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The Life, Times, and Career of the Professional Salesperson

MAIN TOPICS

What Is the Purpose of Business?
Essentials of a Firm's Marketing Effort
What Is Selling?
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A New Definition of Personal Selling
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Do Success Characteristics Describe You?
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E-Selling: Technology and Information
Build Relationships
Selling Is for Large and Small Organizations

The Plan of This Textbook

Building Relationships through the Sales Process

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

This chapter introduces you to the professional and rewarding career of selling. After studying this chapter, you should be able to

- Define and explain the term *selling*.
- Explain why everyone sells, even you.
- Explain the relationship between the definition of personal selling and the Golden Rule of Personal Selling.
- Discuss the reasons people might choose a sales career.
- Enumerate some of the various types of sales jobs.
- Describe the job activities of salespeople.
- Define the characteristics that salespeople believe are needed for success in building relationships with customers.
- List and explain the 10 steps in the sales process.

FACING A SALES CHALLENGE

Debra Hutchins majored in French, with a minor in English literature, at Washington University in St. Louis. After graduation she began work as a secretary in the marketing department at Sunwest Bank in Albuquerque, New Mexico.

"I had never considered a sales job while in school and sales didn't appeal to me when I began work at the bank. I always felt you would have to be an extrovert. I'm more the shy, intellectual type. I don't see myself in the role of a salesperson.

"Someday I *do* want a more challenging job. I'm a very hard worker; long hours don't bother me. I've always had a need to achieve success. One of the things I like about being a secretary is helping customers when they call the bank. It is important to carefully listen to their problems or what they want in order to provide good customer service. Maybe one day I'll find a job that has more challenge, professionalism, and reward."

If you were in Debra's position, what would you do? What types of jobs would you recommend she consider?

Debra Hutchins is like many people in that while she was in school a career in sales did not seem like the thing to do. Most people are unfamiliar with what salespeople do.

As you learn more about the world of sales, a career selling goods or services may become appealing. The salesperson makes valuable contributions to our quality of life by selling goods and services that benefit individuals and industry. Red Motley, former editor of *Parade* magazine, once said, "Nothing happens until somebody sells something." Selling brings in the money and causes cash registers across the country to ring. For centuries, the salespeople of the world have caused goods and services to change hands.

More than ever, today's salespeople are a dynamic power in the business world. They generate more revenue in the U.S. economy than workers in any other profession. The efforts of salespeople have a direct impact on such diverse areas as these:

- The success of new products.
- Keeping existing products on the retailer's shelf.
- Constructing manufacturing facilities.
- Opening businesses and keeping them open.
- Generating sales orders that result in the loading of trucks, trains, ships, airplanes, and pipelines that carry goods to customers all over the world.

The salesperson is engaged in a highly honorable, challenging, rewarding, and professional career. In this chapter, you are introduced to the career, rewards, and duties of the salesperson. This chapter begins by relating an organization's business purpose to its marketing efforts.

Nothing happens until someone sells something.

WHAT IS THE PURPOSE OF BUSINESS?

Marketing's Definition

The purpose of business is to increase the general well-being of humankind through the sale of goods and services. This requires making a profit in order to operate the business and provide beneficial products to the marketplace. Profit is a means to an end. Reduced to basics, businesses have two major functions: *production* of goods or creation of services and *marketing* those goods and services.¹

There are numerous definitions of marketing. Your book will use the American Marketing Association's definition:

Marketing is an organizational function and a set of processes for creating, communicating and delivering value to customers and for managing customer relationships in ways that benefit the organization and its stakeholders.²

The **marketing concept** is a business philosophy that says the customers' want-satisfaction is the economic and social justification for a firm's existence. Consequently, all company activities should be devoted to determining customers' wants and then satisfying them, while still making a profit.

ESSENTIALS OF A FIRM'S MARKETING EFFORT

The essentials of a firm's marketing effort include their abilities (1) to determine the needs of their customers and (2) to create and maintain an effective marketing mix that satisfies customer needs. As shown in **Exhibit 1.1**, a firm's **marketing mix** consists of four main elements—product, price, distribution or place, and promotion—a marketing manager uses to market goods and services. It is the marketing manager's responsibility to determine how best to use each element in the firm's marketing efforts.

Product: It's More Than You Think

A **good** is a physical object that can be purchased. A radio, a house, and a car are examples of a good. A **service** is an action or activity done for others for a fee. Lawyers, plumbers, teachers, and taxicab drivers perform services. The term *product* refers to both goods and services.

So, what is a product? When you think of a product, most likely you imagine some tangible object you can touch, such as a radio, or automobile. However, there is more to a product than you think.

A **product** is a bundle of tangible and intangible attributes, including packaging, color, and brand, plus the services and even the reputation of the seller. People buy more than a set of physical attributes. They buy want-satisfaction such as what the product will do, its quality, and the image of owning the product.

Price: It's Important to Success

The corporate marketing department also determines each product's initial price. This process involves establishing each product's normal price and possible special discount prices. Since product price often is critical to customers, it is an important part of the marketing mix. **Price** refers to the value or worth of a product that attracts the buyer to exchange money or something of value for the product.

Distribution: It Has to Be Available

The marketing manager also determines the best method of distributing the product. **Distribution** refers to the channel structure used to transfer products from an organization to its customers. It is important to have the product available to customers in a convenient and accessible location when they want it.

EXHIBIT 1.1

Four elements to the marketing mix and four promotion activities. Where does selling fit into marketing mix?

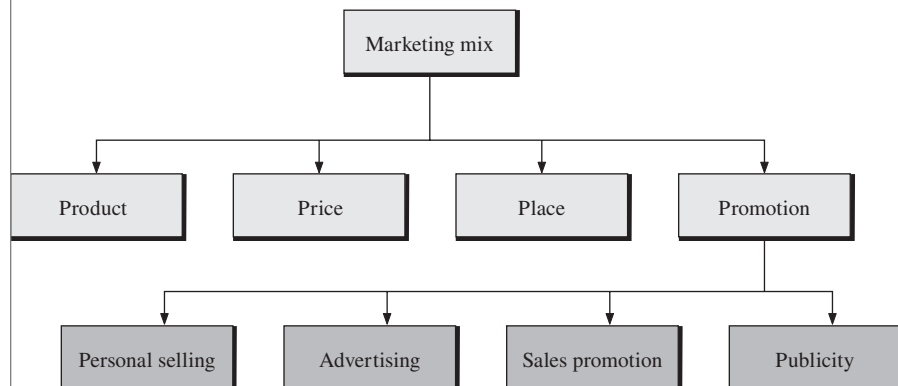


EXHIBIT 1.2

Examples of each marketing mix element.

Product	Price	Place	Promotion
■ Brand name	■ Credit terms	■ Business partners	■ Advertising
■ Features	■ Discounts	■ Channels	■ Coupons
■ Image	■ List price	■ Distributors	■ Customer service
■ Packaging	■ Promotional allowances	■ Inventory	■ Direct mail
■ Quality level		■ Locations	■ Direct sales
■ Returns		■ Retailers	■ Internet
■ Services		■ Transportation	■ Public relations
■ Sizes		■ Wholesalers	■ Telemarketing
■ Warranties			■ Telesales
			■ Trade shows

Promotion: You Have to Tell People about It

Promotion, as part of the marketing mix, increases company sales by communicating product information to potential customers. The four basic parts of a firm’s promotional effort are (1) **personal selling**, (2) **advertising**, (3) **publicity**, and (4) **sales promotion**. Examples of each marketing mix ingredient are shown in Exhibit 1.2. The company’s sales force is one segment of the firm’s promotional effort. Salespeople are part of the organization’s sales force. So what is the job of the salesperson?

WHAT IS SELLING?

Many people consider *selling* and *marketing* synonymous terms. However, selling is actually only one of many marketing components. In business, a traditional definition of personal selling refers to the personal communication of information to persuade a prospective customer to buy something—a good, service, idea, or something else—that satisfies that individual’s needs.

This definition of selling involves a person helping another person. The salesperson often works with prospects or customers to examine their needs, provide information, suggest a product to meet their needs, and provide after-the-sale service to ensure long-term satisfaction.

The definition also involves communications between seller and buyer. The salesperson and the buyer discuss needs and talk about the product relative to how it will satisfy the person’s needs. If the product is what the person needs, then the salesperson attempts to persuade the prospect to buy it.

Unfortunately this explanation of personal selling does not explain the best selling philosophy for the 21st century. Why?

PERSONAL SELLING TODAY

In the early 2000s the worst side of American business became obvious. Corporate corruption, misstated financials, and the personal profit of chief executives as their companies went out of businesses all contributed to public’s negative attitude toward most, if not all, business professions. Unethical business practices resulted in bankruptcies, which in turn led to massive layoffs across the country. This had an impact on all Americans and their families, leaving no person or organization untouched.

<p>How Some Salespeople Are Viewed</p>	<p>Each year, from 1977 to 2001, Gallup (one of America’s leading pollsters) has found that insurance salespeople, advertising practitioners, and used car salespeople are the three lowest-rated job categories on perceived honesty and ethical standards. Which of the three would you say rated the lowest each year? Yes, it was the used car salesperson.⁴⁴ Unfortunately, people tend to generalize from such research findings that most salespeople are not honest or ethical, which is not the case. I know used car salespeople with the highest of ethical standards. Be careful in making a hasty decision about a salesperson. You cannot judge a book by its cover. You may be dealing with a sheep in wolf’s clothing.⁴⁵</p>
<p><i>A sheep in wolf’s clothing?</i></p>	<p>How do you view the honesty and ethical standards of today’s businesses and salespeople? For the last several years, at the beginning of my classes, I have asked sales students the following three questions on a poll found on my website:</p>
<p>What about You?</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. What does the general public think about salespeople? Only 10 percent of the almost 2,000 respondents had a positive attitude. 2. What do you think about salespeople? Thirty-five percent had a positive attitude. 3. After graduation, would you accept a sales job? Forty-five percent said “yes.”
<p><i>What is your answer to the poll questions? See what thousands of others say. Compare your response to theirs.</i></p>	<p>These percentages do not represent high marks from my students. What are your answers to these three questions? Please take a few minutes to answer the poll at http://futrell-www.tamu.edu.</p>
	<p>What would you say is the number one reason for salespeople’s low ratings on honesty and ethics? It is trust. Many people feel they may not be able to trust a salesperson. Why? Greed is often the answer! The love of money is the root of all kinds of problems. From the least of us to the greatest, we all seem to be greedy to some extent, and greed can make some people blind to all else around them. Given all that has gone on in America as we are revising this textbook, we will use a different definition of selling in your book from the traditional view. This difference is very important given the present status of business in America and the public’s—maybe even your—view of salespeople.</p>
<p>A NEW DEFINITION OF PERSONAL SELLING</p> <p>Think of Your Grandmother</p>	<p>The new definition inserts the word <i>unselfish</i> into the traditional definition discussed earlier. It is that simple! <i>Personal selling</i> refers to the personal communication of information to unselfishly persuade a prospective customer to buy something—a good, a service, an idea, or something else—that satisfies that individual’s needs.</p> <p>This definition of selling involves the many things we discussed before, such as a person helping another person through selling. However, when the word <i>unselfishly</i> is added to the definition, it makes a big difference in how someone might look at selling. The word <i>unselfish</i> tells salespeople to be caring toward customers and to serve—help—the person or organization without expecting to get something in return. If you are still wondering about the “unselfish” approach to selling, think of the analogy of selling to your grandmother.</p> <p>Think of your, or your best friend’s, grandmother. Would you treat her in a selfish manner? Would you sell her something just to make a sale? No way! You would not take advantage of granny (grandmother) as shown in the photo. Salespeople should handle their customers with unselfish and ethical service. How are you going to build</p>




“Would you mistreat your grandmother in a sales transaction?”

a long-term relationship with customers unless you treat them unselfishly by placing their interests first?

Tell the truth about what the product will do, give the best price on the best product for the need, deliver on time, and provide outstanding follow-up service to make sure the customer is delighted with the purchase. If it is not the right product for the need expressed, tell the customer. If she or he still wants to buy—sell it to them! After all, you, the salesperson, may be wrong.

Or would you walk away from the sale as Ann Coombs did with a prospect? The CEO of a multinational bank wanted to hire her to boost the productivity of his New York staff—a group of people who were struggling to cope after escaping their World Trade Center offices September 11, 2001. Ann told the CEO that in order to fix it, she had to know what these people were feeling—they had to be able to talk openly about their grief. The CEO wanted absolutely no discussion of fear or grieving. Coombs says it was a six-figure contract. She turned it down because she felt employees were not being treated as they should be treated.

What would you do? Sell someone something you feel they do not need or refuse to make the sale? That is what salespeople face in their jobs. Oh, a few months later Ann Coombs was contracted to work with the Bush administration to help government departments deal with the post-September 11, 2001, world. She took that job. 

THE GOLDEN RULE OF PERSONAL SELLING



When asked, “What would you like to learn in this course?” Steven Osborne, a student in my personal selling class, said “I would like to know how to believe in a profession that many people do not trust.” I sincerely hope you will be a believer in the value of sales integrity at the end of this sales course and be able to give Steven a positive perspective.

Part of your answer will involve your understanding the definition of personal selling discussed earlier and the Golden Rule of Personal Selling. A **rule** is a prescribed guide for conduct or action. The **Golden Rule of Personal Selling** refers to the sales philosophy of unselfishly treating others as you would like to be treated. Reciprocity is not expected. Read the short essay at the back of this chapter in the Appendix titled “The Golden Rule of Personal Selling as Told by a Salesperson.” This short story illustrates the importance of helping people through our jobs and our lives.

Exhibit 2.7 in Chapter 2 provides examples of how people around the world view the Golden Rule. As you study the various statements of the Golden Rule in Exhibit 2.7, be sure to note that all are phrased negatively except for one—the last one. The negative form would teach behavior in this way: If you do not like to get cheated in a purchase, don’t cheat others. The positive form, on the other hand, would say that if you like to receive the best price, then offer the best price to your customers.

To help you understand the concept better, consider how the Golden Rule applies to a litter of kittens. One child watched in delight as the tiny kittens snuggled together, in the cardboard box where her cat had just delivered the litter. “Aw, isn’t that cute?” she exclaimed. “They love each other so much that they’re trying to keep each other warm.” “Well not exactly,” replied her mother. “Actually they’re trying to keep

EXHIBIT 1.3

Interest in serving the customer improves as our self-interest decreases.

① Traditional Salespeople	② Professional Salespeople	③ Golden Rule Salespeople
Self-Interest	Self & Others	Others' Interest
①	②	③
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Do what they think they can get away with. ■ Guided by self-interests. ■ Performance result of personal ability and effort. ■ Seek recognition for efforts, sharing not important. Pride and ego driven. ■ Money is life's main motivator. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Do what they are legally required to do. Take care of customers to receive future sales. Performance result of personal ability and efforts, employer, customers, economy. Enjoy recognition, may share if it suits their purpose. Pride and ego driven. Money is important, but not to the customer's detriment. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Do the right thing. Finds others' interests most important. Performance result of others. Feel that an individual's performance is due to others, thus not motivated by pride and ego. Service most important, money is to be shared.

Salesperson Differences

themselves warm.” The Golden Rule is all about trying to keep somebody else warm, even if it means that we get cold in the process. Stop a minute and think about how this applies to your life and the business world. This important concept will be applied to personal selling throughout the textbook. It is especially effective in explaining differences in salespeople and why so many people may have a negative view of some salespeople and a positive view of other salespeople.

Garry Smith, a former consumer goods sales manager, and your author illustrate some of the differences between salespeople's approaches to personal selling today. In general, Exhibit 1.3 shows that differences can be explained by the extent of the person's self-interest. As Gallup's survey poll of Americans indicates, people view traditional salespeople as having their self-interest as a priority. This type of salesperson is preoccupied with his or her own well-being—usually defined in terms of making money—and thus is selfish and cannot be trusted.

The salesperson following the Golden Rule of Personal Selling, however, places the interests of others before self-interest. Professional salespeople fall somewhere in between the traditional and Golden Rule salesperson in terms of how they view prospects and customers. As Exhibit 1.3 illustrates, as interest in serving others improves, a person's self-interest lessens. The more the salesperson considers the customer's interest, the better customer service.

EVERYBODY SELLS!

If you think about it, everyone sells. From an early age, you develop communications techniques for trying to get your way in life. You are involved in selling when you want someone to do something. For example, if you want to get a date, ask for a pay increase, return merchandise, urge your professor to raise your grade, or apply for a new job, you are selling. You use personal communication skills to persuade someone to act. Your ability to communicate effectively is a key to success in life.

This is why so many people take sales courses. They want to improve their communication skills to be more successful in both their personal and business lives. The skills and knowledge gained from a selling course can be used by a student who

	<p>plans to go into virtually any field, such as law, medicine, journalism, the military, or his or her own business.</p> <p>Selling is not just for salespeople; it is a must for everyone. In today’s competitive environment, where good interpersonal skills are so valued, the lack of selling capability can put anyone at a disadvantage. So as you read this book and progress through the course, think about how you can use the material both personally and in business.</p>						
<p>WHAT SALESPEOPLE ARE PAID TO DO</p>	<p>In the short term, on a day-to-day, week-to-week basis, salespeople are paid to sell—that is their job. When a sales manager sees one of her salespeople, the question is always, “Did you sell anything today?” Salespeople need to sell something “today” to meet the performance goals for</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Themselves, in order to serve others, earn a living, and keep their jobs. ■ Their employer, because without the generation of revenues the company fails and thus cannot serve others. ■ Their customers, because their products help customers fulfill their needs and help their organizations to grow. 						
<p><i>Future sales come from present customers and customers referrals.</i></p>	<p>In the long run—month to month, year to year—salespeople must build positive long-term relationships with their customers. Why? Because they know, and now you know, that up to 80 percent or more of the future sales of many organizations come from present customers and customer referrals.</p>						
	<p>Salespeople need to close sales and at the same time maintain a great relationship with the buyer. Think about that last sentence. It is a very important thing to understand and learn. Salespeople want to sell to their present customers today, more tomorrow, and even more the day after that. How do you sell someone something and remain his or her business friend? You need to know how the Golden Rule of Personal Selling applies to the sales job. That is what this textbook is about.</p>						
<p>WHY CHOOSE A SALES CAREER?</p> <p>Service: Helping Others</p>	<p>Six major reasons for choosing a sales career are (1) service to others; (2) the wide variety of sales jobs available; (3) the freedom of being on your own; (4) the challenge of selling; (5) the opportunity for advancement in a company; and (6) the rewards from a sales career see Exhibit 1.4.</p> <p>When asked what she will look for in a career after graduating from college, a student of your author’s, Jackie Pastrano, said “I’d like to do something that helps other people.” The sales career provides the opportunity for service and an emotional purpose in life gained from helping others. That is why this book’s central core value is “service.” Service is a major reason for choosing a sales career! For many, service is the number one reason.</p>						
<p>EXHIBIT 1.4</p> <p>Six major reasons for choosing a sales career.</p>	<table border="1"> <tr> <td>Service to others</td> <td>Variety of sales jobs</td> <td>Freedom</td> <td>Challenge</td> <td>Advancement</td> <td>Rewards</td> </tr> </table>	Service to others	Variety of sales jobs	Freedom	Challenge	Advancement	Rewards
Service to others	Variety of sales jobs	Freedom	Challenge	Advancement	Rewards		

Service makes a contribution to the welfare of others.

A Variety of Sales Jobs Are Available

Service refers to making a contribution to the welfare of others. All of us want to do what Jackie hopes to do—help others! Would you like to help others? There are millions of sales jobs and thus many opportunities to help people and organizations.

As members of a firm's sales force, salespeople are a vital element in the firm's effort to market goods and services profitably. Personal selling accounts for major expenditures by most companies and presents a large number of career opportunities. There are millions of sales jobs, and the probability that at one time during your life you will have a sales job is high.

There are also hundreds, maybe thousands, of different types of sales positions. Think about this! Almost every good or service you know of has a salesperson who sells it to one or more people in order to get the product to the final user. That is why so many sales jobs are available.

Types of Sales Jobs—Which Is for You?

Although there are numerous specific types of sales jobs, most salespeople work in one of three categories: as a retail salesperson, a wholesaler's salesperson, or a manufacturer's sales representative. These categories are classified according to the type of products sold and the salesperson's type of employer.

Selling in Retail. A **retail salesperson** sells goods or services to consumers for their personal, nonbusiness use. Retail selling is so important to a society that this book has numerous examples of it. Three common types of sellers who sell at retail are the (1) in-store salesperson, (2) direct seller who sells face-to-face away from a fixed store location, and (3) telephone salesperson.

Look back at the definition of a retail salesperson. Think of all the different types of retail organizations selling something—retailers such as bakeries, banks, caterers, hotels, video stores, and travel agents and stores selling clothes, electronics, flowers, food, and furniture (see Exhibit 1.5). Each customer contact person takes your money and provides a good or service in return. **Customer contact person** is another name for a salesperson. Although the title may be different their job is the same—to help you buy.

Direct sellers sell face-to-face to consumers—typically in their homes—who use the products for their personal use. An organization could have one salesperson or 3 million salespeople, like Amway.

As in any type of job—including accountants, mechanics, and politicians—some retail salespeople do very little to help their customers. However, many retail salespeople are highly skilled professionals, commanding exceptionally high incomes for their ability to service their customers. I personally know retail salespeople earning \$40,000 a year selling shoes; \$80,000 selling furniture; \$110,000 selling jewelry; and \$150,000 selling automobiles.

Selling for a Wholesaler. Wholesalers (also called distributors) buy products from manufacturers and other wholesalers and sell to other organizations. A **wholesale salesperson** sells products to parties for

- Resale, such as grocery retailers buying items and selling to consumers.
- Use in producing other goods or services, such as a home builder buying electrical and plumbing supplies.
- Operating an organization, such as your school buying supplies.

EXHIBIT 1.5

Retail salespeople are becoming well-rewarded professionals.



This pharmaceutical rep must service and meet the needs of technicians, physicians, and buyers in hospitals that use her company's products.

Firms engaged in wholesaling are called wholesaling middlemen. Classifying wholesaling middlemen is difficult because they vary greatly in (1) the products they sell, (2) the markets to which they sell, and (3) their methods of operation. As there are so many different types, the discussion of types of wholesalers is beyond the scope of this book.

Selling for a Manufacturer. Manufacturers' salespeople work for organizations producing the product. The types of **manufacturer's sales representative** positions range from people who deliver milk and bread, to the specialized salesperson selling highly technical industrial products. The salesperson working for a manufacturer may sell to other manufacturers, wholesalers, retailers, or directly to consumers. There are five main types of manufacturer sales positions:

1. An account representative calls on a large number of already established customers in, for example, the food, textile, and apparel industries. This person asks for the order.
2. A detail salesperson concentrates on performing promotional activities and introducing new products rather than directly soliciting orders. The medical detail salesperson seeks to persuade doctors, the indirect customers, to specify a pharmaceutical company's trade name product for prescriptions. The actual sale is ultimately made through a wholesaler or directly to pharmacists and hospitals who fill prescriptions.

3. A sales engineer sells products that call for technical know-how and an ability to discuss technical aspects of the product. Expertise in identifying, analyzing, and solving customer problems is another critical factor. This type of selling is common in the oil, chemical, machinery, and heavy equipment industries because of the technical nature of their products.

Greg Munoz, a sales engineer for the Dow Chemical Company, says,

Our sales technique typically takes the team approach. Several of Dow's finest staff (technical, production, marketing, and support) and I work in unison to address the customer's specific needs. I am responsible for building the business relationship with the customer and directing resources and information toward securing a customer's plastic-resin business. Market managers and district sales managers coordinate pricing and positioning as the customer relates to the industry as a whole. Dow technicians engineer materials to meet or exceed the requirements specified for the application and work with the customer's production department to see that they perform accordingly. Customer service representatives handle order placement and product-delivery logistics while servicing the customer's information needs. Once the sale is closed, I follow up and maintain our profile while serving as the first line of communication and interface for the customer.

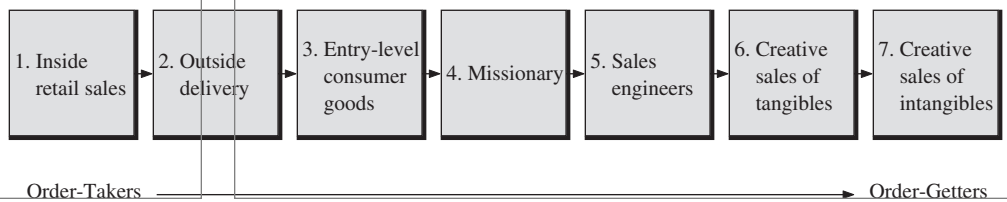
4. An industrial products salesperson, nontechnical, sells a tangible product to industrial buyers. No high degree of technical knowledge is required. Packaging materials manufacturers and office equipment sales representatives are nontechnical salespeople.
5. A service salesperson, unlike the four preceding types of manufacturing salespeople, must sell the benefits of intangible or nonphysical products such as financial, advertising, or computer repair services. Services, like goods, are either technical or nontechnical in nature.

Selling services is ordinarily more difficult than selling tangibles. The salesperson can show, demonstrate, and dramatize tangible products; the salesperson of intangible products, cannot. Intangibles often are difficult for the prospect to comprehend. People cannot feel, smell, see, hear, or taste intangible products. This makes them more challenging to sell.

Order-Takers versus Order-Getters. Sales jobs vary widely in their nature and requirements (see Exhibit 1.6). Some sales jobs require the salesperson only to take orders. **Order-takers** may ask what the customer wants or wait for the customer to order. They do not have a sales strategy and often use no sales presentation.

EXHIBIT 1.6

The complexity and difficulty of these seven sales job categories increase as they move left to right.



**Freedom of
Action: You're on
Your Own**

**Job Challenge Is
Always There**

**Opportunities for
Advancement
Are Great**

Order-takers must be employed to bring in additional business that the employer probably would not obtain without their efforts. Many never attempt to close the sale. They perform useful services. However, few truly *create* sales.

On the other hand, the creative selling of tangible goods or intangible services in highly competitive lines (or where the product has no special advantages) moves merchandise that cannot be sold in equal volume without a salesperson. These people are **order-getters**. They get new and repeat business using a creative sales strategy and a well-executed sales presentation. The salesperson has an infinitely more difficult selling situation than that faced by the order-taker. In this sense, the individual is a true salesperson, which is why this person usually earns so much more than the order-taker.

This salesperson has two selling challenges. First, the salesperson must often create discontent with what the prospect already has before beginning to sell constructively. Second, the salesperson often has to overcome the most powerful and obstinate resistance. For example, the prospect may never have heard of the product and, at the outset, may have no desire whatsoever to purchase it. The prospect may even be prejudiced against it and may resent the intrusion of this stranger. In other instances, the prospect may want it but may want competing products more. Frequently, the prospect cannot afford it. To meet such sales situations successfully requires creative selling of the highest order.

Creative salespeople often are faced with selling to numerous people to get one order. This is the most difficult selling situation because the representative may have to win over not only the decision maker, the one who can say yes, but also other persons who cannot approve the order but who have the power to veto.

A second reason why people choose a sales career is the freedom it offers. A sales job provides possibly the greatest relative freedom of any career. Experienced employees in outside sales usually receive little direct supervision and may go for days, even weeks, without seeing their bosses.*

Job duties and sales goals are explained by a manager. Salespeople are expected to carry out their job duties and achieve goals with minimum guidance. They usually leave home to contact customers around the corner or around the world.

Working alone with the responsibility of a territory capable of generating thousands (sometimes millions) of dollars in revenue for your company is a personal challenge. This environment adds great variety to a sales job. Salespeople often deal with hundreds of different people and firms over time. It is much like operating your own business, without the burdens of true ownership.

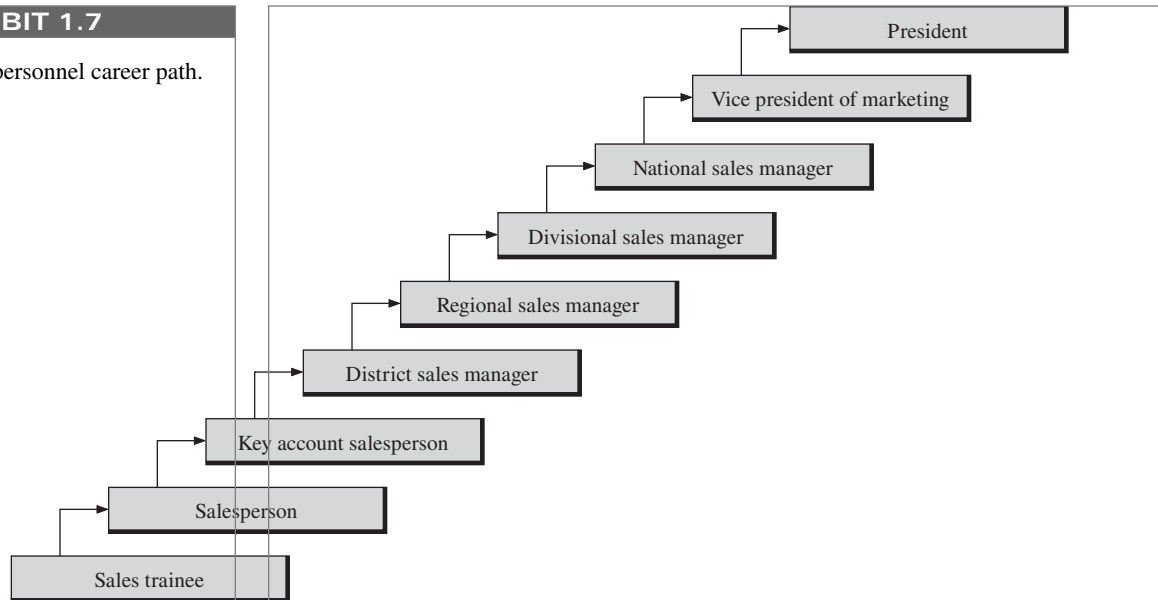
Successful salespeople have many opportunities to move into top management positions. In many instances, this advancement comes quickly.

A sales personnel **career path**, as Exhibit 1.7 depicts, is the upward sequence of job movements during a sales career. Occasionally, people without previous sales experience are promoted into sales management positions. However, 99 percent of the time, a career in sales management begins with an entry-level sales position. Firms believe that an experienced sales professional has the credibility, knowledge, and background to assume a higher position in the company.

* Outside sales usually are conducted off the employer's premises and involve person-to-person contact. Inside sales occur on the premises, as in retail and telephone contact sales.

EXHIBIT 1.7

A sales personnel career path.



*Get wary in your work,
not weary of your work.*

Most companies have two or three successive levels of sales positions, beginning at the junior or trainee level. Beginning as a salesperson allows a person to

- Learn about the attitudes and activities of the company's salespeople.
- Become familiar with customer attitudes toward the company, its products, and its salespeople.
- Gain firsthand knowledge of products and their application, which is most important in technical sales.
- Become seasoned in the business world.

When asked why they like their jobs, first-line sales managers say it is because of the rewards. By rewards, they mean both financial rewards and nonfinancial rewards, such as the great challenge and the feeling of making a valuable contribution to their salespeople and the company. Managers also frequently mention that this position represents their first major step toward the top. They have made the cut and are on the management team. Instead of having responsibility for \$1 million in sales, as a salesperson does, the manager is responsible for \$10 million.

With success, various jobs throughout the sales force and in the corporate marketing department open up. This can include sales training, sales analysis, advertising, and product management. Frequently, traveling the upward career path involves numerous moves from field sales to corporate sales, back to the field, then to corporate, back to the field, and so on. However, sales experience prepares people for more responsible jobs in the company.

Success also creates financial rewards. The larger a company's revenues, the heavier the responsibility of the chief executive, and the larger the compensation. Today, it's common for a CEO of a large national corporation to receive compensation totaling more than \$1 million annually.

Leaving aside compensation at the top echelons, both corporate and field sales managers typically receive higher salaries than others (such as production, advertising, product, or personnel managers) at the same organizational level. Salary is just

Rewards: The Sky's the Limit

You Can Move Quickly into Management

one part of compensation. Many firms offer elaborate packages that include extended vacation and holiday periods; pension programs; health, accident, and legal insurance programs; automobiles and auto expenses; payment of professional association dues; educational assistance for themselves and sometimes for their families; financial planning assistance; company airplanes; home and entertainment expenses; and free country club membership. The higher the sales position, the greater the benefits offered. In addition to performance, salary typically is related to the following factors:

- Annual sales volume of units managed.
- Number of salespeople managed.
- Length of experience in sales.
- Annual sales volume of the firm.

As a salesperson, you can look forward to two types of rewards—nonfinancial and financial.

Nonfinancial Rewards

Sometimes called psychological income or intrinsic rewards, nonfinancial rewards are generated by the individual, not given by the company. You know the job has been done well—for instance, when you have helped the buyer through the purchase of your product.

Successfully meeting the challenges of the job produces a feeling of self-worth. You realize your job is important. Everyone wants to feel good about their job, and a selling career allows you to experience these good feelings and intrinsic rewards daily. Salespeople often report that the nonfinancial rewards of their jobs are just as important to them as financial rewards.

After training, a salesperson is often given responsibility for a sales territory. The person then moves into a regular sales position. In a short time, the salesperson can earn the status and financial rewards of a senior sales position by contacting the larger, more important customers. Some companies refer to this function as a key account sales position.

There Are Two Career Paths

Don't let Exhibit 1.7 mislead you—many salespeople prefer selling over managing people. They want to take care of themselves rather than others. In some companies, a salesperson may even earn more money than the manager; even the firm's president.

Many companies recognize the value of keeping some salespeople in the field for their entire sales career. They do a good job, know their customers, and love what they are doing—so why promote them if they do not want to move up within the organization? However, many other people work hard to move into management.

The first managerial level is usually the district sales manager's position. It is common for people to be promoted to this position within two or three years after joining the company. From district sales manager, a person may move into higher levels of sales management.

	<p>Financial Rewards</p> <p>Many are attracted to selling because in a sales career financial rewards are commonly based solely on performance. Many professional salespeople have opportunities to earn large salaries. Their salaries average even higher than salaries for other types of workers at the same organizational level.</p>
<p>IS A SALES CAREER RIGHT FOR YOU?</p>	<p>It may be too early in life to determine if you really want to be a salesperson. The balance of this book will aid you in investigating sales as a career. Your search for any career begins with you. In considering a sales career, be honest and realistic. Ask yourself questions such as these:</p>
<p><i>I would like to know how to believe in a profession that many people do not trust.</i></p> <p>STEVEN OSBORNE</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ What are my past accomplishments? ■ What are my future goals? ■ Do I want to have the responsibility of a sales job? ■ Do I mind travel? How much travel is acceptable? ■ How much freedom do I want in the job? ■ Do I have the personality characteristics for the job? ■ Am I willing to transfer to another city? Another state?
<p>A Sales Manager's View of the Recruit</p>	<p>Your answers to these questions can help you analyze the various types of sales jobs and establish criteria for evaluating job openings. Determine the industries, types of products or services, and specific companies in which you have an interest.</p> <p>College placement offices, libraries, and business periodicals offer a wealth of information on companies as well as sales positions in them. Conversations with friends and acquaintances who are involved within selling, or have been in sales, can give you realistic insight into what challenges, rewards, and disadvantages the sales vocation offers. To better prepare yourself to obtain a sales job, you must understand what companies look for in salespeople.</p> <p>The following discussion of what sales managers consider when hiring a salesperson is based on a summary of a talk given by a sales manager to a sales class. It is reasonably representative of what companies look for when hiring salespeople.</p> <p>We look for outstanding applicants who are mature and intelligent. They should be able to handle themselves well in the interview, demonstrating good interpersonal skills. They should have a well-thought-out career plan and be able to discuss it rationally. They should have a friendly, pleasing personality. A clean, neat appearance is a must. They should have a positive attitude, be willing to work hard, be ambitious, and demonstrate a good degree of interest in the employer's business field. They should have good grades and other personal, school, and business accomplishments. Finally, they should have clear goals and objectives in life. The more common characteristics on which applicants for our company are judged are (1) appearance, (2) self-expression, (3) maturity, (4) personality, (5) experience, (6) enthusiasm, and (7) interest in the job.</p> <p>People often consider sales careers because they have heard that salespeople can earn good salaries. They think anyone can sell. These people have not considered all the facts. A sales job has high rewards because it also has many important responsibilities. Companies do not pay high salaries for nothing. As you will see in this book, a sales career involves great challenges that require hard work by qualified individuals. Let us review the characteristics of a successful salesperson.</p>

SUCCESS IN SELLING—WHAT DOES IT TAKE?

Over the years, I have asked many salespeople and sales managers the question, “What helps make a salesperson successful?” The answer is contained in the words *love*, *success*, and *person*, as in the phrase “a person who loves success.” As these words will indicate, to be a good salesperson today it helps to be a good person.

As a student, I loved phrases and acronyms to help me remember. That is why I use them here to help you remember and better understand what selling in today’s business environment requires. As Exhibit 1.8 shows, the eight most frequently mentioned characteristics necessary to be successful in sales can be found in the words *love and success*. To help remember, think of the word *ssuccess*, spelled with four s’s.

S—Success Begins with Love

The successful salesperson is an individual who loves selling, finds it exciting, and is strongly convinced that the product being sold offers something of great value. Of the eight work characteristics for sales success, love of selling is clearly number one. Love is at the center of success. It has been said that if you find a job you love, you will never work again.

S—Service to Others

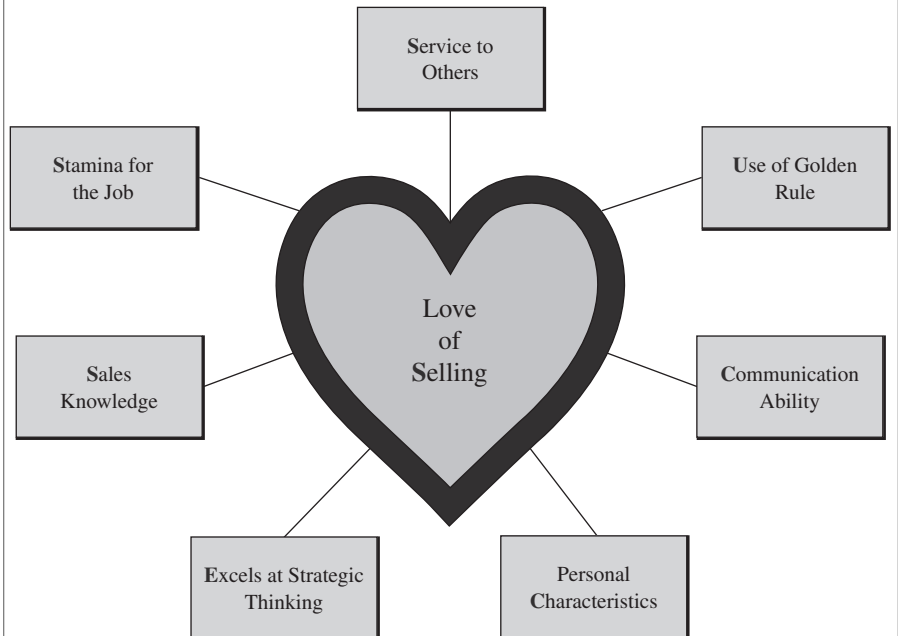
Today’s salespeople make a contribution to the welfare of others through *service*. They are dream makers. They sell solutions to people’s needs that make their dreams come true. Salespeople love to help others fulfill their needs through selling their products.

U—Use the Golden Rule of Selling

If salespeople do not know how to place the customer’s needs first, how can they build a long-term relationship? People like to buy, not be sold. And they like to buy from people they know and trust. That is one reason today’s salesperson needs to treat others as he or she would like to be treated.

EXHIBIT 1.8

Love of selling is at the heart of helping others. Spell success with four s’s: *ssuccess*.



MAKING THE SALE

Don't Quit

When things go wrong as they sometimes will,
 When the road you're trudging seems all uphill,
 When the funds are low and the debts are high,
 And you want to smile but you have to sigh,
 When care is pressing you down a bit—
 Rest if you must, but don't you quit.
 Life is queer with its twists and turns,
 As every one of us sometimes learns,
 And many a person turns about
 When they might have won had they stuck it out.

Don't give up though the pace seems slow—
 You may succeed with another blow.
 Often the struggler has given up
 When he might have captured the victor's cup;
 And he learned too late
 When the night came down,
 How close he was to the golden crown.
 Success is failure turned inside out—
 So stick to the fight when you're hardest hit—
 It's when things seem worst that you mustn't quit.¹⁰

C—Communication Ability

Good salespeople are good communicators. Great salespeople are great communicators. Whether it involves nonverbal or verbal communications, as discussed in Chapter 4, top salespeople speak the other person's language.

C—Characteristics for the Job

Can anyone be a successful salesperson? It helps to reach that goal if you possess the personal characteristics needed for a sales career. These characteristics are discussed after the remaining work characteristics are introduced. Let's continue our discussion of those work characteristics now.

E—Excels at Strategic Thinking

The sixth work characteristic is that high-performing salespeople tend to be strategic problem solvers for their customers. They can match up their product's benefits with the customer's needs. Strategic customer sales planning is discussed more in Chapter 7.

S—Sales Knowledge at the M.D. Level

Top professional salespeople have mastered the basic competencies of selling, which include product knowledge (see Chapter 5) and selling skills. As goods and services become more complex, companies place greater emphasis on training their salespeople and on salespeople training themselves. Salespeople must be experts on everything involved with their products, as a medical doctor is an expert. Remember, however, that knowledge is power, but enthusiasm pulls the switch.

S—Stamina for the Challenge

Today's salesperson needs to be physically, mentally, and spiritually prepared to meet the daily challenges of a sales career. Body, mind, and soul play an important role in the level of a person's stamina. With physical preparedness comes mental strength. Exercise, for example, elevates your mood by increasing energy and simultaneously secreting adrenaline-like substances in the body that act as stimulants and antidepressants, according to the medical community. This increased feeling of well-being transmits itself to the body and mind. In this stressed-out world we all need stress relief. Exercise can help!

Kenneth H. Cooper, M.D., often referred to as the Father of Aerobics, says, "It is easier to maintain good health through proper exercise, diet, and emotional balance than to regain it once it is lost."¹⁰ Exhibit 1.9 presents some aerobic, strength, and

EXHIBIT 1.9

Aerobic, strength, and flexibility exercise guidelines.

*Health is 50% lifestyle,
10% medicine, the rest
is genetics,
environment and luck.*

ARNO L. JENSEN, M.D.

flexibility fitness exercise guidelines you can consider using. Take a few minutes and calculate your exercise target heart rate. Aerobics, strength training, and stretching are wonderful tools to reduce stress, help you feel better, focus better, and have more energy. If you are not actively using these techniques, try them for three months. Find

Aerobics

Aerobic exercise is any type of continuous, vigorous activity within your target heart rate zone (THR). To calculate your THR, use the following formula.

$220 - \text{age} = \text{Maximum heart rate (MHR)}$
 $\text{MHR} \times .60 = \text{Low end of aerobic zone}$
 $\text{MHR} \times .85 = \text{High end of aerobic zone}$

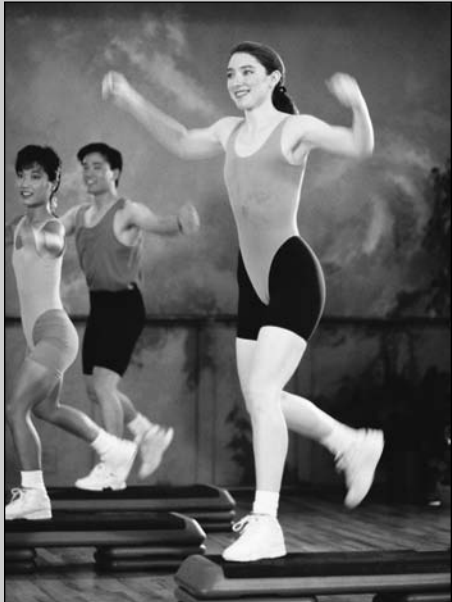
Aerobic Activities	Nonaerobic Activities
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Walking—treadmill or precor elliptical ■ Running—treadmill ■ Step aerobics ■ Cycling ■ Swimming 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Golf ■ Basketball ■ Weight training ■ Yoga

Strength Training

One set of 8 to 12 repetitions per exercise for each muscle group performed at least two days per week is recommended. All major muscle groups should be utilized starting with the larger groups and working down to the smaller groups. Muscle groups to be worked include legs, chest, back, arms, shoulders, and abdominals.

Flexibility

A static stretching regimen should be performed at least three days a week, with three to five repetitions of each stretch (held 30–60 seconds each) for all the major muscle groups. You can stretch while watching TV, right before you go to sleep at night, or in the morning right after you get up.¹²



out how exercise can help you! Be sure to check with your doctor before starting any exercise program, though.

For many people, personal spirituality or belief in a Supreme Being has a great impact upon physical and mental stamina and thus job performance. This is especially true if they feel their sales career is a calling. People’s faith may direct everything they do on the job, ranging from how they treat customers to how ethically they act toward their employer.

**C—
CHARACTERISTICS
FOR THE JOB
EXAMINED**

**Caring, Joy, and
Harmony**

**Patience,
Kindness, and
Moral Ethics**

We skipped over the personal characteristics needed for a sales career earlier. Let’s discuss them now. Certainly any discussion of what it takes to be successful in a sales job has to include the person’s personal characteristics. As we have described selling, the salesperson wants to help people and thus build a long-term relationship. The question has been asked “How do you sell someone something and remain business friends?”

In the movie *Harry Potter and the Chamber of Secrets*, see [Exhibit 1.10](#), his teacher tells Harry that it is not our abilities that show who we truly are but our choices. A salesperson can choose to be like the traditional salesperson we all disparage or the salesperson who is truly people oriented.

Today’s salesperson needs personal characteristics that allow for true caring for customers. Through caring comes the joy of helping others. Customers recognize when a person clearly cares. The caring attitude helps to create harmony in the relationship. Thus salespeople need to have the personal characteristic that allows them to place the customer first. Some people’s pride and egos, however, get in the way.

Salespeople are often under pressure to make the sale today! They need to be able to handle the pressure to sell *now* through demonstrating patience in their working relationship with the customer. Let the customer decide when to buy instead of

EXHIBIT 1.10

Harry Potter and you have something in common. You both have the freedom to choose the type of person you want to be and thus how you will treat others.



<p>Faithful, Fair, Self-Controlled</p>
<p><i>Compassion is difficult to give away because it keeps coming back.</i></p>
<p><i>What comes first in your life?</i></p>

pressuring for a quick decision. The salesperson’s job is to present the necessary information for the buyer to make an educated decision. Patience in closing the sale goes a long way toward building a long-term relationship. Buyers do not like to be pressured into making a quick decision.

Your actions speak louder than your words. Having patience with the customers shows that the salesperson understands the customer’s needs and wants to help (kindness), not solely make the sale. When salespeople show that the customer comes first, people are more likely to trust them. The salesperson’s actions show that she or he is a morally ethical (good) person.

A person who cares, likes the job, is good to work with and is patient, kind, and morally ethical is certainly someone who will be faithful in taking care of customers. The salesperson will spend the time necessary to help, not just make the sale and never be heard from again until the next sales call. We all want to be thought of as ethical. Faithfulness is an ethical virtue. It shows the employer, customers, and competitors that the salesperson is loyal and trustworthy. Customers can trust this person.

Now we come to self-control, which is the most difficult trait for a salesperson to develop. This is why we discuss it last. Self-control concerns our emotions, passions, and desires. How do salespeople control themselves by being patient in closing the sale, for example? Remember, the salesperson must sell to make a living and keep the job. This is a considerable impetus for the salesperson to use pressure, even unethical practices, to compel the customer to buy something that may not be needed.

Self-Control Involves Discipline

Self-control also refers to the needed discipline to rise early, work late, and prepare for the next day in the evening. Often the biggest challenge to success is not out there in the sales territory; it is within us. We can not achieve unless we are willing to pay the price—discipline.

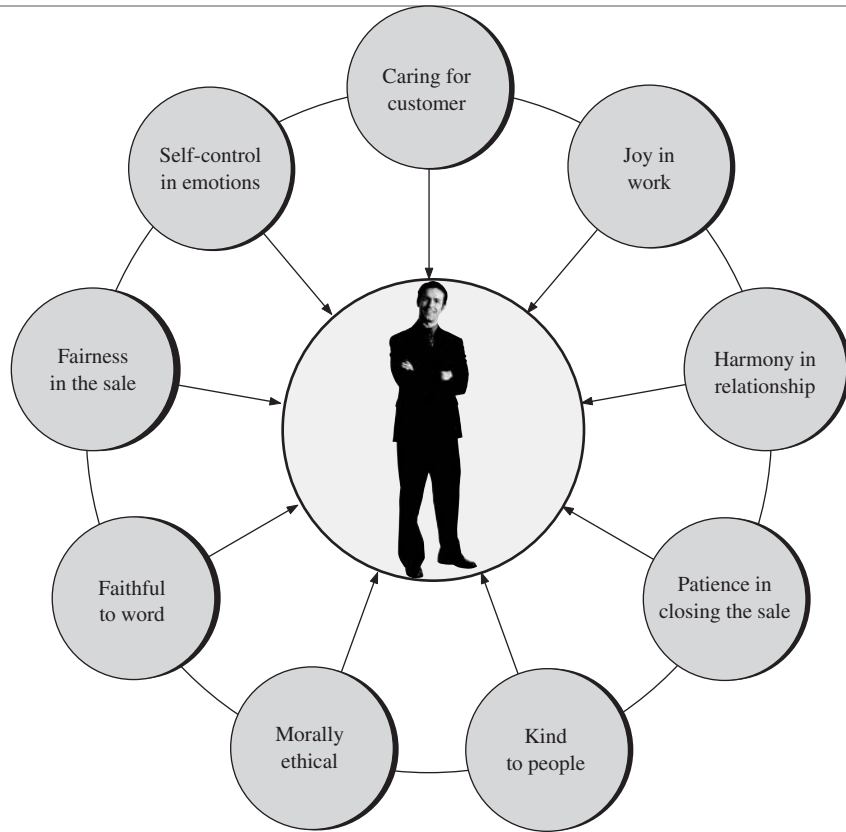
Discipline also includes creating time for family—parents, spouse, and children. So often we are caught up in the American way of wanting to be rich and famous that we forget about the others in our life. Instead we must discipline ourselves to set priorities. What comes first, your job or your family? For me, it should always be family before job. Setting priorities requires willpower many of us do not have. Do you ever wonder why there are so many divorces in America and so many children raised in one-parent homes? Misplacing priorities by not putting family first is the number one contributor to the breakdown of American families. Self-control and discipline are thus very important personal characteristics for all of us, no matter what our careers.

As you see in Exhibit 1.11 the list of personal characteristics needed to be a good salesperson in today’s marketplace is a long one. No doubt your instructor will add to this list, and you undoubtedly will think of other characteristics as well. These characteristics make salespeople good citizens in the business world. However, sadly, it seems that all of us do not have the ability or desire to place the customer first.

Many years ago a man named John Wesley, known as one of the kindest men who ever walked on earth, talked about a simple rule of life. Wesley said he tried to “Do all the good he can by all the means he can in all the places he can at all the

EXHIBIT 1.11

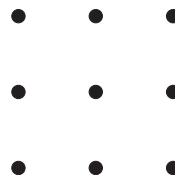
Personal characteristics needed to sell for building long-term relationships.



times he can to all the people he can as long as ever he can.¹³ How would you like to deal with a salesperson that followed both Wesley's rule of life and the Golden Rule? Me too!

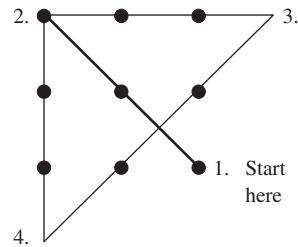
DO SUCCESS CHARACTERISTICS DESCRIBE YOU?

What do you think? Do these success characteristics describe you? Are you willing to incorporate them into your life? You may have to go beyond your normal limits. Only your self-imposed limitations can hold you back. If you fail to realize success or if your success is limited, your own preconceptions may be the cause by throwing an invisible barrier across your path. The following puzzle illustrates how perception can hold you back. The challenge is to connect all nine dots with four straight lines, without lifting your pencil from the paper. Try it!



It seems impossible to intersect all nine dots with four straight lines. How do you move something from the impossible to the possible? *Go beyond the limits.*

When you go beyond the limits, the impossible becomes possible. When you go beyond the limits, you can connect all nine dots with four straight lines.



Successful salespeople break through their self-imposed limitations. No one said when you drew four straight lines that they couldn't go beyond the dots. That was a limitation you imposed. When you impose limitations, the puzzle becomes unsolvable. You can break away from self-imposed limits when you think bigger.

RELATIONSHIP SELLING

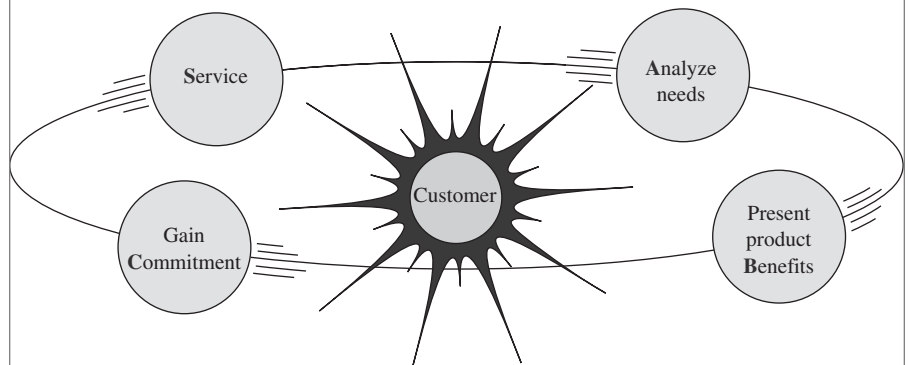
Salespeople are no longer adversaries who manipulate people for personal gain. They want to be consultants, partners, and problem solvers for customers. Their goal is to build a long-term relationship with clients. Salespeople seek to benefit their employer, themselves, and customers.

In recent years, the distinction between a salesperson and a professional has blurred because the salesperson of today is a pro. Many salespeople know more about their field and product than the buyer. This expertise enables the seller to become the buyer's partner, a counselor on how to solve problems. Today's salesperson professionally provides information that helps customers make intelligent actions to achieve their short- and long-term objectives. Service and follow-up are then provided to ensure satisfaction with the purchase. This builds *customer loyalty*—a relationship.

Exhibit 1.12 shows the four main elements in the customer relationship process used by salespeople to build long-term relationships. To help you remember these four elements think of your book's title. The letters **ABCS** stand for **analyze**, **benefits**, **commitment**, and **service**. Salespeople analyze customer needs, present product benefits and gain commitment for the purchase. They provide excellent

EXHIBIT 1.12

The customer is at the center of the sales solar system.



MAKING THE SALE

What Is a Customer?

- Customers are the most important people in any business.
- Customers are not dependent on us. We are dependent on them.
- Customers are not an interruption of our work. They are the purpose of it.
- Customers do us a favor in doing business with us. We aren't doing customers a favor by waiting on them.
- Customers are part of our business—not outsiders. Customers are not just money in the cash register. Customers are human beings with feelings, and they deserve to be treated with respect.
- Customers are people who come to us with needs and wants. It is our job to fill them.
- Customers deserve the most courteous attention we can give them.
- Customers are the lifeblood of this and every business. Customers pay your salary. Without customers we would have to close our doors.
- Don't ever forget it!¹⁴

service in order to maintain and grow the relationship. Customer product and service satisfactions give the salesperson the opportunity to restart the sales cycle by continuing to analyze customer needs.

SALES JOBS ARE DIFFERENT

As you can see, sales jobs are different from other jobs in several ways. Here are some major differences:

- Salespeople represent their companies to the outside world. Consequently, opinions of a company and its products are often formed from impressions left by the sales force. The public ordinarily does not judge a firm by its office or factory workers.
- Other employees usually work under close supervisory control, whereas the outside salesperson typically operates with little or no direct supervision. Moreover, to be successful, salespeople must often be creative, persistent, and show great initiative—all of which require a high degree of motivation.
- Salespeople probably need more tact, diplomacy, and social poise than other employees in an organization. Many sales jobs require the salesperson to display considerable emotional and social intelligence in dealing with buyers.
- Salespeople are among the few employees authorized to spend company funds. They spend this money for entertainment, transportation, and other business expenses.
- Some sales jobs frequently require considerable traveling and time spent away from home and family. At times, salespeople deal with customers who seem determined not to buy the sellers' products. These challenges, coupled with the physical demands of long hours and traveling, require mental toughness and physical stamina rarely demanded in other types of jobs.

Selling is hard work! It requires intelligence, the desire to achieve, and the ability to overcome difficulties.

WHAT DOES A PROFESSIONAL SALESPERSON DO?

The salesperson's roles or activities can vary from company to company, depending on whether sales involve goods or services, the firm's market characteristics, and the location of customers. For example, a salesperson selling Avon products performs similar, but somewhat different, job activities than the industrial salesperson making sales calls for General Electric.

Most people believe that a salesperson only makes sales presentations, but there is much more to the job than person-to-person selling. The salesperson functions as a **territory manager**—planning, organizing, and executing activities that increase sales and profits in a given territory. A sales territory comprises a group of customers often assigned within a geographical area. Exhibit 1.13 indicates a few typical activities of a salesperson. As manager of a territory, the salesperson performs the following nine functions:

1. **Creates New Customers.** In order to increase sales and replace customers that will be lost over time, many types of sales jobs require a salesperson to prospect. Prospecting is the lifeblood of sales because it identifies potential customers. Salespeople locate people and/or organizations that have the potential to buy their products. The salespeople need the ability to close, or make, the sale.

EXHIBIT 1.13

A professional salesperson . . .



. . . helps meet the needs and solve the problems of the customer.



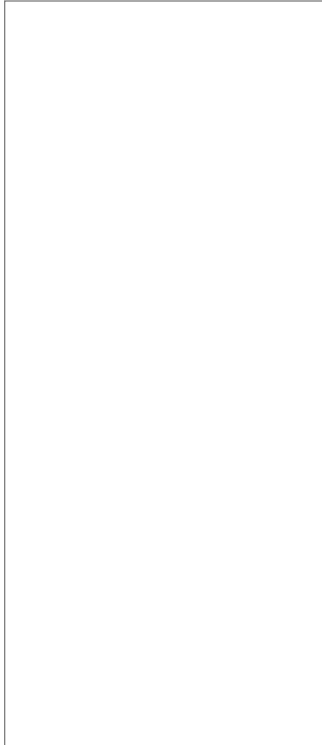
. . . makes presentations to new and current customers.



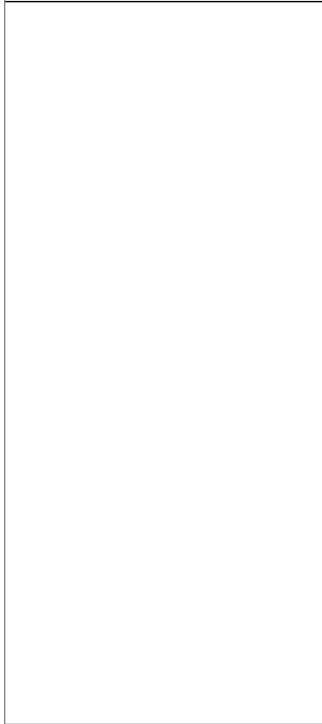
. . . sells to wholesalers and distributors.



. . . handles customer complaints.



I'd like to do something that helps other people.
JACKIE PASTRANO



2. Sells More to Present Customers. Tomorrow's sales come from selling to new customers and selling to present customers again . . . and again . . . and again.

3. Builds Long-Term Relationships with Customers. Earning the opportunity to sell a present customer more product means the salesperson must have a positive, professional business relationship with people and organizations who trust the salesperson and the products purchased.

4. Provides Solutions to Customers' Problems. Customers have needs that can be met and problems that can be solved by purchasing goods or services. Salespeople seek to uncover potential or existing needs or problems and show how the use of their products or services can satisfy needs or solve problems.

5. Provides Service to Customers. Salespeople provide a wide range of services, including handling complaints, returning damaged merchandise, providing samples, suggesting business opportunities, and developing recommendations on how the customer can promote products purchased from the salesperson.

If necessary, salespeople may occasionally work at the customer's business. For example, a salesperson selling fishing tackle may arrange an in-store demonstration of a manufacturer's products and offer to repair fishing reels as a service to the retailer's customers. Furthermore, a manufacturer may have its salespeople sell to distributors or wholesalers. Then, the manufacturer's representative may make sales calls with the distributor's salespeople to aid them in selling and providing service for the distributor's customers.

6. Helps Customers Resell Products to Their Customers. A major part of many sales jobs is for the salesperson to help wholesalers and retailers resell the products that they have purchased. The salesperson helps wholesale customers sell products to retail customers and helps retail customers sell products to consumers.

Consider the Quaker Oats salesperson selling a product to grocery wholesalers. Not only must the wholesaler be contacted but also grocery retailers must be called on, sales made, and orders written up and sent to the wholesaler. In turn, the wholesaler sells and delivers the products to the retailers. The Quaker Oats salesperson also develops promotional programs to help the retailer sell the firm's products. These programs involve supplying advertising materials, conducting store demonstrations, and setting up product displays.

7. Helps Customers Use Products after Purchase. The salesperson's job is not over after the sale is made. Often, customers must be shown how to obtain full benefit from the product. For example, after a customer buys an IBM computer system, technical specialists help the buyer learn how to operate the equipment.

8. Builds Goodwill with Customers. A selling job is people oriented, entailing face-to-face contact with the customer. Many sales are based, to some extent, on friendship and trust. The salesperson needs to develop a personal, friendly, businesslike relationship with everyone who may influence a buying decision. This ongoing part of the salesperson's job requires integrity, high ethical standards, and a sincere interest in satisfying customers' needs.

9. Provides Company with Market Information. Salespeople provide information to their companies on such topics as competitors' activities, customers' reactions to new products, complaints about products or policies, market opportunities, and their job activities. This information is so important for many companies that their salespeople are required to send in weekly or monthly reports on activities of the

EXHIBIT 1.14

What does a professional salesperson do?

1. Creates new customers.
2. Sells more to present customers.
3. Builds long-term relationships with customers.
4. Provides solutions to customers' problems.
5. Provides service to customers.
6. Helps customers resell products to their customers.
7. Helps customers use products after purchase.
8. Builds goodwill with customers.
9. Provides company with market information.

firm's competition in their territory. Salespeople are a vital part of their employers' information retrieval system.

Reflect Back

Review the nine functions shown in Exhibit 1.14 to see what they mean and if you could do any or all of them. Carefully think about the second and third functions. To be successful, a salesperson must close sales and build relationships with the same person and/or organization in order to sell more. To do both is challenging to any person. It requires the salesperson to do the other functions: solve problems, provide service, help resell, teach how to use the purchase, build goodwill, and keep your employer up-to-date on customers' needs and feelings toward product and service.

Your book is about these nine functions and much more. When combined and properly implemented, these nine job activities produce increased sales for the organization and more rewards for the salesperson. An example of how a salesperson integrates these activities will help you better understand the sales job. See the box, "A Typical Day for a Xerox Salesperson."

THE FUTURE FOR SALESPEOPLE

One final thought: In an uncertain and rapidly changing world, how do you learn to be a salesperson? More specifically, how does a course in selling prepare you to become a salesperson ready to face the 21st century?

Learning Selling Skills

Selling is both an art and a science. It is an art because many skills cannot be learned from a textbook. Selling takes practice, just like golf or tennis. Studying a book helps, but it is not enough. Many skills—such as understanding buyers' nonverbal communication messages, listening, handling objections, and closing—take practice. These skills are learned through experience.

Selling is an art and a science.

Selling is also a science because a growing body of knowledge and objective facts describes selling. Becoming a successful salesperson requires a blend of formal learning and practice, of science and art. Practice alone used to be enough to learn how to sell, but no longer. Formal course work in sales can help a salesperson become more competent and be prepared for the challenges of the future. The study of selling helps people see and understand things about sales that others cannot. Training helps salespeople acquire the conceptual, human, and technical skills necessary for selling; this asset results in a salesperson earning more income over a lifetime.

MAKING THE SALE

A Typical Day for a Xerox Salesperson

You are responsible for sales coverage, time, and budget. Help is available and you'll have plenty of marketing and service support; but you're expected to work independently, without constant direction.

Your day is devoted primarily to customer contact. Potential customers may phone the branch and ask to see a Xerox representative. More likely, however, you will acquire customers by making appointments or by visiting businesses to meet the decision-makers, discuss their needs, and offer solutions to their problems. As part of your position, you'll make product presentations, either at the Xerox branch office or at the customer's office. You will also spend a fair amount of time on the telephone following up leads, arranging appointments, and speaking with managers in a variety of businesses and organizations.

In working with customers, you'll need to solve a number of problems. What Xerox product best fits the customer's

needs? How do Xerox products compare with the competition? Should the machine be purchased or leased? What's the total cash outlay—and per-copy cost—for the machine and its service? How should the product be financed? Where should the machine be placed for maximum efficiency? What training is needed for employees? How can Xerox products meet future office needs?

You'll also be engaged in a number of customer support activities, such as expediting product deliveries, checking credit, writing proposals, and training customer employees in the use of the product. You also might refer customers to other Xerox sales organizations and make joint calls with representatives from these organizations.

Each day will bring you new challenges to face and problems to solve. Your days will be busy and interesting.¹⁵

As we see throughout this book, because a salesperson's job is diverse and complex, it requires a range of skills. Although some authors propose a long list of skills, the necessary skills can be summarized in three categories that are especially important: conceptual, human, and technical.

Conceptual Skills

Conceptual skill is the cognitive ability to see the selling process as a whole and the relationship among its parts. Conceptual skill involves the seller's thinking and planning abilities. It involves knowing where one's product fits into the customer's business or how the beginning of a sales presentation relates to asking for the order. Conceptual skills allow the seller to "think strategically"—to understand the product, presentation, buyer, and purchaser's organization.

Although all sellers need conceptual skills, they are especially important for the creative order-getters. They must perceive significant elements in a situation and broad, conceptual patterns.

Human Skills

Human skill is the seller's ability to work with and through other people. Salespeople demonstrate this skill in the way they relate to other people, including customers or people within their own organizations. A seller with human skills likes other people and is liked by them. Sellers who lack human skills often are abrupt, critical, and unsympathetic. Pushy and arrogant, they are not responsive to others' needs.

Technical Skills

Technical skill is the understanding of and proficiency in the performance of specific tasks. Technical skill includes mastery of the methods, techniques, and equipment involved in selling—such as presentation skills and uses for one's products. Technical

EXHIBIT 1.15

The American sales force is becoming diversified. Millions of sales jobs provide room for everyone in a sales career!



**Preparing for the
21st Century**

skill includes specialized knowledge, analytical ability, and the competent use of tools and techniques to solve problems in that specific discipline.

Over the next few years, new forces will shape sales careers (see [Exhibit 1.15](#)). Salespeople will continue to rely heavily on their technical, human, and conceptual skills; however, they will apply them in different ways. Major changes occurring today will continue to occur in the distant future and require salespeople to be knowledgeable in areas they didn't need to know about only a few years ago, including technology.

**E-SELLING:
TECHNOLOGY
AND
INFORMATION
BUILD
RELATIONSHIPS**

In this chapter you were introduced to the importance that knowledge plays in helping the salesperson fulfill the role of business consultant and how customers expect salespeople to be more knowledgeable than ever before. This creates a tremendous challenge for the salesperson in that the information and knowledge needed to properly sell and service perhaps several hundred customers within the sales territory have expanded well beyond what any individual could possibly know. Salespeople need more information about goods, services, customers, and competitors than ever before.

Often the need to gather and organize information lengthens the sales process. Also, the growing emphasis on team selling and group buying makes it critical to share information quickly and accurately among a wide variety of people who influence the customer's buying decision.

The good news is that technology has exploded the boundaries of today's knowledge frontiers. Salespeople have access to almost any conceivable piece of information or data. Technology is making it possible to improve a person's sales and service performance. (See [Exhibit 1.16](#)) Desktop and laptop computers, videocassette recorders, CD-ROM videodiscs, automatic dialers, electronic mail, fax machines, and teleconferencing are quickly becoming popular sales tools. The

EXHIBIT 1.16

Video conferencing is excellent for presentations and training.



EXHIBIT 1.17

Technology is enabling salespeople to do a better job selling and servicing their customers.



salesperson has truly gone high tech. Not only is sales and inventory information transferred much faster, but also specific computerized decision support systems have been created for sales managers and sales representatives.

The goal is to help salespeople increase the speed with which they can find and qualify leads, gather information prior to a customer presentation, reduce their paperwork, report new sales to the company, and service customers after the sale. Computer technology has provided the answer. See [Exhibit 1.17](#).

Technology is expensive. Hardware, software, and training take a large investment. Yet companies believe it is worth the cost because of decreased travel and paperwork, more productive sales calls, and better customer service. Chapter 4 has further discussions on the technology salespeople use to build relationships.

<p>SELLING IS FOR LARGE AND SMALL ORGANIZATIONS</p>	<p>Many textbook examples are from big business. This is typically because readers recognize Ford Motor Company or McDonald's. Even though America's large organizations are easily recognizable and extremely important to our prosperity, it is easy to overestimate the importance of big business because of its greater visibility. Small firms, even though less conspicuous, are a vital component of our economy.</p> <p>Small business contributes significantly to our economy. The Small Business Administration classifies approximately 98 percent of all business in the United States—sole proprietorships, partnerships, corporations, part-time businesses, and unincorporated professional activities—as small businesses.</p> <p>Small enterprises run the gamut from a corner news vender to a developer of optical fibers. Small business people sell gasoline, flowers, and coffee to go. They publish magazines, haul freight, teach languages, and program computers. They make wines, motion pictures, and high-fashion clothes. They build new homes and restore old ones. They repair plumbing, fix appliances, recycle metals, and sell used cars. They drive taxicabs, run cranes, and fly helicopters. They drill for oil, quarry sand and gravel, and mine exotic ores. They forge, cast, weld, photoengrave, electroplate, and anodize. They also invent antipollution devices, quality control mechanisms, energy-saving techniques, microelectronic systems—a complete list would go on for volumes.</p> <p>Often, small business entrepreneurs cannot compete head-to-head with giant firms. However, most large firms started small, and then prospered by using many of the concepts, ideas, and practices discussed in this textbook. Because of this fact, we use small business as examples throughout this textbook.</p>
<p>THE PLAN OF THIS TEXTBOOK</p>	<p>Personal selling and the sales job are much more than you might have imagined. The plan of your textbook provides you with the <i>abc's</i> of what selling is all about. Some of the major topics you will study include these:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ The social, ethical, and legal issues in selling. ■ Why people and organizations buy what they do. ■ Verbal and nonverbal communications. ■ The importance of knowing your and your competition's products. ■ An in-depth discussion of the selling process. ■ Self-, time, and sales territory management. ■ Important functions of sales management. <p>Salespeople are managers of the sales generated from their customers. There is much to know if you want to be a successful sales professional. There is even more to know once you are promoted to the sales manager's job. Sometime before your course is over, be sure to review the last two chapters of this book. They provide you with an overview of the sales manager's job.</p>
<p>BUILDING RELATIONSHIPS THROUGH THE SALES PROCESS</p>	<p>Much of your course will revolve around the sales process. The sales process refers to the salesperson's sequential series of actions that leads toward the customer taking a desired action and ends with a follow-up to ensure purchase satisfaction. This desired action by a prospect is usually buying, which is the most important action. Such desired actions also can include advertising, displaying, or reducing the price of the product.</p>

EXHIBIT 1.18

Ten important steps in the customer relationship selling process.

Nothing else ruins the truth like stretching it.

SUMMARY OF MAJOR SELLING ISSUES

1. *Prospecting.* Locating and qualifying prospects.
2. *Preapproach.* Obtaining interview; determining sales call objective; developing customer profile, customer benefit program, and sales presentation strategies.
3. *Approach.* Meeting prospect and beginning customized sales presentation.
4. *Presentation.* Further uncovering needs; relating product benefits to needs using demonstration, dramatization, visuals, and proof statements.
5. *Trial close.* Asking prospect's *opinions* during and after presentation.
6. *Objections.* Uncovering objections.
7. *Meet objections.* Satisfactorily answering objections.
8. *Trial close.* Asking prospect's *opinion* after overcoming each objection and immediately before the close.
9. *Close.* Bringing prospect to the logical conclusion to buy.
10. *Follow-up and service.* Serving customer after the sale.

Although many factors may influence how a salesperson makes a presentation in any situation, following a logical, sequential series of actions can greatly increase the chances of making a sale. This selling process involves 10 basic steps as briefly listed in Exhibit 1.18. The following chapters discuss each of these steps in greater detail.

Before a sales presentation is attempted, several important preparatory activities should occur. This involves prospecting and planning the sales presentation. Steps 3 through 9 make up the sales presentation itself. Step 10 involves the important follow-up phase of the selling process to ensure customer satisfaction.

Before discussing the selling process, Chapter 2 considers the social, ethical, and legal issues in selling. With this background, we are ready to examine what is involved in preparing to meet the customer, followed by an in-depth discussion of how to develop the sales presentation.

Personal selling is an old and honorable profession. It has helped improve this country's standard of living and provided benefits to individual buyers through the purchase of products. Millions of people have chosen sales careers because of the opportunity to serve others, the availability of sales jobs, the personal freedom sales provides, the challenge, the multitude of opportunities for success, and the nonfinancial and financial rewards.

A person can become a successful salesperson through company and personal training and by properly applying this knowledge while developing skills and abilities that benefit customers. Also important are believing in the product or service being sold, working hard, wanting to succeed, and maintaining a positive outlook toward both selling and oneself. In addition, a successful salesperson should be knowledgeable, able to plan, and efficient in using selling time. Effective salespeople are good listeners who provide service to customers. En route to success, salespeople develop a range of skills through study and practice, enhancing their ability to think strategically, relate to others, and understand the technical aspects of their business.

For the future, salespeople will need to be well versed in diverse international markets, able to ethically develop customer partnerships, and ready to utilize technology. The remainder of this book expands on these topics to provide you with the

ETHICAL DILEMMA

Mexico Here I Come

As you come to the end of your presentation, you realize one of your best customers—John Adams—may not buy. John and you have become friends over the last three years. Losing this sale will result in your missing out on a \$500 bonus, forfeiting a chance to win a trip to Mexico, and failing to reach your sales quota for the year.

When you finish, John says, “We can’t buy.” You then explain your situation to John. He says, “Well, why don’t you ship the merchandise to me. After the contest is over but before it’s time to pay for it, I will ship it back to your company or you can transfer it in small quantities to several of your customers. That way you’ll get credit for the sale.” You know that your boss will not mind because if you reach your sales quota he will also look good and be rewarded.

What do you do? In selecting your action, consider the discussion of ethical behavior in Chapter 2.

1. Accept John’s offer without consulting your boss and send the merchandise to his store—in turn, receiving a \$500 bonus, a trip to Mexico, and praise from your boss for making the sale and reaching your sales quota.
2. Talk to your boss about the situation and explain John’s offer. Let your boss be the ultimate decision maker (taking responsibility instead of you), knowing that he will tell you to take the “sale” from John.
3. Thank John for trying to be a supportive friend but decline his offer because it would not be right to falsify sales for your own benefit.

background either to improve your present selling ability or to help you decide if a sales career is right for you.

MEETING A SALES CHALLENGE

As a secretary in Sunwest Bank’s marketing department, Debra Hutchins worked closely with the bank’s outside salespeople and sales manager. When a sales job opened up, both Alex Romero, the director of marketing, and Rick Mather, the sales manager, asked her if she wanted the job. Debra had seen what salespeople do, so she said, “OK, I’ll give it a shot.”

Debra was so good as a salesperson she was promoted and now is sales manager, managing three men and one woman. “It’s the best decision I’ve ever made,” she says. “If you have not considered a sales career, I highly recommend it.”

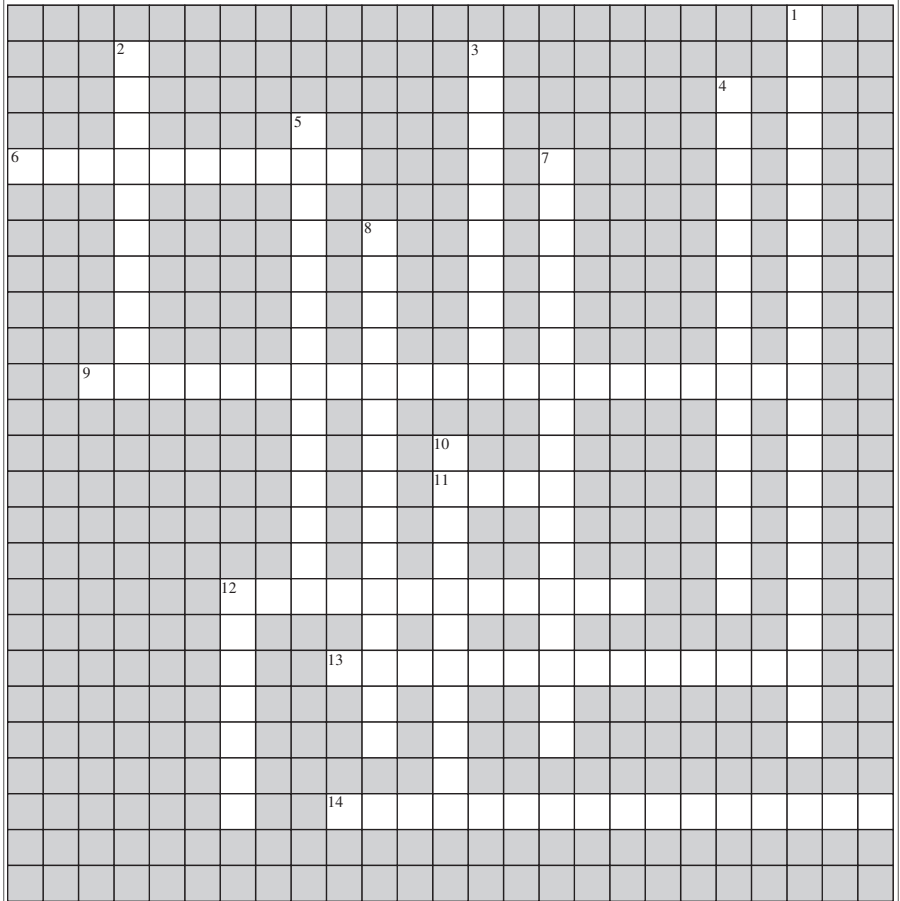
KEY TERMS FOR SELLING

- | | |
|-----------------------|-----------------------------------------|
| marketing ... | Golden Rule of Personal Selling ... |
| marketing concept ... | retail salesperson ... |
| marketing mix ... | customer contact person ... |
| good ... | direct sellers ... |
| service ... | wholesale salesperson ... |
| product ... | manufacturer’s sales representative ... |
| price ... | order-taker ... |
| distribution ... | order-getter ... |
| promotion ... | career path ... |
| personal selling ... | territory manager ... |
| advertising ... | conceptual skill ... |
| publicity ... | human skill ... |
| sales promotion ... | technical skill ... |
| rule ... | sales process ... |

<p style="text-align: center;">SALES APPLICATION QUESTIONS</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The term <i>salesperson</i> refers to many types of sales jobs. What are the major types of sales jobs available? 2. Chapter 1 described characteristics of several successful salespeople currently selling goods and services for national companies. Describe those characteristics and then discuss whether or not those same characteristics also are needed for success in other types of jobs. 3. People choose a particular career for many reasons. What are the reasons someone might give for choosing a sales career? 4. What is meant by the term <i>career path</i>? What are the various jobs to which a salesperson might be promoted in a company? 5. Describe the Golden Rule of Personal Selling and how it relates to the work characteristics of successful salespeople and the personal characteristics needed to sell while building long-term relationships. 																																																																		
<p style="text-align: center;">FURTHER EXPLORING THE SALES WORLD</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Interview one or more salespeople and write a brief report on what they like and dislike about their jobs; why they chose a sales career; what activities they perform; and what they believe it takes to succeed in selling their products. 2. Contact your college placement office and report on what staff members believe firms recruiting people for sales positions look for in applicants. 																																																																		
<p style="text-align: center;">SELLING EXPERIENTIAL EXERCISE</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Are You a Global Traveler?</p>	<p>Our global environment requires that American sales personnel learn to deal effectively with people in other countries. The assumption that foreign business leaders behave and negotiate in the same manner as Americans is false. How well prepared are you to live with globalization? Consider the following items, writing the numbers reflecting your views on another sheet of paper.</p> <table border="0" style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <thead> <tr> <th style="text-align: left; border-bottom: 1px solid black;">Are you guilty of:</th> <th colspan="4" style="text-align: center; border-bottom: 1px solid black;">Definitely No</th> <th style="text-align: center; border-bottom: 1px solid black;">Definitely Yes</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td style="border-bottom: 1px solid black;">1. Being impatient? 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Being somewhat argumentative, sometimes to the point of belligerence?	1	2	3	4	5	4. Being ignorant about the world beyond your borders?	1	2	3	4	5	5. Having a weakness in foreign languages?	1	2	3	4	5	6. Placing emphasis on short-term success?	1	2	3	4	5	7. Believing that advance preparations are less important than negotiations themselves?	1	2	3	4	5	8. Being legalistic and believing a deal is a deal, regardless of changing circumstances?	1	2	3	4	5	9. Having little interest in seminars on the subject of globalization, failing to browse through international topics in libraries or magazines, or not interacting with foreign students or employees?	1	2	3	4	5		Total Score _____				
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Add up your score. If you scored less than 27, congratulations. You have the temperament and interest to do well in a global company. If you scored more than 27, it's time to consider a change. Regardless of your score, go back over each item and make a plan of action to correct deficiencies indicated by answers of 4 or 5 to any question.¹⁶

CROSSWORD OF SELLING TERMS



ACROSS

- 6. Salespeople who only take orders by asking what the customer wants or waiting for the customer to order. They have no sales strategy and use no sales presentation.
- 9. A person who sells products to parties for resale, use in producing other goods or services, or operating an organization.
- 11. A prescribed guide for conduct or action.

- 12. A sequential series of actions by the salesperson that leads toward the prospect taking a desired action and ends with follow-up to ensure purchase satisfaction.
- 13. Sellers who sell face-to-face to consumers—typically in their homes—who use products for their personal use.
- 14. A person who plans, organizes, and executes activities that increase sales and profits in a given territory.

DOWN

- | | |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Another name for a salesperson. 2. The upward sequence of job movements during a sales career. 3. The seller's ability to work with and through other people. 4. Personal communication of information to persuade a prospective customer to buy something—a good, service, idea, or something else—that satisfies that individual's needs. | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 5. The understanding of and proficiency in the performance of specific tasks. 7. This individual sells goods or services to customers for their personal, nonbusiness use. 8. The ability to see the selling process as a whole and the relationship among its parts. 10. Salespeople who get new and repeat business by using a creative sales strategy and a well-executed sales presentation. 12. Making a contribution to the welfare of others. |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|

CASE 1.1
What They Didn't Teach Us in Sales Class*

Rick Lester was depressed. He was cold and damp from the rain as he sat in his van in the parking lot of a Food World supermarket. He had just telephoned the Nabisco division sales office and talked with Helen, the office secretary. Rick had asked her, "What are we supposed to do when it rains like this?" Rick could hear her repeat the question to Mr. Brown, the division sales manager, who just happened to be in the office. Rick could hear the reply in the background, "Tell him to buy a raincoat!" When Helen repeated the response, Rick replied to her, "OK, have a nice day" with a slightly embarrassed tone in his voice. As he hung up the pay phone and sat back in his van he thought, "What a heck of a way to make a living."

As a new salesman, it was clear that Rick had much to learn. He had only been on the job for one month, but he had about decided that it was no "piece of cake." It had all seemed so much easier when he watched Mr. Brown make calls during his two-week on-the-job training period. Now that he was making calls on his own, it was quite different and much more difficult. Interestingly, the sales class Rick had taken at the University of Alabama at Birmingham the previous year had covered many reasons to go into selling, but few disadvantages of pursuing a career in sales. Rick was now learning about these firsthand.

Rick's family—his parents and two younger sisters—had lived in Birmingham for many years. Mr. Lester was a salesman, and Mrs. Lester was a homemaker. Rick was an average student in high school, where he really majored in athletics and cheerleaders. After high school he accepted a partial athletic scholarship to Northwest Mississippi Junior College. His grades in college were about average overall but were low in basic math classes. The chief reason he selected business as his major was that it required no algebra. Following two years in Mississippi, Rick transferred to the University of Alabama at Birmingham and continued to work toward a B.S. degree in marketing. He met a nice girl there, and they later married when he graduated from UAB. There had been three specific job opportunities, all in sales, but he chose the job with Nabisco because it was a big company with many benefits. He also thought highly of Mr. Brown, the local recruiter and division sales manager.

* This case was written by Gerald Crawford and R. Keith Absher, Professors of Marketing, and William S. Stewart, Professor of Management, University of North Alabama, Florence, Alabama 35632.

Rick started to work on September 1. The first week was spent reviewing sales training manuals and completing employment paperwork. He also stocked his new van with merchandise, advertising materials, and displays. The following two weeks were spent “working the trade” with Mr. Brown, who made most of the calls while Rick learned by observing. Toward the end of the third week of employment, Rick was starting to make the sales presentations while Mr. Brown observed. They would discuss each call after they returned to the van. During the fourth week, Rick worked alone. The present week had been difficult . . . there was so much he didn’t know. On Friday it rained, and this was not helpful. It was about two o’clock when he called the office and was told to buy a raincoat.

As he sat in the van waiting for the rain to let up, he began thinking about the situation in which he now found himself, and it was depressing. The rain was not the only reason for his low morale. He thought about his wife and how she had told her friends that Rick was in public relations rather than sales. Although they had not discussed it, Rick assumed that she did not particularly like the title *salesman*. Somewhere in the back of Rick’s thoughts, there was clearly an image that selling has low occupational status. Maybe it came from his father. He couldn’t remember. Another troublesome aspect of the new job was the caloused way that some retailers treat all salespeople. Others simply try to brush them off or avoid them altogether. This job, Rick thought, certainly does not build up one’s ego.

There are other negative aspects of being in sales. One is that selling is physically demanding. It is a requirement to carry the sales bag into all calls. Properly loaded, Rick’s sales bag weighed 38 pounds and contained advertising materials, new products, sample merchandise, a stapler, and the selling portfolio. In addition, in some calls, salespeople must transport cases of merchandise from the storage area to the shelves. A great deal of bending and lifting is simply a part of the routine workday. By quitting time each day, Rick’s clothing was wrinkled and damp from perspiration. Yesterday he had snagged a hole in the trousers of his new suit.

At the end of each day, Rick had to prepare reports and mail them to the home office. It was also necessary to reorganize and restock the van for the next day’s work. Sometimes there were telephone calls that had to be made. By the time these chores were completed, it was almost bedtime. There was not much time left to spend with his new wife, and she had mentioned this a time or two.

The last annoying concern involved the knowledge that a good part of his success, or lack of it, depended on events over which he had no control. In several calls this week, a competitor had persuaded dealers to reduce shelf space for Nabisco products. These dealers reported that the competitor had a special promotion going on and the deal was just too good to pass up. There was no way that Rick could recover the lost shelf space in those calls. This did not look good on the salesperson’s daily report.

As the rain continued to come down, Rick felt very alone. Mr. Brown was not there to help or provide answers. The physical and emotional obstacles just seemed too big to overcome. The only way out of this mess, it seemed, was to quit this job and try to find another one that was not this depressing. “Maybe I could get a job in a bank, where customers are always nice and the work is easier,” Rick thought. As he started his van and drove away toward the division office, he felt relieved that he would soon be free of this impossible responsibility.

Questions

1. Should Rick Lester “turn in his keys”?
2. How should Mr. Brown handle this situation? What should he say to Rick?
3. How can firms reduce high turnover among new sales personnel?
4. What can firms do to increase salesperson status?
5. What can professors do to better prepare students in sales classes?

Appendix: The Golden Rule of Personal Selling as Told by a Salesperson

Some time ago your present job was offered to you. You researched the company and its products, decided you liked what you found, and became a salesperson. You had heard good and bad things about salespeople. However, these things seem to occur in all occupations.

Your employer produces worthwhile products that will help people. It does not produce things that feed the world's desires. You feel people must always be more important than products, money, or you. You have found an outlet for your life's mission and philosophical goals since you accepted this opportunity.

THE GOLDEN RULE OF SELLING

You chose to base your sales philosophy on unselfishly treating others as you would like to be treated. This is what you fondly refer to as the "Golden Rule of Selling." Customer needs come before your needs. So each time you make a sales call you ask yourself, "Do I want to build a friendly relationship with this person because I need something from her/him?" You want to help people without expecting something in return. If you do not know how to put other people's needs first, how can you build a true relationship with them?

OTHERS INCLUDES COMPETITORS

Although you love making a sale, you feel the Golden Rule of Selling especially applies to your relationship with competitors. In fact, applying the Golden Rule of Selling to the competition is one of the main reasons you like sales. For if your customers or prospects do not feel your products will fulfill their needs, you discuss and, if possible, recommend a competitor's product. You prefer to lose your commission in order to be faithful to a relationship and do what is right for your customer. This experience gives you a real sense of joy and peace because, after all, it is your personal mission to help all people.

SALES IS YOUR CALLING TO SERVE

You really do not think of your occupation as work. It's what you do. It defines who you are. It's something you look forward to each day. Going to your job isn't work; it's a chance to be with your friends, because you are all in this together. You want to see your employer's business prosper because it employs many people who use their salary

	<p>to support their families and the economy. Other people, such as the vendors you buy supplies from, prosper as your company experiences improved sales and profits.</p> <p>You enjoy business relationships and work wholeheartedly at your job. Sure, you enjoy time off from time to time. Your family is very important in your life. They are second in your life in importance, just behind your faith, and career is number three in your life.</p> <p>You want to do something worthwhile in your life, and your occupation is one of the things that fills that need. This is where you feel you are meant to be in your life. It is your calling. You were put on this earth to do what you're doing. Some time ago, you stopped to ask yourself, "What is the purpose of my life?" The answer you have discovered is serving others. Service, to you, means making a contribution to the welfare of others.¹⁷ You want to "make a difference!" And you do make a difference in customers' lives. That is one reason you love sales! You have the opportunity to be with so many people each day. Each day brings wonderful opportunities to improve others' lives.</p> <p>You have realized that only through service can you find fulfillment in your job and life.¹⁸ Serving others provides you with an emotional purpose in life that helps to sustain enthusiasm for getting up each day. Service gives you this daily excitement for life within your heart. But one of the first things you realized in your sales job was that to truly serve others you had to know what you were talking about.</p>
<p><i>What is the purpose of your life?</i></p>	
<p>TO SERVE, YOU NEED KNOWLEDGE</p>	<p>After much training and experience, you are considered an expert on your industry, competitors, products, and the application of both your products and those of your competitors to customers' needs. Being knowledgeable on products and selling skills is extremely important to you. It allows you to provide a high level of customer service, which can aid you in properly helping your customers fulfill their needs. This knowledge is also valuable in helping your fellow salespeople. In sales, however, you quickly learned people don't care how much you know until they know how much you care.¹⁹</p>
<p>CUSTOMERS NOTICE INTEGRITY</p>	<p>While it did not happen overnight, your customers love to see you! They trust that you are looking out for their best interest because you are a person of integrity and self-control. But to you, integrity is who you are when no one is looking.²⁰ A sincere desire motivates you to help others by having them purchase your products, and you believe in what you sell. Since your first day of contacting customers, you have realized that they want to buy, not be sold. You have gained genuine happiness from seeing how your products help solve the needs of other people. Because of your gentleness, kindness, and patience, people view you as a role model. Work provides a sense of fulfillment for you, a personal satisfaction from knowing that you are doing something purposeful, meaningful, and worthwhile.</p>
<p>PERSONAL GAIN IS NOT YOUR GOAL</p>	<p>Pursuing sales for the sake of self-interest and gain is not your goal. Helping others is. You are never concerned about sales goals, only customers. Take care of customers, and customers will take care of you. Your productivity is really not in your hands. Results come in direct proportion to your level of customer service.</p>

	<p>It is clear to you that diligence—the willingness to work hard and do your best—is a vital part of your life. You work hard, not to become rich, famous, or admired, although those may be by-products of such a lifestyle, but to help and serve others. Financial rewards result from helping others. You use the rewards gained from aiding others to meet your needs and to contribute to the needs of the less fortunate, besides saving some money for your retirement. You have seen others lose their health to make money, then lose their money to restore their health.²¹ But you are secure and content with what you have been given. Financial reward is not, nor will ever be, your idol.</p> <p>You are proud of what you do. Your intention in life is to accomplish business, sales, and personal goals, such as supplying a better life for your family, selling a quality product, providing good value to the customer, and building and strengthening your community through fair business practices and increased employment.²²</p>
<p>OTHERS COME FIRST</p>	<p>You have even built up a reputation as a volunteer in your community by giving your time, money, and effort to projects that help people. Like your job, working for society’s benefit provides you with great joy. It is a chance to bring goodness into the community.</p> <p>While you occasionally think about taking credit, you honestly feel you have had little, if any, direct influence on your accomplishments. You are not a self-made person. Your father and mother, relatives, schoolteachers, friends, spouse, managers, peers, customers, company trainers, and the products you sell are just some of the factors that have molded your life, allowing you to make contributions to the sales growth of your company. This realization of how so many others have helped you over the years has caused you to be aware of how small you are compared to others. Others have provided the means for you and your family to have a wonderful life. For that reason you have a strong affection for every person in your life. Their interests come before yours. That is why you never compare yourself to others; you can let the boss do that.</p>
<p>THE FRUITS OF THE SELLING SPIRIT</p>	<p>This in turn brings you back around to your life’s philosophy based upon the Golden Rule of Selling—to unselfishly treat others as you would like to be treated. What has been the effect of applying the Golden Rule of Selling to work and life? It has resulted in an abundantly productive, or fruitful, life. The by-products of dedicating your life to others have been love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control. These nine fruits of the selling spirit have given your life purpose. As you tell others, “Practicing the Golden Rule of Selling has resulted in my being blessed by unmerited kindness from others!”</p>