

Introduction

Not another book on selling!

Surely there are already too many books on ‘selling’, offering too many quick fix techniques?

Well, yes there are and that is exactly the problem... Too many quick fixes, too many top tips, too many ‘this’ll result in an avalanche of buyers’ and over-hyped long-winded ideas, which deliver trickles of extra sales at best...

... And force you well out of your comfort zone ...and into doing things you’d ordinarily be ashamed of at worst.

In other words, there is usually too much ‘selling’ – and not nearly enough ‘creating true and long-lasting demand’.

Well this book is different... very different.

So what is the book about and why was it written?

In a nutshell, we were curious about:

- Why all the organisations we’d worked for, and worked with, were so obviously doing stupid things that annoyed customers and jeopardised their reputation, yet they failed to either see them or stop doing them.
- Why people at the front line in these organisations clearly see these problems and openly talk about them, yet the organisation fails to listen, take notice or act.
- Why so many organisations, large and small, start off well but then start to struggle as they get bigger.
- Why if customer attraction, loyalty, and reputation are simply a matter of common sense is common sense so rare in practice?

Simple changes

In all the businesses we've worked with, we've introduced some simple changes (slowly!) based on fundamental principles, which have made huge differences.

We have managed to generate significant and long-lasting improvements through some small changes and simple fixes for our clients.

So why isn't making small changes an obvious solution to every business leader and owner? What in reality is stopping this? And what are the simple principles and fixes we have seen and successfully implemented?

This book will answer those questions and give you the tools to make the necessary changes yourself.

Perspective

We suggest that it's all a matter of perspective: slowing down, identifying some fundamental key common sense principles and putting the systems, checks and balances in place, to ensure everyone sticks to them: through thick and thin, at all levels and without exception.

(That's the hard bit!)

As a customer of other businesses, we can all clearly see various issues, problems, and small glitches in their systems that stops them blowing our socks off and earning our enthusiastic loyalty. However, when we cease being a customer and start to work within a business, this perspective gets lost very quickly: instead, we start to focus on our internal pressures and issues in order to achieve our sales goals.

Slow Selling is a set of systems and tools to help individuals, teams, and businesses retain the perspective of the external customer. It also empowers them to continually develop and improve systems, inch by inch, using this perspective, so that

over time they will consistently make your business stand out and be remarkable in the eyes of your customer.

This takes time: there are no short cuts or quick fixes: that's why it's called 'slow selling'.

Slowing down

In the rush to achieve turnover and profits, things that matter to customers often get missed, and even are deliberately ignored or ridiculed as being 'too soft' or 'not aligned with our targets'. Unfortunately finance managers and accountants are particularly guilty of doing this, because bottom-line profits are based on short-term actions and everyone wants to see quick results through decisive changes. **It's easy to do the wrong thing... quickly!**

Therefore, we need some strong, simple, and consistent beliefs and tools to slow us down and give us confidence to address the small and soft issues that may have little short-term positive bottom-line impact, but often turn out to be a matter of life or death from the customer's point of view in the long term.

Principles

Biologically, we are animals: yet we are animals with the ability to rise above our basic animal instincts and use our unique human capacity to reason and think logically and objectively.

Our animal instincts are the ones that can provoke us into taking short-term actions, driven by our 'fight or flight system', the basic animalistic part of our brain, to get the sale. The fight or flight response is constantly triggered, both by the internal pressure to meet our goals and targets (the survival instinct), and by the thrill of the challenge of getting the sale (the fighting instinct).

In this situation we do not employ the deeper cognitive thinking part of our brain (where we find our conscience, values and principles), and we very often find ourselves violating our

deepest principles and upsetting the very people who we need to be loyal to us, by taking short-term fight or flight actions.

So, in order to combat this massively strong animal instinct (and, let's face it we all get hijacked by it from time to time ... and some significantly more frequently than that), we need clear, published, and uncompromisingly supported organisational, team and individual mission, systems and tools, founded on long-term principles and goals, to keep us on the straight and narrow path. These principles, systems, and tools also need obsessive and uncompromising measures to make sure that all are continually held accountable to them.

Of course, this is easy to say but hard to do. It can also take a long time: it's slow selling. **If it was fast and easy then everyone would already be doing it ...** and, you don't need us to tell you this is usually not the case!

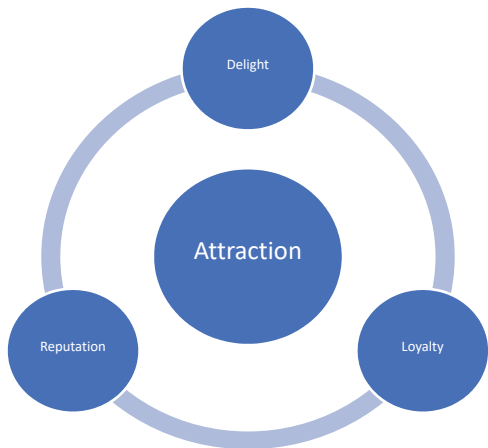
A holistic approach

In effect, we need therefore to adopt a holistic approach to each and every interaction we have with future, present, and past customers. This needs to be principle driven, systemically aligned, and behaviourally measured, in order to ensure that it is balanced, consistent, and supported by all.

Four aspects

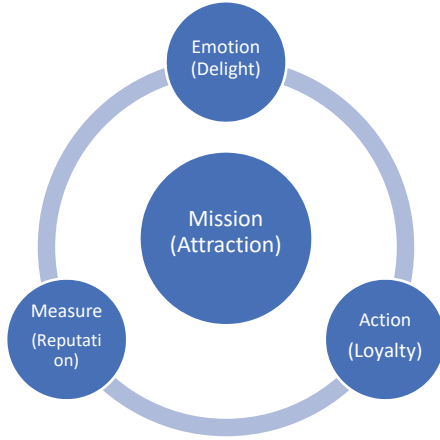
This approach should include the following four aspects:

1. Attraction
2. Delight
3. Loyalty
4. Reputation



Likewise, we will suggest that in all businesses, everything should be driven through four principles that are aligned with these aspects.

1. Mission
2. Emotion
3. Action
4. Measure



We will suggest that every organisation, team, and individual, needs a **mission** that is based on constantly attracting the best people to work with them and to get queues of people wanting to do business with them.

The **emotion** we should aim to generate around us should be one of consistently delighting the customer – internal and external – through every step of every process, so they want to be loyal to us and rave about us, whether they do business with us today or not.

Our **actions** should be aligned with this mission and emotion, and should deliver consistent focus on inspiring loyalty and enthusiasm from everyone we come into contact with ... no exceptions!

And our **measures** should start with our reputation and feedback on how well we have delivered the above intentions and actions. This should become, over time, the key lead measure that will provide the best possible results for the long term.

Then and only then will the profits flow: fully, abundantly, consistently, and sustainably.

This book is not about making sales and profits. **This book is about making full, abundant, consistent, sustainable, and rewarding long-term sales and profits.**

We perhaps can call this the state of being 'remarkable'. This term has a double meaning that is entirely aligned with this type of thinking and our aim in this book is to show you how to make your customer facing systems 'remarkable', so that you get queues of people wanting to buy from you, buying all they can from you, remaining fiercely loyal and raving about you to their friends.

These are the keys to 'selling'.

Balanced scorecard

The above four aspects can be effectively demonstrated by using a balanced scorecard that looks a bit like the diagrams above.

But remember, this is a balanced scorecard that means every aspect must be equally balanced. Any imbalance will result in significant underperformance in all areas. It's like the four wheels on your car, if one is misaligned, all four tyres will wear down significantly quicker.

The real problem

The real problem often is that due to pressure from shareholders and short-term targets, 90% of effort often goes into customer attraction and the remaining 10% gets shared, in a bun fight, between the others.

In traditional selling, customer attraction is seen not only as the number one focus, but also as an action of investment, with the other three aspects seen as very much of secondary importance and as an action of cost by the bean counters.

(And we all know that lots of money can be spent on investment, but costs always need to be minimised!).

The results are predictable, and seen all around us ... with brands rising quickly through high impact promotional activity and then falling away into the dust, with suppliers continually struggling to retain customers and ending up resorting to unsustainable special offers, and with organisations and individuals constantly struggling and often failing to keep up with the competition, achieve sustainable targets, and produce consistent profits.

An answer

An answer to all these issues is at the same time blindingly simple, and startlingly hard to apply.

If it wasn't, you'd see world-class levels of customer engagement, reputation, and loyalty all around you and marketing and advertising would become a very barren occupation.

Instead, we see ever-increasing levels of marketing and advertising chasing ever-lower levels of customer attention and loyalty.

Surely it's time to slow down, focus on common sense principles from start to finish throughout the sales process and, by doing this, **get customers queuing up to buy from you, buying all they can from you, becoming fiercely loyal, and raving about you behind your back?**

The beliefs, attitudes, skills, tools, and measures to make this actually happen for you in all your sales processes is what you will get from this book.

Thank you for buying it and we hope that you get massive value from it.