

Paul Weber
Heiner Böttger

Sales Meets Brain Research

Just let your customer buy

 Springer



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Our Philosophy of Selling

1

Abstract

The first chapter introduces you to our sales philosophy and our aspirations for selling. This includes, above all, the attitude towards customers and the topic of “selling”. We show that selling can be learned and is not solely a question of talent or intuitive, partly unprepared action. Selling is ideally a non-manipulative, professional procedure. It must be understood, practiced, prepared and applied. We will show you that brain research supports you in successful implementation and contributes to making the sales conversation successful and a communicative experience for you and your customers. Practice and research are linked to form a consistent methodology.

If you define selling as a process that leads to guiding the customer¹ to his more attractive and successful future, then it is certainly one of the most exciting jobs you can do in business. This, by the way, is our philosophy of selling, and we want to show you in this book that it is at the same time the basis for simply letting the customer buy.

- ▶ The goal is: to lead customers into a successful future and to put the price into perspective.

You will learn many things in this book that will help you to sell with great pleasure and ease in the future. Because if you actually manage to lead the customer into his more

¹ In the interest of readability, we have refrained from using gender-related formulations in some parts of the text. However, it goes without saying that the generic masculine form in the text always refers to both women and men.

attractive and successful future, then issues such as price, for example, become much less important.

However, let us state right at the beginning of the book that you will only achieve this ease in selling if you are willing to invest time and energy in learning the methods we are going to teach you in such a way that you will be able to call them up in sales conversations.

Our philosophy presupposes, at least to some extent, that you treat your customers with respect and appreciation. It is not uncommon for salespeople to boast over a beer about how they have once again ripped off a customer. This may indeed succeed now and then, but it will tend to make a long-term and mutually successful business relationship impossible. It would be much better if salespeople could brag about how successful they have been with their customers.

At this point we want to concede right away that you by no means have to have the same philosophy of selling and the same view of people as we do in order to become even more successful in sales as a result of this book. Even great egoists who don't have the slightest thing to do with other people and yet are willing to apply the things we teach in this book will be successful. But it certainly doesn't hurt to think hard about our philosophy.

There are many different, inconsistent definitions of the term "customer". If one wants to get an overview, terms such as customer, consumer, buyer or purchaser are often used synonymously. In the understanding of this book, customers are first of all persons and institutions with several decision-makers who act as actual or potential demanders on markets and (want to) conclude purchase contracts (cf. Dichtl and Issing 1993, p. 1253). However, they all have individual personality traits that can differ to such an extent that a simple classification for generalisation is only roughly successful. Customers, above all people, are not just functionaries. They deserve respect and appreciation and must not be underestimated under any circumstances. Especially in times of the Internet, customers today are often more knowledgeable – as the origin of the word suggests – than many a salesperson.

Proposed in the literature are psychologically based customer typologies such as that by Lorenz (2007). They all distinguish individuals in four ways, which, however, only corresponds to human complexity to a limited extent in the first instance. Accordingly, consideration of the individuality of customers must also be reflected – as in this book – as an essential aspect in the criteria for successful customer communication.

Germany Is in a Training Dilemma

Communication and selling can hardly be learned specifically in Germany's school institutions. This is a real training dilemma. At schools, neither communication nor selling is a subject of instruction, and at colleges and universities, special sales-related communication is likewise only taught in specialized courses of study – despite the fact that the majority of the economic system functions via communication and transfer or sales and distribution.

Salespeople thus become primarily people who were born with a certain sales skill. That is, who intuitively do many things right in sales. And so it is the popular belief that you can not learn selling, but simply need people with talent to provide the necessary sales.

- ▶ The bad news is: talent and intuition are often not enough. The good news is that selling can be learned.

It is always good to have talent for what you do in your working life, but transfer this thought, which is so self-evident in sales, to other areas of the company. In production, for example, people try to reach every achievable percentage point by optimizing, while in sales success is more or less left to the intuition of the employees.

We believe that many people would be excellent salespeople, but either don't trust themselves to do so or dismiss selling as "door-to-door selling". If you take our philosophy of selling as a basis, then selling is exactly the opposite. Many people would be good salespeople simply because of the fact that others like to trust them because of their personality. If these people are willing to put in a lot of effort and diligence, as mentioned above, they can become very successful salespeople.

If you apply the suggestions this book gives, then you will be able to convince your customers of a common cause and not have to persuade or even dupe them. That's a significant difference – and our philosophy.

1.1 What You Should Know About This Book in Advance

Selling Does Not Have to Be Manipulation

In this book we want to show how it is possible to achieve lasting success together in a communication situation – namely speaking, listening, understanding and agreeing: Based on the latest findings of brain research, being enabled to convince sustainably in a personal conversation, even without manipulating with invasive conversational techniques, is the goal of the book.

Our Claim

This book has been written with a high standard. Because the main finding from many years of experience with sales coaching is the following: Despite existing theoretical knowledge, some effective communicative behaviors are often implemented too little in the sales conversation.

1. **Know – be able to – apply.** This means that pure knowledge alone is not enough. This is where relevant publications often stop. By including brain research, we now go one step further: Brain research not only explains, but also helps to really recognize and understand the effectiveness of the communication methods and thus to be more willing to practice them permanently and to implement them.