



**Dan Pink:** Dan was educated with a BA from Northwestern and a Law Degree from Yale...he got into politics soon thereafter, eventually becoming the chief speechwriter for Vice President Al Gore along with holding other government positions. He's also the author of 4 other books – including Drive: The Surprising Truth About What Motivates Us, A Whole New Mind: Why Right Brainers Will Rule the Future, The Adventures of Johnny Bunko: The Last Career Guide You'll Ever Need and his first book Free Agent Nation: The Future of

Working for Yourself

**Authors Purpose:** To make the case that Sales has changed dramatically...and whether we like it or not, we are all involved in selling these days and there is a better way to do it than the traditional selling we're all used to.

## Principles and Quotes

“I don't sell minivans in a car dealership or bound from office to office pressing cholesterol drugs on physicians. But leave aside sleep, exercise, and hygiene, and it turns out that I spend a significant portion of my days trying to coax others to part with resources. ... Indeed, the vast majority of time I'm seeking resources other than money. Can I get strangers to read an article, an old friend to help me solve a problem, or my nine-year-old son to take a shower after baseball practice?” *Dan Pink*

**The rebirth of sales?** It turns out that despite the internet and the bad economy, there are just as many people in Sales jobs now as there were 20 years ago (1 in 9 US workers are in Sales). Moreover, those of us who are not 'formally' in sales are also selling. Here are some interesting stats based on a research survey:

- On average people are spending 40 percent of their time engaging in non-sales selling – persuading, influencing and convincing others in ways that don't involve a purchase directly.
- Respondents consider this non-sales selling aspect of their work crucial in the professional success. So selling (despite it not being part of your job title) is alive and well.

Why are so many more people involved in selling? This increasing shift can be traced to at least 3 key trends:

**Entrepreneurship** – explosive trend of people starting their own businesses

- Micro-enterprises are now the majority of US businesses, 54% of 18 to 34 year olds intend to start their own business (or already have).
- As a business owner, you wear every hat in the business, including sales. You will not succeed if you can't influence customers, partners and employees to buy into your ideas.



**Elasticity** – Companies are requiring employees to take on much broader responsibilities, including sales

- Many successful companies no longer use a traditional sales team. Instead the company's view everyone as a sales person – support staff, engineers, customer service teams...all are responsible for helping customers buy what they need.
- The fast moving economy and technology changes are requiring organizations to be flat and nimble...which means everyone is engaged with most aspects of the business. A big change.

**Ed-Med** – Finally two of the fastest growing industries, Education and Medical require inherent selling skills

- Education and Medical sectors has created more jobs than all other sectors combined!
- Both of these industries require persuasion and salesmanship to succeed.

### **Caveat Emptor moving to Caveat Venditor**

Even if you don't know any Latin, the odds are good that you're familiar with the term Caveat Emptor – let the buyer beware. Sales over the last 100+ years have taught us (the hard way) that typically you can't trust salespeople, they're trying to rip you off and they always have some sort of angle they're playing.

Most of this is stereotype – typified by decades of Used Car Salesmen that we've all dealt with at one point in time or another. The reality is there were a lot of bad deals, it was appropriate as a buyer to beware and it was primarily driven by Information Asymmetry. The situation where the seller has a lot more information than the buyer – leading to lots of ways for the seller to take advantage of the buyer.

**Caveat Venditor** – Buyers via the power of the internet often have as much and possibly more information than the seller, plus they have an easy way to loudly blow the whistle on an questionable business tactics. You may not be familiar with the Latin '**Caveat Venditor**' but as you likely guessed, it means: "**Let the beware!**"

Buyers are now on equal footing as sellers in many cases.

"To her the ideal salespeople are those who ask themselves, 'What decision would I make if that were my own mom sitting there trying to get service or buy a car?' It sounds noble. And maybe it is. But today, it's how you sell cars." *Tamara Darvish*

**Extraverts make the best salespeople...right?:** Conventional wisdom (and common sense) tells us that extraverts – those who are the most sociable, assertive, lively and open to trying new things make the best salespeople. The reality is there's no data to back that up – studies show no correlation between extraversion and sales performance. True introverts aren't the answer either – instead the data indicates that the best salespeople are Ambiverts. If you think of Introversion to Extraversion as a scale from 1 to 7 with 1 being uncomfortable with strangers and 7 being the raging life of the party extravert, ambiverts are right in the middle – they would score a 3, 4 or 5.



It turns out that a healthy combination of introverted behavior (like listening) combined with extraverted behavior (pushing appropriately for action) is where sales success is found. Want to find out where you fall on the Introvert to Extravert scale? Take this assessment from Daniel Pink: <http://www.danpink.com/assessment>



## The New ABC's of Sales - Attunement

Attunement is all about adjusting your perspective and approach to match other people. In traditional sales training they might call it Rapport, but it's more than just making your prospective client comfortable, it's putting yourself in their shoes and being able to really understand where they're coming from.

- Seeing things from someone else's perspective dramatically improves your chances of closing a deal
- Power gets in the way of Attunement – it's difficult (and unlikely) for those who are fully in control, those who hold all the cards to see the other person's perspective

**Tip** – Use strategic mimicry (subtly copy what the other person is doing) to put them at ease. A Dutch study found that waitresses who repeated orders word for word earned 70% more tips than those paraphrasing.

### **Quick Ideas to improve Attunement: How to Be**

- Best way to start a conversation with someone? Ask "Where are you from?" as an icebreaker.
- Keep an empty chair. Jeff Bezos from Amazon holds an empty chair at strategy meetings to represent the most important person in the room – the customer. Use it to figure out what they're thinking, feeling.

## The New ABC's of Sales - Buoyancy

One thing the new framework of selling has in common with the traditional version is rejection...if you're going to get out and sell to people, whether its ideas or products, you're going to face rejection. Buoyancy – the ability to stay up (and positive) despite that rejection is a key to sales success. There are 3 components to maintaining Buoyancy that social sciences have proven to be effective – before, during and after sales.

**Before – Interrogative Self-Talk:** Traditional sales advice is that you need to pump yourself up with positive self-talk: 'I'm the greatest salesman in the world!' However studies have shown that questions are much more effective at engaging people (including yourself) that a better approach is to ask yourself questions. Use Bob The Builder as your guide – his catchphrase for every show? "Can we fix it?" The questioning approach causes you to subconsciously consider and answer the question – leaving you much more prepared and confident overall.

**During – Positivity Ratios:** Research on Positivity (range of emotions including amusement, appreciation, joy, interest, gratitude and inspiration) shows that a positive demeanor and approach opens people up and makes them more receptive and creative. However that positive approach has to be grounded in belief and reality – if you don't believe in what you're selling then the positivity will come off as fake and manipulative.



The idea is to encounter or create positive situations. The target should be to **hit at least 3 positive encounters for every negative**. But don't avoid the negatives; you still need them to keep you grounded.

**After – Explanatory Style:** It's human nature to review your performance after everything is done. However it makes a big difference if that internal review is done pessimistically or optimistically. A study of Met Life Insurance agents tracked those with pessimistic styles vs. those with optimistic styles and it turns out that the optimists outsold the pessimists by a lot and were 1/3 less likely to quit within the first year of sales. Optimists believe that rejections are temporary rather than permanent, specific rather than universal and external rather than personal.

### Quick Ideas to improve Buoyancy:

- Practice interrogative self-talk: Ask yourself if you can succeed at what you're trying to do...then answer. Write down five reasons why you can succeed.
- Become aware of your positivity ratio – check out [www.positivityratio.com](http://www.positivityratio.com) for an assessment
- Improve your optimistic explanatory style – after something bad occurs, ask yourself these 3 questions: “Is this permanent?”, “Is this pervasive?”, and “Is this personal?”. Focus on responding with answer that are temporary, specific and universal.

## The New ABC's of Sales - Clarity

Today success in sales doesn't rely on solving problems – most people have the resources to solve a problem on their own. The success factor is driven by the ability to help buyers find the right problem. One of the best ways to enhance clarity (and frame the situation) is to supply a contrasting point. Ask 'Compared to what?' as a way to emphasize a situation.



Here are 3 ways to help you figure out a frame for a situation you're influencing:

- **The less frame:** When people have too many options they tend to be overwhelmed – can you simplify the alternatives down to a few clearly different choices?
- **The experience frame:** Studies show people *value and remember experiences more than material aspects*, so can you frame your sale in terms of the experience it will generate?
- **The label frame:** Words matter – attaching a positive label can change perception and actions. In one study, students told they had the neatest classroom in the school ended up living up to that label.

**An Off Ramp** – The final aspect of clarity is the importance of giving people an off ramp. An off-ramp is a clear set of actions and next steps the buyer would take if they agree to be moved.

### Quick Ideas to improve Clarity:

- Ask 2 irrational questions: Question 1: On a scale from 1 to 10 with 1 being not interested at all and 10 being ready to buy, where are you on this idea/product? Question 2: Why didn't you pick a lower number? The questions catch people off guard and put them in a position of clarifying the situation.



- Ask Five Whys: When faced with a problem ask Why it occurred...continue asking Why 5 times. You'll often be surprised at the result you end up with by having this candid dialogue.
- Find the 1 Percent: Can you boil your proposition down to the utmost core or essence of the point? The 1 percent that explains the other 99%? If you can clearly state the core you will have clarity.

## The New skills of Sales - Pitch

If you want to succeed in sales, you have to distill your idea down to its persuasive core. A study of pitches in Hollywood (people selling ideas for movies) uncovered that success came from engaging the person you are pitching to. Make them a collaborator in your idea and your chances of success go way up. With that in mind and the fact that you have to be concise and to the point, here are 4 types of pitches to get you started:

- **The one word pitch** – It's as concise as you can get, but if you have the clarity and discipline to hone down to one word, you can OWN IT. What online company owns the word 'Search'? What credit card company is 'Priceless'? What examples can you come up with?
- **The question pitch** – questions engage the listener. What question can you ask to help make your case? Think about Ronald Reagan's question in 1980: "Are you better off now than you were 4 years ago?"
- **The subject line pitch** – Copywriters have developed a science around what emails get opened based on their subject line. It has to be short and it should tap into Utility (clear and focused benefit), Curiosity (element of mystery) and Specificity (numbers and clear details).
- **The twitter pitch** – Get your idea across in 140 characters or less. Use questions or share strong insights.

### **Quick Ideas to work on your Pitch:**

- Answer 3 key questions: After someone hears your pitch... 'What do you want them to know?', 'What do you want them to feel?' and 'What do you want them to do?'
- Practice, practice, practice – the more you share your ideas (and evolve them) the stronger they'll be.

## The New skills of Sales - Improvise

The new world of sales requires you to truly engage with the buyer – you're not leading them down a scripted path, you're collaborating with them to find a solution that benefits you both. The skill you need for that is improvisation. Improvisation is all about working with your partner to create something new. That requires different skills and a different approach than most of us are used to. Here are some keys to Improvisation:

**Hear offers** – The first step is to listen...really listen and hear what the other person is saying – take their response as an offer you can follow up on.

**Practice saying 'Yes and'** – Improvisation is all about creating possibilities and when you say 'Yes and' (as opposed to 'Yes but' or 'No') you are collaborating to build a foundation.

**Make your partners look good** – Improv isn't about conflict, it really only shines when you and your partners all look good. It's trite to talk about creating win-win situations, but that's exactly the point here. View your encounters as opportunities to learn and it becomes much easier.



## Quick Ideas to work on Improvising:

- Take five: A big part of improvising with a partner is listening and in order to listen you need to slow down. Literally pick a day (or an hour) and practice waiting for 5 seconds before you respond to anyone.
- Play I'm Curious: This is a two person exercise. Choose a controversial issue with 2 distinct sides and each of you pick a side to debate. Your partner states her argument but you can reply only with questions. The questions must follow 3 rules: 1) No Yes-No questions, 2) Your questions cannot be veiled opinions and 3) Your partner must answer each question. A strong exercise to develop questioning and listening skills.

## The New skills of Sales - Serve



With the shift to Caveat Venditor, one of the keys to success in the new world of selling is changing the mindset from manipulation to service. Are you genuinely helping someone and making the world a better place with what (and how) you're selling? If the answer is no...you're going struggle. Just like the idea of Servant Leadership has taken off in the last 20 years or so, now is the time for Servant Selling.

**Make it Personal** – Everything you do to 'move' someone will be much more effective if you relate to them as a person. They're not a target, they're not a demographic, they are an individual and communicating in that way will make a big difference. The potential buyer wants to work with a person as well – which is why having a picture and an actual story about you on your "About" page is important.

**Make it purposeful** – One of the keys to influencing others is to tap into a big message / purpose that's important to your prospective client. People want to be a part of something bigger that they believe in – how can you position your message to help them? Tap into the big 'Why' of what you're doing.

## Quick Ideas to work on Improvising:

- Upserve – change your mind set from upselling to upservicing. Instead of finding ways to get more, can you give more? That's the kind of approach that people will remember...and talk about.
- Rethink sales commissions – Most traditional sales people are compensated with a small base and a much larger commission opportunity. But is that sending the wrong message or motivating the wrong behavior?
- Sell to Grandma – treat everyone you're selling to as if they were a close family member. What would that change in your normal sales approach or message?

Along the same lines, the behaviors of successful selling require different skills – you must figure out the essence of the value you bring (and be able to cleanly communicate it), you have to be comfortable improvising solutions...and you have to be constantly looking at ways you can add value and help others.





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