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Uncensored Sales Strategies: A Radical New Approach to Selling Your Customers What They Really Want - No Matter What Business You're In

Dan Kennedy
Sydney Biddle Barrows
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The fast-talking, closing-obsessed salesperson of the past is dead and doesn't know it. Potential customers hate being bullied; though they may cave in the face of such old-style aggression, they won't be back and they won't send referrals. Barrows and Kennedy make an irrefutable case that people are more beguiled by an approach centered on providing an experience consistent with inner desires than a pressure-sell.

Barrows urges listening first, then selling clients what they yearn for. "What problem are they trying to solve, what pain are they seeking to alleviate or avoid? What pleasure or gain are they hoping to experience? What do they see as the ideal outcome and how will that make them feel?" This approach meets less sales resistance than trying to convince people to want what is already on hand.

The author and co-author are an absolutely unique duo in the sphere of marketing. Sydney Biddle Barrows first came to the public's notice when labeled by the press as the "Mayflower Madam,"—mistress of a highly lucrative out-call service, called Cachet. She is now a highly in demand public speaker, business mentor, and management consultant. Dan Kennedy is a consulting guru whose daily fee (which folks line up to pay) is about the same as the average annual per capita income in the U.S. His eleven previous books include *The No B.S.* series of specialized sales guides.

According to Barrows and Kennedy, the smart seller should shift focus from products and pricing, to the minds of customers, and put their energy into building honest relationships. Those who aren't sure exactly what business they're really in (answer: whatever legal business the clients want you to be in) will soon be out of business. Niche businesses are lucrative, but sub-niches serving a very particularized segment are even more successful because the seller can tailor their approach to more closely match expectations. One proviso: the techniques detailed here apply without modifica-tion only to those serving clients with plenty of disposable cash. Individuals on limited budgets might like to be catered to, but they still check the price tag.

Several additional sales specialists contribute short sections that reinforce Barrows' and Kennedy's priorities through examples of their own successes and learning experiences. The general approach is concerned with ending overt coercion in the sales process; it's about deeply understanding the movies playing in clients' heads. That's the direction of the future for the entire occupation. Don't discount the advice of the madam and the madman; they might know more about your business than you do.

TODD MERCER (December 16, 2008)

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