# PSYCHOLOGY OF SELLING

Secret Techniques to Close the Deal Every Time



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# Persuasion Psychology of Selling

# Secret Techniques To Close The Deal Every Time Robert Moore

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# **Introduction**

If you want to improve your social skills, advance in your career or just sleep with more hot women, without a doubt the most important subject you can study is sales. Sales not only equate to revenue - and revenue covers expenses – but also psychological tricks and techniques that can be used pretty much in any situation. From a business standpoint, the ability of a company to cover its costs create stable operations and the opportunity for growth. Without sales, the organization would probably struggle and have a difficult time attracting talent and actually growing the business.

Sales are to businesses, like oxygen is to humans. Without it, your business will suffocate and die. But the truth is, many of the smartest students avoid learning it, and some of the best colleges shun teaching it.

Why is that so? First of all, our society too often disparages the sales profession. Blockbusters like Wall Street, Death of a Salesman, Boiler Room, Glengarry Glen Ross give negative portrayals of selling. As a result, too many look at sales people as "slimy sleazy" liars. And, because so many that gravitate to sales jobs are not adequately trained or qualified, the stereotypes about sales and salespeople are reinforced by the negative experiences of many buyers.

If you started following my advice to boost your dating life, this my new series about Persuasion and Psychology will help you reach the next level. All the fundamentals, techniques, tricks and basic skills regarding the Psychology of selling can be applied to any conversation, mostly when you need to overcome objections. This knowledge will give you an unfair advantage!

**PS**: don't forget your **FREE** bonus book, <u>click here</u> right now to get it!

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# **Fundamental Skills For Successful Sales**

You can approach sales in a lot different ways, but they all tend to rely on the same skill set. Note that these are real-life skills, not talents: talents are inborn, but skills are learned. In fact, anyone has the ability to become an effective salesperson, and good salespeople can become great ones just by honing the following sales skills. Generally speaking, these skills can guarantee success in your life, no matter what you do for a living. They are the foundation for a great life, even for people not involved in sales.

## **Unshakeable Self-Confidence**

This is the most important skill you can cultivate, especially if you're in sales because all the other skills are based on *persistence*. Even if you own and master every other sales skill listed below, but you give up at the first hint of a "no", then you'll never have a chance to apply those other skills.

If your prospect is raising objections and doesn't seem interested in your offer, don't take it personally: always keep in mind that they may act like that because of reasons outside of your control. Focus only on what you can actually control: creating a deep rapport with them and applying the techniques that you'll learn in the next pages. And remember that maybe they're just having a bad day... but if you call back a week later, they may be eager to buy.

Self-confidence doesn't end with persistence; according to the law of state transference, if you believe in yourself and your product, your prospects will be inclined to believe as well. Self-confidence will also incline you towards a more assertive closing approach, which is vital to your selling success. As you'll learn in this book, people need to be grabbed by the hand and led: you have to be the leader of the interaction, so you can't let your prospects smell self-doubt or incongruence during the sales process.

# **Being Persuasive and Influential**

In sales, there's an old saying that "features tell, benefits sell." Features are the cold facts about your product or service; benefits are their emotional connotations. Persuasiveness is the skill that allows you to convey these emotions to the customer, by appealing to his self-interest. For example, a 0% interest rate on a credit card is a feature... being able to save money while

buying the things you need is a benefit! Leverage on their emotions to make your prospects feel how great it will be to own your product and how much their life will improve.

# **Good Listening**

Most salespeople are natural extroverts and talkers. Well, if you're more introverted like myself, I have good news for you: even a great speaker will only get so far without a little listening. Taking the time to ask your prospect the correct questions and carefully listen to the answers shows respect for them, and gives you a clearer idea of what they want.

Here's a trick to get aware of your listening skills, or lack thereof. The next time you cold call a prospect, after you've built a bit of rapport, ask an openended question, hit the mute button and leave yourself muted until you are sure the prospect is finished. By forcing yourself to be quiet, you will notice right away how strong your urge is to jump in and say something before the prospect has stopped talking.

# **Building Deep and Strong Relationships**

This sales skill is just as important to your business life as it is to your personal life. Building and maintaining healthy relationships is the key to developing a strong and secure network, which will allow you to reach far more prospects than you could manage on your own. Satisfied customers, friends, relatives... all of them will bring you more and more prospects if you managed to create a deep rapport with them.

Ever heard of the "Six Degrees of Separation" theory? Let's say you're trying to reach the CEO of a major company, but you don't know anyone who works there. A call or two to your network contacts yields someone who knows someone who works for your target; armed with that person's name and phone number, you now have access to your prospect. When you meet new people, building a strong rapport with them is always the best option: you never know who they may introduce you to.

### **Constant Self-Motivation**

As a general rule of life, you should never stop growing and investing in yourself. Even the greatest salesperson is a constant work in progress. The fundamentals of sales are always the same, but the tools and techniques that you can use to apply them are constantly evolving. Like doctors and lawyers,

salespeople need to stay on top of these changes. A big example for everyone is the recent rise of social media. Instead of giving the same pitch to the same prospects day after day, you can experiment new tactics and keep stretching yourself in new ways. You can always find a way to develop your skills, work on your communication techniques, and learn more about the products and services you sell. Keep in mind that the drive to continually improve yourself has to come from within: it must be internal, not external. Your manager might direct you to make some changes if your sales start to plummet, but if you are always working to become a better salesperson, you can start working on the issue before it affects your numbers.

### Sales Fundamentals

Salespeople from different industries tend to use dissimilar sales techniques. After all, if you're selling high-end services to giant corporations, you'll need to approach your prospects in an entirely different way from someone who sells books at a neighborhood bookstore. Still, the fundamental rules of selling remain the same - regardless of your product type and customer base.

# Sales Rule #1: Know Your Product Better Than They Do

If you don't understand what you're selling, you are going to lose a lot of sales. You won't know the best customer fit for your product, so you won't be able to qualify prospects effectively. If you don't know all the product's benefits, you won't be able to show your prospective customers how it could help them - therefore constantly missing chances to impress and persuade them. And if a prospect asks you a technical question, you won't be able to answer... which takes away the power of presenting yourself as an expert or authority. Selling without product knowledge is like running a marathon with one leg tied behind your back.

# **Sales Rule #2: Respect Your Prospects**

Give, give, give before taking: be honest and honor your prospects. If you feel contempt for your them, they'll know it – no matter how hard you try to hide it. You need to put yourself into a respectful, helpful mindset even before you pick up the phone. Most people think of salespeople as selfish and greedy, which is why the consultative approach is so effective – it turns that stereotype on its head. A good book recommendation to learn more about this is "*The Go-Giver*" by Bob Burg and John David Mann: a great read to shift

your focus from getting to giving.

If you're actually putting yourself first right now, you have huge margins of improvement. Your prospects will probably be hostile and unhappy even if you manage to pressure them into buying. Which means they'll almost inevitably tell their friends, family and colleagues how much they disliked you and your manners. This is not the word of mouth reputation you want to receive!

## Sales Rule #3: Be Honest and Truthful

Another salesperson stereotype that you'll have to overcome is the untrustworthy trickster. I'm sure you know at least one salesperson who sells crappy products or cons prospects into buying a lot of unnecessary extras, or maybe you've seen him in some movies or TV series. Like the previous stereotype, the only way to overcome this unfortunate feeling is to do just the opposite. Remember that a salesman is not a liar, and a liar is not a salesman: they're two different things. If you're selling something good and helpful, you don't have to lie. *Being honest goes a long way*. By being completely straightforward with your prospects, you'll also create a positive impression that will keep them coming back for more - and hopefully send their friends to you as well.

# Sales Rule #4: Be Likeable

Ask a hundred star salespeople what approach they take and you'll get a hundred and one answers – but what they'll all have in common is likeability. Almost all resistance to buying boils down to fear on the prospect's part. We saw the power of likeability in the previous chapters: there's no such thing as being too likable! If your prospects don't like the person in front of them who's trying to sell them something, they're unlikely to buy no matter how great the product itself is. But if they like and feel comfortable with you, they're much more likely to take the plunge. The best way to establish this kind of rapport is dressing well, smiling, keeping deep eye contact, and – most importantly – making your prospects feel like they ARE like you. So be ready to share your feelings, opinions and personal stories. The more they feel similar to you, the strongest the connection built.

# **How People Make Decisions**

The psychology of selling is the practice of understanding how and why sales prospects make buying decisions. The following list will help you figure out what drives prospects to buy, so that you can become more effective in sales. Of course, this list is not 100% complete. Psychology is a deep and infinitely revealing line of study. And while I don't believe in making things more complicated and intricate than they have to be, I think there is great benefit in knowing not only what people do, but also why they do it.

# 1. People make decisions emotionally.

They decide based on a sensation, need, or emotion, not through a logical thought process. That's why emotional and impalpable benefits are the keys to persuasion. While writing or talking, you should ask yourself, "What is the emotional hot button here? What's the deep reason behind? What's the WHY behind this customer's actions?"

# 2. Then they justify decisions with facts.

For example, imagine a man that sees an advertisement with a photo of a sports car and immediately falls in love. However, he can't bring himself to buy the car based on a feeling, so he reads the copy for technical specifics about the powerful engine, safety features, and low maintenance. He wants the car because it makes him feel good inside... But he's going to buy it only when he can explain and justify the purchase rationally.

# 3. People are self-centered and egocentric.

The word "egocentric" means focused around the ego or self. We all perceive the world in terms of how it relates to us personally. So when you're asking someone to do something, never forget to also answer the unspoken question, "What's in it for me?". On a deeper level, the question might be "How does this give me feelings of personal worth?".

# 4. People is looking for value.

Value is not a fixed number. Value is about what you're selling, what others are charging, what the prospect is used to paying, how badly the prospect wants it, and how the prospect sees the difference between your offer and others'.

You must exhibit a value that seems to be equal to or greater than the asking price. The greater the value relative to the price, the more likely people are to buy.

# 5. People think in terms of people.

The human brain is not a calculator, computer, or information processor. Scientists have shown that its main function is to deal with social interactions. Do you remember how some mathematical problems in high school were stated as real-life situations? They were always easier to understand and solve than abstract and general questions. Therefore, you should feature people through names, personal pronouns, stories, testimonials, quotes, photos of satisfied customers, etc.

# 6. People love to buy.

Some say people don't like to be "sold." That's not true.

People love to be sold. They love to discover wonderful new products, services and experiences. What people don't love is to be cheated or deceived. Therefore, it can be helpful to change your definition of the marketing process. As a substitute of "selling" to people, try to "help" them instead. Sell great products, make appealing offers, and treat people properly, fairly and honestly. That's a guaranteed recipe for success.

# 7. People are naturally suspicious.

Most people are moderately skeptical of any offer that is challenging the current state of things. Our natural tendency is to stay in our comfort zone, so we always seek to avoid risk and change.

To overcome their doubts, you have to back up all your claims with evidence, such as success stories, testimonials, test and survey results, authoritative endorsements, and scientific facts.

# 8. People are always looking for something.

Love. Wealth. Health. Comfort. Safety. People are naturally dissatisfied and spend their lives searching for intangible things that would give meaning to their life. Sales, at its simplest, is a matter of showing people how a particular product, service, or cause fulfills one or more of their intangible needs.

# 9. People buy "direct" because of convenience and exclusivity.

In case people could easily find the things you offer at a nearby store, that's probably where many would buy them. If they're not buying from you directly for pure convenience, they're doing it because they can't find the item somewhere else (or maybe they just don't know where to look). That's why you should emphasize the convenience and exclusivity of what you wish to sell.

# 10. People like to see it, touch it, hear it, smell it, or taste it before they buy it.

There's always that percentage of people that never buy online, because they can't examine the merchandise and they don't feel comfortable buying something they're uncertain about. Some items, such as books and CDs, are tangible and familiar enough to sell easily and effortlessly online because there is little doubt about their physical qualities. Other things, such as clothing or food, may be a harder sell, at least until people have a satisfactory buying experience, because quality may be variable.

So, think about how people usually buy things in stores and ask yourself if there's some part of that sensory experience that is missing from your sales message.

# 11. Most people follow the crowd.

Most of us are imitators. We are followers, looking to others for guidance, especially when we are unclear about something. We ask, "What do others think about this? What do others do? What do others feel?" Then we act accordingly. This is why testimonials, case histories and all the other forms of social proof are so influential in any piece of written copy or cold call.

# Sales Prospects Need Justification for Their Decisions

Although the psychology of selling is based in part on emotion, it is also analytical. A sales prospect in a position to authorize a major contract did not achieve his or her position without demonstrating the ability to think critically. Mastering the psychology of selling requires the capacity to provide sales prospects with the information they need to justify a purchase decision.

# Sales Prospects Need a Human Connection with the seller

It's extremely rare for a sales prospect to buy if a human connection with the seller is not formed first. A human connection makes sales prospects feel understood and safe. They're sure they will be treated as valuable human beings throughout the sales process, so they can now drop their defenses and relax.

This fundamental human connection can come from different places:

From client testimonials, stories, recommendations, and referrals that the sales prospect can relate to, which make it easier for the sales prospect to commit to the decision.

From you as the sales person, by forming a healthy relationship that is based on shared interests rather than just selling.

From your company's appeal and approach. People like to assign human traits to intangible and abstract concepts, and with the right marketing, communication and branding strategy, you can create an emotional connection between the prospect and your company, by sharing the same values.

Keep in mind that you don't necessarily have to choose; think outside the box, and you'll be able to have sales prospects feeling connected at all three of the levels listed above.

# Sales Prospects Require Solutions to Their Emotional Needs

Logical reasons to act are necessary, but emotions trump all. You can give a sales prospect all the justifications for making a purchase at your disposal, but he or she won't make a move if his or her emotions are not involved in the deal in the first place.

Sales prospects are constantly dissatisfied and feel that something is missing... but they're often unclear on their needs - and those needs can be almost anything: for example, new ways to increase quarterly production, or better methods of reaching out to clients and retain customers, or reduced daily workloads.

Remember that when it comes to emotions, we're all very similar. Our biggest motivators are: fear, vanity, desire for gain, security, love of family, safety, personal pleasure, luxury or comfort, desire to succeed, self-preservation, prevention of loss. Your job is to just twist the knife in the right

spots to create and then increase their emotions.

# Sales Prospects Like to Experience Before Buying

Prospects like to have a foretaste of the future by experiencing a product or service before agreeing to a deal. This is a skill called future pacing, useful in dating women as well. This helps the prospect envision in his mind how your offering will eliminate particular pains and perform in real-world situations. You should always try to integrate a demo of your offering in action, after you have begun to address both the rational and emotional needs of your prospect.

A great selling technique you can easily keep in mind is called "FAB":

*Feature*: show the physical characteristics of the product;

*Advantage*: now it's time for the performance characteristics of the product;

Benefit: conclude with the desirable result that the buyer will receive.

# **Mastering The Agents of Influence**

Just like any complex structure, our brain contains quirks. A multitude of details unrelated to an object's intrinsic worth can significantly skew our perception of it. The time at which we first come into contact with it, its color, others' viewpoints on it, what we were doing just before it was presented, the words used to describe it...

Bottom line? If you think each opinion you form is entirely rational, you're profoundly mistaken. When it comes to selling your products, it doesn't hurt to be mindful of the brain quirks we're all privy to.

Professor of psychology and marketing, Dr. Robert Cialdini laid out six ways you can get people to say YES to what you're asking. In 1984 he published his best-selling book "Influence", where he presented these six agents of influence and persuasion. They are basically a shortcut for making decisions. Life is too complicated to carefully evaluate every element of every situation, so we quickly learn to take shortcuts to help us make what are usually reasonable and reliable decisions. Anyone who sells things for a living, online or offline, should know, love, and live these six principles:

Reciprocity

Commitment & Consistency

Liking

**Authority** 

Social Proof

Scarcity

Let's take a look how you can implement some of these influence triggers to start getting more friends, sales and customers.

# 1. Reciprocity

The principle of reciprocity means that whenever someone gives us something freely, we subconsciously feel compelled to give something back in return. This principle says that you can actually induce people to feel obliged. Have you ever gone to a store and ended up with an unintended sausage purchase in your shopping cart because you felt a nagging obligation

to buy after you tried a free sample? Well, that was exactly the principle of reciprocity in action.

We are all bound — even driven — to always repay debts of all kinds. If someone does something for you, then you feel obligated to reciprocate. It's that easy... almost an automatic reaction.

Of course, online sellers can't personally visit the house of each customer or prospect to thrust a sample in their hand. So how can you make reciprocity work for you ANY time? The formula is simple: just give away a gift, valuable content, information, assistance, a service... pretty much anything works to create in the other person a feeling of indebtedness. Then you ask for what you want and you can watch the rule of Reciprocity work for you.

# Adding a Free Gift With Purchase

Sometimes you might not be able to offer something in advance; in these situations, you can certainly suggest something alongside, or add a small gift to confirmed orders. This tactic is a favorite of cosmetic and beauty products. Even if you don't advertise the gift up front, slipping samples of other products into your shipped product can create a feeling of surprise and happiness in the customers, bringing them closer to a second purchase.

# The Gift Of Content

Content can be a good way for online sellers to offer value to prospective customers - in fact, giving them a gift. So whether it's a specific guide for how to make the perfect vinaigrette or an exclusive author interview, you can use content as an ethical bribe that makes people feel grateful towards your business.

Studies show that a gift can generate a "yes" response to your requests even if, initially, it's not asked for, or when the person you're giving a gift to doesn't like you, or when the gift obviously results in an unfair or uneven exchange.

# 2. Commitment & Consistency

The principle of commitment and consistency says that people will go to great lengths to appear consistent in their words and actions - even to the extent of doing things that are basically irrational.

Psychologists say it's simple human nature. People are driven to be consistent

in all areas of life — in their words, attitudes, opinions, deeds, beliefs, values, habits, and promises. Once a person makes a decision, takes a stand, or performs an action, he or she strives to make all future behavior match this past behavior. Just like the other five agents of influence, consistency is basically a "decision heuristic" — a shortcut for making decisions.

Moreover, people are not only driven to "be" consistent, but are also driven to "appear to be" consistent. That's because, socially, consistency is a desirable personal attribute. It is seen as stable, decisive, rational, and trustworthy. Inconsistency, on the other hand, is usually frowned upon. It's considered to be irrational, deceptive, unstable, and indecisive.

That's the reason why if you're trying to make a change in your life - losing weight, for example - it can be very helpful to state your goal openly and publicly. Once you've committed out loud (or online, maybe on Facebook), you will have much more incentive to keep up your end of the bargain, because now you'll feel some social pressure on you.

According to Dr. Cialdini, "You can use small commitments to manipulate a person's self-image; you can use them to turn citizens into 'public servants,' prospects into 'customers' ... And once you've got a man's self-image where you want it, he should comply naturally with a whole range of your requests that are consistent with this view of himself."

So, how can you implement this principle in your every-day life? Simple: start small and build from mini-commitments. The "foot-in-the-door" technique actually works. Start by asking your prospect to agree to a simple request or a small transaction. Agree to complete a questionnaire or answer questions in a survey. You can request information, or sample a product. Make them say "yes" to a simple question, such as "Are you feeling good today?". By getting your prospect to take a stand, perform an action or making a decision, you're establishing a new psychological commitment.

Once you have that initial commitment, no matter how small, you will have changed your prospect's self-image just enough to trigger the Rule of Consistency. Since the rule states that people do their best to be and appear consistent, you can leverage on their new self-perception and make ever increasing requests. Accepting a free trial can lead to accepting a small transaction. A small transaction may result in a larger purchase, and so on.

Commitments can be private and secret, but as we've seen public

commitments are more effective because they create more lasting changes. The more public, the stronger the sense of consistency and the less likely your customer will change idea later on. Remember, people are not only compelled to be consistent but also to *appear* consistent as well.

It's important to find ways to make involvement public when it is appropriate. Get them to write testimonials, have them fill out forms, make them members of an exclusive group, give them awards and certificates, publish their names in honor rolls. It doesn't have to actually be public, but must feel public enough so that they can sense some kind of social pressure on them.

If you are an online seller, if you can get customers to make a small commitment to your brand (like signing up for your email newsletter), then they are more likely to ultimately purchase products and services from you. And if you can actually get your products in their hand, even if there is no formal commitment to buy them, your odds increase even more.

Zappos' famously easy return policy is another example of this — or Zalando's for my European readers. There is less friction and resistance for the customer to buy, because they know that if they don't like the product they can easily return it. But once they have the product in their hands, will they actually return it? Probably not. They're already committed to the buying decision.

# 3. Liking

This principle states that we are more likely to say yes to a demand if we feel a connection to the person making it. That's why the cheese sample lady at the groceries store is always giving you a sweet smile. It's also the reason why brands hire celebrities to endorse their products - so that people will transfer their love for famous actors to the products they're endorsing.

People are far more likely to say "yes" to those they know and like. Getting your prospect to like you first is simple: you can start just by showing similarity, with flattery and praise, and by demonstrating cooperation. Work with your target as an ally with common goals.

And if you're ready for the next step, here is the next-level liking strategy: you have to make them realize THEY are like YOU. How? Simple, by telling your story, by sharing experiences and anecdotes. Make them realize you like

the same stuff, you hate the same things, you had similar experiences in life... so that you can actually build a strong connection with them.

According to Cialdini, "We like people who are similar to us. This fact seems to hold true whether the similarity is in the area of opinions, personality traits, background, or lifestyle."

There are lots of ways to make this principle work for you and your store.

# **Telling Your Story**

If there's one place where branding is essential, it is in triggering the principle of liking. Every single element of your store or website - fonts, colors, photo styles, copy - contributes to your brand personality, and your goal is to create a character that is cohesive and that your target customer will resonate with. This might be sharp and efficient if you are selling into a corporate market, warm and playful if you're selling children's products, "earth-loving" if you're selling natural products.

Many stores will include something like an "About Us" page that is basically brand personality distilled. This is an excellent way to sum up your story and to get people to like you.

# Use Models People Can Identify With

If you're selling clothing, jewelry, or accessories, one quick way to create a connection to your customer is to show your stuff on people they will identify with and like. This doesn't mean you need to book Russian supermodels; it's best if they look like your customers. This might mean funky and relaxed, or casual and athletic, or preppy.

# Display the section "What Others Are Buying"

Have you ever seen someone wearing the same shoes or shirt as you and mentally greeted their delicate palate? Probably, you felt a quick connection with that person based solely on that one data point. Stores and websites can play off that idea by presenting products that are similar to what the person is looking for.

# 4. Authority

Have you ever heard of the Milgram experiments? They've become quite famous because volunteers were convinced to continue delivering what they

thought were incredibly painful electric shocks to unseen subjects, even when they could hear (faked) screams of pain. The presence of a man in a lab coat telling them to continue was enough to earn the compliance of nearly all the volunteers.

So, researchers concluded that people appear hard-wired to respond to authority - or just the appearance of authority. If you're looking for a doctor, for example, you don't run an in-depth investigation, you just pick one out of the phone book. Then when you're in the office, you look on the wall to see what school he or she graduated from. You put your life in that doctor's hands based solely on whether a piece of paper on the wall looks official. Throw in a white frock, a stethoscope around the neck, and you're sold. You're ready to do just about anything this person tells you. But how can you use this in your life?

You can just content yourself with "fake" authority, or you can achieve REAL authority, real credibility. What does it take to establish it? According to a ton of psychological research, there are four essential elements: Expertise, Trustworthiness, Similarity, and Physical Attractiveness.

**Expertise** - Having pertinent knowledge is the key to expertise. What special education do you have? What kind of experience? Have you demonstrated outstanding competence in a related area? What are your biggest successes? What about awards or public recognition? People look for clues about what you know and what you've actually done.

These hints must be relevant to the subject, though. If you're selling accounting software, the fact that you graduated from Harvard may show you're smart - but the fact that you're a qualified and fruitful accountant is far better for your prospects.

*Trustworthiness* – Possibly, even more important than expertise is trustworthiness. Deep down, do people feel they can trust you? The answer is based on what people perceive your intents to be.

**Similarity** - Deep down in their minds, your prospects ask, "Does he think like me? Do we share the same values? Is he from the same social class as I am? Does he look like me?" And the more yeses they come up with, the more likely they are to like you as a person and grant your requests.

*Physical Attractiveness* – I know, most of us don't want to admit. But there's

no way around it, you and I are more likely to pay attention to attractive people: it's a fact. Even if you're not born a fashion model, don't worry: what people value most is how you introduce yourself, because that's an indicator of how much you value yourself.

You only get one chance at a first impression. Make sure to dress the best you can: you don't need to buy clothes that you can't afford, you just need clothes that fit you perfectly. My friend Ryan Magin is a master in teaching guys how to dress and build different outfits always using the same basic clothes. Check out his YouTube channel!

Attractiveness produces the "halo effect" - the pleasant feeling we get from an attractive person is associated with the message that person delivers. And according to various studies, attractive people are seen as better communicators and more fluent.

### 5. Social Proof

The principle of social proof is connected to the principle of liking: because we are social creatures, we tend to like things just because other people do as well, whether we know them or not. All of us look to others to help us decide how to act, to guide our behavior, to determine whether something is right or wrong. The more people doing it, the more right it seems. Anything that displays the popularity of your site and your products can generate a response.

Have you gotten good press? Mention it! Received loving emails from customers? Quote them! Received good feedback from your mom? Get it up there.

Another method is to provide a "Best Sellers" or "Most Popular" page. When you visit on online clothing store and you find their "best-selling" jeans, are they really their most popular or just the ones that are most piled up in the warehouse? As a consumer myself, I don't know. But by declaring these particular jeans the most wanted, the brand has given them an undeniable sheen of desirability.

And of course, ratings and reviews, like Amazon & many other retailers, are another fine way to show social proof. So if you're enjoying this book so far, would you be so kind to leave your honest review?;)

# 6. Scarcity

Cialdini's final principle is the principle of scarcity, which states that people are highly motivated by the thought that they might lose out on something. Call it the Eternal Teenager Principle: if someone tells you that you can't have it - boy, do you want it.

That which is rare or is becoming less available is always more appealing. Show genuine scarcity in the most tangible way you can. Point out what will be lost by not responding. People fear loss, so you have to generate a feeling of potential loss and, ultimately, pain.

Marketers trigger this effect by using all kinds of tactics to suggest that products (or low prices) might soon be gone, or that someone is trying to keep this product off the market.

# Buyer Behavior: Understanding The Reasons Behind Their Actions

How do customers buy? Have you ever wondered if your clients buy rationally, impersonally, analytically, based on the numbers, transaction by transaction, with risk built into the price, and with in-depth product knowledge? Or do they buy emotionally, based on relationships, without full product knowledge, and with an aversion to risk?

How do YOU usually buy? We are actually customers, and we buy more emotionally than we like to admit. Research suggests that most customers go through a six-stage decision-making process in any purchase. This model implies that the clients pass through all stages in every purchase. However, in more routine purchases, consumers often skip or reverse some of the stages, so the model is very useful when it comes to understanding any purchase that requires some thought and pondering.

1. Need Recognition & Awareness: the buyer recognizes a problem or need, a difference between the desired state and the actual condition. For example, hunger implies food. Hunger stimulates your need to eat.

This need can also be boosted by the marketer through product information: "did you not know you were deficient?". I.E., when you see a commercial for a new pair of shoes, it stimulates your recognition that you need a new pair of shoes.

An "aroused" customer then needs to decide how much information (if any) is required. If his need is strong and there's a product or service that meets that same exact need close to hand, then a purchase decision is likely to be made there and then (stage 5). If not, then the process of information search begins.

2. *Information search*: internal search (memory) or external search if you need more information. A customer can obtain information from friends and relatives, or advertising, packaging, retailers, dealers, and commercial sources. Research suggests that customers value and respect personal sources more than commercial sources (that's the power of "word of mouth").

A successful information search leaves a buyer with possible alternatives. For example: you're hungry, you want to go out and eat, so your possible

alternatives are: Chinese restaurant, Italian food, Burger King, Indian food.

3. Evaluation of Alternatives: now there's a need to establish specific criteria for evaluation, features the buyer wants or does not want. For example, you may decide that you want to eat some spicy food, so Indian becomes your preferred alternative.

During this stage, the sellers may need to underline the important attributes of the product, the advantages compared to the competition, and maybe even encourage "trial" or "sampling" of the product in the hope of securing the sale.

*4. Purchase decision*: it's time to choose between the alternatives. The customer can be influenced by product, package, store, method of purchase, etc.

## 5. Purchase!

6. Post-Purchase Evaluation: is the customer satisfied or not? It's common for clients to experience concerns and worries after making a purchase decision. This rises from a concept that is known as "cognitive dissonance": the customer, after he bought the product, may feel that another option would have been preferable. In these circumstances that customer will not repurchase immediately, but is likely to switch brands next time. This can be reduced by guarantees, after-sales communication and support, etc.

Buyers *decide* with the heart and rationalize their decision with the brain. Consumers don't just want a solution: they want to *feel good* about it. They want to sleep well at night, to believe that surprises will be resolved quickly and reasonably, and that the salesperson has the buyer's interests at heart. A service provider's trustworthiness is immensely valuable to a client. Customers will pay for that value - if only they can find it. Consumers hate buying from the lowest-cost provider. They'd far rather buy what they should buy anyway from someone they trust.

Many professionals believe trust is created through brands, credentials, brains, and great work. In reality, it's not. Trust is just a mental relationship between individuals: people trust people, not institutions. Credibility and reliability are just two trust drivers: a sense of intimacy is another. Most important is the buyer's belief that the seller has their best interests at heart. Trust isn't created back at the office, but in real-time interpersonal relations,

primarily face to face. Often, it's generated during the sale itself, which is probably going to be a success. All buying situations contain both business process and personal psychology, so you need to learn, improve, and become a master of both if you want to grow your business fast.

Skills needed include: how to conduct sales meetings, listening skills, question formulation, reading buyer signals, meeting design and facilitation, handling objections, talking price, presentation skills, and many others, which will be covered in this book series.

# Hidden Psychological Tricks Used by Great Salespeople

Many of us are probably conscious that salespeople often use psychological tricks to persuade us to buy their products, whether they're aware of how these techniques mess with our mind or not. Often, they actually are. Very few people on this planet are invulnerable to that sort of manipulation, and the scientific evidence proves it. How do they usually trick your mind? And how can you model them?

# 1. Make false comparisons

The most famous ones are the techniques of used car sales. In the name of research, Robert Levine, a professor of social psychology at California State University, Fresno, masqueraded as a salesman at a used car dealership in the early 2000s. As he recounts in his book, *The Power of Persuasion: How We're Bought and Sold*, he was worried that he would fail to shift many cars because he wouldn't be able to remember all the stats about the various models on the lot. The professor quickly learned, however, that plenty of used car salespeople don't carry this information around in their heads either – to sell a car, they only really needed to memorize a few basic facts that applied to all the models on the lot. What mattered more was showing the cars in a strategic order.

This concept is known as "base rate fallacy". When a shopper isn't aware of the intrinsic value of a product – and the value of used cars can be difficult to judge without some previous homework – a base rate can be established and then used to emphasize the exceptional value of another product simply by comparison.

Levine explains this technique in his book. "If a bunch of \$200 espresso machines are put next to one overpriced \$400 machine - that does basically the same thing - the \$200 machines suddenly look like an apparent good deal. This is particularly true if you have a skilled salesperson who divulges that the \$400 device isn't really any better than the others. But the reality is, most people probably have no idea how much an espresso machine should cost."

Even a good understanding of the tactics behind sales, according to Levine,

was little help. He says he was hopeless at selling cars, and only succeeded in shifting one over the course of his experiment.

Maybe if Levine, a white man in his 50s, had been selling cars solely to other middle-aged white men, or to someone also named Robert, Bobby or Bob, he would have taken home more commissions, as the next tip suggests...

# 2. Emphasize social similarities

As we said, likability is a powerful influence agent. Research has shown that we are more likely to buy from people whom we trust and like - and we trust and like people who are more like us, even when the characteristics we share are incidental. Likability matters a lot in selling because it impacts how potential customers view you and your everything you do.

Jerry Burger, a professor at Santa Clara University, studies how and when people are most likely to comply with requests that carry a personal cost, such as handing over money. He found that even perceived incidental coincidences, like having the same birthday or name as someone else, can change our behavior towards that person. Apparently, it is sharing characteristics with the requester – not with potential beneficiaries – that is most likely to influence our decision to donate money, especially if the potential beneficiaries are perceived as distant and unrelated.

## 3. Create illusion of demand

Another trick is to make it seem like a product is being snapped up by others. Colleen Szot, one of the most successful writers in infomercials, is the perfect example for this trick. Szot famously changed the call to action in her infomercials from: "Operators are waiting, please call now!" to: "If operators are busy, please call again." The subtle change implies social proof: if the operators are busy, that means there is a huge demand for the product, so it must be valuable. We look at others to inform our own decisions, and this little trick led to an increase in sales.

When there is a limited supply of products, showing that other people are buying the product can also emphasize the notion of scarcity and urgency, something that we seem very sensitive to. We just hate missing out on unique opportunities, even when the opportunity is not really unique at all. If you can make it sound like that, however, you can get a huge advantage over your competition.

# 4. Spread benefits, bundle cost

We prefer the disclosure of bonuses and "gains" over time. If you were told of all the paybacks at once, the sell would be less effective. When it comes to paying though, that's not the case. While gains are best spread out, we prefer to experience our losses all at once. For instance, a tailor who tries to sell you an extra tie at the time of an expensive suit purchase. They know the best time to encourage you to spend an extra \$50 is when you're already committed to paying significantly more.

# 5. Induce a feeling of obligation

When people receive a favor from someone, they feel obligated to reciprocate in some way: that's the good old rule of reciprocity. This feeling can be strong, don't underestimate it.

Again, salespeople have learned how to use these unconscious behaviors to their advantage. A lot of times, sellers go through extra effort for you and go through all sorts of gestures, because they know it will be hard for you to later say no. People feel bad taking something for free or somebody's time and effort without paying them back in some way. We were wired by society to act like that, and it's hard for people to fight social pressure.

# 6. Think emotional triggers

Most people are ruled by their emotions. They're not masters of themselves, and so they are particularly likely to be influenced when emotionally overwhelmed or unclear about the right course of action. They often need someone ready to grab them by the hand and tell them that they're making the right decision.

Some research suggests emotions also affect our commercial activity – both as buyers and sellers. For example, a 2004 study demonstrated that participants were willing to spend 30% more for an item if they had first watched a sad movie clip. Sellers who had watched the sad clip, meanwhile, were willing to sell the item for 33% less.

# **How to Sell Anything to Anybody**

"Everyone lives by selling something" – Robert L. Stevenson

Whether you're selling products to customers, ideas to your boss, or yourself to an employer, you're always selling something. Sometimes you have to sell yourself and your abilities. That's why sales skills are so important for every aspect of your life: you may not realize it, but the most critical junctures in your career involve selling. Whether you're selling a product to customers or an idea to investors, your ability to sell will play a huge role in your success.

Unfortunately, most people aren't born with the sales gene. Not only that, selling has sort of a bad rep. When hearing the word Sales, most people instinctively associate it with a dishonest car salesman. Of course, that's far from the truth, because working in sales can teach you about connecting with others, getting them on board with an idea, negotiating, and closing. And you can put all that to good use throughout your whole career, or with dating and relationships. After all, the psychological principles of influence and persuasion are always the same.

There are four fundamental concepts you need to understand to sell anything to anybody. Learn them, practice them, and above all, make them uniquely your own by determining how to best integrate them into your DNA, your own style, your own situation, and the goals you'd like to achieve.

# Do your homework

Know your customer, potential investor, audience, whoever you're selling to. Understand their roles, responsibilities, goals and objectives. Comprehend as much as you can about what's in it for them, so that you can appeal to their self-interest later. Know your competitors and all the possible objections and hurdles you might face, so that you can invalidate their options during your pitch.

But never forget to actually know whatever it is you're trying to sell. Whether it's an idea, product, plan, whatever, know it inside and out. Without a doubt, you should be able to describe it better than anyone else, especially those you're selling to.

Ever got beat up by your boss, a prospect or a customer because you didn't do your homework and wasted his time? Ah, there's nothing worse than that.

And when that happens, you can kiss that prospect goodbye, sometimes for good. So, don't procrastinate, get shit done: an extra hour of researching information can save your deal and, ultimately, your career.

### Ask and listen

Let's say you actually did your homework, and now you're full of useful information, you're so prepared, confident and passionate that you're chomping at the bit to get it out. Don't! Here's why: if you do that, you risk coming across needy and pushy, like it's all about you and your interests. It isn't about you, it's about the people in front of you at the table. It's about THEIR needs and goals.

So, first of all, ask. Ask how you can help them. Ask what their goals are. Ask what their concerns are. Then be patient, pay attention and listen. Ask leading questions and listen some more. Keep listening until you have a pretty clear understanding of the whole picture.

No, don't badger them. Sometimes you listen a little, give some more, and go back and forth for a few times during your meetings. That's totally fine. You do want to be flexible and you don't want to be too pushy. Just try to find a way to get them to speak first. Information is power, as it's been said.

Also listen for what really and truly matters to them. You should peel off layer after layer, and get to their deep WHY. They might say a lot, but if you listen carefully, you'll distinguish what's really in it for them, what motivates them, and what obstacles you have to overcome. It's like cracking a nut: if you do it with brute force, you'll only get tiny pieces of nutmeat and shells. But if you find the right spot and get to their real motivations by listening, asking leading questions and being patient, it opens cleanly.

# Make a genuine connection

This is the secret sauce of great sales, the secret trick used by the most successful salesmen: every business transaction involves a genuine connection between individuals. It's not always a deep relationship, but it's still an actual relationship, nonetheless.

If you want to connect with people, you have to describe things in a way that resonates with them. If you've done your homework, asked the right questions, and listened sensibly and carefully, you should know what they're looking for and how to overcome their anxieties and meet their needs.

The best way to create a solid rapport is to do two things: genuinely connect with the person and communicate using anecdotes, metaphors and parallels that will cut through and resonate with them. That's because people aren't just motivated by logic and information, they're also driven by emotional and primal needs. Make them picture what you're saying in their mind: create a vivid image that can impress them, by including every minor detail and hitting on each of the five senses - sight, taste, touch, smell and hearing. This way, the picture in their mind starts feeling like it's something real, and their brain gets excited about it.

People like to hear about features, ideas and performance. Secondly, they need to hear about benefits and what's in it for them even more. But when it's all said and done and they're on their own making a choice, they'll remember the *emotional connection* with stories and people. And, eventually, that's what will inspire them to go for it.

# Know whose side you're on

This is not an easy concept for people to comprehend but it's key. You may be sitting across from someone, physically opposite them, but, in reality, you're on the same side. The sooner you get into that mindset, the sooner you'll get deals done.

You see, most people have sales all wrong. They keep a competitive mindset throughout the different selling stages and although they may be doing a great job, their prospects "feel" that they're not on their side. They feel something is off, like an invisible obstacle between you and them that prevent you guys from connecting on a deep level. In a certain sense, you're working for the customer or whoever you're selling to. That's because your job is to understand and serve their needs, to help them achieve their goals. That's your job! That means you're working together, you're on the same team; you're not competing against each other.

And most importantly, your customers need to know that you're there to help them achieve their goals. That you guys are partners, not enemies. That you're willing to move mountains for them. Often, that's exactly what you must do to get a deal done.

And guess what? When people pick up on your sincere and honest desire to jump through any hoop to help make them successful... that, more than anything, will help you get to the next level. That's how you become

successful: by giving freely, just for the sake of helping others and by convincing them that you can and will make them successful - and then doing it.

# How to convert more prospects into paying customers

The secret to more sales is as simple as understanding what the buyer wants. Below are ten advanced strategies, rigorously tested and studied in social psychology, that reveal how to ethically influence more customers to say "YES!" to your products and services.

- 1. Help clients break through "action paralysis" by setting minimums: Robert Cialdini proved how adding a minimum to a demand increased donations for the American Cancer Society by 78%. Remind your customers about how easy it is to get started. For example, your policy may be "no payments for the first month", to help them break through action paralysis.
- 2. Embrace the power of Labels: in a behavioral study examining voting patterns, scientists found that people who they arbitrarily labeled as "politically active" were 15% more likely to vote. Even though they were randomly chosen, the label ended up affecting their actions. Label your customers as part of a superior group (people who invest in themselves, who care about their family and friends, who don't care about high prices...), and their actions will reflect those characteristics.
- 3. Understand the 3 types of buyers: scientists have labeled human spending patterns as literally a process of "spending till it hurts". According to the research, there are largely 3 types of buyers: tightwads, average buyers, and spendthrifts. To sell to tightwads, be sure to focus on bundling products, re-framing product value (\$50/month vs. \$600/year) and reducing the number of small fees associated with your product.
- 4. Highlight strengths by admitting shortcomings: Fiona Lee, a famous social psychologist, showed how customers were more trustworthy of businesses who admitted to strategic failings over those who blamed external sources for company problems even if they were true. She concluded that consumers are okay with

- companies admitting to faults from time to time, as they show that the company is actively looking to fix the problem, rather than passing blame to an outside source.
- 5. Use urgency the smart way: as we already know, urgency and scarcity are powerful in driving up sales; but according to research from Howard Leventhal, people are prone to black out pressing messages if they aren't given information on how to follow-up. Leventhal proved this hypothesis with a test involving tetanus shots and found that those subjects who received follow-up information were 25% more likely to go get vaccinated.
- 6. Make their brain light up "instantly": many studies on the human brain have shown that our frontal cortex is highly involved when we think about waiting for something that's a no-go for more sales. To better appeal to customers, remind them that your product or service can solve their pain points FAST. Focusing on quick arrivals, fast shipping, and instant gratification can be just the incentive customers need to buy.
- 7. Make an enemy real or fake, doesn't really matter. According to social psychologist Henri Tajifel, people can be divided from the most menial of distinctions, and they tend to become more loyal to their in-group. Think about it: nowadays the world is full of brand battles between different products, like Mac vs. PC, iPhone vs. Android, Coke vs. Pepsi, etc. Making enemies is less about being harsh to people or competitors and more about labeling your customers. For example, some apparel companies are "only for athletes" or certain beverage companies don't make "wimpy light beer".
- 8. Stand for something: of all the customers who have a strong relationship with a single brand, over 64% said it was because they had shared values with the company in question. Don't be afraid to share your values as a seller: some people will like you, some won't, but all of them will know you, the real you. This way, you can polarize and create a following of loyal customers, while identifying the haters as the enemy.
- 9. Be the devil's advocate: research shows that when groups of

people have their ideas questioned by a devil's advocate, they increase their confidence in their original stance. Your business can utilize this information by playing the devil's advocate yourself, increasing the confidence of already interested customers – who are the ones most likely to buy your products. Address their concerns and dismiss them with well-researched information and examples.

10. Keep them on their toes. While customers value consistency, they also love surprises. We are addicted to dopamine rushes, and a sudden surprise releases an enormous amount of dopamine in the brain. Create small "wows" that customers don't expect. It doesn't have to be a costly endeavor, it really is the thought that counts.

# How To Pitch Your Idea In 60 Seconds

Did you know that when selling, you have one minute to pique your prospect's interest?

Sometimes you just have to be quick. If you have a product or an idea to sell and you meet a potential buyer or investor, you need to jump on that opportunity without thinking twice and pitch it to that person quickly, with a good dose of confidence. If they're a busy CEO, you won't have long to put your idea into words. You have to make a solid presentation, get across the main points of your product or service, and leave a memorable, lasting impression.

You could bump into one of these potential buyers at any time, be it on the street, at a party or in an elevator. When that person asks, "so what do you do?" or you get the chance to make an opening gambit, you have to be ready and prepared.

What are the essentials of a good elevator pitch? This differs depending on what you're selling, but there are several common elements.

# Define the Problem and Solution

This is key. In the first few seconds, you should be able to outline a problem that currently exists, by using words that draw in the listener. For example, you may start your pitch with:

"Don't you hate it when..."

"The biggest problem with..."

"What's the deal with..."

After you identify the problem, it's time to agitate the situation a little bit: intensify the listener's emotions behind it and create a sincere desire for your solution.

Then, you can present the solution by showing how your product or service meets the demand. Avoid using jargons and figures that may confuse the audience or make them fail to understand your message; instead, be specific enough to clearly solve the problem. Remember, every word counts: there is no room in a pitch for any extravagant language. You have just 60 seconds, or less, to get someone interested.

A great and quick way to make your audience picture an idea in their mind is by using metaphors. They are a figure of speech in which an expression is used to refer to something that it does not literally denote, in order to suggest a similarity. The trick is including familiar objects, animals or situations so that it quickly creates a picture in the listener's mind. Here are some of my favorites:

"That dog won't hunt": that idea is not a winner, it's going to be a failure.

"To keep a lamp burning, you have to keep putting oil in it": if you want success, you have to keep going.

"America has tossed its cap over the wall of space": this is from J.F. Kennedy, you can model it and change the words to fit your company or product.

So, write your pitch, refine it, edit it, cut it, practice it, cut it again, and keep going until every word you use is essential.

#### Be Conversational, but Professional

When you're selling your idea, you're walking a fine line: no one wants to hear a stale, pre-prepared pitch. It should feel natural, like a casual conversation. Your pitch shouldn't feel like you're cornering the prospect with 60 seconds of over-rehearsed fluff. At the same time, you don't want to appear so relaxed as to seem unprepared, unprofessional, stumbling or forgetful.

Be high-status, control your emotional state and keep it cool. Imagine the prospect is a friend or a partner you know and trust from a long time, and talk respectfully but with hunger, passion and drive.

#### Be Enthusiastic

If you're not interested in what you're pitching, why should anyone else be? It's important to have a sincere passion for what you're selling, whether it's a massive plan for a solar powered car or a new ad campaign for a soda drink. You are not just selling the idea, you're selling yourself. Smile and have fun – you will transfer your positive energy to the listener.

## Ask the right questions

Remember to involve your audience and keep it engaged. The best way to do this is to smartly put questions inside the pitch. Those starting questions

previously mentioned are good, but you can always include more. Just remember the "w" words you learned in school:

- *WHAT* is your biggest challenge right now?
- *WHO* is your biggest demographic?
- *WHY* should people come to you?
- WHEN will you be ready to take a big step?
- WHERE do you see your company in five years?

## And don't forget the HOWs, of course:

- *HOW* is your business going?
- *HOW* long have you had that problem?
- *HOW* much time do you have?

Nowadays, buyers are more educated than ever before. More than ever, you need to focus on understanding your prospect's world - and the best way to do it is to just ask intelligent questions. When interacting with a prospect, you must first seek to understand what's going on in her or his world. Then and only then will your ideas be accepted and understood.

Learn to ask open-ended "prompting" questions. Generally speaking, these questions cannot be answered with a simple yes or no, so they enable dialogue and encourage the other person to share feelings and opinions, thus building rapport.

The opposite of an open-ended question is a closed-ended question. These questions, unlike the kind we've just examined, put an end to effective dialog and will not get you any closer to a second appointment. That's why you should completely avoid this type of questions as a means of getting consent to win another 60 seconds.

For instance, a close-ended question might be, "You're interested in attracting new customers, right?". The best moment to use such a close-ended question is in a situation where you need to validate or confirm what you think is going on in your prospect's mind. Usually, close-ended questions are useful to give feedback during a dialogue and can be used to obtain accurate information and/or confirm facts mentioned earlier.

If you want to make sure that you've heard the prospect correctly, you can use a so-called *clarifying* question. These questions, too, can win you a fresh 60 seconds. A good clarifying question might begin with the words, "So, if I understand you correctly, you're saying that...". Be careful: you should always preface your clarifying question with a similar statement and then creatively paraphrase what you think your listener's main point is. Be careful, don't just parrot back what you've heard your prospect say: that can be perceived as condescending, mocking and disrespectful. A good clarifying question can earn you the other person's approval and definitely prove that you've got a good understanding of what he or she said, if you express in your own words what you've just heard.

After you clarify with your prospect, you can then ask a developmental question to move the dialogue in the desired direction to further understand the prospect's purpose and/or result he or she wants to achieve. This kind of questions encourages the listener to elaborate on what he or she just said: they allow the audience to show their true feelings about the topic at hand, thus creating a deeper rapport between you and them.

Another important kind of question is the "opinion". Opinion questions are a non-threatening way to ensure that the other person is actually engaged in the dialogue. As a general rule, opinion questions ask a direct question in a non-confrontational way, so they get your prospect to speak frankly and openly. You can share feelings and show your esteem and respect for the other person. By using these questions, you can extend your dialogue and gain extra time when needed.

# How to Sell to New Customers and Make Them Loyal

We are creatures of habit. According to research out of Harvard Business School, American families - on average - buy the same 150 products over and over again, which make up 85 percent of their household needs. How can you get people to take a chance on your new product of service and eventually become loyal customers? The trick is helping your prospects overcome their initial hesitation and making your new item speak to them in a relatable way.

Here are five ways to help your product sell itself in a packed marketplace:

**1. Broadcast your advantage.** What makes you better than everyone else in the industry? You have to be clear and honest with your customers *from the start*. Perceived advantage is built on factors like greater prestige, more convenience, superior effectiveness or better value for the money. Comparing your product to your competitor's may be useful when you're sure about its superiority.

Even cleaning products, the most mundane of all consumer necessities, can win using this strategy. In the history of successful TV ad campaigns, there are a lot of examples of products that solved the problems that previous liquid cleaners claimed to, with added advantages - such as not damaging the paint on walls as competitors' products did.

- **2. Fit into your ideal customer's routine.** Keep in mind: how much effort is required for customers to make the transition from a current product to yours? If the cost is more than its relative advantage, most people won't try your new product. When introducing a new idea, the most important thing is not to confuse consumers. If they can't tell what your product or service is about, they won't try it. Not knowing how or why they would use it, they simply won't.
- **3. Your product should work right out of the box.** When building new products, remove as much work as possible don't add work for the buyer. Your product should work as intended the first time out and every time after that. You should destroy every friction or resistance: if your product or service is complicated and hard to use, you're raising obstacles between you and them. A children's toy, for example, should be easy to assemble, and you

should never expect a busy mom to spend more than five minutes figuring out how to use a new cooking machine.

- **4. Make benefits easy to spot.** The more obvious the perceived advantages, the more your product will market itself. For example, the transparent plastic wrapping of 3M's Command line of removable hooks lets you see and easily understand how the product allows you to hang and remove a hook without leaving a hole in the wall.
- **5. Let customers try it out.** As seen before, giving away samples and free trials can leverage the power of commitment & consistency, getting customers to buy the full product or service. For example, tea bags were first used as giveaways so that people could sample tea without buying large tins, vastly improving the "trial-ability" of brewed tea, and eventually tea bags. Samples, giveaways and store demonstrations are tried-and-true techniques: if you can't afford to give your product away, offer a tempting discount or "buy one, get one" deal. Depending on your product and core customer, you can use sites like Gilt.com or Travel Zoo to make enticing offers.

Remember that friction is your enemy: the easier something is to try, the faster customers will want to buy it.

## The Different Sales Approaches: Pros & Cons

When it comes to the different sales approaches you could use, there's no such thing as a single best option. Not only your personality, but also your background will define which type of sales technique is most effective for you. Even if you have a methodology that works well, it's a good idea to explore a different approach now and then. Trying new methods keeps you out of a rut, and you may be astonished by how well a new sales approach works for you. Once you get some field experience, you can also mix different approaches and create your own style.

## The Instant Buddy

Usually, salespeople who use the "buddy" approach appear to be kind and outgoing, asking questions and showing interest in their prospects. They try to connect on an emotional level with each and every prospective customer. This approach can be very effective for salespeople who are naturally extroverted, warm-hearted and love making new friends. Don't try this method with a prospect if you don't mean it — most people can smell that you're faking it from a mile away, and they'll be very unhappy about that. You'll also need to ask some follow-up questions to show that you really like and care about your prospect. For instance, if you chat about the prospect's six-month-old baby during your appointment, you should follow up by asking how the baby is - or even sending a small gift on the child's first birthday.

#### The Guru

If you prefer a more logical and less emotional approach, you can set yourself on the task of becoming an expert in anything and everything related to your industry. You can have huge success by positioning yourself as a problemsolver, an authority able to answer any question and tackle any concern that the prospect lays before you.

The guru approach requires lots of work and study, necessary to learn information and constantly keep up with the changes in your industry. If you're willing to work hard and put in the time it takes, you can do very well both in selling to your prospects and generating plenty of referrals. This is a great side benefit of this approach: once customers realize what a knowledgeable resource you are, they're way more likely to send friends, relatives and co-workers with questions straight to you.

#### The Consultant

This is definitely the most powerful method. This approach combines both the 'guru' and 'buddy' approaches in a unique way. You can present yourself as an expert who has the customer's best interests in mind. Learn and study all about your company's products and then by asking a prospect a few questions, you can match him up with the best product for his needs.

This approach combines the best qualities of the first two methods, so it can be exceptionally effective; but it also requires lots of time and effort on the your part. You have to be both knowledgeable and able to make an emotional connection with your prospects. If you take the time to master both the sides of this approach, your sales will skyrocket.

#### The Networker

Networking can be a huge help for any salesman: your network is your net worth. If you haven't started yet, it's time to set up and maintain a web of friends, customers, salespeople from other companies, co-workers, and anyone else you meet each and every day. A strong and healthy network will create an upward spiral of warm leads that can provide most or even all of the salesperson's needs.

With this approach, you'll spend lots of time cultivating relationships. It's a highly effective technique if you enjoy attending various events, parties, and of course meeting new people. Keep in mind that you'll need to respond by doing favors and sending leads back to the individuals who've helped you in the first place.

An exchange of favors is the best way to build and maintain a strong relationship. If you meet a successful man and you want to include him in your network, you have three options to influence him: introduce new girls to him and give him high social value; you can pay him; or you can introduce him to other successful guys, thus expanding his own network.

## The Hard Seller – a.k.a, what you should avoid at all cost

This method can be simply described as "scare the prospect into buying". The hard sell approach is what gives salespeople a bad name in our society. Hard selling implicates getting someone to buy a product even though he doesn't want or need it. Methods vary from pure intimidation, to bullying and manipulation ("If you don't buy from me I'll lose my job") to absolute

dishonesty and deception ("This product has a much better safety record than the competition").

## **How & When to Use Closing Techniques**

Usually, the better you do during the whole sales process, the easier it is to close the deal. If you've gotten to the end of your demonstration and haven't fully convinced the prospect, you're going to have a hard time closing. On the other hand, if you've done a good job of building rapport and persuading, your close might be as simple as "just sign here."

Some salespeople have great success "naturally", without the need for particular closing techniques. They may even start closing right at the beginning of the appointment, using some statement like "If I show you how this product will save you 75% over your current product, will you buy today?" and going on from there.

Unfortunately, it's rare for a sales process to go so well that you will have no need to close at all. If you build substantial trust with the prospects and your product is an exceptionally good match for them, then they'll be easy to close. The truth is, most prospects still won't buy on the spot unless you give them a call to action such as the aforementioned "sign here" comment.

Remember: you shouldn't be afraid to close. A lot of salespeople miss the opportunity to get great deals simply because they forget to close their prospect, or because they feel awkward doing so. Closing is your job. Closing equals selling: you must do it, and if you can do it in great style then much better. That's where closing techniques come into play!

The biggest enemy for any salesperson is inertia, as known as inaction. Closing techniques are extremely useful in sales, because they allow you to overcome any lethargy that may happen. Change is a worrisome thing for anybody, and if given a choice prospects will stay with their current condition rather than taking a risk by purchasing a new product. So even if you've done your job well and the prospect believes your product is the best option on the market, if you don't actively close the deal, he's likely to put off the purchase until he has thought about it further. The bigger and more expensive the change, the more likely your prospects will drag their feet.

Correctly using the best closing techniques means giving the last little momentum that gets your prospect moving. Every single part of the sales process up to the closing should contribute to the prospect's feeling that buying your product is significantly better than staying with the status quo; then you can leverage their high emotional state to close the deal in a matter of seconds.

Most salespeople are best off sticking with simple closes instead of relying on the riskier ones. Sure, some prospects are tougher sells than others. This may not necessarily be due to an error on your part. Keep in mind that there are a lot of factors beyond your control. If your prospect is having a terrible day, for instance, he'll be less willing to listen to you regardless of how well your performance goes.

#### How to Close a Sale - For Basic and Advanced Closers

Unfortunately, it's quite common for salespeople to panic and blurt out "Would you like to think it over?" or other such sale-killing question. Don't do it, close the deal instead! People need direction, they need to be grabbed by the hand and led to a better life. As the seller, you are the one in control of the interaction: don't be afraid to take charge and lead your prospect.

Very few people will buy your product if you recommend thinking about it first. If even the guy selling the product doesn't think I should buy it right now, I should definitely wait... right?

So how do you close a sale? Well, that depends on the situation and on the prospect. If the rest of the sales process has gone pretty well and the prospect is ready to buy, closing is just a matter of seconds, because it feels like the natural conclusion of the interaction. Your brain doesn't like open loops, as they drain your energy: that's why your prospects actually expect to close the loop you created during the sales process, simply by closing the deal. If, on the other hand, you haven't done quite such a good job of persuading the prospect to buy, you will have to make up for it throughout the close.

Now, let's see some closing techniques. It's a good idea to learn and practice them so that you can use them smoothly under pressure, no matter who you're talking to.

#### The Hero Close

I learned this technique from sales guru Tom Hopkins. In his book "Selling for Dummies" he describes this as the "higher authority close." It's originally designed for business-to-business sales, although I suppose you could apply the same principle to consumer sales as well.

First, you have to pick a satisfied customer who also happens to be a successful and well-known member of the business community. Call him to check up with him and make sure everything is okay with the product; if everything is fine and if his feedback is positive, ask if he would be willing to tell the occasional prospect how good the product is. If he seems to be wavering, assure him you won't ask for his help often - just on occasionally - and you'll always inform them ahead of time when you might want their help because you value their time. If he agrees to help, follow up with a heartfelt thank-you note and possibly a personalized gift.

The next time you've got an appointment with a really big prospect, call your satisfied customer and give him the exact time you may need his help. When your new big prospect state his objection during the sales process - for example, they're worried about the setup process - say something like:

"You know, Jason Moore, the owner of "XYZ", uses this same product. I recall he had the same concern before buying it. Would you mind if I gave him a call now and we asked him about his experiences with the setup process?"

Then call Mr. Moore, make a brief introduction and hand the phone to the prospect. If you pick the right "hero" customer, this close will blow your prospect's mind.

## The Takeaway Close

Warning: this close requires perfect delivery or it could backfire on you. But if you pull it off it will close a sale that is otherwise not going to happen. Barriers, real or fake, move people to action. Remember the story of Romeo and Juliet? I don't think it would have been such a romantic story if there wasn't a barrier between the two. It was the obstacle on the way of their love that created that deep attraction between them. We, human creatures, pursue that which retreats from us — no exception. And this risky closing technique leverages on that psychological bias.

When your prospect sits through your presentation in uninviting silence - usually with their arms crossed - it's a pretty clear body language indicator that they aren't going to buy the product but don't want to tell you why. Perseverance on your part will either get you a flat "no" or the infamous "I'll think about it." Before you reach that point, but only after it's clear the

conversation is headed that way, you can say something like:

"I'm afraid I've made a mistake in coming here today. I apologize for wasting your time, but I don't think this product is right for you."

Then start packing up your things, shake the prospect's hand and head out the door. If you've read the person correctly, taking away the product can jolt them into at least thinking about buying it. If not, you just threw away a sale that was probably going nowhere.

## The Appointment close

This closing line can be used to get in-person appointments over the phone, or to immediately catch your prospect's attention during a call.

"Would you like to see a system that will enable you to increase your sales by 20 to 30 percent over the next 12 months?"

#### The Trial Close

This is particularly useful for products with lots of features or applications.

After you presented each feature of the product, ask, "What do you think of this so far?". This will give you a clear image of what your prospect really wants, so that you can adapt your final close after that – not what you think he wants.

## The Just Suppose Close

No one wants to feel stupid, mediocre or inferior. Use this line with high-ticket products or services.

"And yet we sell thousands of these every year to brilliant people like you. Do you want to know why?"

## The Benjamin Franklin Close

This trick is called after Ben Franklin, as he used to apply this strategy every time he needed to make a major decision. Use it when a decision rests on a variety of different factors.

Take a piece of paper and draw a line down the center. Have the prospect restate and write all the good reasons for buying your product on the left,

then cons on the right.

By putting things in front of his eyes, the benefits will be clearer and his brain will rationalize the buying decision.

## The Power of Suggestion Close

Use this to get a prospect excited about your product or service: don't ever undervalue the power of suggestion. A clear, detailed picture or vision in their mind can be incredibly effective, because, when it comes to images, our brain can't tell the difference between real and fake.

Talk as if the prospect already made the decision to buy: "You're really going to enjoy the way this car handles on the road." The more details you include, the better. If, for example, the car you're selling is a convertible, you can hit a lot of senses with a simple sentence: "Driving this car is an amazing experience. You'll feel the wind in your hair, the warm sun will hit your skin and you'll be able to smell the scents of nature... no one of my customers ever went back from this car."

#### The Summary Close

Use it at the end of your presentation.

Summarize everything that you discussed, then ask, "Can you think of anything else?". If your prospect answers, "No," simply ask for the sale.

#### The Invitational Close

Use to simply encourage the prospect to make a buying decision.

The question, "Why don't you just give it a try?" suggests that making the buying conclusion is no big deal and doesn't imply the classic pressure of making a decision.

### The Approach Close

Use it immediately at the beginning of the presentation to leverage on social proof.

"All I'm going to do is show you some of the motives why people have bought this product in the past and why they keep buying it. All I ask is that you look at the reasons why others have bought it, and judge for yourself."

#### The Order Sheet Close

Use this at the beginning of your presentation to leverage the power of commitment & consistency.

Write everything the prospect says about the product on an order form and explain, "I have a poor memory for detail, so I like to write everything down. And if you don't buy anything today, we'll just throw it away. Okay?"

#### The Hot Button Close

Use for products with more than one feature or application. Simply ask enough good questions to determine the hot button – the key benefit that the prospect wants more than anything else – and then push it over and over. Get to the real WHY behind his desires and leverage on that.

#### The Demonstration Close

Use at the beginning of the presentation to intrigue the prospect.

"If I can show you the very best investment you've ever seen, are you in a position to put \$3,000 into it right now?"

## The Assumption Close

Use them when the prospect is close to a decision, and assume he already wants to buy.

"How would you like to make payment?"

"Where would you want this delivered?"

"How soon do you need it?"

## The Puppy Dog Close

Use this with products people can try for a time period, for example, great luxury cars or a cute little puppy. This is especially useful when your prospect wants to buy, but he gets objections from his parents, relatives, friends, etc...

Give your prospect an opportunity to touch, taste, feel, smell, or use the product as much as possible. For example, let a family try to take care of a puppy for just a week. Chances are, they will probably fall in love with him

even if the parents weren't fully convinced about it at first — and they'll decide to keep him at home, because they will be afraid to break their kid's heart.

## How to Answer to the "Sell Me This Pen" Question

Did you ever get the question "sell me this pen" in a sales interview? It happened to me. Chances are, it will probably happen to you too, sooner or later. When an interviewer asks you to "sell me this pen," he doesn't look for a gimmicky answer - he wants to see you be able to perform a basic sales call. He intends to spot if you are a poor salesman or a good salesman. And for you to avoid panic, you should know exactly what to say back.

The key point of this question is to see if you understand what selling is all about. 9 out of 10 people will immediately start describing the pen and its features - "it writes smoothly," "it looks great," "it's cheap," etc. This is an indication that they are clueless about selling.

I'm going to give you not only a practical example you can learn and copy, but also the right sales framework to respond perfectly every time. Selling a pen can teach you a lot more about the entire topic of sales. because if you naively start to describe how suave the pen feels and how glossy the pen looks, just like you saw in the Wolf of Wall Street movie... you probably won't get the job.

When you become great at answering this question, you'll be one step closer to becoming one hell of a seller. And that's why people still ask it in interviews: it displays your creative approach and how good you are at actually selling products – this is a *practical* skill that your resume can't show through written words.

There are exactly four sales skills the examiner is looking for when you answer this question:

- 1. how you collect information
- 2. how you respond to information
- 3. how you provide information
- 4. how you ask for something a.k.a., the closing

Let's go through exactly what you can say to address each of those sales skills. Very few people can surprise the interviewers with an excellent answer: when you do it right, you'll blow their mind!

You can memorize this script, but more importantly, learn and remember the

sales framework at the end. This way, you can adapt your pitch to their objections, and you won't be stuck in the middle of the process trying to recall this script exactly. I first learned this script from Ian Adams, a great expert on sales: definitely, check him out!

## CEO: Sell me this pen. (reaches across to hand you the pen)

You: (slowly rolling the pen between your index and thumb fingers) When was the last time you used a pen?

**CEO:** This morning.

You: Do you remember what kind of pen that was?

CEO: No.

You: Do you remember why you were using it to write?

CEO: Yes. Signing a few new customer contracts.

You: Well I'd say that's the best use for a pen. (*smirking and laughing together*, *building some rapport*) Wouldn't you say signing those new customer deals is an important event for your business?

## **CEO:** Of course. (nods head)

You: Then shouldn't it be treated like one? I mean, here you are signing new customer contracts, an important and memorable event... All while using a very standard and *unmemorable* pen. We all grew up using cheap BIC pens, because they usually get the job done for grocery lists and quick notes. But we never gave it much thought to learn what's best for important events.

Well, *this* is the pen for more significant events. This is the tool you use to get great deals done. Think of it as a symbol for taking your company to the next level. Because when you start using the right tool, you get into a more productive mindset, and you begin to sign more new customer contracts.

In fact, just this week I shipped ten new boxes of these pens to Bill Gates' office.

Unfortunately, this is my last pen today (*reaching across to hand the pen back to him*). So, I propose you get this one. *Try it out*. If you're not happy with it, I will personally come back next week to pick it up, and it won't cost you a dime. What do you say?

CEO: (picks jaw up off the floor) Yes!

Killer script, right? If you notice, all four sales skills were displayed above. Here's the basic sales framework you can memorize to answer the dreaded "sell me this pen" question. You can also apply this same framework to whatever product they ask you to sell during the interview.

- The first step is to find out how they last used a pen (gathering information).
- Then, it's time to emphasize the importance of the activity they last used a pen (responding to information).
- This is the most important part: sell something bigger than a pen, like a state of mind, leveraging on their self-interest (delivering information).
- Lastly, ask for the buy (closing).

Remember that it's not about actually selling a pen. They want to test your ability to sell a product and persuade the prospect. Of course, if you want to impress the interviewer, you have to be ready to act as a great salesman: the person who just fumbles for words and talks about the features of the pen is weeded out quickly. Let's see the main mistakes to avoid and the best things to do.

#### Poor salesman:

- A) Talks about the product features
- B) Doesn't ask questions
- C) Doesn't try to identify the prospect's real reason for purchase
- D) Sees every interaction as a one-time transaction

#### Great salesman:

- A) Instead of wasting excessive time on the product features, the great salesman focuses on the *benefit* that the feature implies and the meaning it has for the prospect (*Example: the pen that gives him a more productive state of mind*).
- B) The quickest and easiest way to understand what the client wants is by asking questions. You cannot guess what the client needs. A great salesman knows that he should let the customer do the talking, by asking the right questions and hitting the right spots.

- C) Once you've identified the real reason behind their purchase, you can make a more compelling offer, by always appealing to their self-interest.
- D) A great salesman doesn't see the interaction as a one-time transaction; he knows that every prospect can eventually become a loyal customer, so he does everything in his power to build up trust and a solid relationship with him.

## **Conclusion**

Psychology of selling is a complex topic. We went through the basic sales fundamentals and the main aspects, skills and abilities you should master to become a great seller. You now have a list of techniques and strategies you can practice and improve with your unique style.

Don't be too closed-minded though. Just remember to ask questions and exhibit curiosity about how your prospect's desires, needs and plans.

Instead of jumping in with a sales spiel about your product or service, why don't you start with a line of inquiry about the buyer, and then present your wares as a way to meet the buyer's needs? You need to uncover the issues or challenges the individual or company you're selling to faces. Show you can find a solution for their issues or opportunities. By being open, friendly and most importantly, by putting your prospect's interest as the #1 priority, you lead the buyer to draw his own conclusions.

For instance, imagine a customer who walks into your car dealership. You as the salesman should not aggressively approach him and mouth off about the latest fabulous models and low prices, but rather should try to understand and recognize his or her needs first. Glean why the buyer is shopping for a car and what functions and performance he's interested in. Isn't that just common sense? Probably yes, but salespeople often ignore it. A lot of needy salespeople are so anxious to get the sale, they start pitching their product as soon as anyone expresses some kind of interest. It's not just selling — you have to peel back the onion and ask good, insightful, searching questions.

Thank you again for reading this book, I hope you liked it. Don't forget to post your honest feedback about it on Amazon.com. I appreciate every review, both positive or negative, as they help me understand your needs and allow me to improve my book in the future.

Good luck, my friend.

Your #1 fan,

Robert Moore

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What I'm about to reveal in this book may SHOCK you!

You may shake your head in disbelief. However, trust me...

The question is, would you like to have the power of influencing anyone you want or have them do EXACTLY as you bid? Just imagine how great would it be to persuade your boss to give you a raise, or that hot girl to come home with you...

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How to Influence Human Behavior: you won't live at the effect of others, you will be the CAUSE!

Mind Reading Secrets: own every interaction and get what you really want... always!

How to have people literally OBEY you and still be happy about it!

Get the Power that will enable you to influence people's thoughts, emotions, and behavior in nearly any situation... (dangerous - use it carefully!)

How to listen and speak more effectively!

<u>How to avoid the most common conversational disasters - become a masterful communicator!</u>

Learn proven strategies that allow you to successfully communicate your point of view and control their decisions, whether it's a client, a girl or your boss.

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You can have this power: master the art of Persuasion to influence your

friends, your family, your girlfriend, so that they can live a better life while YOU get what you want and deserve!

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### **Body Language Training** – the bestselling book by Robert Moore.

Think how GREAT it would be to impress people just with your movements, your positioning, your walk... without even saying a single word!

In fact, today you can discover the best HIGH STATUS positions used by "Alpha male" celebrities all over the world. I will show you how I trained my Body Language in order to attract and seduce any woman I wanted in the past - and how you can do it too, for the rest of your life!

What if I told you that with some tips, your standing position could become a real sign of POWER?

What if after reading this short guide, you will be able to attract the girl you want, just sitting in a DOMINANT position or walking like a real badass?

Trust me, body language is really that powerful. You should already know that human beings are constantly reading situations and other people so that, really quickly, they can know what category to put them in: low status, middle status, or high status.

It's just a survival mechanism, because you have to know who has the power and who hasn't. That's something that's been hardwired into us over thousands and thousands of years. So, most people don't trust words, because we've been taught from a young age to lie with them. They prefer to read those status cues through the body language: THAT is the honest signal of High-Status!

High status body language = high status person.

It's that simple, and we trust it. Once we make the decision or opinion about that person, it's almost impossible for us to break it. Therefore, your body language is the UNSPOKEN TRUTH

When you have a high status body language, people conclude that you are in CONTROL of your own reality. Remember this, my badass friend:

"The body follows the mind, but the mind follows the body even more."

Having a high status body language will make you have a high status mindset all the time: this can CHANGE YOUR LIFE FOREVER.

Now, this is what you'll discover inside Body Language Training:

Why a High Status Body Language is so important for your sex life, social life and career...

The 10 Foundational Principles of High Status Body Language - once you understand them, you'll never come back!

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What your walk reveals about you - how to look way more confident than your friends and colleagues...

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How to be recognized as the leader of your group, in any social situation...

How to fix your posture once and for all - I'll show you how to stand and sit like an Alpha Male!

How to boost your own mindset and have unbreakable confidence everytime you go out...

How to control the interaction and attract any girl - even that ONE girl that had locked you into the Friendzone!

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Voice is one of the most important qualities of a leader.

When you have a POWERFUL voice, life becomes so much easier. Your social life will be much better and your business life will reward you so many times. Girls will be much more attracted to you... and if you're a woman, your voice will be the SEXIEST it is ever.

Just imagine yourself at a business meeting: you will be the most valuable guy there, because your voice will be so STRONG and COMMANDING.

Everyone will be raptured by your words.

Political leaders and actors were not born with a powerful voice, they TRAINED it up to that point.

In fact, you don't have a quiet voice, you simply trained it that way.

Now it's time to train it the other way around!

Here Is A Preview Of What You'll Learn In Voice Training...

Why A High-Status Voice Is So Powerful: how to make people know, like and trust you immediately...

The 5 Secret Traits Of A Powerful Voice: capture attention and hold it in a trance-like state every time you open your mouth!

Voice Training: mouth and voice strengthening exercises and tonality secrets used by Hollywood actors to command your audience's attention...

The Power Of Enunciation And Suspense: how to become a master storyteller who holds people rapt, fully engaged and hanging on your every word...

... and much more!

Download it now from Amazon.com at a special price discount!

## **Eye Contact Training - How To Attract And Seduce A Woman, Increase Your Confidence And Become A Leader**

What if I tell you that with some easy, powerful exercises you can get a deep, high status eye contact in just a few days? It would change your life, right?

Well, IT CHANGED MY LIFE. When you can handle the tension of a deep eye contact with everyone, you feel invincible. When you can handle the eyes of your boss, staring directly at them with confidence, then you'll stop feeling like his slave.

And with girls... damn, keeping a high status eye contact with girls it's completely GAME-CHANGING.

The techniques I show you in this book will make them chasing for your attention: they are so powerful, that even HOLLYWOOD ACTORS use them.

People will start doing things for you, they will start looking to you for decisions and, for the most part, they'll simply do whatever you say.

Remember this, my badass friend:

## "With great eye contact comes great power, and with great power comes a lot of pussy."

Now, here is what you'll discover in Eye Contact Training:

Why a high status Eye Contact is so important for your life...

What a high status Eye Contact exactly is: one simple trick to deep, powerful, relaxed eye contact...

How to command complete control of your eyes and your attention: this SCREAMS high status to anybody watching...

Eye Contact Training: how to OWN your internal tension - Specific practices and exercises to train you how to handle tension inside and outside...

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