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Telephone Sales

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Dirk Zeller

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WILEY

Wiley Publishing, Inc.

Telephone Sales For Dummies®

Published by

Wiley Publishing, Inc.

111 River St.

Hoboken, NJ 07030-5774

www.wiley.com

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Indianapolis, Indiana

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Published by Wiley Publishing, Inc., Indianapolis, Indiana

Published simultaneously in Canada

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Library of Congress Control Number: 2007940114

ISBN: 978-0-470-16836-3

Manufactured in the United States of America

10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2



About the Author

Dirk Zeller started his sales career almost 40 years ago through lemonade stands and selling newspaper subscriptions door-to-door. Dirk has been recognized as a top sales performer in every sales field he's entered from business-to-business sales of advertising, marketing, and event sponsorship to consumer-direct sales fields like real estate.

Dirk proceeded to turn his sales success into creating significant business income and life-change when he founded Sales Champions in 1998. Sales Champions provides premier coaching and training to the sales industry with clients worldwide. Dirk has created revolutionary programs like Stewardship Selling™, Selling the Way the Prospect Wants to Buy™, and The Champion Salesperson™. These programs and others like them have transformed the lives of hundreds of thousands of salespeople worldwide.

Dirk is one of the most published authors of success, life balance, sales training, sales force development, and business development in the sales field. He has over 300 published articles to his credit, and his weekly sales newsletter is read by over 350,000 salespeople and sales managers.

Dirk is one of the most sought after speakers in the sales arena. He has spoken to hundreds of thousands of salespeople and sales managers at the regional, national, and international level. He has also authored five top selling books in the field of sales, and he wrote *Success as a Real Estate Agent For Dummies*, also published by Wiley.

With all of the blessings and success Dirk has attained, his faith and his family are still the primary focus of his life. He and his wife of 18 years, Joan, are active with their children, five-year-old son, Wesley, and two-year-old daughter, Annabelle. He and his family reside in Bend, Oregon. You can reach Dirk at: Sales Champions, 5 NW Hawthorne Ave., Suite 100, Bend, OR 97701; phone 541-383-0505; e-mail Info@SalesChampions.com.

Dedication

To salespeople — the backbone of any successful company. You possess the power to make your companies grow and prosper. Nothing is accomplished without someone making a sale somewhere at sometime. Be proud you are a salesperson. Your profession is noble and essential to the world.

Author's Acknowledgments

I thank the team at Sales Champions and Real Estate Champions, my two sales training companies. Without your dedication to helping salespeople reach their full potential in selling, this book wouldn't be possible.

Special thanks must be expressed to my senior management team Don Cunningham, Director of Coaching; Dan Matejsek, VP of Marketing; Roger Marti, Sales Manager; and Julie Porfirio, VP of Operations. You all take on extra duties while I am focused on writing. Also, to Rachelle Cotton who typed and proofed the manuscript . . . thanks.

Thanks to Tracy Boggier, Acquisitions Editor, Chad Sievers and Georgette Beatty, Project Editors, and Sarah Westfall and Carrie Burchfield, Copy Editors, for taking on this project and keeping us all on schedule. Thank you to Betsy Sheldon who did a masterful job of taking my writing, thoughts, and ideas and converting them into the *For Dummies* format that you can learn from and enjoy.

To the home team — my wife, Joan, my son, Wesley, and my daughter, Annabelle, you make the challenges of a

sales career all worth the effort. Without you all, the rewards of sales and success would have diminished value.

Publisher's Acknowledgments

We're proud of this book; please send us your comments through our Dummies online registration form located at www.dummies.com/register/.

Some of the people who helped bring this book to market include the following:

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Project Editors: Chad R. Sievers, Georgette Beatty

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Cover Photos: © George Dryle/Getty Images

Cartoons: Rich Tennant (www.the5thwave.com)

Composition Services

Project Coordinator: Erin Smith

Layout and Graphics: Reuben W. Davis, Melissa K. Jester, Barbara Moore, Christine Williams, Erin Zeltner

Anniversary Logo Design: Richard Pacifico

Proofreaders: Laura Bowman, Jessica Kramer

Indexer: Potomac Indexing, LLC

Publishing and Editorial for Consumer Dummies

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Introduction

“A born salesman.” You know the expression. People love to slap that label on those who seem to come naturally to selling. Maybe *you’ve* been told you were born to sell at some point in your life:

- ✓ When you were 6 years old and persuaded the guy in the ice-cream truck to buy your lemonade, your Mom said it.
- ✓ When you got the prize for selling the most candy for the school fundraiser, the other kids said it.
- ✓ When you talked your way from a C to a B, your English lit teacher said it.
- ✓ When you turn your trash into treasure by selling it on eBay, your spouse says it.

But whether you call it the power of persuasion, the capacity to convince, or the wit to win over — I’m here to tell you this: Dynamite salespeople aren’t born. They’re the result of commitment, discipline, and the drive to learn the best and *smartest* ways to earn the business of their prospects.

Take it from me: I’m the penultimate salesperson. Sure, sales is my passion, my path to career success. Sales has helped me attain and even exceed my financial goals and has allowed me to realize my most-valued life dreams. But I didn’t start out that way.

When I started out in the field, I was the youngest, greenest sales agent in my office. Some tried to convince me I'd fail, that I didn't have what it took. However, I put forth a lot of effort in those first few months. During the day, I'd work through breakfast, lunch, and dinner to make as many calls as possible. And after hours, I'd review my performance and numbers and devise the most effective methods for selling over the phone.

Within months, I earned the title of top salesman for the entire division. My progress continued, and I earned my first million at the ripe old age of 32. In 1998, I launched my coaching company, Sales Champions, to help others become top-notch salespeople and reach their career goals and life dreams.

I wrote *Telephone Sales For Dummies* for the same reasons I started my company — to guide others to develop their full potential as a sales professional and achieve their highest aspirations.

About This Book

This book is a how-to guide for gaining the skills and knowledge you need to become a champion telephone salesperson. You can also use it to acquire the organizational habits, time-management techniques, personal motivational strategies, and positive attitudes you need to rise to the top.

Telephone Sales For Dummies isn't a book of theory but of "real stuff" that works. I've packed it with proven programs and processes, tested techniques, and tried-and-true skills, strategies, and scripts.

In classic *For Dummies* fashion, the book is designed to give you easy access to the precise information you're looking for. You can read the book from cover to cover or zigzag your way through, flipping to the content you need *when* you need it. You can keep the book close at hand and turn to it for a fast reference — whether by combing the Table of Contents or Index or zeroing in on a particular chapter section, sidebar (those gray shaded boxes), or list.

Conventions Used in This Book

To make this book as easy to use as possible, the following conventions are followed throughout:

✓ All Web addresses appear in monofont.

Note: Some Web addresses break across two lines of text. In such cases, no hyphens were inserted to indicate a break. So if you type exactly what you see — pretending the line break doesn't exist — you can get to your Web destination.

✓ New terms appear in *italics* and are closely followed by an easy-to-understand definition. I also

use italics for emphasis once in a while.

✓ **Bold** font highlights keywords in bulleted lists or identifies the action parts of numbered lists.

✓ I indent and *italicize* all scripts used throughout the book. You can use them verbatim or with minor tweaks to increase your sales success.

What You're Not to Read

I understand your life is busy, and you want to read only the need-to-know information. If you're on a fast-track learning mission, you can safely skip the sidebars. Shaded gray boxes, *sidebars* serve as examples or support material. They're meant to reinforce and illustrate a concept (giving you a little extra oomph), but aren't critical to your understanding of the concept.

Foolish Assumptions

When I wrote this book, I assumed a few things about you, my dear reader. I assumed that you picked up this book because you want to improve your phone-sales skills. I didn't assume, however, that you're a working person with the title of *telephone salesperson*. You may be

✓ A real estate agent

✓ A financial consultant

- ✔ An insurance agent
- ✔ An account executive for a business-to-business product
- ✔ A volunteer for a phone fundraising campaign
- ✔ A telemarketer
- ✔ A customer service professional
- ✔ A savvy businessperson who understands that telephone-sales skills are valuable to success in any job

No matter your title or your job, you want to elevate your game and improve your sales numbers.

How This Book Is Organized

I divide *Telephone Sales For Dummies* into six major parts to help you find just what you need as quick as possible. The content is organized so that you can choose to read only the topics that interest you — or the entire part. Check out the Table of Contents or the Index to find your area of interest, and then go to the chapter that addresses the topic. At a glance, here's what you can find:

Part I: Picking Up on Telephone Sales

Part I presents an overview of the most important matters to master in order to achieve telephone-sales success. I begin with a walk-through of the phone-sales process in Chapter 1, and then follow with ways to increase your sales and income in Chapter 2. In Chapter 3, I untangle Do-Not-Call regulations for easy understanding.

Part II: Laying the Groundwork for Telephone-Sales Success

Phone-sales success requires plenty of groundwork *before* you place a finger on the first touchtone. And a game plan is the best foundation for a champion sales effort. Chapter 4 takes you step by step through the process.

Ready to get in touch with future clients? Chapter 5 covers the what, who, when, why, and how of prospecting for business. And in Chapter 6, I show you how to overcome that common malaise: call hesitance. I identify this malady and reveal my sure cure. And because time is your most valuable asset, Chapter 7 addresses another challenge to your sales endeavors: time management.

Part III: You Make the Call!

The call is the *core* of telephone sales. And (no surprise) making a call that closes is a complex process — complex but easily mastered if you have a handle on the process and the players. Part III contains the how-to instructions for executing a winning call, starting in Chapter 8 with tips to get past the gatekeepers that guard your prospect's phone access. In Chapters 9, 10, and 11, you discover how to craft an attention-getting opening, how to *ask* and *listen* before you *tell* and *sell*, and how to ask the questions that garner the best answers. Finally, Chapter 12 shows you how to smoothly shift into the delivery of your sales presentation.

Part IV: Going for the Close

So close to the *close!* This stage is one of the most critical parts of the sales process — the spot that can make or break the sale. This part contains the secrets to overcoming close barriers: Chapter 13 covers the most frequently cited objections and presents my six-step process for defusing them. In Chapter 14, I show you how to lock in your prospect's commitment and close the order *now*. And Chapter 15 shows how you can turn a failed close into a future sale.