

**IT'S NOT THE SAME**

**THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN SELLING  
IN *THE USA* AND *SCANDINAVIA***





We've been selling in both the USA and Scandinavia, so we've seen firsthand how different these markets are. To dig deeper, we rolled up our sleeves and did the research - reading, learning, and pulling insights from real pros.

One of our key sources? Kay Xander Mellish's books, *Working with Americans* and *Working with Danes*. These break down how people in each culture think, work, and communicate. But we didn't stop there. We've gathered insights from dozens of case studies, learning from sellers, business developers, and industry experts who've compared these markets across all kinds of industries.

And with an intercultural communication specialist on our team, we've put together a simple comparison and some practical tips to show you that the same pitch doesn't work everywhere.

Understanding these differences is the first step to getting it right.

## **Sales isn't a one-size-fits-all game.**

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Different cultures have their own expectations about how they want to be approached.

Let's break down how sales tactics differ between **the USA and Scandinavia** - and why understanding these differences could make or break your deal.

# THE USA: THE SHOWBIZ OF SALES

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In the USA, sales often feels like a performance. Americans enjoy the process - it's exciting, engaging, and a little over the top. A confident, enthusiastic pitch isn't just appreciated, it's expected.

Phrases like "This is the only product you'll ever need" or "This software is to die for" work well because they spark curiosity and optimism.

## What works in the USA:



1

### BE CHARISMATIC:

Energy and enthusiasm are a must. A lively delivery can grab attention instantly.

2

### BE CONFIDENT:

Bold claims like "the best in the market" show you stand behind your product.

3

### APPEAL TO EMOTIONS:

Americans love a pitch that makes them feel something - excitement, hope, or even urgency.

For example, when pitching a wellness app, you'd focus on its transformative power: "This app is a game-changer - it'll keep you motivated, track your progress like never before, and help you crush your health goals."

# SCANDINAVIA: THE PRAGMATIC BUYERS

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Scandinavians? Different story. They don't want a show. They prefer honesty, practicality, and understated confidence. Push too hard, and they'll tune out.

## What works in Scandinavia:

1

### BE DIRECT AND HONEST:

Say what your product does—and what it doesn't. They'll respect you more for it.

2

### DATA-DRIVEN:

Hard facts and proven results speak louder than flashy claims.

3

### LOW-KEY AND RESPECTFUL:

Forget the salesy theatrics. Focus on solving their problem.

For the same wellness app, your Scandinavian pitch might sound like this:

"This app helps you track your health goals with personalised reminders and progress insights. It's not a replacement for professional advice, but it's a solid tool to support your daily habits."

They'll appreciate your transparency and the absence of hype.

# OVERSELLING VS. UNDERSELLING

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**Overselling** is a common sales approach - bragging about your product, comparing it to weaker competitors, and backing it up with flashy stats. While this can grab attention, it doesn't work everywhere. Underselling, on the flip side, can make your product seem too modest, leaving it unnoticed in a crowded market. So, how do you find the right approach?

In the USA, overselling often works because boldness and enthusiasm build trust. People expect confidence and excitement - they want to believe they're buying the best. A bit of exaggeration isn't a dealbreaker; it's just part of the show.

In Scandinavia, the rules flip. **Underselling** - focusing on honest, modest claims - creates trust.

Highlighting both strengths and limitations shows integrity, and overselling can feel manipulative or misleading.

Striking the right balance depends on knowing your audience.



## WRAP UP

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While Americans might see a lack of enthusiasm as a lack of confidence in your product, Scandinavians might view too much excitement as an attempt to manipulate them. Knowing when to turn up the charm or tone it down could be the key to closing the deal.

**Ultimately, selling isn't just about what you're offering - it's about understanding who you're offering it to. Tailor your approach, and you'll see the difference it makes.**

This guide was made to help you see that there's a real difference between markets. If you decide to target new regions, take time to research and adjust your approach.



**We really try to help you - honestly.**

But of course, we won't teach you all the tricks. Every piece of information in our documents can be a turning point in your thinking and understanding of business development - with practical tips, not just theory.

**This document is just a starting point. Everything we do for clients is tailored, refined, and executed to a much higher standard. If you'd like to see what that looks like for your business, get in touch.**