



What's the perception of sales people? What comes to mind when you hear the word, "sales man?" In 1978, I became a sales man. I

know that because it said so on my business card.

It would be years later before I learned to become a selling "performer." My product was Salad Master cookware, with the same company in which Zig Ziglar set all the sales records he often speaks about (and I certainly did my part to make sure his sales records stayed intact).

That was my first introduction to the world of selling. I should say, that was the first time I was included in that group called "sales people" that I'd heard. Right up until the time I answered that ad for a little extra income each week, I'd never seen myself as being "one of them."

**What the best of the best in the selling profession do is perform! Think Hollywood or Las Vegas. This marketplace is all about "The Show!"**

As I began to learn my new trade, everyone kept talking about becoming a selling "professional." (They're still talking about it today.) But the word "professional" simply means you're PAID to do something, or to appear professional while doing it.

What the best of the best in the selling profession do is perform! Think Hollywood or Las Vegas. This marketplace is all about "The Show!" and the performers who are paid to be in it. That's what this marketplace and every manager wants from a sales person ... a performance.

# Hi, I'm Pushy and Obnoxious ... Wanna Buy Something

It's not acting so much as knowing "you're on!" and responding with an award-winning performance again today.

What's the general public's perception of "sales person"? When I ask that question to live audiences, their "*perception of sales people*," here's the list of answers:

- Pushy.
- Obnoxious.
- Say anything.
- Do anything.
- Unprofessional.
- Less-than-truthful.  
(OK, we can stop now)
- Get the idea?

## Why is that?

Simple answer: We earned that reputation over years and years of doing all those things.

How many managers over the years gave you a book and a business card and said something to the effect of "*Now get out there and make somebody mad, don't take no for an answer, close early and close often, do whatever it takes, but bring me back a SALE!*"

Oh, so that's what it takes to make a sale. Fortunately for the marketplace, there's something called the 80/20 rule. This rule can apply to many things, but in this case we'll use it to identify the 20 percent of sales people who have committed to becoming "*aspiring sales performers*."

Aspiring sales professionals perform (and are paid) at the highest level. Wouldn't that be a worthy ambition if you've chosen selling as a vocation?

If you're going to be generating revenues for organizations to survive and even prosper, wouldn't it be great to decide at some point (the sooner the better) that you will do it in an uncommon fashion? Not like the typical list of pushy, obnoxious, say anything, etc.

What would you use to make your list on the uncommon selling performers? How about:

- Honesty.
- Integrity.
- Commitment.
- Continuous Learning.
- Powerful Communicator.

And that means a commitment to "becoming."

As a director of sales teams for many years, I used this "what everyone thinks of sales people" example to convey to my group of aspiring sales performers exactly how they'd be thought of when someone answered their phone calls for an appointment, or when they entered an office or someone walked through their door for the first time. They would be in that 80 percentile (at least perceived that way) ... just like all those other money-grabbing sales types.

But the good news is that just by being aware of this perception in the marketplace and by doing a few things well, any individual can begin to stand out in the mind of buyers and customers as different! As unique, atypical, unconventional as uncommon!

## How do you do it?

How can you stand out in a marketplace today of sales-sameness? How do you establish yourself as a professional selling performer? How skilled are you at asking questions that set you apart? How well do you listen? How do you create real value for the customer? How can you position yourself as a resource to them and to the organization?

Welcome to "The Now Economy." No one cares about how good you used to be. What customers are asking NOW is "*How good will you be next week?*" Customers are asking many of the same questions they've always asked. But they're not settling for the same old answers. How are you coming up with new answers to now questions, for your organization and for your customers?

Want my short list of 10 things you can do now to "Become Uncommon" as a selling performer? Send an e-mail to the address below and ask for the uncommon list.

Lights, camera, action!  
You're on.

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