat others as you'd like to be treated. In some cultures, this is more important than anything else; it's the norm to offer a cup of coffee or a refreshing glass of juice in the Mediterranean countries when you go for a haircut or to get your car inspected—one wouldn't even stop to consider returning to a place that lacks this basic hospitality. Generosity is charming and relaxing. Provide refreshments, but also be attentive to the mood and emotions of your clients.

“The secret of man's success resides in his insight into the moods of people, and his tact in dealing with them.”

– J. G. Holland

This latter characteristic is called having **Sensory Acuity**. I once had an appointment with a couple who apparently had a massive argument in the car before they showed up. As soon as I saw them, it was clear that she had just been crying her heart out. Honestly, this was not the time to go and try and sell them anything. So I calmed them down first, talking about a whole bunch of neutral and pleasant topics, got her a drink, made them feel comfortable. Once she was calm and he was comfortable, they got the ball rolling by themselves. If I'd pressured them in any way before that, the sale would have gone up in smoke and the mood may have sadly soured even more.

The Compassion Recap:

- **Comfortable seating** (Spongy and stiff foam chair? Cushiony couch?)
- **Right temperature** (20-24 degrees C is often ideal)
- **Reduced distractions** (noises, smells, glares)
- **Hospitality provided** (refreshments)
- **Sensory Acuity** (observe emotions)
- **Private time** (to consider options, visit the WC)



Loving Your Prospects

1 ■ People Will Buy... When They Like You

That is a fundamental truth. People won't do **anything** with you if they don't like you (and if they have a choice, naturally). But on the other hand, people will do **many** things for you if they do like you!

"If you work just for money, you'll never make it. But if you love what you are doing, and always put the customer first, success will be yours."

– Ray Kroc

On that same vein, if prospects do not buy from you it is probably because there is not enough love. They won't tell you that, of course! **Hey Dave... you know, I don't really like you very much, so I decided not to buy. Instead, they'll blame price or variety: Sorry... you're too expensive for my budget right now... sorry, you don't have what I'm looking for.**

Next time you don't land a sale, question yourself if you've fallen prey to any of these six common mistakes:

- Failed to **connect** personally with them; you didn't match their personality.
- Didn't build enough **rapport**.
- Didn't **understand** what they really wanted.
- Weren't **flexible** enough to their specific needs.
- Didn't **ask** for the sale.
- Couldn't demonstrate your own **value**.

If people don't buy from you, it's probably because you failed to connect personally with them.

These are the big six mistakes that stop you from getting the sale. The process of closing and the results of your conversion rate are a different story. This is the pre-closing, the build-up to popping the big question. If you haven't connect on all the right levels, if you haven't invested in the conversations, the romance, the flowers, the chocolates, the bonding—well, don't be surprised if your proposal gets turned down.

2 ■ Be Fully Focused: One at a Time

How many times have you tried juggling too many things at once—we like to call this “multi-tasking”—only to discover that you’re actually wasting more time than you’re saving? This is because we can only really devote ourselves to something when we give it our full time and energy and attention. Otherwise it’s half-hearted work... because we’re only half there.

We discussed in a previous book how when you’re speaking to people over the telephone, they can hear your smile. Likewise, they can also easily pick up if you’re not giving them your full attention. If you’re speaking to someone over the phone and you’re typing on the computer at the same time, he or she can tell. Not just because of the clacking noise in the background; your answers are hesitant and spoken a bit absently perhaps; half of your mind is elsewhere. And this actually backfires. Instead of giving the impression of you being busy, it just implies that you don’t care.

“To speak and to speak well are two things. A fool may talk, but a wise man speaks.”

– Ben Jonson

Doing just one thing at a time pays off big time. Put all your attention to the prospect, because he or she’s constantly listening to your verbal and nonverbal feedback, always gauging your reactions just as you should be gauging his. That’s the beauty and dynamic of an interaction, anyway. If you miss out on that, you could very easily miss out on a sale.



3 ■ Match Your Prospects

This has to do with what we mentioned before: it's important to match the pace and style of your prospect or client. Fact is, people like people who are like them. There are some folks who are very fast-paced, both in the decision-making process and in conversation; there are others who are more laid-back, who like to take it slow, who need space and time to digest things. Some people are very blunt and results-oriented, while others only open up after some friendly small talk and chatter. Then again, there are folks who are more visual, others who are auditory, yet others who are more kinesthetic.

Also, the more you find out about your prospect—his or her line of work, family, recreation and interests, likes and dislikes—the more you'll be able to relate to his or her and ask his or her personal questions to show you care. Interacting on a personal level, as well at a professional one, works highly in your favor.

How many times have you felt good, walking into an office or store or anywhere, where someone remembers your name, asks about your family and remembers your ailing mother, remembers that you recently returned from a business trip and is happy you made it home safe. You feel as if you've got an ally, a friend in that place. It's an invaluable feeling. It's the bond of connection. It creates a thread of trust and cooperation between the two of you—that is exactly what you want and need.

Thus, the more you are like the people whom you're trying to pitch to, the better results you'll get...

4 ■ Selling to a Group

Keep in mind that you're dealing with a different dynamic when you're selling to a group of buyers. Maybe you're dealing with a couple, or a family, or two sets of parents, or whatever. As soon as you can, you have to watch for and identify two important people:

1. The Decision-Maker

The real one... just like they implied in *My Big Fat Greek Wedding*, the real power in the family comes from the neck of the house, not the head of the house—"because the neck can turn the head anyway she wants"...

2. The Red Flag Buyer

This person is actually the power person, but he or she doesn't say anything to show that. Sometimes you've been pitching to the person who was making all the noise and getting all the fanfare... and suddenly a parent or a spouse or someone else cuts you off and says, **No, we're not going to go with this option at this time.**

So make sure you've included everyone, just in case. Make sure you've asked questions of the quiet people. This is a committee. The noisy ones will vote for anything; they'd do a deal this next second. But take your time to demonstrate and explain, make sure everyone's on board, as much as possible. Pay attention to everyone in your peripheral vision—this includes children and pets. It's the trait of an attentive, caring person. Try to make everyone comfortable.

Also, remember to allow privacy and give them space. A group of people will often want time to discuss things.

You might even want to pair up, yourself. If you get another person to come with you, you can pitch the sale as a team. That way, you've got someone who is different on your side, so both of you together are more likely to appeal to more people in general. If you're a loud, fast talker, enlist the help of someone who's more reserved and soft-spoken (or vice-versa). If you're good at finances and logistics, get someone who is more communicative and more of a people-person. You want to be able to play across the board; good dynamics between the two of you, balancing each other out, will equate into better dynamics in the entire setting.

Effective Questions and Appreciative Listening

A good conversationalist knows the right questions to ask. The best way to do judge which questions to ask, is by listening to determine what must be said and shared.

Questions vary, of course, depending on the situation and the type of answer you're looking for. Here are a few basics:

■ Confirming Questions

- *Does this fit with the ideas you had in mind?*
- *Does this sound like it would meet your requirements?*
- *From what we have discussed, I see that [...] Do we share the same view?*
- *From what you've told me, I understand that [...] Is that what you were thinking?*
- *Based on the information you have given me, my suggestion is that we [...] Is that what you are thinking?*
- *It sounds like you are unsure about some of the information, can I answer any questions for you?*
- *So the main things I need to keep in mind are [...] Is that correct?*
- *How would you see us resolving that for you?*

■ Budget Questions

- *It sounds like you have some reservations; did you have a specific budget in mind?*
- *You mentioned you wanted the best loan—did you have a budget in mind?*
- *So do you have a budget to work with?*
- *Is the cost a concern for you? We do have some packages available that do have some conditions, would you like me to go through them with you?*
- *What do we need to do to win your business?*
- *It seems this may not be within your budget; may we suggest a loan package that suits your requirements?*
- *This is a basic price as you requested; there may be additional costs involved once you see what other options are available, all right?*

■ Price Questions

- *What is your budget range?*
- *Do you have a price in mind?*
- *Have you a price range you are working in?*
- *What price sounds good to you?*
- *How much are you looking at spending?*
- *What are you looking to spend?*

■ Competitor Quotes Questions

- *When getting quotes, make sure that you receive a quote for all services; would you mind if I explained this to you a moment?*
- *Quotes might seem low; check that they include all the services you need, however—can I give you an example?*
- *Yes, quotes will be different; we've found it's a good idea to list exactly what each item is so that you are being quoted on the same things across the board; would you like me to email the details to you?*
- *When you're getting quotes, be wary of just getting a global quote or one figure; there may be additional things included that are not covered. We give a detailed itemized quote to ensure that there are no hidden surprises. Would you like me to email you the details?*

- *Getting further quotes is a good idea; ensure that they're quoting for all of the things you require—could I ask you to give me a call back with the opportunity to match the other quotes you receive?*
- *I understand you need to obtain further quotes; do you mind if I call you tomorrow to see how that is going?*

■ Timing Questions

- *Have you been looking around for long?*
- *Are you ready to buy now?*
- *Have you just started looking?*
- *Are you in a position to buy today?*
- *Ideally, when would you like to buy?*
- *Are you prepared to buy today if I can give you the right deal?*

Show the love. Ask supplementary questions related to what they just said. Get them to talk about the things they love to talk about. They'll feel good and they'll anchor those positive feelings onto **you**.

Another way of showing the love—the biggest way, as a matter of fact—is in your positive and attentive response. Your responses must be both verbal and non-verbal. Eye-contact, attentive body language, an open expression, a smile; use all of the basics of good communication. Affirm their words—and them, personally—with verbal cues of acceptance and attentiveness:

- **Great! Good!**
- **Sure thing! Absolutely.**
- **Terrific! Amazing.**
- **Wow! Really?**
- **Yes—that's popular!**
- **Yes, we can.**
- **Well done!**
- **Right with you on that!**

You want to encourage them, and make them feel special. When you give someone your undivided attention, he or she immediately feels it, and is much more likely to reciprocate in turn.

Chapter 3

Know What (and Why!) People Buy

“Advertising is the ability to sense, interpret...
to put the very heart throbs of a business into
type, paper and ink.”

– Leo Burnett

The Benefit of Benefits

Another important element in creating conversions and improving closing rates is to use more features and benefits. People love buying benefits. So rather than just leaving it at *Here's the loan. This is what it does... launch into the benefits: which means... that means... because it's...it's proof of... it'll pay off faster... it's an intelligent return on investment... it's better for a family in case you'll have a baby... it's less risky... it's better value...*

“Don't sell life insurance. Sell what life insurance can do.”

– Ben Feldman

A common problem is that many folks who are either the originator or the manufacturer of any particular product just talk about the features—they never approach the product from the viewpoint of the customer who is looking for the benefits. Put yourself in the prospect's shoes and think: *What's in it for me?* You have to give *meaning* to the features.

In You They Trust

1 ■ Question Softeners

Question softeners are an excellent strategy to build trust and to literally soften the blow of prodding questions. They characterise your speech with gentility and thoughtfulness, so there's no danger of being mistaken for a member of the Spanish Inquisition.

Try some of these during your next conversation, and see how the mood immediately becomes more mellow...

- *“You see...”*
- *“By the way...”*
- *“It seems to be that...”*
- *“From what you've said...”*
- *“While we're on the subject...”*
- *“As I understand it...”*
- *“Let me see...”*
- *“Can I just ask...”*
- *“Is it all right if I ask...”*
- *“Do you mind if I asked...”*

2 ■ Test the Waters: Trial Closes

Trial closes are an ideal way to gauge how your prospect will react to the closing of a deal or sale. Think of it as “testing the waters.” If your client agrees to a trial close, nothing is stopping you from making the actual close! On the other hand, giving his or her an initial gentle and tentative option offers his or her breathing space that he or she might still need before making the final dive.

- **Visual:** “How does that look?”
- **Auditory:** “How does that sound?”
- **Kinesthetic:** “How do you feel about that?”
“How do you like it so far?”
- **Digital:** “Is this what you had in mind?”
- “Is that OK?”
- “Is that correct?”
- “Would that be fine?”
- “So we’re good on this, right?”
- “Seems like we’re all set, what do you say?”

Trial closes are essential for another reason—if you don’t actually ask for the deal, it may never happen! Your prospect might be waiting for you to make the final offer, and if you don’t, he or she might disappear and never call you back. Seize the opportunity while you can.

The more trail closes you make, the better results you’re guaranteed to get!



3 ■ FAQs and FADQs

For any sort of product or service, you're sure to encounter a bunch of questions that seem to be repeated by a number of customers: these are, of course, your **Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ)**. Know these and keep track of them, because it's wise to plan your answers ahead of time. You can even provide your clients with a list of such questions, either handing out this list in person, referring to the answers during phone conversations, or posting it up on your website for interested prospects to see.

There are some great ways to answer these questions, and some poor ways. The more time you spend thinking about them, the more likely you'll be able to provide your clients with the more effective and thorough answers.

- ***"Can I just get a quote or a price over the phone?"***
- ***"What's the difference between these loans?"***
- ***"How do you charge?"***
- ***"Can you please give me advice on this issue..."***
- ***"After I get the loan, how soon do I obtain the money?"***
- ***"Do I need to have an evaluation?"***
- ***"What paperwork do you need me to bring to the appointment?"***

Then, there are the **FADQ: the Frequently Asked Difficult Questions**. As you may remember from the previous ebooks, these are the questions which you know you'll have to answer once you're asked, but they're not necessarily the ones you'll want to broadcast to the public. Know them and recognize their answers, and provide them upon demand.

- ***"I can get that cheaper elsewhere. Why should I come to you?"***
- ***"I can get that cheaper elsewhere. Why do you charge that extra fee?"***
- ***"What is your credit card policy? Why are you asking my credit card details?"***
- ***"Can't I just go to the bank direct? Are they exclusive to you?"***

Think up the best answers to these most tricky objections and questions. It's best if you've written out some answers that you and your team can consistently deliver. If you're prepared, you won't have to pull a goldfish face once someone really pings you and nails the question.

The Art of Closing the Deal

The process of closing the deal needs mastery, skill, and patience—it is indeed an art. Think of it as creating a sculpture: painstaking, meticulous work, but well worth the effort when the result is a success! Sometimes, we get too excited, too impatient; we rush prematurely into the closing, missing out on the rapport, the diagnostics, the value... one wrong hasty move, and the nose of our sculpture gets chipped off by our aggressive chisel. Instead of a spectacular bust, you're stuck with a sphinx.

Blend your question softeners with your trial closings, and travel your chisel carefully over the sculpture to mark the finishing touches:

- **Prescriptive close:** *"You'll need..."*
- **Action close:** *you do something, like a write up.*
- **Choice close:** *"You would prefer X or Y?"*
- **Add-on close:** *"Now you'll also need..."*
- **Question close:** *"When do you want it?"*
- **Bigger order close:** *ask for a larger order.*
- **Assumptive close:** *Assume the sale is in order, and move on.*
- **Today close:** *"Anything stopping us from getting going today?"*
"If this is the ideal loan for you, will you go the next step to sign up today?"

You might have a particular phrase or expression that has worked for you in the past, something which has become your favorite by-line. If it works, use it! In my old business, one of my favorites was just a simple: ***"I'll just pencil that date in for you. Do you happen to have your credit card handy?"*** One of my gentle closes that really helped nail the deal. But if you don't ask, and you don't close, your prospects will wander off, only to be nabbed by someone else!

1 ■ No Fear

It's a gift to be able to ease a person's fears in an uncertain world like the one in which we live today. There are countless dangers waiting just outside our doorstep, not to mention within. Every day has its own risks and challenges, and many of us learn to tread softly and carry a big stick. Strangers are approached warily, and people automatically put up shields when you try to make a connection... especially to sell them something.

That's why the most important thing is not **what** you do... it is **how** you do it. Your approach, your behavior, your attitude, your tone of voice, your choice of words—all of these encompass the impression you give and the degree of trust and comfort you exude and cultivate with other people.

The words you choose are critical. They can make or break a transaction. Interestingly enough, there's a list of words that are labeled **non-fear inducing**, the ones that promote trust and comfort and familiarity:

- Invest
- Save
- Contribute
- Own
- Autograph
- Okay
- Approval
- Paperwork
- Drop By
- Get Involved

Then there are the **fear-inducing words**, those which are proven to put people on their guard and make them wary.

- Buy
- Fee
- Pay
- Cost
- Signature
- Contract
- Deposit
- Appointment
- Deal
- Stitch Up

2 ■ Yes Words and Embedded Commands

Anytime you can get people to be consistent—and, even better, to consistently agree with you—consider yourself on the right track!

The trick in doing this is in using a series of what are called “yes words” and embedded commands.

- *"Are you happy with that?" ...Yes.*
- *"Is that correct?" ... Yes.*
- *"So you like what you've heard so far?" ... Yes.*
- *"So you're happy with the offer?" ... Yes.*
- *"So you'd like to go ahead today?"*
- *"So you'd like to do that now?"*

"The deal begins when the customer says yes."

– Harvey McKay

3 ■ Six Factors of Influence

The Six Factors of Influence are the handful of key elements that you need, in a nutshell, to practice in order to gain a better conversion rate.

1. **Reciprocity:** helping people out (karma... is a beauty).
2. **Authority:** proven credibility and expertise.
3. **Scarcity:** limited availability.
4. **Commitment/consistency:** yes, yes, yes words!
5. **Actions of others:** social proof; the most popular testimonials.
6. **Likeability:** they actually like you!



Reciprocity: When you do something for someone, they feel more obliged to do something for you. So if I come in and you treat me to a coffee and cake, I'm more obliged to help you out. At the smallest level, this is how our minds work; it's all about the give and take.

Authority. Imagine walking into my office now, ready to do business with me, and then changing your mind... why? Because something is missing. My emblems of authority. You perceive that personally I am lacking in confidence and charisma, I seem to have no credibility, there are no certificates up on the wall, my professionalism is poor, and you've checked that I haven't bothered writing or publishing anything. My authority, in other words, becomes very questionable! Credibility and expertise are often assumed, and you have to provide an image of them immediately as a first impression. Do not underestimate this power!

Scarcity. Supply equals demand; it's an age-old rule. If there's a limited availability of something—or even the impression or illusion of limited availability—people will fight for it. The adrenaline peaks if you give people a message along the lines of: **This is a limited time offer! or This offer is only good while supplies last.**

Commitment and consistency: people who are committed are the folks who will continually show up to do business with you, once you've won them over. **Yes, I've done this before... I did it last time... I was happy... I'll do it again.** Consider these the prized customers who have happily done business with you before, who are the most likely to return, and are also the most likely to refer you to their friends.

Actions of others; or, popularity. Right up there with commitment. Statistics show that 80% of Australians love copying what other people do. So, social proof which says **This is the most popular loan or This is the most popular chosen product** will be upheld by 80% of the population in this nation. Then again, you've got 20% of the folks out there saying, **Nope, I want to be different—I don't want to do anything that anybody else does!** Once you gauge what sort of person your prospect is, you can offer a "this is the most popular area" to your conformists, and a "handcrafted and customized, a loan solution tailored just for you" for your nonconformist crowd.

Likeability is simply the most powerful and simplest element out there: people will do business with the people they like. Being a nice person gets you a stack more business; that's really all you need to know! The old saying **People don't care how much you know, until they know how much you care** has been passed down through the years for a reason... it holds true.

4 ■ Countering Objections With an Open Mind

You won't get anywhere far if you don't know how to handle objections. It's important to anticipate the strongest of these, and have an answer prepared, which will satisfy your prospect. Objections are natural and to be expected; how you parry against them reveals something very significant both about you and your business.

Do any of these sound familiar?

- *"What's your best price? Because this is just too expensive."*
- *"Yeah, ok, but what's your lowest price? That can't be the right price."*
- *"Look, we're really time-pressed. You've only got 10 minutes. You're the first broker we've rung."*
- *"Look, what's the property worth; tell me upfront."*
- *"We're shopping around three banks and we just want your best deal on the loan, that's all."*

Consider it a game of ping-pong. If they throw the ball in your court, you better return it really, really quickly—and it's got to be a good hit. No "ummm uhhh hmmm"s allowed.

Don't let them catch you off-guard or unprepared. Here are some ideas to get you in the proper comeback mindset... score the customer and seal the deal!

■ "What's your best/lowest price?"

- "Depends—just because I answer that, do you mind if I ask a few quick questions?"

■ "It's too expensive!"

- "What exactly is 'too expensive'?"
- "As compared to what?"
- "Is 'cheap' really important to you?"
- "That okay... I can offer you some other alternatives within your budget."
- "Other than price, is there anything preventing you from going ahead?"
- "We're not buying anything until [...], but..."
- "I would be happy to give you all of the information I can today, so that when you are ready, you'll have everything you need to know."

■ "We only have 10 minutes."

- "Ok—I appreciate that. What information could I provide for you in the time you have so that your time will be well spent?"

- **“You’re the first broker we’ve rung.”**
 - “Thank you for calling me first. What questions do you have that I could help you with?”
- **“What is the property worth?”**
 - “Let me get that professionally valued for you while we’re looking at loans, which will save you time in the long run.”
- **“We’re shopping at three banks/brokers, and just want to know your best deal on a loan.”**
 - “Great!—I hope the service I provide you will lead you to consider me when you are ready to buy. Now, how can I be most helpful to you?”
- **Any other general objection...**
 - “If we were to suppose that was not a concern for a moment... are you in a position to decide today?”
 - “I understand... yet...”
 - “I appreciate that... but...”

Appreciate and acknowledge what they tell you; it’s important, they’re telling you whatever they’re telling you for a reason. On the other hand, be ready to debate your point, to draw them gently and logically into your waters, onto your turf. Then they’ll be open to you, and will in turn be more willing to acknowledge what you have to say. That’s when you can show them a solution while they are just stuck on the problem.

Price objections... perhaps the most frequent of the lot. Don’t forget what I said before: they will always blame the price if they don’t like you. This is really wicked. If you take one thing away from this book, let it be this: *if you didn’t build enough love, they will tell you that you’re too expensive.* Australians in particular are far too nice. They won’t tell you that you smelled... or that you’re obnoxious... or that you swear too much... they won’t tell you the truth. They’ll just say, *Oh, you’re pretty expensive ... or, We’ve got someone else.*

That certainly takes you back a few steps. Remember, you have to have a foundation to build upon...

Build up the love!

5 ■ Everything Is Negotiable

So the deal is almost closed—you can see the finish line in the horizon, but you can't tell for sure yet if it's for real or if it's a mirage. On the other hand, if you're only negotiating the price, you're seriously missing out. Everything will be illuminated when you realize that everything is negotiable...

You can negotiate terms. You can negotiate conditions. You can negotiate timing and urgency until you feel like you've squeezed the juice out of a rock. You can negotiate what's included in the deal. You can negotiate exclusivity. You can negotiate extra services, or the amount of assistance provided. And on and on...

- *"We can push this up earlier on the calendar and mark it urgent so you have it when you need it; connect us with your accountant and supplier, and we're good to go."*
- *"If you make me exclusively your broker, I'll give you the best deal..."*
- *"I can help you with this, this, and this. And we can make it quicker and easier and faster for you. And we can provide plenty of assistance; I'll send my team round and we'll organise this for you."*

Think in terms of **possibilities...**

Following Up

1 ■ Another Pitch

One of the best deals may be waiting at the other end of the telephone with a person you've already spoken to. Perhaps it was a bad day for him or her, or he or she was busy at the moment, or he or she needed a chance to confirm with his family, or he or she had something come up unexpectedly that stopped him or her in his tracks. It's considerate and business-savvy on your end to hit him up again after a while. Sometimes you can judge "a while" based off of his cues: ***"Give me a few days to talk this through with my partner"... "I have too many things going on this month"... "I'm waiting for my promotion at year's end to consider remodeling"...***

"I do not think there is another quality so essential to success of any kind as the quality of perseverance. It overcomes almost everything, even nature."

– John D. Rockefeller

Follow up with another pitch! You have nothing to lose and much to gain! At the very least, you've touched based with a prospect, which can be nice; people can enjoy a friendly conversation and a how-d'-you-do. At best, you may seal the deal this time round.

Remember:

**"No" does not mean "No, never!"
It means "No, not now"...**

Sometimes he or she's gone with someone else, sealed the deal, and his or her expectations have not been met. Even better! Now you get the chance to step in and be the savior, because he or she's in trouble. If you help him or her out of a fix, you can be sure that he or she will remember that...

- **"I can get you a loan, even if it's the last minute, we'll get the best thing, at premium price of course..."**

2 ■ A Simple Script

So you know what you have to do... but it can be a little nerve-wracking nonetheless. What if you're rejected again? What if he or she's just not interested again? What if he or she doesn't remember you?

I'll tell you what. Kick all these negative "what if's" to the curb, and focus on what can go right. Stay positive, and sound positive. It'll carry through into the conversation, and you just might convince your prospect that the time—and everything else—is right!

1. Introduce yourself with your name and your representation. Light and friendly! If he or she greets you happily and he or she remembers who you are, that's definitely a good sign.

Hi! It's Dave from White Hat Business.

2. Check his or her attitude and confusion level. If he or she's confused, it might not be the right time to call him or her; try again later.

How are you doing? It's been a while, hope everything is going well for you!

3. State your purpose. (And don't use "just"! You're not "just" calling... you're calling for a specific purpose and because you want to speak with him or her specifically. Never underplay that.)

I'm calling to ...

A Last Word of Advice...

■ **Practice.**

"The more you sweat in training, the less you bleed in battle..."

Don't experiment with customers who are really, really expensive to get. Practice with the small sales first, and build your way up.

Chapter 4

The Recap

“Sales are congruent upon the attitude of the salesman, not the attitude of the prospect.”

– William Clement Stone

■ Use Your Sales Kit:

- Image and Presentation
- Business Cards
- Great Branding
- Stories (success stories... war stories...)
- Qualifications
- Testimonials
- Demonstrations (including pictures and videos)
- Agendas (and all organizational tools)
- Timing: be on time
- Product knowledge: have it
- Merchandising
- Cozy Corner Area
- Confident Pricing
- Scripts and Key Phrases
- Details and the Fine Print
- FAQs : frequently asked questions
- FADQs: objection busters

Anything you can do to improve your sales kit will improve your conversion, your image, and your presentation. Hand out business cards like candies! Vamp up your branding. Take advantage of situations and build on your ability to weave a good tale:

I'm sorry I'm a little late; I just had a client who did [...] and got a really great result, listen...

Show pictures, post up credentials, be organized, always be on time. When you've got your product knowledge up to speed, you can do some merchandising: all your collateral information. Be confident in stating your fees and stick to them; justify the reasons you charge what you do for what you do.

■ Strategy of the Brave:

- Ask for extras
- Ask for referrals
- Ask for testimonials
- Call your referrers
- Give a presentation
- Drop a bad client
- Build your online tribe

■ Strategy of the Diligent:

- Send cards and gifts
- Call anybody that's referred you and thank them.
- Write an article
- Get published
- De-clutter; tidy up
- Do your mirror work
- Practice your phrases
- Listen; repeat; rephrase



David Staughton

AUTHOR | SPEAKER | CONSULTANT

Wouldn't you like to know...

- How you can sell more without ever reducing your prices?
- How you can dramatically increase your sales in quiet times?
- How you can sell the products your customers seem to be overlooking?

David is your man.

Anyone can tell you how to sell more when times are good. David shows you how to grow great profits even in the most turbulent of times.

Growing up in modest circumstances, David worked in his family's hardware store from the age of six. Money was always tight and his family struggled. Tired of hardship, David resolved to become a millionaire by the age of 30 and give his family a better life.

It didn't go exactly as planned. Although David worked hard seven days a week, he found himself with few customers and on the brink of bankruptcy. But something happened...

Within no time David raised himself and his business from the struggle. From narrowly escaping bankruptcy, David went on to create an award-winning business empire in Victoria Australia with several hundred employees and a multi-million dollar turnover. How did he do it?

The good news is that David can teach you his magic.

Everyone can sell popular products during the best times of the year. Selling ice cream in summer is not what David is all about.

David uses his unique, no-nonsense strategies to help you sell during quiet times – without major discounting

Armed with hard-earned experience from the trenches of entrepreneurship, David will demonstrate how you too can make sales when no one else is selling, no matter the time of the year, month or week.



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TOP TELEPHONE TECHNIQUES

USING THE PHONE TO MAKE MORE MONEY

Phone skills techniques that really work
 How to build rapid rapport over the phone
 Best questions to ask and using phone scripts



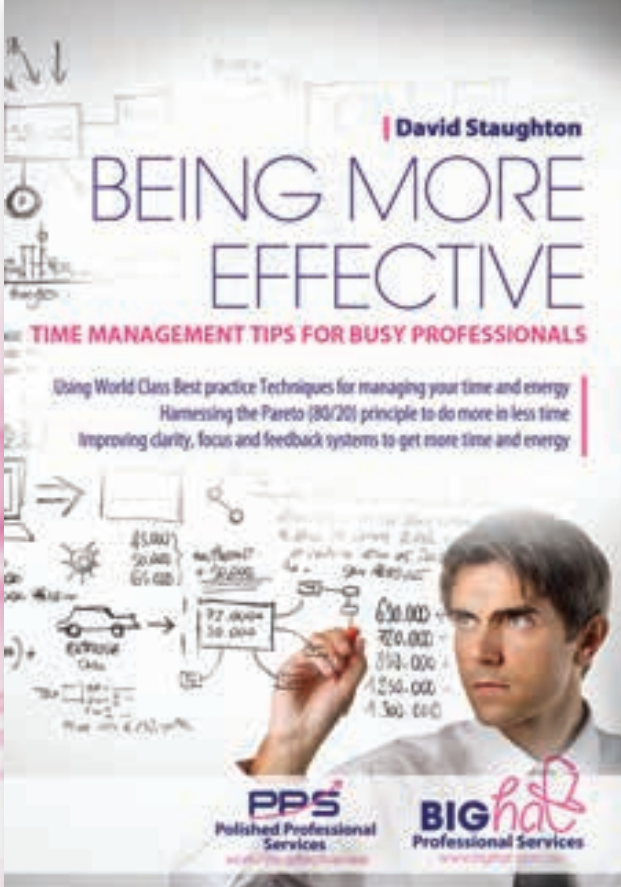
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BEING MORE EFFECTIVE

TIME MANAGEMENT TIPS FOR BUSY PROFESSIONALS

Using World Class Best practice Techniques for managing your time and energy
 Harnessing the Pareto (80/20) principle to do more in less time
 Improving clarity, focus and feedback systems to get more time and energy



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GETTING MORE REPEATS & REFERRAL BUSINESS

HARNESSING WORD OF MOUTH

Deciding what sort of clients you really want
When and How to ask for referrals
Acknowledging and Rewarding your Referrers



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How to avoid wasting time by using listening and questions to qualify your prospects
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