

Selling Yourself to Others: The New Psychology of Sales

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William Horton

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Some would say the business of selling is a necessary evil, a distasteful by-product of a materialistic society. Not true, trumpet the authors of this book: "Every single person on earth who is not in the business of selling is completely in debt to those who do. Every single monetary exchange begins and ends with a salesperson." Emphasizing that every sales transaction must be a win for the customer as well as for the salesperson, the authors claim that by using the techniques presented, salespeople will find that their customers not only want to buy, but will in fact demand the products being sold.

The premise of this book is actually quite straightforward: "When you know what motivates a person, you can influence them. When you know what motivates yourself, you can change your own behavior." Understanding customers begins with understanding mind access points, or MAPS. The authors use a commonplace example: research shows that a waitress who touches a customer as she gives him the bill is more likely to get a larger tip than a waitress who does not touch. Whether consciously or unconsciously, this waitress has uncovered a MAP, and by making use of this MAP, she is more successful.

Thousands of these "stimulus-response experiences" are coded into each person's brain, and the authors cover the basics of unlocking this potential. Early chapters review meeting the customer, establishing rapport, getting inside information, and mastering body language, all fairly standard utensils in the sales toolbox. Subsequent chapters go to the heart of the authors' science: tuning in to clients' most unconscious communication, the ten unconscious laws of persuasion, the secret ingredients of selling and turning fear into power.

The authors have the background to give this science credibility. Hogan has a background in psychology and sales, and has written several books, most notably *The Psychology of Persuasion*. Horton, a licensed clinical psychologist, is an expert in neurolinguistic psychology and subconscious communication. Because the content is presented in rapid-fire prose, the book can be a bit overwhelming, but there is no mistaking the enthusiasm the authors bring to the subject. Whether putting these techniques into practice will guarantee more "sales per call," as the authors claim, remains to be seen, but in today's rapid-fire world, knowledge is indeed power. Insight into the ways and whys of people is fascinating reading at worst, and a powerful tool at best.

VICKI GERVICKAS (July / August 2002)

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