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Selling
FOR
DUMMIES®
2ND EDITION

by Tom Hopkins and Ben Kench

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Introduction

Welcome to *Selling For Dummies*. Although this book is about selling products and services to businesses and consumers, it goes beyond that knowledge. This book is really about people skills. After all, knowing how to get along well with others is vital, especially if your career involves persuading them toward ownership of your ideas, concepts, products, or services. In this way, selling is a life skill that you use in many situations, both at home and at work. Life is a sales game and you fare better when more people see things your way!

To be successful in sales, you must be able to co-operate, have good listening skills and be willing to put others' needs before your own. With the selling skills that we cover here in your arsenal, you'll have more happiness and satisfaction in *all* areas of your life, not just in your selling career (although your selling will certainly benefit too).

About This Book

Selling For Dummies, can help you get more happiness and contentment out of your life right now by helping you gain more respect, more money, more recognition for the job you do, more agreement from your friends and family, more control in negotiations and, of course, more sales. Above all, this book is a reference tool, so you don't have to read it from beginning to end. Instead, you can turn to any part of the book that gives you the information you need, when you need it. And you can keep coming back to the book over and over again throughout your selling career.

As the original dummies in sales, we're the perfect people to write this book.

Ben started his career selling double-glazing. He remembers vividly his mother's reaction to his new job: 'Oh well, that'll do until you get a proper job.' But somehow, he never got the proper job. At the time, double-glazing sales, for many, epitomised the lower end of the selling spectrum – national television at the time spent most Sunday evenings exposing 'cowboy' selling tactics. However, the job served Ben well. He started in January with no money, no proper overcoat and a battered, barely legal Hillman Avenger car that had no heater. The experience was tough, but it served as excellent leverage. Ben wanted money, so he had to make the job work!

Ben listened and copied and learned and developed. He was constantly hungry for a new idea or pitch style, and when he added in his cheeky personality, he soon started winning – big. But he has never forgotten the lessons he learned at the start of his career. Today, Ben is recognised as the UK's number one sales and business growth specialist, and, within his successful business coaching and sales training entities, he still applies himself to constant learning. He's delighted to be able to share all the knowledge gained through his experience and hard work, so that you can enjoy, as he has, a life dedicated to sales . . . 'not a proper job'!

Tom started his selling career in property at the age of 19. Property may have been a great career choice, but at the time he owned neither a suit nor a car. All he had was a band uniform and a motorcycle. And selling properties on a motorcycle wasn't easy; rather than loading up the prospective buyers in his car, he had to tell them to follow him to the properties and hope they didn't get lost along the way. When they finally came to their senses and realised that this kid couldn't possibly be for real, they'd keep going straight when he'd make a turn. (To make things even worse, wearing a woollen band uniform in Southern California's summer heat didn't allow him to present the coolest image, either.)

But he stuck it out, because he knew there was big money to be made in the selling business – if he could just find out what the successful people were doing that he wasn't. He learned the hard way, through trial and error. Early in his career, a professional, experienced salesperson told Tom that he had to learn how to *close*, meaning 'to close the sale'. Tom

responded, 'I don't have many clothes.' See why he only averaged \$42 a month in his first six months of selling property?

Needless to say, Tom has come a long way since then, and it thrills him no end to give you the chance to benefit from the mistakes he made, as well as from the subsequent success he's had. Yes, he's had successes. He achieved his goal of becoming a millionaire by the age of 30, beating his own deadline by nearly three years! At age 27, he was one of the most successful estate agents in the United States – a guy who started without a decent suit or a vehicle with four wheels!

Just goes to show you that it doesn't matter how much of a dummy you are on this subject when you start. With this book by your side, serving as a reference for all the selling situations you encounter, you'll master the selling, persuasion and people skills you need to really shine.

Conventions Used in This Book

To help you navigate this book, we include the following conventions:

- ✔ **Boldface** highlights key words in bulleted lists and action steps that you should follow in a specific order.
- ✔ New terms and words we choose to emphasise are in *italics*.
- ✔ Web addresses appear in `monoFont`.

When this book was printed, some of the web addresses we reference may have needed to break across two lines of text. If that happened, rest assured that we haven't put in any extra characters (such as hyphens) to indicate the break. So, when using one of these web addresses, just type in exactly what you see in this book, pretending the line break doesn't exist.

We also use some terms interchangeably in this book. For example, the people you look for to present your offering to may be called *prospects* in one area. In other areas, we refer to them as *potential clients*, which we believe creates a more positive, powerful mental image about who they are.

What You're Not to Read

If you're reading this book just to get a better understanding of the more serious bits of how to sell your product or service, skip past content preceded by the Anecdote icon. These are stories from our pasts or experiences of our students that demonstrate a point but may not be necessary to your understanding of the topic at hand. The same goes for sidebars, which are the grey-shaded boxes sprinkled throughout this book.

Foolish Assumptions

When writing this book, we assumed that its readers would either already be in sales careers or considering going into sales. It doesn't matter whether you're selling corporate jets or chocolates, the basic selling strategies apply simply because you're selling to *people*.

We also assumed that you like people in general and that you enjoy working with them: you're not a hermit or a recluse, you don't have an extreme case of anthropophobia (a fear of people) and you aren't painfully shy.

Another assumption is that you're interested in learning and willing to experiment and apply the strategies in this book. If you're not serious about at least trying something new to get different results from those you're getting now, you might as well give this book to someone else. This book contains answers, strategies and tactics for successfully selling products and services, but they won't work until you put them to work.

How This Book Is Organised

Selling For Dummies is organised into six parts, and the parts are divided into chapters. In the following sections, we give you a quick preview of what to expect from each part so you can turn to the part that interests you most.

Part I: Laying a Solid Foundation for Selling

In this part, you find out a little about what selling is and what it isn't. We share ideas on what selling skills can do for you in all areas of your life, and give you a quick tour through the seven steps of the selling cycle. We also let you know how important your attitude is to the art of selling – encouraging you to have fun and get all the satisfaction and success out of selling that you get out of the things you do for fun.

Part II: Doing Your Homework before You Sell a Thing

Just as with virtually any pursuit in life, preparation is the key to success in the world of selling. In this part, we cover the steps to preparation – everything from knowing your clients to knowing your products – that will set you apart from average persuaders and help you hear more yeses in your life. We talk about the importance of understanding the cultural needs of your clients, and how to use this understanding to your advantage in the preparation stage of the game as well as in making your selling life more successful. We also cover many ways technology can make your life less complicated as you navigate the sometimes challenging course of business.

Part III: The Anatomy of a Sale

In this part, we give each of the seven steps of the selling cycle its very own chapter. We pack in lots of useful information – including some suggestions for wording and nonverbal communication tips – in each stage of the process. You'll discover how to find the people you can sell to, how to get an appointment with those people and make a good impression, how to build better relationships that increase the likelihood of sales, how to give fantastic presentations, how to address customer concerns, how to close the sale and how to get referrals . . . so you can start the process all over again.

Part IV: Growing Your Business

This part is where you begin to separate yourself from average salespeople to become one of the greats. Average salespeople make their presentations, win a few, lose a few and move on. But the great ones view every presentation as an opportunity to build a long-term business. So in this part, we give you tips for staying in touch with your clients, making more sales through the help of the Internet and managing your time wisely so that you always have time for your clients as your business grows.

Great salespeople build not only businesses but also relationships, because *relationships* take them further and bring them a lot more satisfaction in the long run. We also cover strategies and tactics for partnering with other non-competing business professionals to tap into their clientèle who just might have a need for your services as well.

Part V: You Can't Win 'Em All: Keeping the Faith in Sales

Rejection is a part of life. So you need to expect it, accept it and get over it. The fact that a prospect rejects your product or service doesn't mean that he's rejected you as a person. But when you're in the world of selling, where rejection is just part of the territory, your self-esteem can easily suffer. So in this part, we help you imitate a duck by letting things run off your back like water. We show you how to think like a pro – not an *average* salesperson – and how to work through challenging times without losing faith. We also help you understand how best to use your time and keep focused on the big-picture goals so the little negativities of life don't bring you down. **Remember:** With every no, you're that much closer to a yes.

Part VI: The Part of Tens

The short chapters in this part are packed with quick ideas about selling and persuading that you can read any time you have a few minutes. They're a great way to get yourself

psyched for a presentation or for making calls. And they're good for pumping up your attitude and invigorating you for each day. **Remember:** No one will ever want what you have, if you're not excited about it.

Icons Used in This Book

Icons are those little pictures you see in the margins throughout this book, and they're meant to draw your attention to key points that are of help to you along the way. Here's a list of the icons we use and what they signify.



When you see this icon, you can bet that stories from our years of experience in selling and from our students' experiences are nearby. And, oh, what stories we have to share. . . .



This icon highlights advice to follow to go beyond the basics and become a true champion at selling. When you see this icon, you'll find examples of exchanges between you and your prospective client so you can see exactly how a conversation can develop if you know just what to say.



Instead of being the typical warning that red flags usually indicate, this icon highlights the crucial pieces of information and skills you need for selling anything. When you see this flag in the margin, take notice. Great selling tips are at hand.



Some things are so important that they bear a little extra attention. So this icon – like a string tied around your finger – is a friendly reminder of information you'll want to commit to memory and use over the long haul.



When you see this icon in the margin, the paragraph next to it contains valuable information on making the sales process easier or faster – anything from prospecting to closing and beyond.



This icon highlights things you want to avoid and common mistakes salespeople make. An important part of achieving success is simply eliminating the mistakes. And the information marked by this icon helps you do just that.

Where to Go from Here

Glance through the Table of Contents and find the part, chapter or section that flips your switch. That's the best place to begin.

To benefit the most from the material in this book, do a little self-analysis to see where you're the weakest. We know admitting your faults is tough, even to yourself. But reading the material that covers your weaker areas will bring you the greatest amount of success.

Studies have shown that most traditional salespeople are not highly skilled at relationship building. They visit a lot of people and try hard but just never quite get enough connection and interest to wrestle the sale from another competitor, or never quite make the sale happen for them when they'd like. If you're in traditional sales and you aren't sure whether relationship building is your weakness, Chapter 9 may be a great place to start.

The most successful people in life are those who continue to grow. The fact that you're reading these words now puts you into that realm – because it isn't how much you know that counts, but how much you can discover *after* you 'know it all'. Congratulations for believing in yourself, in your ability to change for the better, in your ability to improve your lifestyle *and* in your ability to improve the lives of the people you help with this book's many tips on the art of selling. We wish you greatness!

Part I

Laying a Solid Foundation for Selling



'We're looking for a salesperson who can get his
foot in the door - Are you that person,
Mr Snartley?'

In this part...

Here you discover the components of the selling cycle and how you can use the process to generate greater success for yourself. We also look at the importance of attitude in your sales role. Whether you're a new starter or an old hand, this section offers excellent, simple suggestions and key reminders to keep you upbeat and focused for success.

Chapter 1

Selling Is All Around You

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In This Chapter

- ▶ Defining selling
 - ▶ Recognising some common methods salespeople use to get their messages across
 - ▶ Improving your life by improving your selling
-

Selling is happening everywhere around you, and everybody does it almost every day, in one form or another. In fact, selling is a life skill that affects every waking moment of your day. So in this chapter, I let you know what exactly this thing called *selling* is, how it's done and how you can use selling skills to make your life and your career better.

Understanding What Selling Is



In the strictest sense of the word, *selling* is a process of communication in which the seller imparts a feeling to another person or group in order to win the buyer over to the seller's ideas, concepts, products or services. This feeling comes from the high level of emotion that you have for your idea, concept, product or service, and when you speak with other people about it you radiate your feeling! You glow! Indeed your enthusiasm for 'it' is contagious, and other people take it on board too! In its truest form, that is selling.

When you think about it, you can be sold a concept or an idea: a religion or political persuasion, a belief about an issue or a favouring of a person or thing. Selling is about getting someone to feel whatever it is you want them to feel, and you do this and see it being done every day. For example, you persuade your partner to go along with your choice of holiday or

your choice of a night's entertainment, or you encourage your work colleagues to adopt a new process or a course of action. All these areas involve you selling: a process whereby you persuade and encourage other people to feel the same way as you do.

In the more traditional sense of the word though, people think of *selling* as a work skill that involves moving goods and services from the hands of those who produce them into the hands of those who'll benefit most from their use. Selling involves both educational and persuasive skills and a combination of methods, including personal approaches alongside print, audio, video and online messages – all selling either the particular item or the brand name as being something the customer would want to have.

Some people say that nothing ever happens unless someone sells something to someone else. Without selling, products that have been manufactured would sit in warehouses for an eternity, people working for those manufacturers would become unemployed, we wouldn't need transportation and freight services, and people would be living isolated lives, striving to eke out livings from whatever bits of land they owned. Or would people even own land if no one were there to sell it to them? Think about it.

Look around you right now. You can probably spot hundreds, if not thousands, of things that were sold to get where they are right now. Even if you're totally naked, sitting in the woods, you had to be involved in some sort of selling process to have this book with you. If you choose to ignore material possessions, take stock of yourself internally. What do you believe? Why do you believe what you do? Did someone – like your parents or your peers – sell you a set of values as you were growing up? Did your teachers persuade you to believe, through demonstration, that $2 + 2 = 4$? Or did you figure that one out on your own? Odds are that whether you're living in a material world or you've forsaken nearly all possessions, you've been involved in selling, one way or another.



The preceding paragraph should have persuaded you to look at selling a bit differently than you have in the past. We did this, though, without pushing facts and figures on you. Good selling isn't pushy; it's a process of helping people to think a bit differently than they have before by using a variety of techniques and tools.