

## Stop Selling!!! – Help People to Buy

I have spent a lot of my life in the business of selling. I have sold life insurance, computer software, pots and pans, beauty treatments, nutritional products, clothes and training services to name a few. In those 30 years of sales experience one immutable fact has emerged. People hate being sold to. However this is also at the root of one of life's great paradoxes. Whilst we hate being sold to, we all love to buy. Buying something that we really want or that really solves a problem is a wonderful feeling. For people running a business this presents a real dilemma. So often the selling techniques we experience as customers seem to be attempts to trick us into buying something we don't really need and this practice in the past has given the entire selling profession a bad reputation. Having so often been the victims of these high pressure selling tactics, it's not surprising that we are very uncomfortable when we have to sell. So how do we solve this paradox - Easy. Stop Selling!! That's right - None of us likes to be sold to - so don't sell to people. On the other hand we love to buy - but - often we need help in making the right buying decision, we need someone to "Help us to Buy." As a sales trainer years ago I developed a new definition of selling when teaching people to sell life insurance. Selling is Solving Peoples Problems at a Profit

It's all a matter of concentrating on understanding a customer's problem, really seeing what's in it for them, what they want to achieve and then providing them with the best solution that fits their budget. This applies whether you are selling online or offline, focus on helping people to solve their problem and they will be comfortable about buying your products. A few years ago I did a lot of work for the Institute of Sales and Marketing Management helping set up their training division. As an association they often got special exhibitor deals for trade shows and were all set to go off to one when they asked me what I thought of the promotion material. It was a complex futuristic looking poster incorporating all the services they offered and took about 5 minutes to decipher. What they wanted to do was get new members and sell training courses and the poster was clearly trying to sell all their services. I persuaded them to shift the focus and put up two hand-written posters that read: Double Your Sales – Free Consultation They had salespeople queuing up at the stand for two days asking for more information and trying to get a free consultation from the sales trainers there. Sales people want more sales – they don't want training courses or magazines or seminars - unless they lead to more sales. What do your customers want? What problem are they looking for you to solve for them? How can you help them to buy? When you send out a sales letter, when they come to your web site, visit your trade show booth, look into your shop window, pick up your brochure – what message do they see? Do they see a message trying to sell them something, or do they see a message helping them to buy a solution to a need or problem? Copyright 2005 Richelle (Rikki) Arundel, UK

## About the Author

State investigators say it is only a matter of time before a whale trainer at SeaWorld in San Diego is killed.

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