

small business sales myths

20 common business misconceptions
that keep small businesses broke.

20 myths that bust small businesses & keep em broke

So many good small business owners are reluctant to learn the little bit of *selling* skills it takes to be able to make a great living. Sales is not a mechanical cold call snake oil pitch to someone that doesn't hang up. Sales is you approaching the right person with the right product and making it work--for everyone's mutual benefit.

They are rejecting "sales" for the wrong reasons. They are rejecting sales because of wrong info that they learned because the bad examples, the stuff on Matchstick Men make for better theater. We're entering in a post consumer world. Selling "to" someone is becoming outdated. Selling "for" someone is not.

Givers gain success, takers gain stress. This ebook is about the real ethos you need to be a successful salesperson.

myth #1: sales is about rejection...

Look, when you're a self centered, when you make sales all about you, when you beg for business, OF COURSE you're gonna get rejected. That's normal. What's more unattractive than someone that is all about *them*? What's more unattractive than someone that is trying to cajole you into doing something that you don't want to do.

Not much.

If you sell with that attitude, you're screwed, and you're gonna run into a brick wall.

But...

When you sell with the desire to help the OTHER PERSON'S best interests... there is no limit to what you can achieve.

Then it's not about you. Then, you're not exposed anymore. You tried to help, but that's that. Focusing on the other person's best interest mentally is a HUGE shift. But when you can do it, you are going to experience a profound change in what you can achieve and, how much you can earn. Being a sales guy, and being a trusted advisor have two very different pay scales.

myth #2: I have to do a ton of boring, repetitive cold calling

No. No, you don't. Yes, you need to learn to make friends over the phone. Yes, you need to deepen the relationships you make in social media. Yes, you need to have a purpose and a plan.

But no--a hundred times no--you don't close people over the phone, and nearly never on the first call.

You need to understand closing techniques, you need to learn the things that make sales happen. But when you call to connect, you're calling to make friends, to be a resource. Not to make a sale. You call without an agenda, you call without a goal, and there's no pressure. Your goal is to learn about the other person, what they need, how that you can help and what happens next. Your goal is NOT to have a 'one call close' or 'manipulate.

Your goal on the phone is to connect, make a friend, and discover if you have connections or skills that the other person needs. No pressure. You make enough connections in a day, and have all the business you care to handle.

myth #3: sales is manipulation

Dude. Nothing is farther from the truth than that. You are selling to help, and to serve. You're here to help, really. You're not here to hurt, manipulate, or trick.

You don't win when you are not here to help.

You are not selling to get someone to do something that they don't need or want. You must program yourself to think of the other person's best interests. You must program yourself to do what's right for your friend. Manipulation is not wealth creation, it's the crap tactics that led to the bailout era. Don't do it, don't think for a second that anything good advocates those types of tactics.

Sales--at its core--is getting people nudged in the right direction. You want to share your knowledge and skill because you're so enthusiastic about it. Not because you need a paycheck. Go in to a negotiation with this mindset "Hopefully we're not talking commissions, we're talking about a lifelong mutually enriching partnership."

If you manipulate others, you're not doing what sales is about. Having skills and being ready to close is useful only when it's used for good, not evil.

myth #4: I must be pushy to sell:

Sales is not about imposing your will on someone else. We've all been "sold at," and led down the path by some moronic salesperson that is counting on our politeness to finish their sales pitch. We've all endured telemarketing pitches, door to door pushy pitches. We've encountered used car people that don't let you go, and if we've ever been in a foreign airport, astonishing time share salespeople that keep talking to us as we walk away.

Did they work? Hell no. Were they effective? Probably not often. They did make everyone feel tense and horrible. No credible sales course is gonna get make you all Glengary on you. No credible sales course is going to try to create a pushy environment.

When you're a pushy jerk, it might get one transaction out of someone. You'll never make a lifelong friend. Being pushy is counter to the ethos of being good. If you have to push, you've done a bad job screening and researching your client.

#5: I should get so good at marketing, I *eventually* won't have to sell.

This life is now. Marketing works. It brings people to your door. It doesn't get them to sign, or allay their fears.

Marketing is important. The job of marketing is to provide you with endless, high end opportunities. The job of marketing is to get you prospects, people that are interested in you or your services. That's where it ends.

The job of sales is to convert them into a paying customer. The job of sales is to demonstrate that you are the right resource, that you have value. It's a mutual process--you want to be of service to the right people.

Getting good at marketing gets better and better people to your door. Getting good at marketing gets more people to come to you. But people helping selling skills are what makes you the money.

Myth #6: I shouldn't have to reach out to new business once I'm established.

Very similar to myth #5. This is all about you, all about the *entitlementality* that kills small businesses. Again, this is not about you. YOU have to connect with and help people all of your life. There will be no day that you “arrive” and life becomes magical and easy. C'mon. Doesn't work like that.

A recent survey found that small business owners changed jobs at a rate of once every 5 years. People in corporate america change careers equally fast. This means that every year 20% or more of your customer base could leave the market for your service. Gotta replace 'em every year.

Selling replaces and upgrades your existing relationships. There are always going to be jobs that you'd kill for. Selling helps you find those jobs, basic sales skills helps you do this easily. You must always put yourself in position to help people. Your business must be watered with new clients and customers however you see fit.

Selling is not just for new businesses, it's for everyone that wants to be in business.

myth #7: If I was good at what I was doing, the business would simply come to me.

THIS is a killer and common a self-defeating mindset that causes all sorts of other problems.

Let's take a look at something: almost everyone would agree that a Mercedes Benz e-class is a nice car. They have been in business for a long time.

Yet every year, they have to find customers, they have to advertise their automobiles. It's not because their cars are junk. It's for the present and the future that they do this. The people you meet this year are the pool of folks that will be doing business with you over the next five years. The more folks that you are regularly in touch with, regularly, the better off you're going to be.

The better you get at what you do, the more referral opportunities you have. But those referral at bats are just that: opportunities. You can find a fit, close them. Many people that are referred to you should not work with you, you should refer them out. Being good at sales gives you the abundance mentality that you can do that.

Myth #8: selling is for non creatives.

It takes a ton of creativity to sell well. Just like it takes creativity to write well, express things visually, or make music. Persuasion is a form, a way to communicate, and it takes skill, science and art.

Sales is about mastery of another form of communication, and a collection of little habits that put you in compelling and winning position. Mastering this art form can make it so that you are booked solid, in demand and working forever. The science of helping people takes creativity, poise and mastery just like anything else.

You must learn to read people's signals. You must learn to tune in and listen to what people are saying and *not* saying. You must learn how to read ahead, listen and let people hear what's going on. You have to learn human beings, how they vibrate and what they are doing. It's 70% listening, 20% thinking and 10% presenting a solution.

Look, to sell and to win, all you have to do is spend 90 minutes every day doing what you don't like, so you can spend the rest of the time doing EXACTLY what you are passionate about. Stop making excuses.

myth #9: good sales people are all liars:

That's a crock. The court system has a term for when a salesperson lies: it's called fraud, and it's a crime. There's no possibility that a criminal can be a good salesperson. If you have to lie to someone else to get a deal done, it's probably because you have little skill at what you do. When you have little skill you're exposed to all kinds of bad news.

Lies might work on some people, they might be the illegal performance enhancing drugs that you've taken over the years. But winning the game while cheating isn't real, it never lasts, and at some point we all meet our Maker. We get caught, we get disgraced.

Good sales people are not Bernie Maddoff. Those dudes are rare. People use the "too honest excuse" to not take action.

myth #10: sales is just about money

Sales--with success--is **ABSOLUTELY POSITIVELY NOT** *about* money. It's about finding good mutual fits for what you do. When you sell for 7.5 hours a week--as we recommend--you will be matchmaking with clients. You'll find a good fit for your wheelhouse. The proverbial hanging curveball. And when you become highly skilled, deals will just come together with little resistance because you are working together with people.

It's about excellence, the standards you can uphold, the way that you run a business, the way that you can help people. Sales is never about money alone.

Oh, you need money. Just like you need air. But we humans don't exist to breathe air, it's a condition necessary for life , but drawing a breath isn't the thing we dream of most. It's just part of the process.

Selling is about making deals that keep the economy going, being of service to others and being helpful.

Myth #11: sales is about hard angle closing techniques.

You DO have to learn to put a bow on negotiations, define the product, process. That's one part of sales, and for most of us, not the most happy process. You have to learn how to close. This is true. But the close is a natural ending. It's not trying to fit a square peg in a round hole. It's figuring out what your client, citizen and future lifelong friend wants. It's honestly assessing if you are their best available resource.

And if you are, there's absolutely, positively no reason why you shouldn't tie up the details, and get the work started. I'm excited to get this done!

To get our work started, all we will need is a check--or paypal.

See how easy that is? That's simple. It's natural. It's *selling*. You figure out that you're the best person for the job. If not, you find someone that is. But when you are, tie up the details and make it work. A close is natural, normal. A simple conversion of dreams and excitement into cash.

What you have to do with discipline you need to create opportunities on a regular basis. That's the part where you put yourself out there.

#12: Salespeople don't value others:

A lot of salespeople are the Herb Tarlek types. These are the shiftless neanderthals that descend on companies like locusts, sucking out draw vs. commission all over, putting energy into their jobs (and their extra marital affairs), and when the jig is up, they move on to the next gig, expending energy trying to get a big base, and not be accountable for the results.

Salespeople honor both their company and their clients, and mean it from their hearts. Salespeople will always give a refund to unhappy person. Anything less than that standard and you are a thief, a crook, and a bad actor. The economy will eventually eliminate you from the process.

And these people may have periods of success, but that's dependent on their industry. Look at what's happened to all the mortgage brokers and Hummer dealers. Not a pretty sight right now.

Myth #13: We Must Compromise Our Standards To Sell More

A lot of people use greed based selling as a way to do things. Greed-based-selling is simply dangling future pseudo riches in front of a client to get them to pay you money. Some unrealistic promise to you.

Greed Based Selling drives a lot of small business because the customers often don't know enough and think that they will have buckets of money from this affiliate program. When it doesn't happen, ill will, drama and stress pops up. New small business owners aren't often choosy enough about their clients.

Small Business owners then are changed by this experience--they get into greed based selling as an MO. They start overstating the benefits. They become more anxious to get the business. This erodes integrity of a lot of folks. This changes the way that they view selling. If you're not careful the first few years as a small business owner make you into a crazy magnet.

In lots of businesses the first year have to work with the craziest people. Selling every day means that you don't have to settle for that. Selling every day creates options.

myth #14: I always have to drop my prices because people know I want the sale badly.

There is this idea that when you pitch someone, when you initiate the relationship, you aren't on the same playing field. That you don't have equal business stature. Nothing--and I mean nothing--can be further from the truth. When you pick out possible people to do business with, the objective isn't go out guns blazing and try to sell to whoever crosses your path. You're looking for a mutual fit.

When you sell for 7 hours a week or so, you get the power to walk away from BS deals. You get the power to say 'eh, no.' Because you know--for a fact--that the next deal is around the corner. When you know that, you've got power. You chose.

Negotiating is part of sales. You have to sell your value, your expertise. You have to listen to what they want, and demonstrate precisely what is is that you'll be delivering.

The purpose of sales is to listen and learn. You might not be a fit for that person's business. *Okayfine.* Next. Spend time learning who your skills are a fit for rather than trying to shove a square peg into a round hole.

#15: There aren't enough leads.

This might be the #1 myth of salespeople. This happens when marketing isn't working, when they aren't closing. It's far easier to blame sales fail on the world than it is to own up for your failure to sell yourself. It's far easier to say that there are conditions preventing my success. than.

As Sean Connery said in the Rock: "Losers Try Their Best, Winners Go and F#@ the Prom Queen." Deal is this: there are plenty of leads. Even in depressionesque America, there were plenty of people in all industries that needed good folks to fill in the gaps. People always had the money to spend and the dreams and desire to spend it. We need to realize that someone, somewhere is doing business.

And we need to find them, serve them and help them.

Finding leads is part of the selling process. Researching customers to find a person that is an absolute fit. That makes the approach radically easier and far more pleasant.

myth #16: I need to upsell everyone to make a living.

There it is. Hear that? It's scarcity again. Yes, You upsell your customers--with gusto--when it *helps* them, when it's in THEIR best interests, and when it's a good idea to do it. When they need what you have and can help out with. You upsell your customers when it's affordable (ah, dirty word, but I believe in keeping yourself grounded, your services defined and affordable) to them and when they will get help.

But your not-ever-at cross purposes with their success. You want the people that do business with to be as successful as possible. If your next stuff reloads their business and helps 'em, and if they will use it, go at it.

If not, don't. You will find other people. When you strive as hard as possible to help, the world delivers people who need you.

Good salespeople don't beg for business and they never chase deals that aren't real.

#17: I will have to beg people that will never buy to buy...

One of the things that salespeople have to learn (and I have had to relearn) is the idea that it's far easier to find a real customer than it is to wring out all the objections from a pseudo customer.

You will be depleted if you think that each customer has to buy. Finding new opportunities is a method. We do it on purpose, it's totally repeatable. It is easy to do. It's much simpler to spend a half hour researching and seeking clients that need you on social media than it is to spend an hour trying to get a nonbuyer to buy. You can trust your instincts, and let it go.

If you are--truly--the best idea for someone, for THEIR benefit and not yours, you have an obligation to overcome their objections. You owe it to them to help them understand why you're the best. If you're not the best, then that's fine, you can just be honest about it.

Myth #18: I don't have a golden tongue, how can I sell?

So you lack the gift of gab. You're not a 'natural born' salesman (Whatever the hell that is). You can't naturally and easily connect with people, and you never know what to say.

Look, it works like this: I am quick on my feet. I know what to say. But I repelled people consistently with having the right answers--with my 'objection handlers. It wasn't till I learned to listen, it wasn't till I learned to care, it wasn't till I learned to help others that my career became something I was proud of and something viable.

When I learned to shut my damn piehole, when I learned to listen to what people wanted, to learn my services were a match for their needs match for what I can do, that's when I started selling enough to pull out of the gravity pull of my six figure IRS debt. When I lost the "gift of gab," and started getting big damn ears, I started getting ahead.

myth #19 I have to be fake to sell well.

“I’ve learned that people will forget what you said, I’ve learned that people will forget what you did, but people will never forget how you made them feel.” -Maya Angelou

Nope. You don’t have to be fake. EVER. You needn’t lie. Ever. You have to listen and honor the other person. You have to propose real live solutions to what it is that they want. But you don’t have to ‘fake’ it, you don’t have to oversell your capacity. That will never help you, it will make people feel terrible, and it will increase the stress and drama in your life.

People in America have the best possible Bullshit detectors. We’ve been sold to. We’ve been lied to. We know the signs, and we know when it might happen again someday.

People can just tell when you’re not being authentic; when you don’t care. You don’t want to acquire whatever slimy skill that you’d have to acquire to get past the radar of good people. That is soul siphoning, damning and damaging. That is--quite clearly--counter to the ethos that you have to need to make things work as a sales person.

#20: I have to brag to sell

Let other people do it for you. Look--I have a good and growing testimonial reel. With every computer built in the last 3 years equipped with a webcam, it's time to get clients presold on the idea of getting you a testimonial if you do good work. They brag. They brag about how good you do, how much money you made them.

But don't do it yourself. Let others tell the story. Let other people do it on your behalf and it's believable.

But bragging? I hate it. I hate it when I find myself doing it, and I certainly hate to hear others doing it. You brag at your own risk, and you shouldn't do it if you want to sell well.

What you need to do is get testimonials: <http://flatratewebjobs.com/category/testimonials> is where you go for a good example and social proof. Let your best & happiest customers do this stuff for you.



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