

A person wearing a dark blue suit jacket and a light blue shirt with a striped cuff. Their hands are clasped together in front of them. The background is white.

Avi Idan SEAL THE DEAL WITH A SMILE

Not Only for Sales People!

The most effective
way to deal with
SALESPHOBIA

Avi Idan

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Senior Editors & Producers: Contento De Semrik

English Edit: BookMasters Group
Editor and professional consultant: Amira Morag
Cover Design: Zofia Basari

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22 Isserles, 67014 Tel-Aviv, Israel
Semrik10@gmail.com
www.Semrik.com

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SEAL THE DEAL WITH A SMILE

Not Only for Sales People

Contento De Semrik

For everyone who hates sales,
but understands its necessity for success in life.

A book about the art of selling which
anyone
can understand.

THE MOST EFFECTIVE WAY TO DEAL
with
SALESPHOBIA

If more than once in your life you've said:
"Sales is not for me,
I'm not good at marketing,
and I'm not interested in dealing with
persuading people."

It could be that after reading this book
you will never say that again.

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Table of Contents

Acknowledgements | 7

Prologue | 13

First Story: It has nothing to do with me—They sent me to
houses where the people wanted to buy | 13

Second story: Last one out, turn off the lights | 15

Third story: Selling is a necessary profession, not necessarily
a sought-after one | 17

Introduction | 21

Can Anyone Learn to Sell? | 21

Selling is Something We Do Naturally | 25

Insight into the Three Parallel Conversations | 27

Part 1 | Me and Me - The Mental Factor | 33

Making Peace with Sales | 35

The Sales Rep—The Unchosen Profession | 38

The Influence of Fear in Sales | 42

Walking with the Fear | 43

Fear of Image | 45

The First to Speak Loses | 48

The Fear of Hearing “No” | 52
The Fear of Rejection | 58
The Fear of Failure | 61
What Can Be Learned about Success and Failure from Thomas Edison and Michael Jordan? | 67
Fear of Success | 70
Fear of Making Money | 76
Fear of Assuming Responsibility for Outcomes | 80
Fear of Financial Instability | 82
Just not “Maybe” | 86
Positive and Negative Loops | 92
Using Guided Imagery | 97
Be Natural | 101
Sales as “Service” | 104
Respecting Your Colleagues | 107
Sales Personnel as Smart Business People | 109

Part II | Him and Him - The Approach | 115

Introduction—there is a Person behind Every Sale | 117
People Love to Buy, But... | 120
First Impressions | 122
How to Create Good Chemistry | 132
What He’s Scared Of | 144
The Desire for Profit and the Fear of Loss | 149
The Purchasing Formula | 151
The Radio Station the Customer Hears—W.I.I. F.M. | 159
Listening | 163
Creating a Positive Atmosphere | 166

Enthusiasm | 172

Point System | 174

Games of Honor | 175

That Will Cost You... | 177

How My Expectations Affect the Customer | 177

A Few Words Summarizing Part II | 179

Part III | Me and Him - The Technique | 183

Introduction | 185

Structure of the Sales Talk—The Sales Pyramid | 190

Opening | 196

Gathering Information and Clarifying Needs | 198

Purchasing Readiness Axis | 201

Presenting the Solution/Subject | 205

Why the Product, Why My Product, Why Now? | 206

Qualities and Benefits | 208

Purchasing-Formula and the Sales Process | 210

How to Create Desire and Need | 210

How to Build Value—"It's Worth Paying For" | 212

The Art of Inquiry—The Language of Asking Questions | 218

Selling in Stages, Small Closings | 238

Closing the Deal | 242

Objections | 252

Wise Use of the Telephone | 267

Follow-Up on Customers | 286

Reinforcing the Sale | 292

Practice Practice Practice | 295

Part IV | Choosing Success - Creating a Winner Mentality | 299

Introduction | 301

The Meaning of Choosing Success | 304

The Journey | 309

Journey Diary | 311

Knowing What I Want | 312

The Power of Focus | 313

What to Focus on Now | 315

The Next Step | 316

The Secret of Success Stories | 318

The Royal Highway | 320

Ten Basic Principles for Achieving Results and Success | 321

The Importance of the Mentor for Success | 324

The Mastermind Pact | 325

Afterword | 327

Prologue

How I Ended Up Inventing this System and Writing this Book

First Story: It has nothing to do with me—They sent me to houses where the people wanted to buy
My story begins like all great stories begin, with transition, or to put it more accurately, with an opportunity for change and the courage to take advantage of that opportunity.

I was a vacuum cleaner sales representative then. I liked the work and was good at it and in my estimation, I was very lucky. On average, one out of three families I visited wanted to buy a vacuum cleaner.

One day the manager approached me and said that he wanted me to be the sales trainer. “I want you to teach the other reps to sell as well as you.”

I was surprised. “I don’t know how to sell and I certainly don’t know how to teach sales,” I told him.

“But you’re our best sales rep,” he answered.

“Well, you send me to the right homes. There are people there who simply want to buy,” I replied.

The manager looked at me in surprise and shook his head in disagreement.

“Let me think about it for a day or two,” I said thinking that perhaps the manager would forget, but he didn’t forget. In the meantime, I began to pay attention to the way I sell and the way others sell, and thoughts flew through my head. Maybe it really was because of who I am? Maybe what I do really is different and makes a difference? Perhaps I can encourage others to enjoy their work the way I do? Despite my concern about the change, I agreed, on one condition: I wanted my training course to be different; I proposed a course in which the sales personnel would learn how to enjoy their work as much as I do. I asked for time to research my success and the way I sell. Here’s an interesting fact: if you ask for something, sometimes you get it. I did receive the time and opportunity to study myself, how I think and act, why I do each thing I do in the sales process and how I do it. I started to record the sales visits (yes, that certainly seemed strange to people; in one home I ended up selling them the tape recorder—that’s the way I am—I never pass up a chance for a sale), and study my thought processes. Afterwards, I tried to think about what went through my clients’ minds. Since I don’t have the telepathic talents of Uri Geller, I had no choice but to call clients I had visited previously and interview them. I asked them about their thoughts during my visit, why they had decided to buy, or not to buy. It’s unbelievable how many gifts I received from these conversations. Some people said that they hadn’t bought a vacuum cleaner during my initial call because of some insignificant technicality and now they were ready to buy, so bring the machine over. To think how many of these

I may have missed in the past simply because I hadn't made the effort to call them again. Their insights into the processes they underwent during sales calls were priceless, as were the insights shared with me by customers who hadn't bought. In addition, I accompanied other salespersons in the field, observed them at work and saw how the conversations between the salespersons and the customers were conducted. I tried to guess where things were heading in order to see if I had understood the way they were communicating. There were times when I intervened in order to see if I was capable of changing the direction of a conversation. I learned a lot from that. I conducted conversations with representatives in order to learn their opinions about their work, what they liked about it, and what they liked less, what scared them the most, and what they thought about during sales. Suddenly, everything came together and made sense. I began to understand why I enjoy my work, why I love to sell so much and why people like me to sell to them; what the common mistakes made by other reps were, why they don't enjoy their work, what they fear the most and what they would like to happen. I obtained the insights which would later become a workshop for which this book is named—"Seal the Deal With a Smile."

Second story: Last one out, turn off the lights

If the previous change is one that most of us would gladly welcome, this story tells of a transition that most of us fear—being fired. After I'd been appointed director of

training, an opportunity for advancement arose. Someone who'd just acquired a new company had come to my office several times for advice on how to instill a sales-oriented approach in his technical service personnel. He offered me a senior position in his company with a fat salary. Obviously, I was pleased at this new opportunity. I decided to leave the vacuum cleaner firm, and we parted amicably. I transferred to the other company as VP of Marketing, with the promise that the company's next five-year plan would include my advancement to the position of CEO. Initially it was great. We made some good marketing moves and sales increased; but despite everything, due to inferior planning or faulty management, as well as other non-sales-related factors, the company encountered a crisis. The owners were forced to close the business and fire all the employees. I was among the last to leave. A moment before I turned out the lights and locked the office doors for the last time, I sent an e-mail to all my contacts (suppliers, customers, competitors, etc.), and informed them that the company was suspending operations and going into receivership, and if anyone needed anything, they could contact me at my personal e-mail address. I spent the next two days feeling depressed and not doing much of anything other than driving my wife and children crazy. And then I checked my e-mails and to my surprise I found 16 alluring job offers in various sales positions. All I had to do, if I chose to, was to go interview my potential boss and decide where I wanted to work. It was so different from the nightmare which I thought I would have to undergo on the way to finding a new job, that I was

stunned by the insight that I would never lack a job. At that moment I understood something important:

Good salespeople are the first to be hired and the last to be fired, and they will always, always have work.

This was something I couldn't keep to myself, so I decided to set out on the journey of a lifetime and share what I had learned with as many people and salespeople as I could, because the ability to make a deal and to sell, is a combination of successful life-skills that anyone who wants to attain something in life must possess. I decided to teach sales and train salespeople and, among other things, write this book for you.

Third story: Selling is a necessary profession, not necessarily a sought-after one

When I got married I promised my wife that she wouldn't have to work. She could be a stay-at-home-mom if she wanted. My wife took me up on it, left her job when our first son was born and established an exemplary home. One day, after the children had grown and she was bored, she decided that she wanted to go back to work. I was quite pleased with her decision (and was already making plans for our next vacation, to be financed by the additional income). I made coffee, arranged the armchair so she could sit comfortably, and placed four weekend newspapers full of job offers in front of her.

My wife began to go through the weekend newspapers and after an hour turned to me annoyed. “There are no jobs,” she declared. “Really, there’s a recession. I haven’t found anything.” I took the papers from her and looked through the jobs advertised (despite the recession). To my surprise I found many interesting job offers, so many that I was tempted to send my resumé out and apply for a position. When I showed my wife the ads I had circled she became even more annoyed. “What’s the big deal?” she tossed out. “It’s all work in marketing and sales.” And she immediately added, “That’s not for me! I can’t sell. I’m terrible at it, and I’m not the type who can persuade people. It seems like awful work to me. That’s work for someone else. I’m not like that. And that’s final.” I was surprised, or rather more to the point, I was shocked.

I myself had been a salesperson for many years (she knew this when we married, and she still said yes). For years now I’d been advising and coaching salespeople. Everything we own, including our home, we owe to my work in sales. I’m crazy about sales. She knows this. She lives with me on a daily basis.

“What’s with you? Are you crazy?” I asked her. “These are really good job offers, with awesome benefits, a car, mobile phone, freedom of movement. That’s great work.” I felt like the shoemaker’s children who go barefoot.

I’m a proud salesperson who teaches others and turns them into excellent salespeople, and my wife doesn’t believe in the profession. I couldn’t understand why she didn’t feel the same way I did. I truly love sales. How could it be that other

people don't? Why aren't they even willing to try?

I have never understood why on the one hand, so many people are unemployed, and on the other hand there is such a demand for salespeople. Why doesn't it balance out? Why don't people like to sell?

I thought of friends who'd had great business ideas and hadn't managed to turn them into realities because they didn't know how to sell.

I sat there, stunned, and thought: I love to sell. Why don't other people like to sell or are even afraid of selling? Then I understood: **people are afraid of sales.** People are afraid of selling things to other people. This nonsense keeps them stuck in place. They can't move on or realize their dreams because of this ridiculousness and sometimes they choose a life of mediocrity and compromise because of their fears: the fear of hearing "no," the fear of rejection, the fear of failure. Between you and me—who wants to fail? The easiest way to prevent failure is this: never try anything and never do anything. To justify doing nothing people tell themselves fascinating stories about why they didn't do what they needed to do in order to succeed. Why they avoided simple tasks, like calling a client, knocking on the door of a potential customer or just approaching a stranger, offering their card and telling him what they do. They find these simple acts extremely complicated, or to put it more accurately, terrifying, like Chinese torture.

Historically, many successful people have succeeded because they knew how to sell and market their ideas, their vision, their product and most importantly of all—themselves!